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Sent: Monday, July 30, 2018 2:20 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Aug 1 city sign code amendment hearing

Councilmember Thao,

I hope it isn't too late to provide a little more information for the City Council prior to the hearing Wednesday evening. I've attached a few PDFs that provide a more complete picture of where Saint Paul is in regards to billboards.

Billboards (off-premise signs) are considered a non-conforming use in Saint Paul. Chapter 64 (I'm including sec. 64.302 and Sec. 64.770) talks about conversions from traditional billboards to digital and the Downtown area special sign district plan mentions the goals that were set for that area.

I would love to propose trading traditional billboards for dynamic digital displays, but a couple problems arise in the sign code. The first is that we aren't converting a traditional printed billboard sign to digital. There is no billboard on the Treasure Island Center building to convert. The second problem is that Treasure Island Center is located in a B4 zoning district and according to the sign code "Except in a B4 or B5 zoning district, a legally nonconforming, illuminated billboard may be converted to a billboard with a dynamic display if the following conditions are met:" (64.302 (b))

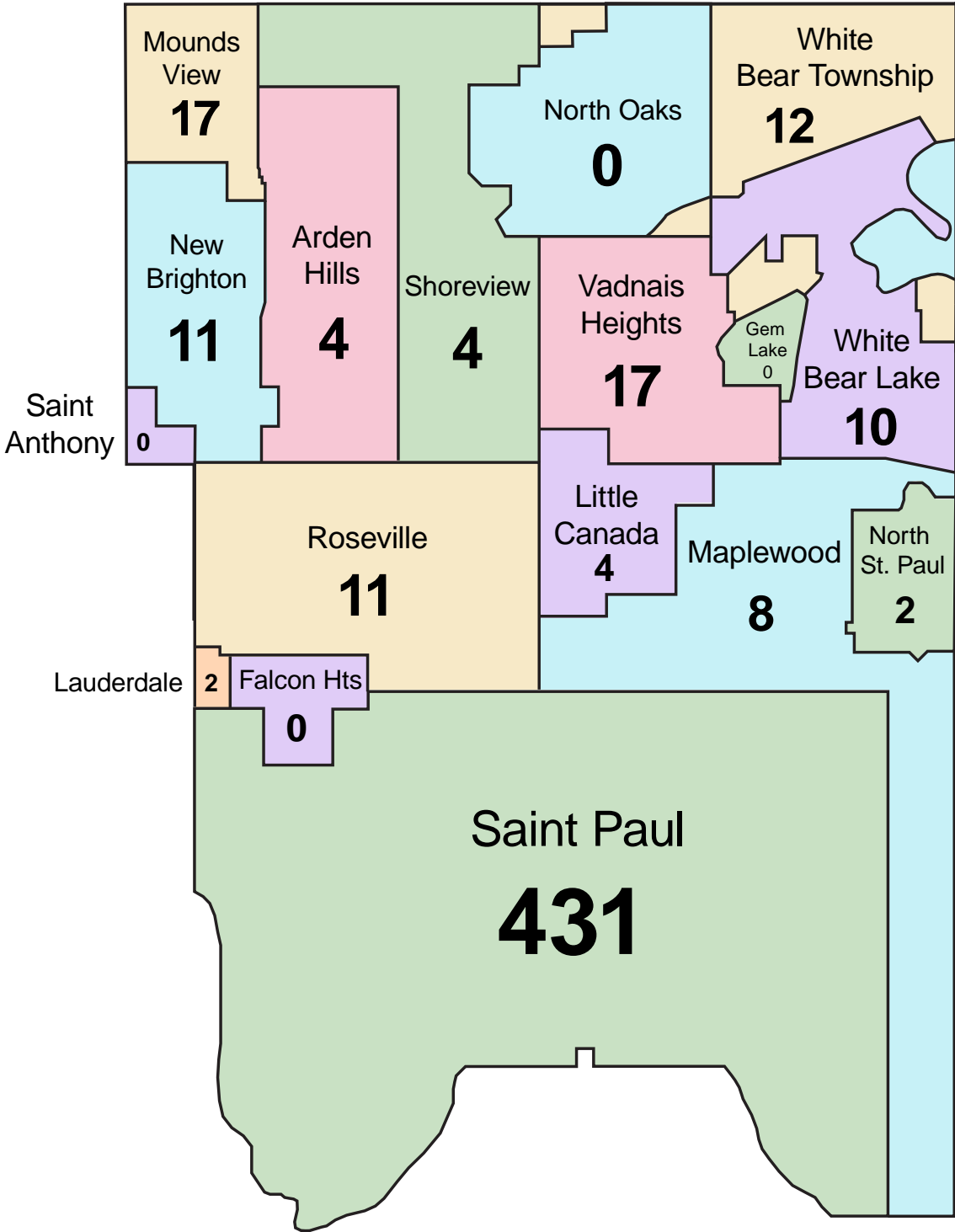
Scenic Saint Paul did a comparison study in 2017 that looked at billboards in Ramsey County. I've included that as well as a ward map comparison of where billboards are in Saint Paul. Obviously, Wards 1, 2, and 4 have far more than any of the other wards.

