



# COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

**TO:** City Council Members

**FROM:** Brian Fullmer  
Policy Analyst

**DATE:** August 27, 2024

**RE: Projecting Business Signs Zoning Text Amendment  
PLNPCM2023-00996**

Item Schedule:

Briefing: July 9, 2024

Set Date: July 9, 2024

Public Hearing: August 13, 2024

Potential Action: August 27, 2024

## **PUBLIC HEARING UPDATE**

No one spoke at the public hearing for this item. The Council closed the hearing and deferred action to a future meeting.

***The following information was provided for previous Council meetings. It is included again for background purposes***

## **BRIEFING UPDATE**

This item was converted to a written briefing. There have not been any Council Member questions to date.

The Council will be briefed about a proposal requested by the Administration to allow signs that project off the front business façade (frequently referred to as “blade signs”) in all commercial and mixed-use districts. They are currently allowed in only some of these districts. (A complete list of current and proposed zoning districts where the signs are and would be allowed is found in the Additional Information section below.) These signs contain only the business name and/or company logo. They project out from a building over the right-of-way as shown in the image below.

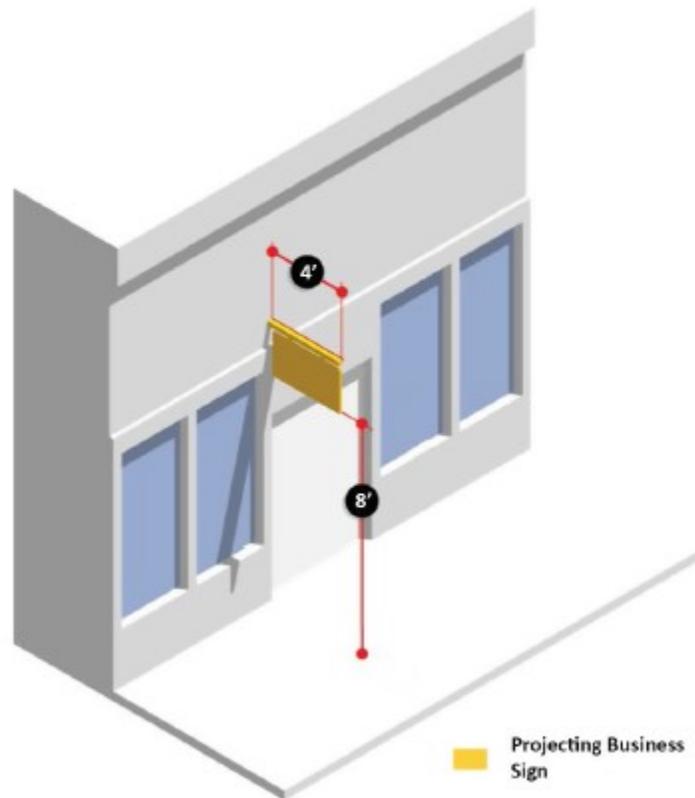
Proposed changes include reducing the minimum height above a sidewalk of a projecting building sign from 10 feet to eight feet, and reducing the distance a sign can project from the building from six feet to four feet. The draft ordinance includes language requiring signs that project over a public right of way must comply with the City’s encroachment policy. In addition, language clarifying that signs will be measured to



the back of the curb is included in the draft ordinance. Minor grammatical corrections to the section of City Code related to signs are also included in the proposed text amendment.

Planning staff suggested the Council may wish to consider allowing larger projecting signs in more intense commercial zones. Planning stated “...the projecting sign size is 6 square feet per face in both CN and CG zones, but the CG zone allows buildings that can be up to 100’ taller than the CN zone. This often results in taller ground floors, which can accommodate larger projecting signs.”

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposal at its February 14, 2024 meeting and held a public hearing at which one person spoke in support of the proposed text amendment. **The Commission voted unanimously to forward a positive recommendation to the City Council.**



*Illustration of projecting business sign with proposed maximum distance signs can project from a building, and minimum distance from the ground.  
Image courtesy of Salt Lake City Planning Division*

**Goal of the briefing:** Review the proposed text amendment and determine if the Council supports moving forward with the proposal.

## **POLICY QUESTION**

1. The Council may wish to discuss whether to allow larger projecting business signs in more intense commercial zones that have increased maximum height.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The proposed changes would create consistency for these signs in all commercial and mixed-use districts throughout the city. The proposed text amendment would also align City Code with updated State statute

requirements and help reduce barriers in the sign code by adding signs that are more visible to those passing by.

Currently projecting business signs are permitted in the following commercial and mixed-use zoning districts:

- R-MU – Residential Mixed Use
- MU – Mixed Use
- SNB – Small Neighborhood Business
- CSHBD – Sugar House Business District (1 & 2)
- TSA – Transit Station Area
- D-1 – Central Business District
- D-4 – Downtown Secondary Central Business District
- G-MU – Gateway Mixed-Use

The proposal would allow these signs in the following additional zoning districts:

- RB – Residential Business
- RO – Residential Office
- CN – Neighborhood Commercial
- CB – Community Business
- CS – Community Shopping
- CG – General Commercial
- FB – Form Based Zones
- M-1 and M-2 – Light Manufacturing and Heavy Manufacturing
- D-2 – Downtown Support District
- D-3 – Downtown

## **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

Planning staff identified two key considerations related to the proposal, found on pages 2-3 of the Planning Commission staff report, and summarized below. For the complete analysis, please see the Planning staff report.

### **Consideration 1 – How the proposal furthers City goals and policies identified in Plan Salt Lake:**

Planning staff found that the proposed amendment aligns with a goal in Plan Salt Lake to address existing barriers to understanding and implementing code regulations. City code becomes more flexible as sign options are increased. Cleaning up ordinance language and alphabetizing lists will make the code more readable and help promote governmental transparency.

### **Consideration 2 – Impact to the City:**

The proposed amendment would only impact signs in commercial and mixed-use districts in the city. Because these signs are over pedestrian rights of way, Planning found the amendment would promote walkability and accessibility by allowing the signs in these districts and promote sign type consistency throughout the city. It is Planning staff's opinion that the amendment's overall impact will be positive.

## **ANALYSIS OF STANDARDS**

Attachment B (pages 42-43) of the Planning Commission staff report outlines zoning text amendment standards that should be considered as the Council reviews this proposal. The standards and findings are summarized below. Please see the Planning Commission staff report for additional information.

Factor	Finding
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the city as stated through its various adopted planning documents.	<i>Complies</i>
Whether a proposed text amendment furthers the specific purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.	<i>Complies</i>
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes and provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards.	<i>N/A (No overlay districts are being amended)</i>
The extent to which a proposed text amendment implements best current, professional practices of urban planning and design.	<i>Complies</i>

**PROJECT CHRONOLOGY**

- December 14, 2023 – Petition initiated by Salt Lake City Planning Division.
- December 15, 2023 – Petition assigned to Grant Amann, Principal Planner.
- December 21, 2023 – Early notification to all recognized community councils. 45-day comment period begins.
- February 2, 2024 – Public hearing notice with project information and notice of the Planning Commission public hearing physically posted at various library noticing points citywide.
- February 4, 2024 – 45-day recognized community organization notice period ends.
- February 14, 2024 – Planning Commission briefing and public hearing. The Commission forwards a unanimous positive recommendation to the City Council.
- February 21, 2024 – Planning Division requests ordinance from the City Attorney’s Office.
- April 22, 2024 – Ordinance from Attorney’s Office received by Planning Division.
- May 2, 2024 – Transmittal received in City Council Office.