

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT

Ordinance No. 6288 amending the Bellevue City Code relating to the Sign Code, amending a portion of Chapter 22B.10 of the Bellevue City Code to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Update and improve clarity and usability, which includes the following amendments: modifying the requirement that an enterprise located within a high-rise building must occupy at least 180,000 net square feet and that corporate headquarters must occupy at least 120,000 square feet to place or maintain two signs on a high-rise building, providing for severability, and establishing an effective date.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact is expected. The amended Sign Code will be administered by land use staff during review of permit applications.

STAFF CONTACTS

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<i>Development Services Department</i>	

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POLICY CONSIDERATION

Should the City amend Sign Code sections 22B.10.220, 22B.10.025 and 22B.10.030 to reduce the corporate size and headquarter requirements to 75,000 square feet for the placement of high-rise signs?

BACKGROUND

At the May 9, 2016 Council Study Session, staff presented an option to amend the High-Rise Sign Code to reduce the minimum square footage requirement to 75,000 square feet that must be met before a sign can be reviewed for placement at the top of a high-rise. This solution responds to a nationwide trend, particularly in the technology industry, whereby companies are consolidating their employees into smaller space footprints. This “densification” of work places is based on technology eliminating the need for larger workspaces as well as corporate needs for more common space to promote collaboration driving productivity.

The modified code will lower the square foot threshold and eliminate the alternative qualification for regional headquarters in favor of one universal standard. The modified code will retain the current code provisions regarding size, design, illumination and locational requirements to ensure that the public view is protected.

To qualify for a high-rise sign under the existing code, a company would need to occupy 180,000 square feet, or 120,000 square feet if they are a headquarters office. Between 1,200 and 1,800 employees could be accommodated in a dense workspace configuration under the current thresholds for placement of a high-rise sign. Reducing the requirement to 75,000 square feet will allow companies with approximately 500 employees to qualify for a high-rise sign. For some companies, a high-rise sign is an important consideration in their location search because it serves as a marketing tool for talent and clients.

Amending the code will allow a larger group of companies to qualify for high-rise signs, which supports the City Council's "Open for Business" vision, and commitment to economic prosperity for all. Moreover, the amendment would support City Council's Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Office of Economic Development's business attraction and retention programs.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

If adopted by Council, this Ordinance becomes effective on May 26, 2016.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt Ordinance amending the Sign Code to reduce the minimum threshold for a high-rise sign to 75,000 square feet.
2. Reject the Ordinance that amends the Sign Code, reducing the minimum threshold for a high-rise sign to 75,000 square feet, and provide alternative direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION

Option 1.

MOTION

Move to adopt Ordinance No. 6288 amending the Bellevue City Code relating to the Sign Code, amending a portion of Chapter 22B.10 of the Bellevue City Code to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan Update and improve clarity and usability, which includes the following amendments: modifying the requirement that an enterprise located within a high-rise building must occupy at least 180,000 net square feet and that corporate headquarters must occupy at least 120,000 square feet to place or maintain two signs on a high-rise building, providing for severability, and establishing an effective date.

ATTACHMENTS

Proposed Ordinance No. 6288