Finally, I'm including a list that was prepared for the City Council in 2010 that was compiled from all the district councils that listed billboards they would most like to remove in their neighborhoods. I think this illustrates how widespread the desire is to not want to live or work near a billboard. They are a blight, and allowing these changes to the sign code is a move in the wrong direction.

Thank you,

Gerry Mischke
142 Granite Street
(Scenic) St. Paul

2017 Billboard Quantity Comparison in Ramsey County, Minnesota



The 2 sections of Saint Paul sign code (chapter 64) pertinent to August 1, 2018
sign code amendment public hearing

Sec. 64.302. - Nonconforming advertising signs; conversion to billboard with dynamic display.

- (a) *Intent and purpose.* Studies show that there is a correlation between driver distraction and accidents. Signs with dynamic displays can be a cause of driver distraction. Along highways, signs with dynamic displays tend to distract drivers if they are waiting to see the next change, especially if it is a continuation of the message or if the transition uses special effects. Signs with lettering that is too small to read at a glance also cause driver distraction; whereas, typical time and temperature signs, which can be read at a glance, are not a significant distraction. This section allows for the conversion of illuminated billboards to billboards with dynamic displays subject to standards that maintain highway safety.

Dynamic display technologies can greatly expand the advertising capacity and graphic flexibility of billboards. However, section 64.420 prohibits any new advertising signs in the city in order to protect and improve views, aesthetics, community pride and investment, and the visibility of local businesses. One purpose of this chapter is to reduce the number of billboards in the city. The provisions of the present section seek to offer benefits both to the public and to billboard owners. This section allows increased advertising through the addition of dynamic display technologies on existing billboards along certain freeways in exchange for voluntary reductions in the number of billboards in the city.

- (b) Except in a B4 or B5 zoning district, a legally nonconforming, illuminated billboard may be converted to a billboard with a dynamic display if the following conditions are met:
- (1) The billboard is located within three hundred thirty (330) feet of I-94 or I-35E north of I-94 and is designed to be read from the highway.
 - (2) The billboard is at least one (1) mile measured along the freeway from any other billboard with a dynamic display designed to be read by drivers heading in the same direction on the highway.
 - (3) Only one (1) sign face on a billboard structure is converted.
 - (4) The billboard is not in the visual field of any residence, regardless of municipal boundaries, that is in a residential or TN traditional neighborhood zoning district and has windows which are facing and from which the dynamic display is directly visible. "Visual field" means the cone-shaped area in front of a billboard, drawn on a map, that extends perpendicular from the center of the sign face for one thousand (1,000) feet with a vertex angle of seventy-five (75) degrees and also includes peripheral triangles on both sides of the cone, which are delineated by extending the line of the sign face two hundred (200) feet in each direction from its center, and from these two (2) points connecting to the two (2) outer points of the cone.
 - (5) The owner of the billboard shall apply for and receive a sign permit for the conversion from the city.

