



Walla Walla County Community Development Department

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To: Walla Walla County Planning Commission
From: Lauren Prentice, Director
Meeting Date: October 7, 2020
Prepared: October 5, 2020
RE: **Workshop** – zoning code text amendment proposed by Walla Walla County to allow electronic changing message center signs in the Public Reserve zoning district. Docket No. ZCA20-002.

Background

The Board of County Commissioners directed staff to prepare draft amendments to Walla Walla County Code (WWCC) Chapter 17.25 as a result of a preliminary sign proposal by the Walla Walla County Fairgrounds to install an electronic changing message center sign on 9th Avenue/Highway 125, which is currently not allowed.

Attachments

- A. Draft Sign Code Amendments dated 2020-10-01
- B. Sign code examples from other jurisdictions

Summary of Proposal

The draft proposal in Attachment A is a first draft which was prepared by the County's planning consultant LDC at the direction of Community Development Department staff. As written, the proposed code amendments would add a definition for 'Electronic Changing Message Center Sign' to Chapter 17.08 and amend Chapter 17.25 to increase height limits for signs in some zones and add a section with standards for these types of signs.

Workshop

The purpose of the workshop meeting is to allow the Planning Commission to review and discuss the proposed amendments prior to scheduling a public hearing. No final conclusions or recommendations need to be made by the Planning Commission at the workshop, but if there is consensus (direction) on any of these issues, then we can factor that into our SEPA analysis and public hearing preparation.

Here are some possible questions for discussion:

1. Should these signs require a conditional use permit in any case in the Public Reserve zone or be permitted outright? If a conditional use permit is recommended, should it be subject to administrative review or go to the Hearing Examiner?
2. Should these signs be allowed in any other zoning districts?
3. Are the proposed development standards (e.g. maximum height, size, changing frequency) appropriate? Are others needed?
4. Should a separate provision to allow smaller signs via an administrative process be included in the amendments (i.e. for community uses like churches or schools, or commercial uses)?

Next Steps

Unless there are specific issues the Planning Commission wants addressed, or another workshop is requested, the next procedural steps would be to schedule a public informational meeting and a Planning Commission public hearing, and to complete SEPA environmental review and send the proposed amendments to the Department of Commerce.