



Meeting Date: August 24, 2026

Submitter: Atefa Ghaznawi, AICP, LEED AP, City Planner
Daniel Ritter, AICP, Community Development Director

Department: Community Development

Agenda Item: Plan Commission recommendation on application of the City of Crest Hill for Comprehensive Text Amendments to Chapter 15.12 Sign Code of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinances (Case # TXT-26-1-8-1)

Summary:

City Staff periodically review the Zoning Ordinance and the City Code of Ordinances to ensure they remain effective in advancing the City's goals pertaining to economic development, land use compatibility, community appearance, and quality of life. Through ongoing administration of the Code, Staff have identified concerns regarding the effectiveness of the City's current sign regulations. Staff have also received feedback from residents, businesses, and elected officials regarding the visual impact of permanent and temporary signage throughout the community. In addition, the current regulations do not adequately address evolving sign technologies, changing legal standards, or contemporary development practices. These shortcomings have contributed to inconsistent sign quality, visual clutter, and enforcement challenges along the City's commercial corridors. Staff propose a comprehensive review and update of the current Sign Code to modernize the regulations and ensure they remain effective, enforceable, and aligned with the City's planning and economic development objectives. Proposed text amendments include:

- Improve overall layout and structure of the Sign Code, by reorganizing relevant provisions under more condensed sub-topics.
- Establish updated standards for sign design, size, placement, maintenance, and landscaping to improve community aesthetics. New ground signs in all zoning districts will be required to have a decorative sign base (minimum 75% of sign width) and landscaping around the sign base (2 sq-ft of landscaping for every 1 sq-ft of sign area but not less than 50 sq-ft in area).
- Expand the list of prohibited signs: attention-getting devices such as feather flags, pennants, balloons, etc. will be prohibited as temporary signs; pole and pylon signs will be prohibited in all zoning districts; and digital signs will be prohibited in residential districts.
- Expand Definitions Section to add definitions for more sign typologies, and better define zoning terms, and sign requirements.

- Clarify nonconforming sign provisions that create administrative and enforcement challenges while allowing ongoing maintenance and panel changes to occur as to not create undue costs onto businesses.
- Provide clear standards for specific sign types, including window signs, awning and canopy signs, fuel station signage, and other commonly used sign formats.
- Enhance public safety by addressing visibility, traffic safety, wayfinding, illumination, and maintenance concerns.
- Streamline the review procedures and administrative processes for businesses/property owners.
- Create fair and predictable standards that balance business identification needs with neighborhood compatibility and community character.

Overall, the proposed amendments will modernize the City's Sign Code, improve its clarity and enforceability, and support the City's vision for attractive commercial corridors, high-quality development, and a well-maintained built environment.

A preliminary discussion of the proposed Sign Code updates took place at the Plan Commission meeting on July 9, 2026, and Staff received preliminary feedback and direction. Subsequently, the Plan Commission conducted the required public hearing for this application at its August 13, 2026, meeting and recommended unanimous but conditional approval of the requested text amendments to Chapter 15.12 Sign Code of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinance. A copy of the draft approval Ordinance is included with the agenda backup materials for this item.

Council Action Requested: Direction to include the draft Ordinance approving comprehensive Text Amendments to Chapter 15.12 Sign Code of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinances on the September 8, 2026, Regular City Council Agenda for final consideration.

Attachments

- Attachment A – July 9, 2026, Approved Plan Commission Meeting Minutes
- Attachment B – August 13, 2026, Draft Plan Commission Meeting Minutes
- Attachment C - An Ordinance Approving Comprehensive Text Amendments to Chapter 15.12 Sign Code of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinances – Application of City of Crest Hill (with Associated Exhibits)