



## Update to General Sign Provisions

PR-2025-001768 (Zoning Text Amendment)

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Planning Commission

Agenda Item: 2

May 8, 2025

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## BACKGROUND



**August 2015**

- City Council adopts comprehensive update to sign code, resulting in today's sign code.



**September 2024  
December 2024**

- Land Use Committee Sign Workshops
- Committee direction to pursue amendments for:
  - Window sign standards
  - Blade sign standards
  - Codification of certain design guidelines
  - Creative sign permit process



**February 27, 2025**

- Item brought to Planning Commission, which gives direction to:
  - Look at options for amortization
  - Clarify intent of transparency standards

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## NONCONFORMING SIGNS

- Proposed amendment to prohibit cabinet signs, making existing cabinets *nonconforming*.
- Three options to address nonconforming signs:

### OPTION 1

Maintain Status Quo/existing nonconforming procedures

### OPTION 2

Add to nonconforming section for reactive amortization

### OPTION 3

Proactive amortization program



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## AMORTIZATION OPTION 1

### Maintain status quo/existing nonconforming procedures

Nonconforming signs may remain until:

- Alterations, additions or relocation is proposed
- A sign or the use of the property has been discontinued for 90 days
- Damage or destruction occurs where repair could cost more than 50% of the sign value



### Pros:

- Most business friendly
- Maintains existing signs of significance
- No lead time for implementation

### Cons:

- Nonconforming signs may continue indefinitely

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## AMORTIZATION OPTION 2

### Amortization required upon change of use or occupancy

Maintain nonconforming procedures under Section 19.620.930 & add provisions to:

- Require nonconforming signs to be addressed upon change of use or occupancy (reactive)
- Provide flexibility to preserve signs with historic significance



#### Pros:

- Addresses nonconforming signs as new uses are introduced
- Allows for flexibility for historic signs



#### Cons:

- Will not address every existing nonconforming sign
- May discourage new business or obtaining permits

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## AMORTIZATION OPTION 3

### Formal amortization program

Administrative requirements may include:

- Inventory of all nonconforming signs
- Public outreach and noticing to property owners
- Determined period for compliance or termination
- Procedures/penalties for noncompliance
- Amortization ordinance formally adopted by the City Council



#### Pros:

- Brings all nonconforming signs to compliance in a determined amount of time



#### Cons:

- Least business friendly, potential opposition
- Long term administrative effort

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## NONCONFORMING SIGNS OPTIONS

**OPTION 1:**  
Status quo, maintain RMC  
Section 19.620.930

### Pros

- Most business friendly
- Maintains existing signs of significance

### Cons

- Nonconforming signs may continue indefinitely

**OPTION 2:**  
Amortization required upon  
change of use or  
occupancy

### Pros

- Addresses nonconforming signs with change of use
- Flexible for historic signs

### Cons

- Will not address all nonconforming signs

**OPTION 3:**  
Formal amortization  
program

### Pros

- Brings all nonconforming signs into compliance

### Cons

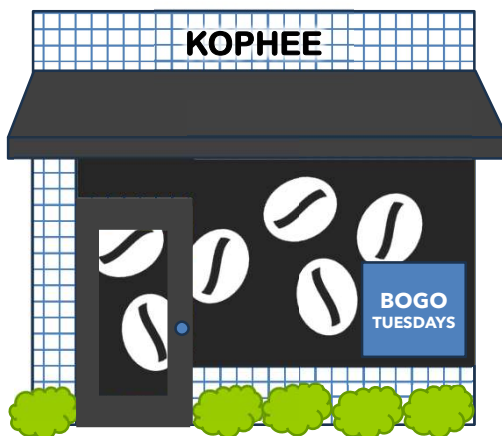
- Long-term administrative effort
- Longer lead time for implementation
- Least business friendly



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## TRANSPARENCY STANDARDS

### CURRENT CODE



- No standards for transparency
- 1 window sign per public entrance permitted, up to 25% of each window area.

