

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 26, 2016

TO: Ad Hoc Group on Signage

FROM: Alex Dambach, AICP, Division Chief – Land Use

SUBJECT: Phase II Policy Changes relating to Signage

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For the upcoming March 7, 2016 meeting, staff has four documents that will be used then. These are all related to the proposed new signage ordinance designed to directly respond to the *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* Supreme Court Decision and to address some other issues with the current ordinance. The following materials are provided:

1. Ordinance Comparison Summary: This is a short, summarized comparison of the requirements of the current ordinance with the proposed ordinance;
2. Ordinance Comparison Complete: This is a side-by-side comparison of the complete text of the current ordinance with the proposed ordinance along with notes, some of which are highlighted in yellow and should be discussed at the meeting;
3. Article IX SIGNS Draft Ordinance for Ad Hoc: This is the complete text of the proposed ordinance; and
4. Current Ordinance – Signs: This is the complete text of the existing ordinance.

The provided summary is a good place to start in meeting preparation, but please be aware that details are very important in regulating signage, so please use the side-by-side chart or the full text ordinance to study the details. The proposed ordinance's main purpose is to comply with the US Supreme Court ruling in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*. It also addresses issues such as tall pole-type signs that have been found objectionable in many parts of Alexandria; provides a mechanism for exceptions to the ordinance, when needed, through the special use permit process; removes allowances for unattractive 'light box' type signs while still allowing preferable 'channel letter' type signs; and clarifies long-standing ambiguities that have been in the current ordinance.

On the following page are examples from sign companies of the types of smaller signs that are permitted in this ordinance.



1. Examples of 4 square foot signs



2. Examples of 1 square foot signs



3. Examples of various 4 square foot and 6 square foot signs