The 2 sections of Saint Paul sign code (chapter 64) pertinent to August 1, 2018
sign code amendment public hearing

- (6) As part of the permit application, the applicant shall agree in writing to remove permanently other existing billboards in the city; for each square foot of dynamic display space being created, six (6) square feet of illuminated billboard faces, or eight (8) square feet of non-illuminated faces shall be removed. Billboards that the applicant owns or controls in residential zoning districts or any other locations designated for billboard removal by resolution of the city council must be taken down before billboards taken down in other areas of the city will be counted toward this removal requirement. Billboards may be counted toward the removal if they have been or will be removed between one (1) year prior to the application and two (2) months following the issuance of the permit. The removals must include the complete removal of the billboard structures including the foundations of any freestanding billboards.

Prior to approval of the sign permit, the applicant must agree in writing that the city may remove the billboards if the applicant has not done so before the new electronic message sign is put into operation, and the applicant must submit a cash deposit or letter of credit acceptable to the city to pay the city's cost for that removal. The applicant must also agree in writing that the removal of the billboards is done voluntarily and the applicant has no right, under any law, to compensation from any governmental unit for the removed signs.

When a billboard is permanently removed (including the sign or display surface and all elements of the sign structure) for purposes of dynamic display conversion under this section or when a billboard is permanently removed for any other reason, and the owner of the removed billboard surrenders in writing any state and local permits previously issued for the removed billboard, no new sign and/or sign structure permit will be issued for the real property on which the removed billboard was located.

- (7) If the removed signs are ones for which a state permit is required, the applicant and owners must surrender such permits to the state. The billboard with a dynamic display may not be put into operation until proof is provided to the city that such state permits have been surrendered.
- (c) In addition to the other regulations in this chapter, a billboard with a dynamic display shall conform to the following operational standards:
 - (1) All alpha-numeric copy must be at least fifteen (15) inches high.
 - (2) The images and messages displayed must be static, and the transition from one static display to another must be direct and immediate without any special effects. Each image and message displayed must be complete in itself, and may not continue on the subsequent one. Each image and message must remain constant for at least twelve (12) seconds before changing to the next one.

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The 2 sections of Saint Paul sign code (chapter 64) pertinent to August 1, 2018
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Sec. 64.770. - Downtown area special district sign plan.

- (a) *Intent and purpose.* The downtown special sign district Plan, as provided in section 6.601, is adopted to provide advertising sign controls that build upon the unique character and identity of the city's downtown. This sign plan is intended to:
- (1) Maintain and enhance the scenic view of unique architectural and natural features visible from the residential and commercial areas of downtown;
 - (2) Protect and encourage investment and beautification of downtown;
 - (3) Reduce the clutter and chaotic diversity of advertising signage that impairs the effectiveness of signs identifying businesses and institutions in downtown;
 - (4) Create a more aesthetically pleasing fusion of residential and commercial areas in downtown; and
 - (5) Protect property values in downtown and reflect the pride its residents, businesses and institutions place in the community.
- (b) The provisions of the downtown special district sign plan apply within the boundaries of the district 17 neighborhood district council but excludes those areas of district 17 which are subject to the jurisdiction of the capital area architectural and planning board as provided by Minnesota Statute 15.50.
- (c) Within the downtown special sign district, no advertising signs shall be permitted except as permitted in section 64.420(b) for professional sports facilities.
- (d) Whenever a permit for an advertising sign in the downtown special sign district is required under provisions of chapter 64, such permit shall not be issued unless the plans for the sign have been approved by the zoning administrator as in conformance with this sign plan. All building permit applications for advertising signs in the special sign district shall be submitted to the zoning administrator for review and approval. A fee to cover the costs of the review shall be established by resolution of the city council. All plans submitted for zoning administrator approval shall be of sufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposed sign complies with the provision of this sign plan. The zoning administrator shall review the plans within thirty (30) days and notify both the applicant and the department of safety and inspections of any decision to approve or disapprove the plans. Written reasons for denial shall be prepared by the zoning administrator and shall accompany any decision to disapprove the plans. Any decision by the zoning administrator may be appealed as provided in chapter 61, administration and enforcement.

