

From: [JEFF ARAN](#)
To: [Ford, John](#); [Dunn, Jacob](#)
Cc: [Autumn Luna](#)
Subject: Sign ordinance revisions
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 3:10:46 PM

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Hello -- We've been tracking the sign ordinance update. Do you know if or when a sign inventory of illegal and abandoned signs will be undertaken (per B&P Code 5491.1)?

Also, is there a date set for it to go to the Board?

Thanks,

Jeff Aran
Legal Counsel
California Sign Association

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B&P Code Sec 5491.1

(a) Any city or county adopting or amending any ordinance or regulation that regulates or prohibits the use of any on-premises advertising display that is more restrictive than existing law, shall include provisions in that ordinance or regulation for the identification and inventorying of all displays within its territorial limits that are determined to be illegal or abandoned pursuant to the law that is in effect prior to the adoption of, or amendment to, the ordinance or regulation.

(b) The required identification and inventory shall commence not later than 120 days from the date on which the ordinance or regulation is adopted or amended and shall be completed in a timely manner. The population of the city or county, as determined by the most recent federal census, the number of on-premise advertising displays located within the city or county, and other relevant factors may serve as a guide for the purposes of determining what constitutes "a timely manner" for the purposes of this subdivision.

(c)(1) Upon the completion of the required identification and inventory, the city or county shall consider, at a public hearing with opportunity for public comment, whether there is a need for the ordinance or regulation described in subdivision (a) to take effect.

(2)(A) Any applicable amortization schedule for the ordinance or regulation adopted or amended pursuant to this section shall not expire until at least six months after the date on which the city or county confirms, pursuant to paragraph (1), that there is a continuing need for that ordinance or regulation to take effect, unless the amortization period specified in the ordinance is for a longer term, in which case the remaining

term shall apply.

(B) Until the city or county provides, pursuant to paragraph (1), that there is a continuing need for the ordinance or regulation to take effect, the new ordinance shall not apply to a change of copy, change of color, maintenance, or repair made to a sign which conformed to the prior ordinance unless those changes, maintenance, or repairs involve a change in location or structure of the sign.

(d) An identification and inventory is not required if a city or county has undertaken and completed an identification and inventory of illegal or abandoned displays not more than three years prior to the date on which the ordinance or regulation described in subdivision (a) is adopted or amended.

(e) This section does not apply if a city or county adopts or amends an ordinance or regulation that regulates only new on-premises advertising displays. For the purposes of this section, a "new on-premises advertising display" means a display whose structure or housing has not been permanently affixed to its intended premise on the date on which the ordinance or regulation is adopted.

From: [Geoff W](#)
To: [Planning Clerk](#); [Brian Mitchell](#); [Noah Levy](#); [srhawest@gmail.com](#); [Peggyoneill1953@gmail.com](#); [lonyx.landry@humboldt.edu](#); [hrh707@outlook.com](#); [skavdalz11@gmail.com](#); [Ford, John](#); [Dunn, Jacob](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#)
Cc: [Jeff Mccuen](#); [Jason Ripp](#); [Dana Kennedy](#); [Anthony Leones](#); [Jeff Aran](#); [greg.p@piersoncompany.com](#); [Noah Samson](#); [Miles Slattery](#)
Subject: Re: Draft sign ordinance-RIP HUMBOLDT SIGNS
Date: Friday, February 16, 2024 3:28:15 PM

The famous quote "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results" has been on repeat in my mind for the last 18 hours or so. Why am I bothering to put forth so much effort over the years, pleading with local government to have reason, common sense, and support of our community's business and signage needs, when time and time again that effort is ignored and my professional suggestions are passed over by whimsical guesses at what regulation should be by those that know nothing about the industry they are regulating? Since 10:15 pm last night, my mind has been spinning. I am simultaneously at a loss for words as I have a mind swirling out of control with words... What can possibly compel our local government and planning commission to have such a grand distaste for signs and billboards that they would easily and enthusiastically wipe out one of their own community members' entire life work and net worth despite my constant pleas to not, and why would you handcuff and stringently regulate the entire business community that is already struggling? Multiple times from multiple commissioners, you either asked for or thanked staff for doing everything legally possible to end my billboard business, furthermore trying to do so any possible way to avoid paying eminent domain for the taking.

Are you that tone-deaf to the community that you think signs and billboards are a pressing issue that needed to be tamed down? Is eliminating one of the most cost-effective advertising mediums going to help our community? We have homelessness and drug use out of control, economic decline from the loss of a billion-dollar cannabis industry disappearing, Garberville is a ghost town, etc. The sign industry is the beating heart of a business community; all of my business comes from other businesses, all of my billboards are rented by other businesses. The last three years have been a dramatic shift from the previous 15 years; I am fully dependent and supported by national business right now vs our local businesses. My billboards are occupied by government grant campaigns and national buys vs almost exclusively by local businesses like years past.

The Humboldt County sign ordinance since the existence of the county has been essentially a couple of paragraphs; almost any sign type, size, and height have been allowed. Look around you all, do you really feel like we have out of control signs? Murphys in Cutten could have built an 80' tall 300 sqft sign all this time; news flash they didn't. The reality has been proven over the last hundreds of years in Humboldt; we don't need a crazy stringent sign code; the market, business type, and location dictate the sign size. Did we need to drastically limit what can be done and outright ban sign types that are used all over our county? Absolutely not; you all made an error that needs to be fixed now while it can be done easily. I will be sending examples later, but there are hundreds of existing signs all over this county that will no longer be able to be built without a CUP, and an unintended consequence is the vast majority of these normal existing signs will be illegal as the majority of signs in our county never went through the proper steps to get a permit.

