



REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF COLLINSVILLE

APPLICATION NUMBER(S)	TA 25-02
APPLICATION NAME:	Signage Permitting Standards & Abandoned Signage (Text Amendment)
APPLICANT NAME:	City of Collinsville 125 South Center Street Collinsville, IL 62234
APPLICANT'S REQUEST:	A City-initiated request for approval of amendments to Title 17 (Zoning) as it relates to the City's signage requirements.
COMMISSION MEETING DATE:	July 10, 2025
CASE MANAGER:	Joseph Williamson, Associate Planner
RECOMMENDATION:	APPROVAL

REQUEST

The City of Collinsville has initiated a request to amend the following sections of *Title 17—Zoning of the City's Code of Ordinances* as it relates to one for one replacement for signage panels, clarifying regulations for abandoned signage, freestanding signage setbacks, permitted sign materials, and clarifying the terms and conditions surrounding Sign Zone 4. The focus of this amendment is to provide clarity on the following:

Goals of this Amendment:

- ◇ Signage replacements in an already existing sign cabinet or mount may be switched or changed without requiring a permit
- ◇ Creating regulations to maintain abandoned signage when a tenant leaves a space
- ◇ Defining material requirements for permanent signage
- ◇ Defining setback regulations for freestanding signage
- ◇ Codifying "Sign Zone 4" in our Code of Ordinances

The sections listed below are proposed to be amended with this ordinance.

- *Section 17.190.030 - General regulations.*
- *Section 17.190.040. Prohibited, permitted, and types of signs*

BACKGROUND

The City is seeking to adopt a Text Amendment that will add to the Zoning Ordinance to clarify our signage requirements and regulations. As is bulleted above, the goals of this amendment are listed as follows: Tenants switching same-for-same signage with no permit process required, regulating abandoned signage, defining signage material requirements for permanent signage, defining setback regulations for freestanding signage, as well as codifying Sign Zone 4. Staff believes that by making these changes to the Code, the City will be able to manage commercial signage in a more precise way, leaving no ambiguity. On the next pages are examples of what the texts will look like in the Code of Ordinances:

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BACKGROUND (CONTINUED)

When staff considers a text amendment, we research and consider what comparable communities are doing in our local area to see where Collinsville falls on the scale. Below this paragraph & on page 4, are 3 tables that show what other municipalities require regarding abandoned signage, freestanding signage setbacks, as well as material requirements for signage. With this research, staff were able to pinpoint areas of our own Code that could be updated to avoid ambiguity and better reflect the character of our commercial areas.

Abandoned Signage:

Staff agrees with Fairview Heights' abandoned sign code; not allowing open sign cabinets and codifying the need for blank sign faces in abandoned signs. This code is an attempt to clean up any aesthetically displeasing open sign cabinets with wire/electronics showing, and allow for legal sign cabinets to be used for future commercial businesses. Staff has seen that an existing sign cabinet adds value to a new business entering the location, as with the existing cabinet their initial costs drastically decrease by negating the need for a new pylon/freestanding mount/cabinet sign.

Freestanding Signage Setbacks:

Staff finds Alton's freestanding signage setbacks to be precise and direct, leaving no room for ambiguity. We will propose an amendment similar in wording to Alton's freestanding setbacks requirements.

Material Requirements (Signage):

Staff feels that our sign code could specify more in terms of permitted materials for the sign, avoiding any ambiguity for commercial users. More than half of the communities researched have material regulations for their permanent signage, or at minimum have a statement advising of the durability of said material. Staff feels that this addition will make our sign code reflect the Commission and staff's enforcement and give business owners more direction when choosing signage. Uptown signage will still rely upon the Uptown Signage Regulations and will not change with this amendment.

Below are the findings from nearby communities:

Municipalities	Abandoned Signage Regulations
Collinsville	90 days until abandoned, 30 days to remove after abandoned status
Edwardsville	N/A
Carbondale	N/A
Fairview Heights	60 days until abandoned. No open sign cabinets or boxes are allowed. Needs to have a blank face of a white or gray color made of durable, weatherproof material.
Belleville	Only removal if unlawful or nonconforming.
O'Fallon	General - Signs shall not be located in a public right-of-way or within the sight distance triangle, except as otherwise exempted in this chapter.



