



Office of the Planning Commission

City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge
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Ryan L. Holcomb, AICP
Planning Director

May 4, 2023

TO: Planning Commission
THROUGH: Ryan L. Holcomb, AICP, Planning Director *RH*
FROM: Gilles Morin, AICP, CFM, Assistant Planning Director *GRM*
SUBJECT: **TA-2-23** Chapter 16, Signs

Application Summary			
Applicant	Planning Commission	Submittal Date	February 13, 2023
Code Section(s)	Chapter 16, Signs, Section 16.2.4		
Areas Affected	Parishwide		
Planning Commission Meeting Date	May 15, 2023	Metropolitan Council Meeting Date	May 17, 2023
Request			
Summary of Change	To revise Chapter 16, to provide regulations for abandoned signs		
Findings			
Staff certifies that the proposed UDC amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan			

Case History

- The Metropolitan Council, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, and the Parish Attorney’s Office requested changes to Chapter 16, Signs, to provide regulations to remove blighted signs
- Proposed revision was created in conjunction with the Building Official and Parish Attorney

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

- These changes are consistent with the following provisions of FUTUREBR:
 - Land Use Action 6.1.1, which calls for ensuring regulatory processes are responsive, efficient, and customer friendly;
 - Land Use Action 6.1.2, which calls for making the UDC more customer friendly; and
 - Community Design and Neighborhoods Action 1.2.2, which calls for revising sign regulations for best practices and enforcement

Analysis

- This amendment establishes:
 - Procedure for the Building Official to determine when existing signs are abandoned;
 - Notice to property owner and a process to respond; and
 - Removal process of sign if owner is not responsive.

Community Outreach/Notification

- Proposed language was provided to the Federation of Greater Baton Rouge Civic Associations and Baton Rouge Growth Coalition on March 23, 2023
- Staff reports available to review on May 4, 2023 at <http://la-batonrouge.civicplus.com/AgendaCenter/Planning-Commission-12>
- Legal advertisement published in The Advocate on April 7, 11 and 13, 2023

Section 16.2.4 Design, Construction and Maintenance

- A. Signs shall be constructed of ~~permanent~~ durable materials and permanently affixed to the ground or building except for those signs that, by their nature, are considered temporary.
- B. ~~Permanent s~~ Signs shall be maintained in good condition at all times and shall be kept free of cracked or peeling paint, missing or damaged sign panels or supports, and weeds, grass or vegetation that obscures the view of the sign message - and adheres to all general regulations.

1. Abandoned Signs

Any sign and/or its supporting sign structure which remains without a message or whose display surface remains blank or that does not meet the standard of maintenance as provided in Section 16.2.4.B, for a period of 90 days or more; or any sign which pertains to a time; event or purpose which no longer applies, shall be deemed to have been abandoned. Any sign remaining after demolition of a principal structure and any sign remaining that pertains to a business that is no longer in operation shall be deemed to be abandoned. In the event the use of any sign has been discontinued for a period of 90 days or more, as determined by the Building Official said sign shall be deemed abandoned.

2. Notice and Removal of Abandoned Signs

The Building Official shall notify the owner of the property on which the sign is located as well as the owner of the sign, if not the same, 15 days written notice to:

- a. Submit documentation to the Building Official to establish that the sign has not been abandoned as provided in this section; or
- b. Remove the sign as well as any support structure. Upon the failure of the owner of a sign to remove it and any support structure, the City-Parish shall remove the sign and the support structure, and the City-Parish shall be entitled to a privilege and lien upon the property for the costs of removal; in the event the property owner fails to remove the sign and any support structure as requested, a penalty in the amount established by Title 8-Building Regulations of East Baton Rouge Code of Ordinances shall be imposed upon the property owner of the sign until the date of removal as well as any costs of removal incurred by the City-Parish.