



## CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

**DATE OF MEETING:** November 10, 2025

**ITEM TITLE:** First Reading of an Ordinance Amending Article 17 "Signs" of the City of Independence Zoning Ordinance

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### BACKGROUND:

In October of 2024, Code Enforcement received a concern regarding a "blade" flag mounted in a flowerpot in the downtown area. Upon review, the flag was found and the owner was asked to remove it. At the same time, there was a "sandwich" sign found placed on the sidewalk in the ROW, which was against City Ordinance. Staff asked for it to be removed, and it was. In the October 7, 2024, Council Meeting, several business owners approached the City about this portion of the Ordinance and asked that the Council consider modifying it.

A moratorium was then put in place during the October 28, 2024, Council Meeting to allow these signs to be in place while the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed potential modifications to the Zoning Code of Ordinances.

After consideration at several Planning & Zoning meetings throughout the year, the Commission recommended approval of this updated Ordinance at the October 7, 2025, meeting.

### DISCUSSION:

An updated article has been constructed to allow for the placement of Portable Pedestrian Signs ("A-frame", or "Sandwich Board") in only the Downtown Business Area. Attached is the Ordinance for review and discussion.

### RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **encouraging a supportive environment for businesses, workforce, and economic development**. This item helps achieve that vision by supporting the downtown business community with advertising opportunities in the downtown area.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

Other than publication costs for the codification of the new ordinance and Staff time to develop the Ordinance, there are no financial considerations.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a motion to approve the first reading of an Ordinance Amending Article 17 "Signs" of the City of Independence Zoning Ordinance.

Staff recommends a motion to suspend the statutory rule requiring an ordinance to be considered and voted on for passage at two council meetings prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed.

Staff recommends a motion to have this ordinance amending Article 17 "Signs" of the City of Independence Zoning Ordinance, placed on its final passage for adoption pursuant to Iowa Code Section 380.3, and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Ordinance. The changes will be effective upon the ordinance summary being published in the newspaper.