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BACKGROUND (CONTINUED)

Municipalities	Freestanding Signage Setbacks
Collinsville	Subject to Sight Distance Triangle
Edwardsville	13ft from property line or not obstructing
Carbondale	20ft of setback from the street curb line or have at least 8ft of clearance between the base of the sign and the ground
Alton	Not in Public Right of Way
Fairview Heights	Not in Public Right of Way & Structural Supports 10ft from Public ROW
Belleville	No free-standing graphic shall project into the public right-of-way. No free-standing graphic shall be closer than five feet to any side lot line.
O'Fallon	Not located in ROW nor within a Sight Distance Triangle

Municipalities	Material Requirements (excluding support structures/bases)
Collinsville	N/A
Edwardsville	Fabricated metal only (with metal or painted finishes)
Carbondale	Downtown only: Signs must be compatible with surrounding area
Alton	N/A
Fairview Heights	N/A
Belleville	Materials are dependent upon signage type
O'Fallon	Flame-resistant and weather-resistant materials

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ZONING ANALYSIS

Sec. 17.150.090. - Amendments to text.

When a proposed amendment would result in a change in the text of these regulations, but would not result in a change of zoning classification of any specific property, the recommendation of the Planning Commission shall contain a statement as to the nature and effect of such proposed amendment and determination as to the following items:

A. Whether such change is consistent with the intent and purpose of these regulations.

The proposed text amendment furthers the intent and purpose of the City's Zoning Ordinance (Section 17.190.030) and (Section 17.190.040) specifically:

- *To promote the health, safety, quality of life, comfort and general welfare of the City and its planning area, which includes the area within the City corporate limits and unincorporated territory lying outside the City forming the total community of which Collinsville is a part;*
- *To preserve and protect property values throughout the City and its planning area;*
- *To provide for the elimination of incompatible and nonconforming uses of land, buildings and structures which are adversely affecting the character of desirable development in each district; and*
- *To serve as a tool in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.*

Staff finds that based on the above criteria, the proposed amendments to Title 17 Zoning will further the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

B. The areas which are most likely to be directly affected by such change and in what way they will be affected.

The proposed text amendments to Title 17 impacts all signage for properties throughout the City, as well as affecting the overall aesthetic of the City by cleaning up empty sign mounts/cabinets/pylons and codifying regulations for new signage material.

Below is a summary of the substantive amendments proposed. Changes to the Ordinance will be outlined in red font. The full ordinance can be seen in Exhibit A:

Amendments Proposed for Title 17:

Section 17.190.030.C. - General regulations.

1. Two (2) square feet of graphics area per one (1) foot of lineal street frontage in sign zones 1 and One and one-half (1.5) square feet of graphics area per one (1) foot of lineal street frontage in sign zones **3 & 4**, with a minimum of thirty-two (32) square feet of graphics per mitted in all commercial sign zones.

Section 17.190.030.H. - General regulations.

1. **Any and all permanent signage (excluding window graphics & awnings) in the City of Collinsville shall be made from a durable, weatherproof material such as acrylic, metal, PVC, or similar as approved by the Community Development Director.**



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ZONING ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

Section 17.190.040.A. *Prohibited graphics or signs.*

4. Abandoned signs shall be defined as those signs, including sign graphic area, posts and other supports, which advertise or identify an activity, business, product or service no longer conducted on the premises where such graphic is located. If the business or service advertised or identified by a nonconforming sign ceases to be conducted for a period exceeding ninety (90) calendar days, the nonconforming sign shall be classified as an "abandoned sign," and shall be removed by the owner, agent, or person having beneficial use of the premises or lot upon which the sign is located within thirty (30) days following receipt of written notice as stated in Subsection 17.190.050.F of this chapter by the Administrator concerning its removal. Legally conforming sign structures may remain on sites with legally conforming primary structures provided any sign graphics which advertise or identify an activity, business, product or service no longer conducted on the premises where such graphic is located is removed and replaced with a blank panel made of durable, weatherproof material such as acrylic, metal, or PVC.

Section 17.190.040.B. *Permitted graphics.*

20. Sign panel replacements such as replacing a legally conforming sign panel with the same size and dimensions on existing, legal supports will not require a permit. Any changes to size, dimensions, location, support structure, illumination etc., shall require a sign permit.

Section 17.190.040.D. *Permitted graphics.*

6. Freestanding graphics. No establishment in any zoning district may have more than one (1) freestanding graphic on any lot, except in sign zone 1. In sign zone 1, an establishment may have a maximum of two (2) freestanding graphics on any lot, with one (1) freestanding graphic not exceeding the height allowed under Subsection 17.190.040.D.6.c.1.) and one (1) freestanding graphic not extending twenty-five (25) feet above the ground. Minimum distance apart for two (2) freestanding graphics on one (1) parcel in zone 1: If an establishment in zone 1 erects two (2) freestanding graphics on one (1) parcel of land and both freestanding graphics are located in the front half or both freestanding graphics are located in the back half of the property, the minimum distance apart shall be one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the parcel's street frontage. If an establishment in zone 1 erects one (1) freestanding graphic on the front half of the property and the other freestanding graphic on the back half of the property, the minimum distance apart shall be one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the parcel's depth. The front half of the property shall be determined by the legal address. Under any circumstance, two (2) freestanding graphics constructed on one (1) parcel in zone 1 shall be placed further than forty (40) feet apart.