### Challenges

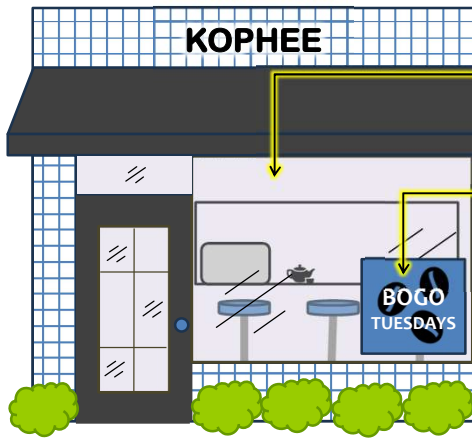
- Window areas may be covered or treated for full opacity
- Aesthetics and public safety may be negatively impacted
- Compliance, interpretation, and enforcement is difficult



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## TRANSPARENCY STANDARDS



**Intent: enhance retail storefront design and support public safety.**

✓ Minimum of 75% of window area must remain transparent (allowances for semi-transparent glass treatment)

✓ Maximum of 25% of window area can be covered with opaque material (including allowable window signs)

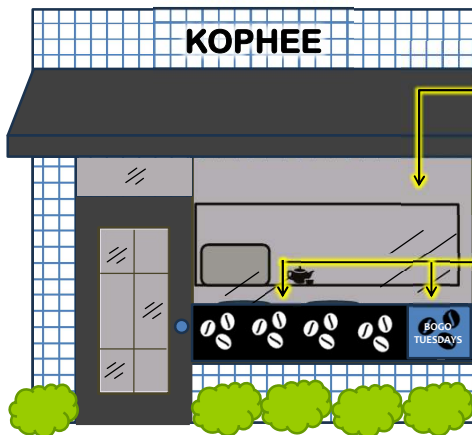
✓ Opaque coverings, including allowable window signs, exceeding 25% of the window surface area are prohibited

Exception to transparency requirements: areas of storage or mechanical/utility equipment



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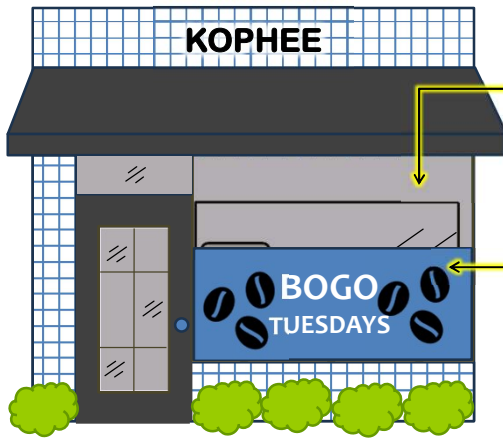
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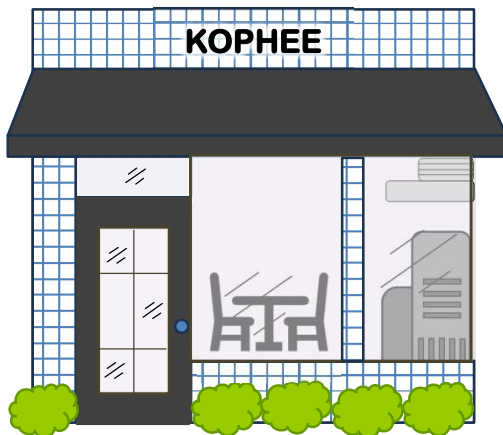
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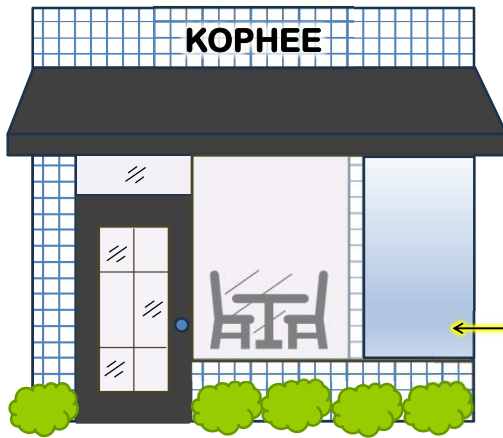


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## STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

### ENVISION RIVERSIDE 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

#### Strategic Priority 5 – High Performing Government

Goal 5.3 – Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

#### Cross-Cutting Threads



Community Trust



Fiscal Responsibility



Sustainability & Resiliency



Equity



Innovation



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## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning Commission:

1. **DETERMINE** that Planning Case PR-2025-001768 is exempt from further California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule), as it can be seen with certainty that approval of the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and
2. **RECOMMEND** One, some, or none of the options for amortization and window transparency for City Council consideration and/or approval; and
3. **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of all other amendments under Planning Case PR-2025-001768 (Zoning Text Amendment) as outlined in the staff report and summarized in the Findings section of this report.



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## REFERENCE ONLY



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