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# CITY OF POMONA COUNCIL REPORT

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March 17, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Anita D. Scott, City Manager

Submitted By: Betty Donovanik, Development Services Director

**SUBJECT: INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 4357,  
APPROVING ZONING CODE AMENDMENT (CODE-001403-2024)  
ESTABLISHING NEW SIGN REGULATIONS IN THE POMONA  
ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTION 630 (“SIGNS”)**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council take the following actions:

- 1) Conduct a public hearing and receive public testimony;
- 2) Introduce, waive further, and give first reading to the following ordinance (Attachment 1):

**ORDINANCE NO. 4357 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF  
THE CITY OF POMONA, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING ZONING CODE  
AMENDMENT (CODE-001403-2024) AMENDING THE POMONA  
ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CODE TO REMOVE THE CURRENT  
SIGN SECTION .1310 AND REPLACE WITH SECTION 630. (“SIGNS”)**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

On February 12, 2025, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval (7-0-0-0) to amend the existing sign regulations outlined in the Pomona Zoning and Development Code during a public hearing. The new sign regulations in the Pomona Zoning and Development Code Section 630. “Signs” will remove language that directly conflicts with First Amendment rights pertaining to freedom of speech and establish sign regulations compatible with the frontage standards of the new Zoning and Development Code that was adopted in July of 2024. This zoning code amendment excludes specific plans that currently have sign regulations within their respective plans. Future efforts to include specific plans will come under separate action. If adopted by the City Council, this request is expected to be in effect on May 7, 2025.

**SB1439/GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLICABILITY:**

When this box is checked, it indicates the agenda item is subject to the Levine Act SB1439 requirements. Councilmembers are reminded to check their campaign contributions and determine whether they have received a campaign contribution of \$500 or more that would require disclosure and/or recusal from discussing or acting on this agenda item. Campaign contributions of \$500 or more made 1) by any person or entity who is identified in the agenda report as the applicant or proposer or 2) on behalf of the applicant or participant, including a parent, subsidiary or otherwise related business entity, or 3) by any person who has a financial interest in the agenda item requires a councilmember to comply with SB1439.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No Fiscal Impact at this time.

**PUBLIC NOTICING REQUIREMENTS:**

A public hearing notice was published in the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin on Friday, March 7, 2025 (Attachment No. 3).

**PREVIOUS RELATED ACTION:**

On February 12, 2024, the Planning Commission held a public hearing regarding a Zoning Code Amendment (CODE-001403-2024), a request to update Section .1310 “Signs” and replace it with new sign regulations Section 630. “Signs” (Attachment No. 2). After carefully considering all pertinent testimony and the recommendation of the Planning Division staff (Attachment No. 4), the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Zoning Code Amendment (CODE-001403-2024) on a 7-0-0-0 vote, subject to conditions.

Based on the recommendations by Planning Division staff, the Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions:

- 1) Remove all permanent sign allowances in the Neighborhood Yard frontage module with the exception of Suspended Signs (originally proposed with special exemptions based on use for sign permissions). This revision would address concerns related to constitutional free speech protections.
- 2) Based on feedback from the City Attorney’s office, the Planning Commission directs Staff to revise the definitions for “Building Signs,” “Street and Traffic Control Signs,” and “Original Artwork Murals” to ensure that these terms are not unconstitutionally vague.

These revisions are reflected in the draft document which includes revisions to the sign definitions and frontage module permissions (allowed sign types).

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Overview**

The proposed Zoning Code Amendment is a request to remove Section .1310. “Signs” (formerly Section .530-K) and incorporate new sign regulations in Pomona Zoning and Development Code Section 630. “Signs” (Attachment No. 2). The proposed amendment will remove language that directly conflicts with First Amendment rights pertaining to freedom of speech and establish sign regulations compatible with the frontage standards of the New Code.

This zoning code amendment will exclude specific plans that currently have sign regulations within their respective plans and include specific plans that currently defer to the Pomona Zoning and Development Code for sign regulations. Future efforts to include the excluded specific plans will come under separate action, subject to SB 18 (Government Code §6532.3(a)(1)), which requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and to conduct meaningful consultation with California Native American tribes, if requested, prior to the adoption or any amendment of a general plan or specific plan. This effort is tentatively scheduled for April 2025.

### **Staff Analysis**

#### **(A) Applicable Code Section**

Pursuant to Pomona Zoning and Development Code Section 1150.D.(2), the City Council may, by ordinance and upon written recommendation of the Planning Commission, amend, supplement, or change the ordinances codified in this Zoning and Development Code whenever the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, or good zoning practice so requires.

A Zoning Code Amendment must be acted upon by the Approving Authority based upon the information provided in the submitted application, evidence presented in the Planning Division’s written report, and testimony provided during the public hearing, only after considering and clearly establishing all of the below listed findings and giving supporting reasons for each finding. The application must be denied if one or more of the below-listed findings cannot be clearly established.

- 1) The proposed Zoning and Development Code Amendment is consistent with the goals, policies, plans and exhibits of the General Plan; and
- 2) The proposed Zoning and Development Code Amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare of the City.