(C.F. No. 07-149, § 37, 3-28-07; Ord 12-77, § 1, 12-26-12; Ord 14-44, § 1, 12-3-14)

Saint Paul's 17 District Councils' recommendations for billboard removal in their respective neighborhoods – January 2010

District Council #	Location of Billboard	City File	Clear Channel / CBS / Image #	Removal Date
1	Sunray Bowl 2245 Hudson Road	02 102644 BB	CC# 093035_Hudson-McKnight.JPG CC# 093030_Hudson-McKnight. JPG	
	Holiday Inn 2201 Burns Avenue	02 102645 BB	CBS_94-McKnight1.JPG CBS_94-McKnight2.JPG	
	Target 1722 Suburban Avenue	02 102636 BB	CBS_27528i_Suburban-94.JPG CBS_27529i_Suburban-94.JPG	
	Intersection of Hazel Street & Old Hudson Road	02 102640 BB	CC# 093058_Hudson-Hazel.JPG CC# 093057_Hudson-Hazel.JPG	
2	842/848 White Bear Ave (near E 7 th)	02 102466 BB	CC# 064165_WhiteBear-East7.JPG	Removed date unknown
	North Side of 1428 White Bear Ave	02 102459 BB	CC# 064280, 064290	
3	Dodd and Winslow (Dodd & Morton St W)	02 102319 BB	CC# 080300_Dodd-Morton.JPG	9/2/2010
	4 billboards located at Congress and Wabasha	02 102317 BB	CC# 080820-080830_Wabasha-Congress.JPG	10/1/2008
		02 102318 BB	CC# 080840-080850_Wabasha-Congress.JPG	10/1/2008
	Cesar and State Street (176 Concord St & State)	02 102731 BB	CC# 081360, 081390	
4	Peter McCarty's building 776 East 7 th Street	02 102473 BB	CC# 066160_East7-Hope.JPG	
	South side of East Seventh Street at Payne Ave	02 102479 BB	CC# 093190_East7-Payne.JPG	
			CC# 065790_East7-Payne.JPG	
	Carbones 680 E. 7 th Street	02 102474 BB	CC# 065890_East7-Maria.JPG	2/1/2017
Paul's Lounge 1045 Hudson Road	02 102631 BB	CC# 064750-064780_HudsonRd-Earl.JPG		

Saint Paul's 17 District Councils' recommendations for billboard removal in their respective neighborhoods – January 2010

		02 102632 BB	CC# 064790_HudsonRd-Earl.JPG	
5	Yannarellys Bar 1199 Payne Ave	02 102440 BB	CC# 067000_Payne-Maryland.JPG	
			CC# 066970_Payne-Maryland.JPG	
	Payne-Ivy Grocery 1340 Payne Ave	02 102443 BB	CC# 063640_Payne-Ivy.JPG	8/1/2010
	35E between Wheelock Pkwy & Larpenteur	02 102666 BB	CC# 092895_35E-Wheelock.JPG	
CC# 092896_35E-Wheelock.JPG				
6	Como & Pennsylvania	02 102562 BB	CC# 072870_Como-Pennsylvania.JPG	
	West side of Rice Street near Winnipeg	02 102564 BB	CC# 068690_Rice-Milford.JPG	
CC# 068670_Rice-Milford.JPG				
7	586 Rice Street (east side of Rice St near Como)	02 102554 BB 02 102555 BB 02 102556 BB 02 102557 BB	CC# 068410-068440_Rice-Como.JPG	
			CC# 068350-068380_Rice-Como.JPG	
	535 North Dale Street (Charles & Dale)	02 102684 BB	CC# 067930_Dale-Charles.JPG	
	601 North Dale Street (Thomas & Dale)	02 102687 BB	Noname_Dale-Thomas (ownership unknown)	
	710 North Dale Street (Dale South of Minnehaha)	?	Noname_Dale-Minnehaha (ownership unknown)	
Corner of Pennsylvania Street & Como Avenue (a duplicate of a District 6 request)	02 102562 BB	CC# 072870_Como-Pennsylvania.JPG		
8	Intersection of Snelling Ave & St. Anthony	02 102404 BB	CC# 093620, 093720, 093860	

