

RESOLUTION NUMBER PC 2025-XY

CITY OF UKIAH

APRIL 23, 2025

"SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT"

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION, CITY OF UKIAH, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, PROVIDING A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE UKIAH CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE PROPOSED ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO DIVISION 9, CHAPTER 7 OF THE UKIAH CITY CODE

WHEREAS, on December 7, 2022, the Ukiah City Council adopted Resolution No. 2022-79 certifying the Environmental Impact Report for the City of Ukiah 2040 General Plan (State Clearinghouse No. 2022050556) (the "General Plan EIR"), which analyzed the environmental impacts of the adoption of the City's General Plan, and adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Statement of Overriding Considerations; and

WHEREAS, the City may adopt ordinances that regulate signage pursuant to Government Code Section 65850, ensuring consistency with land use and zoning regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ukiah's sign regulations, set forth in Division 9, Chapter 7 of the Ukiah City Code, establish standards for signage across various zoning districts and have undergone periodic updates since the adoption of Ordinance No. 685 (1976), with subsequent modifications through Ordinances 756 (1981), 822 (1983), 1106 (2008), and 1148 (2014); and

WHEREAS, the City of Ukiah's 2040 General Plan includes Land Use Element Policy LU-11.7 (Sign Regulations), which calls for streamlining and clarifying the sign review and approval process; and

WHEREAS, existing sign regulations require updates to address technological advancements, evolving advertising methods, and administrative inefficiencies, ensuring a balance between business visibility, aesthetic considerations, and public safety; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments clarify signage types, streamline the approval process, establish stricter illumination standards to reduce light pollution, and improve enforceability through clearer compliance mechanisms; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance amendment includes updates that:

- Clarify and expand prohibitions on certain sign types, including digital displays with frequent image changes, animated graphics, air-powered inflatables, and signs that emit sound or visual distractions;
- Establish streamlined review processes by simplifying regulations for temporary signs and those not requiring a building permit, as well as reassigning the review authority for murals on private structures;
- Modify illumination standards to reduce light pollution and include design standards ensure signs are more compatible with surrounding development;

- Reduce allowable display periods for temporary banners and similar signs from 45 days per year to 15 days per year without the need for a sign permit and other measures to reduce staff review requirements; and
- Strengthen enforcement provisions by expanding the Community Development Director's authority, reducing compliance timelines, and increasing outreach efforts to promote voluntary compliance before enforcement actions are taken; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance amendment was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Design Review Board on February 27, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Design Review Board is established to ensure that new development and aesthetic enhancements within the City align with adopted design standards and community character; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of these objectives, the Design Review Board would be empowered to review and approve Mural Permits for artwork proposed on private structures, ensuring consistency with applicable design guidelines, historical context, opportunities for public review, and community values; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that the proposed ordinance amendment is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15311 (Accessory Structures), and the general exemption under Section 15061(b)(3); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with applicable provisions of law, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on April 23, 2025, at which time the Planning Commission heard and received all relevant testimony and evidence presented orally or in writing regarding the Sign Ordinance, and all interested persons were given an opportunity to hear and be heard; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered all of the information presented to it, including the Staff Report, public testimony, and supporting documentation; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has had an opportunity to review this Resolution and finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Planning Commission regarding the Sign Ordinance Amendment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Ukiah Planning Commission, based upon evidence in the record and oral and written testimony presented at public hearings, and all information contained in the record of proceedings related to the Sign Ordinance Amendment, makes the following findings and recommendations:

1. The above recitals are true and correct and incorporated herein by this reference.
2. The proposed changes in the Sign Ordinance Amendment are consistent with the City of Ukiah 2040 General Plan. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65860, a zoning ordinance is consistent with a general plan if the City has adopted a plan and the various land uses authorized by the ordinance are compatible with the objectives, policies, general land uses, and programs specified in the plan. None of the zoning district articles being modified affect conformity with the 2040 General Plan.

3. The proposed ordinance has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As the proposed Sign Ordinance Amendment is consistent with the Ukiah 2040 General Plan, the project relies upon the General Plan EIR and qualifies for a categorical exemption under CEQA Sections 15301, 15303, 15311, and 15061(b)(3).
4. That the City Council adopt an ordinance making the changes shown in the Sign Ordinance Amendment, as shown in the attached Exhibit A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission designates the City Clerk as the custodian of the document and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings upon which the Planning Commission decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the City of Ukiah Department of Community Development, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, CA 95482.

I hereby certify that according to the Provisions of Government Code Section 25103 delivery of this document has been made.

ATTEST:

Stephanie Abba
Planning Commission Clerk

Craig Schlatter
Director, Community Development

Alex De Grassi
Chair, Planning Commission