



THE BUREAU OF  
**PLANNING &  
SUSTAINABILITY**

Date: September 6, 2024

**To:** Planning Commissioners

**From:** Phil Nameny, Senior Planner

**CC:** Shannon Buono, Senior Planner  
Sandra Wood, Principal Planner  
Patricia Diefenderfer, Chief Planner  
Karl Lisle, Manager Spectator Venues

**Re:** Rose Quarter Entertainment subdistrict, Sign Code – Amendments to Proposed Draft

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On August 27, 2024, the Planning Commission held a hearing on the Rose Quarter Entertainment Subdistrict Title 32, Sign Code Amendments. The Planning Commission will continue its discussion on September 10. This memo includes sign code amendments to the proposed name of the district and to the temporary banner regulations. The memo also provides additional information on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) sign review, dark skies provisions and applicable design standards for the Commission deliberation.

### **District Name Sign Code Amendment**

Staff had originally proposed naming the area where the new regulations apply “Rose Quarter Entertainment Subdistrict.” During the August 27<sup>th</sup> hearing, Commissioner Alexander questioned whether this was the best name, considering the transition the areas in undergoing and the multiple purposes the area will serve in the future.

This amendment changes the name to “Rose Quarter Entertainment Sign District.” The new name clarifies that the name is intended for sign code regulations only, not to name the area for all purposes. It also



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removes any confusion that could occur with the names of existing Central City subdistricts referenced through the zoning code.

**Proposed amendment:**  
**Amend 32.10, 32.32, 32.34 32.62 and Map 6**

The reference to the Rose Quarter Entertainment Subdistrict occurs in 40 places within the staff report, the code commentary and the code language in the document. While the specific changes are not included here, staff would revise each of those instances to read "Rose Quarter Entertainment Sign District", instead of referencing it as a subdistrict. Likewise, Map 6 would be corrected to state "Rose Quarter Entertainment Sign District."

**Temporary Banner Sign Code Amendments**

Two amendments to the temporary banner regulations were requested. The amendments were the result of testimony from Rip City Management and initial discussion by the Planning Commission. The first amendment clarifies the time period for allowing temporary banners so that the 180-day allowance is per calendar year. This matches the existing language for temporary signs and banners elsewhere in the Sign Code. The second amendment increases the allowed size of a temporary banner from 300 to 500 square feet. Temporary banners larger than this size would still be allowed but would count as permanent signage and be subject to design review.

The shaded text below shows the proposed amendment language.

**Proposed amendment:**  
**Amend 32.34.030.A.2.c.(4)**

(4) Temporary signs. Temporary signs that meet the following are allowed for a period of up to 180 days in a calendar year. Signs meeting these standards are not subject to Design Review. Signs that do not meet the standards of this subsection are subject to the standards for permanent signs:

(a) Temporary sign size limits. The following limits apply to temporary signs:

- Temporary banners are limited to 500 square feet;
- Temporary fascia signs are limited to 100 square feet; and
- All other temporary signs are limited to 32 square feet.



(b) Temporary signs may not have direct or internal illumination, unless the message or image is created by light projected onto a surface. A temporary sign can be illuminated by indirect lighting if the lighting is shielded and directed down to the ground. Changing image sign features and electronic elements are prohibited on temporary signs.

(c) Temporary signs must be located outside the right-of-way.

(d) Temporary balloon signs are prohibited.

## **Additional Information requested by Commissioners**

### ODOT signage regulations for signage along Interstate-5

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) regulates signage that is visible from the state highways and freeways and requires the registration of "outdoor advertising signs" which are signs that either advertise something that is not on the site or for which compensation is provided for the display.

ORS 377 contains the revised statutes for highway signs and OAR 734 Sections 59 and 60 provide the State administrative rules for signage and permitting. These rules include limits for outdoor advertising signs in terms of their location, spacing between signs and intersections, and the amount of changing image. According to ODOT, there are already several outdoor advertising signs in the area, and any new outdoor advertising sign would need to meet spacing requirements. The rules also address digital or other variable message signs that are not used as outdoor advertising. These rules limit the amount of movement of the sign and the luminosity and brightness of these signs. In conclusion, it does appear that ODOT's authority would include signs that are broadcasting images for which compensation is receive or for digital/LED signs used specifically for the Rose Quarter if they are visible from I-5. ODOT would not be involved for static signs on site that are not considered outdoor advertising.

It should be noted that the staff proposal includes a maximum sign size of 200 square feet for any sign within 100-feet of the I-5 freeway dedication line and facing the freeway. An adjustment or modification through design review is allowed to exceed the 200 square foot limit. While submitted testimony requested that this limit be increased to 1,000 square feet, we did not hear from any Planning Commissioners to consider that amendment. So, an amendment to the 200 square feet maximum is not included in this memo.

### Dark skies and signage illumination

We heard concern from a couple Planning Commissioners regarding increased light pollution with the proposed standards. Particularly, there was a concern about the impact of a rooftop sign that is directly or internally illuminated.

Our current sign code does not have any limits on brightness or luminance except for changing image signs, which are subject to the glare standards with a limit of 0.5 footcandles on an adjoining property. This project



continues to apply the glare standards to the changing image signs allowed through the code amendments. The project also requires any indirect lighting onto a sign (including on the roof) to have the lighting shielded and directed down to the ground. Staff had a brief correspondence with our consultant for the dark skies project. They mentioned that rooftop signage on arenas are often at a level of brightness that limits their impacts, but potential suggestions could include curfew hours or maximum luminance emanating from the sign. However, these provisions have not been further vetted or researched, so staff is not proposing an amendment at this time.

### Design Guidelines applicable to signage

Commissioners had expressed an interest in how the design guidelines would consider proposed signage. The Moda Center and Rose Quarter area are within the Lloyd subdistrict of the Central City plan district. There are two sets of guidelines that would be addressed through design review: the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines and the Lloyd District Special Design Guidelines.

The Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines (CCFDG) contain a total of 29 guidelines grouped into three categories: Portland Personality, Pedestrian Emphasis, and Project Design. In addition, the Lloyd District Special Design Guidelines augment the CCFDG with 26 supplemental guidelines using the same three categories above. Often reviews will merge the various criteria of these two districts. Using a previous design review for the Moda signage as a reference, the following guidelines have relevance to a review of larger signs or an area sign program:

#### Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines/Lloyd District Special Guidelines

##### A. Portland Personality

- A5: Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas – Building on local character and integrating special features. Lloyd also specifies integrating works of art and water features.
- A8: Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape – Increasing space for public use and creating connections from sidewalks into buildings.
- A9: Strengthen Gateways – This includes providing a sense of entry and exit in the Lloyd District.

##### B. Pedestrian Emphasis

- B2: Protect the Pedestrian – This can include providing integrated identification, sign and lighting to offer safety and interest to pedestrians.

##### C. Project Design

- C2/C10: Promote Quality and Permanence in Development.
- C3: Respect Architectural Integrity – Consider original character of building when modifying its exterior.
- C4: Complement the Context of Existing Buildings – Similar to above.
- C5: Design for Coherency – Integrate the building and design elements.
- C13: Integrate Signs – Integrate signs and structural components into building's overall design concept. Size, place, design and lighting of signs do not dominate skyline.
- C1-2: (Lloyd): Integrate Signs – Placement of signs should support scale and articulation of building. Avoid larger free-standing signs that contribute to visual clutter. Support a master sign program.

BPS staff will be available to provide additional information on this information and answer questions during the work session on September 10.