Saint Paul's 17 District Councils' recommendations for billboard removal in their respective neighborhoods – January 2010

	Dale Street & St. Anthony	02 102609 BB	CC# 092991_StAnthony-Dale.JPG	
			CC# 092990_StAnthony-Dale.JPG	
9	Shepard Road & Eagle (Old Chestnut)	02 102697 BB 02 102698 BB	CC# 073780-073800_Shepard-Chestnut.JPG	
	Jefferson & Victoria	02 102335 BB	CC# 076840-076870_Jefferson-Victoria.JPG	
			CC# 076900-076930_Jefferson-Victoria.JPG	
	Randolph & Chatsworth	02 102700 BB 02 102701 BB	CC# 076570-076600_Randolph-Chatsworth.JPG	
	West Seventh & Superior	02 102503 BB	CC# 075450_West7-Superior.JPG	
	Randolph & Drake	02 102509 BB	CC# 076670_Randolph-Drake.JPG	8/1/2010
			CC# 076675_Randolph-Drake.JPG	8/1/2010
	West Seventh & Grace	02 102504 BB	CC# 075310_West7-Grace.JPG	
CC# 075320_West7-Grace.JPG				
Shepard Road & Drake	02 102514 BB	CC# 074170_Shepard-Drake.JPG	Removed date unknown	
		CC# 074180_Shepard-Drake.JPG	Removed date unknown	
10	Northeast corner of Snelling & Como intersection	02 102415 BB	CBS_Snelling-Como2.JPG	
11	University Avenue & Pascal Street	02 102363 BB	CBS_University-Pascal.JPG	
12	Raymond & Robbins (east side of Raymond)	02 102332 BB	CC# 067270_Raymond-Robbins.JPG	10/1/2008
	University & Cromwell (280)	02 102383 BB	CBS_Univ-Cromwell.jpg	

Saint Paul's 17 District Councils' recommendations for billboard removal in their respective neighborhoods – January 2010

	University & Hampden	02 102380 BB 02 102381 BB	CC# 069470-069471_Univ-Hampden.jpg CC# 069472-069474_Univ-Hampden.jpg	
13	SweatShop Health Club 167 Snelling Ave N.	02 102398 BB	CC# 073350, 073380_Snelling-Selby	
13	Intersection of University Ave & Fairview above furniture store	02 102373 BB	CC# 093580_Univ-Fairview.JPG	After 02/17/15
	Intersection of Snelling Ave & Portland Ave	02 102397 BB	CC# 007395, 007397_Snelling-Portland.JPG	
	Anchor Bank 1570 Concordia Ave	02 102604 BB	CBS_Concordia-Snelling.JPG	
14	Northeast corner of St. Clair Ave & Snelling Ave	02 102393 BB 02 102394 BB	CC# 073290-073320_Snelling-StClair.JPG	
	Intersection of St. Clair Ave & Griggs St.	02 102708 BB	CC# 077200, 077230_StClair-AydMill.JPG	
15	Moeller Jewelers 2065 Ford Pkwy	02 102521 BB	CC# 093900_Ford-Cleveland.JPG	
	Blockbuster Video 2056 Ford Pkwy	02 102525 BB	CC# 093920_Ford-Cleveland.JPG	
16	Intersection of St. Clair Ave & Ayd Mill Road	02 102709 BB 02 102710 BB	CC# 077110, 077140, 07717	
	Billboard located along 35E off of St. Clair Ave	02 102711 BB	CC# 077120, 077150, 077180	
17	Rossmor Building 1 Robert & 9th	02 102484 BB	CBS_Robert-9th.JPG	
	Rossmor Building 2 Robert & 10th	02 102485 BB	CBS_Robert-10th.JPG	
	St Peter & 10 th (on roof)	02 102492 BB	CBS_StPeter-10th.JPG	

Saint Paul Billboard Totals 2001 - 2017

