

El Dorado County Sign Ordinance Update

June 25, 2013

Background

- Sign Ordinance Update was to be deferred until after the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update.
- August 7, 2012 - BOS directed staff to prepare a new Sign Ordinance.
- January 28, 2013 - Joint workshop with BOS and Planning Commission to get concerns on the table and direction to proceed.

Current Work Status

- Scope of work :
 - Step 1: Prepare Public Draft Sign Ordinance.
 - Step 2: Proceed with Environmental Review.

We are still in Step 1...



Current vs. Draft Sign Ordinance

- New Policies Outlining Legal Framework
- New Sign Permit Procedures
- Comprehensive List of Exempt Signs
- Comprehensive List of Prohibited Signs
- Updated Definitions, Development and Design Standards
- Consolidated Existing Standards for Permanent On-site Signs
- Expanded Standards for Temporary On-site Signs
- Added Off-site Sign Regulations
- Established Rules for Signs on Public Property
- Established Rules for Illegal, Abandoned and Nonconforming Signs

Key Issues To Be Addressed

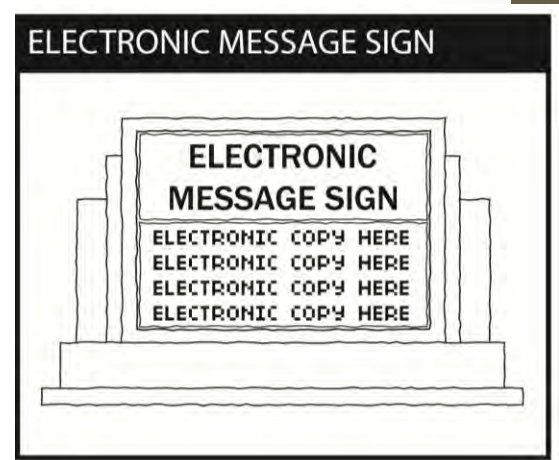
- Board Directed Amendments:
 - Viewshed Protection
 - New Technologies such as LED Lighting and Reader Boards
 - Off-site Signage and Billboards
 - Truck and Trailer Signs
 - Provisions for Promoting and Protecting Tourism, Employment, Commercial, Historical, Agricultural And Rural Commerce
 - Meet State Requirements
 - Reduce Sign Clutter through the use of State and County Community or Multi Service Directional Sign Programs
 - Amortization of Nonconforming and Designated Scenic Corridor

Viewshed Protection within Designated Scenic Corridors

- Permit Requirements – Design Review
 - Special Development and Design Standards for Designated Scenic Corridors to be developed as part of the Designated Scenic Corridor Ordinance
- Standards:
 - Maximum height of a single-tenant sign shall be 24 feet.
 - Maximum height of a multi-tenant sign shall be 48 feet.

New Technologies - LED Lighting and Reader Boards

- Electronic Message Sign
 - “An electronic sign, typically comprising a liquid crystal diode (LCD), light-emitting diode (LED), plasma, or other digital illuminated display that contains one or more messages. An electronic message sign is different from an illuminated sign in that the illumination of the display creates the message, rather than an internal or external light source illuminating the message.”
- Electronic readerboard
 - Signs that change message less frequently than once every 12 seconds may be permitted consistent with the requirements of this Chapter.



Off-site Signage

Billboards, Truck and Trailer Signs

- **Billboards**
 - No new “construction, erection, or use of any billboards other than those that legally exist in the county, or for which a valid permit has been issued”
- **Mobile Billboard**
 - Signs “attached to a mobile, nonmotorized vehicle, device, or bicycle that carries, pulls, or transports a sign or billboard and is for the primary purpose of advertising” are prohibited.

Other Sign Issues

- Clarify signage for rural commerce including Tourism, Employment, Historical, Agricultural and Rural Commerce (wineries and ranch marketing)
- Reduce Sign Clutter
 - Consolidation of signs
 - Sign enforcement
 - Community directional sign programs
 - Amortization of nonconforming signs



Illegal, Abandoned and Nonconforming Signs

- Illegal
 - Shall be abated by the property owner or person responsible for installing or maintaining the sign
- Abandoned
 - Signs left after the close of a business and not updated upon occupancy of a new business at the same location:
 - Sign copy shall be replaced with blank sign copy within 90 days of the close of the business
 - Blank copy shall only be allowed to remain for 9 months then be removed (total of 12 months from close of business)
 - Signs not maintained or removed consistent with the requirements of the Sign Ordinance may be abated by the County and reimbursed by the property owner

Illegal, Abandoned and Nonconforming Signs (cont.)

- Nonconforming Signs
 - Existing off-site commercial signs (e.g., billboards) are considered nonconforming
 - Shall be considered to be an illegal sign after the amortization period has expired and conformance has not been accomplished.

Amortization Timeline for Nonconforming Signs

Type of Nonconforming Sign	Time for Compliance
Architectural banners, awning/canopy signs, under-canopy signs, advertising artwork, and blade signs	2 years
Other building signs (e.g., roof signs)	4 years
Freestanding signs and all other signs	8 years

Illegal, Abandoned and Nonconforming Signs (cont.)

- Nonconforming Signs
 - **Relocation and Alteration.**
 - “No nonconforming sign shall be moved, enlarged in size, or raised in height unless such relocation, alteration, or enlargement is required by law or brings the sign into conformance with the provisions of this Chapter.”
 - **Restoration of Damaged Signs**
 - “...when 50 percent or less of a nonconforming sign is destroyed by fire or other calamity (not including intentional acts), the sign may be restored to its nonconforming condition and the use modified as necessary to comply with current safety code requirements” ...
 - “Routine maintenance and repair of the sign may be continued for the remainder of the amortization period.”
 - “Any nonconforming sign destroyed by more than 50 percent shall not be restored”

Step 1: Next Steps

- Receive BOS direction on draft Sign Ordinance
- Release Working Draft for Public Review and Comments
- Notify stakeholders of Release:
 - Chambers of Commerce, Community Services Districts, Design Review Committees, Agricultural community, sign industry reps, etc.
- Gather Public input at PC Workshop(s)
- Return to Board with “Public Draft”
- If accepted , proceed to Step 2...



Step 2: Future

- Environmental Review of “Public Draft”; and
- Public Notification of Draft Ordinance .
- PC and BOS:
 - Additional public meetings
 - Final BOS direction
- BOS certifies EIR and adopts “Final” Sign Ordinance



Today

1. New ideas or changes in prior direction
2. Authorize release of draft Sign Ordinance for:
 - Public/stakeholder review
 - Planning Commission hearing(s)
 - Return to BOS with the revised draft Sign Ordinance