



Meeting Date:	June 8, 2026
Submitter:	Daniel Ritter, Community Development Director
Department:	Community Development
Agenda Item:	Direction on Zoning Ordinance and City Code Amendments – Updates to Use Chart and Sign Code

Summary:

City staff periodically reviews the Zoning Ordinance and other development regulations to ensure they remain effective in advancing the City’s goals related to economic development, land use compatibility, community appearance, and quality of life. Through ongoing administration of the Code, staff has identified concerns regarding certain business uses and the effectiveness of the City’s current sign regulations. Staff has also received feedback from residents, businesses, and elected officials regarding the concentration of specific uses in commercial areas and the visual impact of permanent and temporary signage throughout the community.

Based on this feedback and staff’s experience administering the Code, staff is considering potential amendments in two areas: (1) use regulations within the Zoning Ordinance and (2) the City’s Sign Code. Before investing significant time in research and drafting amendments for formal Plan Commission review, staff seeks preliminary feedback and direction from the City Council regarding these potential initiatives.

Use Chart and Use Regulations

Staff is seeking City Council feedback before undertaking a comprehensive review of certain land uses and preparing potential Zoning Ordinance amendments for consideration by the Plan Commission. Concerns have been raised about the concentration and proliferation of certain uses that may adversely affect community character, commercial vitality, and long-term economic development objectives. Staff would like to comprehensively review all uses, but some specific principal and accessory uses that may be reviewed include:

- Tobacco (including Vape), Cigar, Cigarette Shops
- Package Liquor Sales
- Second Hand, Rummage, and Discount Stores
- Personal Storage
- Truck and Trailer Repair/Parking
- Automotive Repair/Parking
- Public Parks/Playgrounds, Forest Preserve, and Public Library
- Tattoo and Body Piercing
- Outdoor Storage of Trucks and Trailers

City Council Work Session - June 8, 2026 Zoning Text Amendments

While we don't need specific feedback about uses at this time, if there are general concerns about specific uses (too strict, too lenient, traffic issues, etc.), then those would be helpful to know as we review of the allowable uses.

Sign Code

Through the administration, interpretation, and enforcement of the City's Sign Code (Chapter 15.12 of the Code of Ordinances), staff has identified several provisions that are outdated, difficult to interpret, or unnecessarily burdensome to administer. 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 proposes a comprehensive review and update of the Sign Code to modernize the regulations and ensure they remain effective, enforceable, and aligned with the City's planning and economic development objectives. Potential amendments would:

- Establish updated standards for sign design, size, placement, maintenance, and landscaping to improve community aesthetics.
- Ensure compliance with current legal requirements and standards, including having content-neutral sign regulations.
- Clarify nonconforming sign provisions that create administrative and enforcement challenges.
- Provide clear standards for specific sign types, including window signs, awning and canopy signs, fuel station signage, and other commonly used sign formats.
- Improve consistency and cohesion between the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and economic development goals.
- Enhance public safety by addressing visibility, traffic safety, 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, proposed amendments would 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.

Recommended Council Action: Direct staff to complete applicable research and draft proposed Zoning Code Amendments for the Use Chart and Signage to the Plan Commission for review at a public hearing.

Attachments:

1. Current Zoning Use Chart – Residential and Commercial
2. Current Sign Code