

RECOMMENDED FINDING

Amendment to Sunnyvale Municipal Code

Goals and Policies that relate to this project are:

Policy LT-4.1 Preserve and enhance an attractive community, with a positive image, a sense of place, landscaping, and a human scale.

Policy LT-12.6 Create a strong, identifiable Downtown that offers regional and citywide shopping opportunities and entertainment.

Policy LT-13.2 Improve the visual appearance of business areas and districts by applying high standards of architectural design, landscaping, and sign standards for new development and the reuse or remodeling of existing buildings.

Policy CC-3.1 Place a priority on quality architecture and site design, which will enhance the image of Sunnyvale and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents and visitors, and be reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure Sunnyvale's economic prosperity.

GOAL CC-2 Create an attractive street environment which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors.

Policy CC-2.2 Minimize elements which clutter the roadway and look unattractive.

1. The amendment to Sunnyvale Municipal Code is deemed to be in the public interest (**finding met**).

The current sign code contained in SMC 19.44 was created to balance two key goals: maintaining Sunnyvale's attractive community character by avoiding excessive sign clutter, while still providing opportunities for businesses to effectively identify themselves. The current sign code did not fully anticipate a theater on a second level above another major tenant.

The proposed sign code amendment provides an opportunity for theaters on the second floor to meet their signage needs. Regional Retail Business zones are generally located along major roadways and often, on larger properties that contain larger buildings. Larger sign areas increase the proportionality of signage to the massing of these larger buildings. Theaters also have more of a regional draw. Therefore, the visibility of their signs are helpful as wayfinding for patrons that may be driving along major roadways or travelling via public transit. In addition, increasing the sign area for theaters provides greater flexibility for theaters to incorporate their signage into the building architecture, such as fin or blade signs.

The current sign code already provides sufficient controls that help to reduce negative impacts associated with sign clutter. For example, the current sign code contains limits

copy heights and illumination of signs when located within 150 feet of a residential zone. The current sign code also requires electronic messaging and readerboard signs to be counted towards sign area if located on a building exterior, which also helps to limit the amount of signage on a building. Signage design guidelines, such as those included in the Downtown Specific Plan and Precise Plan for El Camino Real, also help to maintain an attractive community character.

Therefore, staff finds that the proposed amendment is in the public interest, as the amendment is consistent with the General Plan goals and policies and SMC 19.44 sign code purpose. The amendment provides an opportunity for theaters on the second floor to meet their signage needs, provides greater flexibility to incorporate theater signs into the building architecture, and sufficient controls exist within the sign code that help to reduce negative impacts.