To add to the frustration of having my business bear the regulations imposed by people knowing nothing about the industry, the staff report last night was filled with misinformation and wrong sign sizes on the example photos, leading you all to be even further out of the loop on what you're doing. There has to be a better way to impose planning and zoning regulations.

I'm going to ask this same thing again - what can possibly compel our local government and planning commission to have such a grand distaste for signs and billboards that they would easily and enthusiastically wipe out one of their own community members' entire life work and net worth despite my constant pleas to not, and why would you handcuff and stringently regulate the entire business community that is already struggling? I really want to know why; please respond.

Geoff Wills
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From: [Visual Concepts](#)
Cc: [Geoff W](#); [Planning Clerk](#); [Brian Mitchell](#); [Noah Levy](#); [srhawest@gmail.com](#); [Peggyoneill1953@gmail.com](#); [hrh707@outlook.com](#); [skavdalz11@gmail.com](#); [Ford, John](#); [Dunn, Jacob](#); [Bohn, Rex](#); [Bushnell, Michelle](#); [Wilson, Mike](#); [Arroyo, Natalie](#); [Madrone, Steve](#); [Jeff Mccuen](#); [Jason Ripp](#); [Dana Kennedy](#); [Anthony Leones](#); [Jeff Aran](#); [greg.p@piersoncompany.com](#); [Miles Slattery](#)
Subject: Re: Draft sign ordinance-RIP HUMBOLDT SIGNS
Date: Monday, February 19, 2024 2:08:12 PM

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Thank you for including me, Geoff. My business does not build the large scale or architectural signs like Allpoints does, but still, this regulation change really worries me. Like Allpoints, we do work for local businesses. Signs are their communication pieces that can explain brand promise and intent to possible patrons or customers. In the ever evolving fight against online sales, I can't understand why we'd take away a lifeline from local businesses like signage. As I was listening to the meeting the other night, I was texting my friends and clients, local business owners who were used as examples in your presentation. These are local community members, doing their best in an economic downturn to provide goods, services, and jobs for local people, and this would make their lives even tougher.

Westin at A&L Feed was mind blown that for some reason his marquee sign would soon be illegal. He literally uses it to tell folks what his business is offering that week. I use that sign every year to know when baby chicks are available. Is making that sign illegal really worth our time and effort?

Michelle at Humboldt Cider Co was highlighted as well. Her family is local to the core. Investing millions into a building in Eureka that sat vacant for years and years. Please note that this building she invested in sits next door to yet another vacant building. She did a beautiful job personalizing the outside of her new spot in a tasteful and artistic way. What an asset to our city she and her business is. Rather than help her, boost her up, we want to regulate her to death, and make building a successful business in Humboldt even more difficult.

Wilson at Carmela's in McKinleyville competes for dollars with Taco Bell. Don't we want to give the local folks all the tools they need to compete against these chains that are better funded, and offer a lower quality, obviously unhealthy meal option?

Inflation is out of control, and we just finished regulating our biggest export (cannabis) out of existence. I ask, is now the proper time to give local businesses one more headache, one more chance to fail, shutter their business, and head out of town? The disconnect between government officials and what is really happening in our local business community is astounding, and I hope we can connect the two entities in years to come.

The main issue and theme that I saw across the examples of signage shown in the presentation was that far and away, in my opinion, most were pretty old, run down, or just ugly. This is no doubt simply a symptom of the state of our local economy. If we simply continue to add regulation after regulation to local business, this blight will continue on the urban landscape. If we can encourage local business to thrive, I assure you the artistic nature and general beautification of signage will proliferate in years to come. People, for the most part, have pride in their businesses. I built mine out of my garage in my early 20's. If a local business person could afford to advertise their business, or clean up their storefront they certainly will. Times have been tough lately, and in turn, you see local businesses not being able to afford to invest into their properties or signage. Instead of regulating size and type of signage arbitrarily, let's

encourage the use of beautiful, artistic, unique, architectural signage that improves the look of our urban areas or business districts. The idea that signage takes away from the look and feel of an urban landscape is just incorrect. Many towns, especially of a historic nature, are shaped and given personality by properly crafted signage. Go check out Bend, Oregon or other cool, outdoorsy areas we should strive to be like. They're not endlessly limiting their local business. They have tasteful signage that matches the vibe of the area and the natural landscape. No one feels the need to build insanely huge signage or anting too loud or whatever. In most cases, folks hire local signage professionals like Allpoints, or myself, and we can coach them through the process of building signage that improves the look of their space, and encourages patronage.

Allpoints and Visual Concepts are community members. Allpoints since 1969, and I started Visual Concepts in my garage in 2007. We donate tens of thousands of dollars a year to local nonprofits, youth causes, and local events. Go through with this unnecessary regulation, and you'll be greatly inhibiting our ability to do so. Take a pole around local schools and their sports programs. I'll bet a good portion of them have received help or funding from one of our businesses. This is just meant to further illustrate the point that this regulation has far deeper impact and consequences than what is seen on the surface.

I'll stop here because this is already a lot to read, and I value your time. I could go on and on as to why local business interests, already in a downturn and badly suffering, oppose further regulation in almost any way. Signage nonetheless. If anyone would like to discuss this further, I can be reached on my cell phone any time: 707.834.0896

I appreciate you hearing me out on this issue, and please know, even though Geoff has been the vocal one in this fight, he has the vast majority of the local business community behind him.

On Fri, Feb 16, 2024 at 4:17 PM Lonyx B Landry <lonyx.landry@humboldt.edu> wrote:

Thank you for the email Geoff! I am no longer a Planning Commissioner. You may remove my email from their correspondence.

Lonyx Landry (Former Commissioner)

On Fri, Feb 16, 2024 at 3:28 PM Geoff W <geoffwills33@yahoo.com> wrote:

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