#### **(B) Proposed Amendment**

The proposed amendment would remove Section .1310. “Signs” (formerly Section .530-K of the Pomona Zoning Ordinance) and incorporate new sign regulations in Pomona Zoning and Development Code Section 630. “Signs”.

The new sign regulations will be incorporated into the Site chapter of the Zoning and Development Code. The Site chapter is responsible for will regulating site design, including the location and

characteristics of access, parking, landscape, and other site features. Site consists of a combination of regulations that are appropriate to a variety of contexts such as transit-oriented centers, special campuses, suburban neighborhoods, and open spaces.

While regulations will be located in the Site chapter of the Zoning and Development Code, sign permissions will be determined by the frontage module type assigned to each Zoning District as displayed in Fig.1.1. Permanent Signs – Allowed Sign Type, Frontage Module Permissions. Aligning sign types to frontage modules is a strategic approach to assure consistency with the goals and policies of the General Plan by maintaining the desired relationship to the public right-of-way.

Fig.1.1. Permanent Signs – Allowed Sign Type, Frontage Module Permissions with Planning Commission Revisions.

**1. Frontage Module Permissions**

The following signs are allowed by frontage module:

Sign Type	Frontage Module					Standards
	Neighborhood Yard	Multi-Unit	General	Shopfront	Special	
<b>Building Signs</b>						
Awning	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.a. Awning Sign</a>
Canopy	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.b. Canopy Sign</a>
Painted	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.c. Painted Sign</a>
Projecting	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.d. Projecting Sign</a>
Roof	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.e. Roof Sign</a>
Wall	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.f. Wall Sign</a>
Window	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.2.g. Window Sign</a>
<b>Freestanding Signs</b>						
Monument	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.3.a. Monument Sign</a>
Suspended	■	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.3.b. Suspended Sign</a>
<b>Special Signs</b>						
Crown	--	■	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.4.a. Crown Sign</a>
Marquee	--	--	■	■	■	<a href="#">Sec. 630.F.4.b. Marquee Sign</a>

■ = Sign type allowed   ■ = Sign type allowed for RX1 or assembly uses only   -- = Sign type not allowed

Frontage regulates portions of a lot and building facades that impact the public realm. Frontage modules ensure that projects respond to the public realm appropriately. Frontage Modules range from flexible standards for open space frontages with limited buildings to more robust standards for shopfront frontages where buildings need to support an active and high-quality public realm with strong associations with uses inside buildings.

**(C) General Plan Conformance**

The land use and community design chapters of the General Plan place high priority on building form and places focus on design that supports public activity and strengthens safety. The reiterated goals and policies in the General Plan promote the efficient use of land that encourage walking, bicycling and transit use across all place types. To accomplish this the General Plan discusses moving away from “exclusively auto-oriented shopping and toward open-air, amenity driven

formats that have both daytime and nighttime activity and are clustered at major crossroads”. Additionally, the community design chapter emphasizes the creation of more walkable and accessible street environments, strives to improve pedestrian safety, and improve the livability and cultural life of the community through physical design considerations.

To implement the vision set by the General Plan, the new sign regulations prohibit the erection of new auto-oriented signs such as animated signs, digital signs, bunting signs, and mobile signage and incorporates new signage types such as painted signs, crown signs, and marquee signs. Additionally, the new sign regulations remove all language pertaining to sign content and safeguards life, health, property and public welfare by regulating the design, quality of materials, construction, illumination, location, and maintenance of signs (Attachment 5).

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires analysis of agency approvals of discretionary “projects.” A “project,” under CEQA, is defined as “the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment” (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). The proposed project is considered a “project” under CEQA.

In 2014, the City of Pomona adopted a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) associated with the discretionary project, which analyzed the environmental impacts of the City of Pomona’s General Plan Update (GPU), Corridors Specific Plan, Active Transportation Plan, and Green Plan. In conjunction with the certification of the GPU and PCSP EIR, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted. The proposed project site was previously studied under this Certified Final EIR.

In compliance with Section 15061(b)(3), the proposed project is covered by the general rule exemption which exempts activities that can be seen with certainty to have no possibility for causing a significant effect on the environment. The project may be considered for the general rule exemption in that the proposed project only includes the amendment of text of an adopted document previously studied in the 2014 Pomona GPU Final EIR. The proposed project described above hereby meets the guidelines. Therefore, no further environmental review is required.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

Upon approval at first reading of draft Ordinance No. 4357, the City Council will conduct a second reading, and 30 days thereafter, the requested zoning code amendment will become effective. Staff tentatively expects the second reading to be held on April 7, 2025, and the effective date to be May 7, 2025.

### **COUNCIL PRIORITIES & GOALS:**

This item is consistent with the following Council priorities and goals:

GOAL G: Create Economic Strategy for City That Reflects Current Opportunities and City Values.

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karina Diaz', written over a horizontal line.

Karina Diaz  
Assistant Planner

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Attachment No. 1 – Draft Ordinance No. 4357

Attachment No. 2 – Exhibit A: March 17, 2025, Draft Zoning & Development Code Section 630.

Attachment No. 3 – Public Hearing Noticing

Attachment No. 4 – Staff Report & Attachments of 2-12-25 Planning Commission Public Hearing

Attachment No. 5 – Staff Presentation