Freestanding graphics shall comply with the following regulations:

- a. No point of any freestanding graphics shall project over or intrude a private lot line *or any Sight Distance Triangle as required by Section 17.060.150 of this code*, and no freestanding graphic shall be higher than two (2) feet in the restricted area.

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ZONING ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

b. No freestanding graphic shall exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area or twelve (12) feet in any dimension, except for freestanding graphics in zone 1 which shall not exceed three hundred (300) square feet in area; provided, that this paragraph shall not apply to shopping center identification graphics. (See Subsection 17.190.040.D.5.)

c. Height of sign—Districts.

1.) When attached to a post or other supports, a freestanding graphic shall not extend more than eighty (80) feet above the ground or pavement in zone 1 except on those parcels of ground contiguous to Illinois Highway 157 which shall not extend more than sixty (60) feet above the ground or pavement in zone 1.

2.) When attached to a post or other supports, a freestanding graphic shall not extend more than twenty (20) feet above the ground or pavement in zone 2.

3.) When attached to a post or other supports, a freestanding graphic shall not extend more than fifteen (15) feet above the ground or pavement in zone 3 except for gasoline and oil service stations which a freestanding graphic shall not extend more than twenty (20) feet above the ground or pavement.

C. Whether the proposed amendment is made necessary because of changed or changing conditions in the areas and zoning districts affected, or in the area of jurisdiction of such changed or changing conditions.

Staff is pursuing the proposed text amendment to amend the City's Code of Ordinance to allow for businesses within the City of Collinsville to exchange their existing signage for new (same-for-same: dimensions, material, etc) without requiring a permit. The reason for this, is it seems redundant to make a business pay for a an already existing sign placement on an already accounted for graphic area allowance. This also pertains to acquiring signage for an existing mount/cabinet/pylon. Staff sees a large influx of permit applications for legally conforming signs that require little/no review, and at a cost to the business of \$100 per sign permit. It is staff's opinion that a permit in these instances adds no value to the community or business owner.

Staff is also amending the Code regarding "abandoned signage" to help make Collinsville more aesthetically pleasing where some of these abandoned signs reside. Current regulations require signs and their support structures be removed upon abandonment. Staff is proposing that support structures only be removed for nonconforming signs and that the abandoned graphics shall be removed and replaced with a blank panel made of durable, weatherproof material and the mount/cabinet/pylon to be maintained in good repair.

Staff is also applying explicit setback regulations to freestanding signage. While currently enforced, this new amendment will clearly establish regulations preventing freestanding signage within the sight distance triangle to prevent any potential hazards for vehicle traffic.



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ZONING ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

Strategic Plan Goals Achieved by the Proposed Text Amendment:

Achieve Strategic Plan Goal #1: Preserve and improve existing neighborhoods:

- ⇒ This text amendment will help preserve and improve existing neighborhoods by clarifying regulations for abandoned signage to clean up abandoned signage around the City, as well as to assist business owners in replacing their old signage for new. As long as they are not making changes to the sign in any manner, we will allow a switch of signage without requiring a permit to do so.

Achieve Strategic Plan Goal #7: Support excellent municipal services

- ⇒ This amendment will support excellent municipal services by not requiring business owners to go through the permitting process for a sign face that has already been permitted prior if they are simply switching the signage for new with the same dimensions and material. This will help support local business owners by saving them money and time on unnecessary permits. Regulations on permitted sign materials will also remove any ambiguity in the code and require durable, weatherproof materials, explicitly identified for any new signage.

The proposed amendment will achieve these Strategic Plan Goals by updating and bettering the Zoning Ordinance to make more comprehensive and effective regulations, while increasing clarity and communication of the City's Ordinances regarding signage. This will not only benefit the City, but will benefit new or existing business owners within the City.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed text amendments meet or exceed the review criteria for zoning text amendments. Further, staff finds that the proposed text amendment advances the intent of the City's Zoning Ordinance and provides clarity. Based on these findings, staff recommends 'Approval' of Text Amendment Application TA 25-02 Signage Permitting Standards & Abandoned Signage.



Attachments

A. DRAFT ORDINANCE