



Planning  
Department  
Bessie L. Martin  
Director

# STAFF REPORT Text Study

Docket No. TXT-9-21  
Summary No. 25807  
Amortization of Signs Along David. Dr.

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**Study Intent:** To evaluate and establish standards related to amortization of non-conforming signs along the David Dr. corridor from W. Napoleon to Veterans Blvd. for properties zoned Town Center Mixed Use.

**Council District:** Parish-wide  
**PAB Hearing:** 12/2/2021  
**Last Meeting Date for Council Action:** 4/06/2022

**Authorization:** Ord. No.

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## OVERVIEW

The intent of this proposal is to evaluate and establish standards related to amortization of non-conforming signs along the David Dr. corridor from W. Napoleon to Veterans Blvd. for properties zoned Town Center Mixed Use.

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Provide for a five-year amortization period for non-conforming signage along the David Dr. corridor from W. Napoleon to Veterans Blvd. for properties zoned Town Center Mixed Use.

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## PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Approval (see minutes).

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## BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Resolution No. 134658, the Planning Department was authorized to conduct a text study of Chapter 25 Planning and Development, Chapter 33 Unified Development Code, and Chapter 40 Zoning of the Code of Ordinances of Jefferson Parish; and a map study of the properties in the area bounded by Veterans Blvd, the I-10 on-ramp, Judith St, W Napoleon Ave, and the Soniat Canal, and the properties fronting the south side of W Napoleon Ave at David Dr, as shown on a map prepared by the Planning Department titled "Lafreniere Area Study" dated October 17, 2019; with the intent of modifying regulations and plans, and rezoning or changing the Future Land Use category of properties, to support redevelopment of the area in accordance with the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan.

N-Y and Associates was chosen to undertake this study and provided amendments to Lafreniere Sub Area Plan under two different text studies (TXT-4-21 and TXT-5-21) and

an area study (EZ-11-21). These amendments to the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan, were overwhelmingly approved by the Planning Advisory Board and the Jefferson Parish Council in June of 2021. As part of this text study, a new zoning district, the Town Center Mixed Use district, was created. The purpose of the Town Center Mixed Use district (TCMU) is to provide “small areas with a complete mix of residential, retail, service, and office activities and a balance of residential and non-residential land-use opportunities, all designed in scale with the surrounding residential uses that they support and enhance. Regulations and standards intend to protect and encourage the character of the district by limiting the type and size of commercial uses, maintaining a neighborhood commercial scale, promoting pedestrian activity, reducing auto trips, and creating the unique character of a town center.”

The TCMU district was mapped on properties fronting on the David Dr. corridor between W. Napoleon Ave. and Veterans Blvd. in June of 2021 as part of the amendments to the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan. As part of Envision Jefferson 2040, the Parish’s Comprehensive Plan, the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan serves to guide the physical development of the Linwood Manor and Park Manor Neighborhoods and the David Dr. corridor from W. Napoleon Ave. to Veterans Blvd. (see pg. 7, Lafreniere Sub Area Plan September 2019 as amended in June of 2021). This plan focuses on achieving revitalization through redevelopment strategies geared towards attracting new investments in this area.

A major initiative of the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan is the revitalization of the David Dr. corridor between W. Napoleon Ave. and Veterans Blvd. This portion of David Dr. is a commercialized area with a mix of uses that directly abuts Lafreniere Park. As part of the engagement process for the amendments to the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan, N-Y and Associates conducted multiple public meetings and surveyed the attendees, in addition to conducting online surveys through the public engagement website, as to what they would like to see occur in this area. Overwhelmingly, attendees were in favor of requiring existing pole signs to be removed and replaced with monument signs within a reasonable amount of time. (see pg. 29, Lafreniere Sub Area Plan September 2019 as amended in June of 2021).

As part of this project, N-Y and Associates also conducted a sign inventory along this portion of David Dr. for the purpose of identifying signage issues, such as sign clutter related to number and size of business signs and illegal signs, and determining best practices that could be implemented, including sign amortization, to improve the aesthetics of this portion of the David Dr. corridor. Following this undertaking, N-Y and Associates recommended that “...the best path forward for the Parish to make a prompt and obvious visual change for the redevelopment of the David Drive corridor in the Lafreniere Sub -Area” was to amortize the non-conforming signage along this corridor. (David Dr. Sign Inventory and Analysis). This sign inventory is attached as Exhibit “A” to this report. Consequently, the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan amendments designated the amortization of nonconforming signage as an action item for the David Drive corridor.

## CONFORMANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This recommendation supports the following *Envision Jefferson 2040* goals and objectives:

Goal 1, Objective 9 Develop effective strategies for neighborhoods with unique land use and transportation considerations through subarea plans.

Goal 5, Objective 2 Improve the visual quality of roadways using landscaping and beautification projects.

Goal 5, Objective 3 Encourage signage that is attractive, appropriate for the location, and balances good visibility and aesthetics.

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## AMENDED ORDINANCE TEXT

Staff recommends the following text amendments:

### 1. Amend Chapter 33. Unified Development Code, Article 8. Sign Regulations to read as follows:

**Sec. 33.-8.7.1. Amortization of Nonconforming Signs Along Portion of David Dr. zoned Town Center Mixed Use District.** The following regulations and amortization provisions shall apply to the properties zoned Town Center Mixed Use District (TCMU) along the portion of David Dr. between W. Napoleon Ave. and Veterans Memorial Blvd.:

(1) Findings and Purpose:

- a. The parish council finds that nonconforming signs that do not conform with the provisions of the TCMU district, as applicable, threaten the public health, safety and welfare because they:
  1. Create traffic safety hazards;
  2. Create pedestrian safety hazards;
  3. Decrease property values;
  4. Increase the potential for blight; and/or
  5. Discourage reinvestment in residential and nonresidential property that is essential to for the implementation of the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan.
- b. The purposes of this section are to:
  1. Recognize that the eventual elimination of existing signs that are not in conformity with the provisions of this section is as important as is the prohibition of new signs that would violate these regulations.
  2. Establish a fair and equitable process for the elimination of nonconforming signs that will facilitate implementation of the Lafreniere Sub Area Plan.

- (2) Immediate Removal of Certain Signs. The following nonconforming signs shall be removed immediately:
- a. Any sign not established as a legal nonconforming sign prior to the adoption of these regulations;
  - b. Any sign erected or maintained upon any parish highway, right-of-way, servitude, street, public building or parish property without a resolution from the Parish Council authorizing such sign or for which the resolution is not posted in a visible location on the premises;
  - c. Any sign now or hereafter existing which no longer advertises a bona fide business conducted, or a product sold, on the premises where such sign is located.
- (3) Limits on Nonconforming Signs.
- a. Change of Business or Use. Any nonconforming sign advertising, identifying, or pertaining to a business on the premises on which it is located shall be removed upon any change in the business name or change in the use advertised by the sign.
  - b. A nonconforming sign may not be:
    1. Changed to another nonconforming sign;
    2. Structurally altered to extend its useful life;
    3. Expanded in height, width, depth or weight;
    4. Reestablished after a business is discontinued for sixty (60) days;
    5. Reestablished after damage or destruction of more than fifty (50) percent of its value, as determined by the director of inspections and code enforcement.
  - c. No new sign shall be approved for a site, structure, building or use that contains nonconforming signs unless such nonconforming signs are removed or modified to conform with the provisions of this title.
  - d. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to exclude routine maintenance, repair, or renovation which does not extend, increase, or enlarge the nonconforming sign.
  - e. No building permit shall be issued for any structures, building expansions or new building construction on a site which contains nonconforming signs, unless all signs on the site are brought into conformance with this title. This does not include interior alterations which do not substantially change the character or intensity of the site.
- (4) Amortization. Legally nonconforming signs erected prior to the effective date of this ordinance may continue to be maintained until December 31, 2026. Thereafter, unless such signs conform to the provisions of this article, they shall be removed. Signs that are nonconforming due to exceeding the permitted height, width or area by ten percent (10%) or less shall not be subject to removal under this section.
- (5) A determination of sign conformance shall be provided by the department of inspection and code enforcement.

- (6) Removal. Nonconforming signs that require removal under the regulations in this section shall be taken down, or removed by the owner, agent or person having the beneficial use of the building or structure upon which such sign may be found within sixty (60) days after written notification from the department of inspection and code enforcement and, upon failure to comply with such notice or file an appeal within the time specified in such order, the department of inspection and code enforcement is hereby authorized to cause removal of such sign and collect the cost, therefore, in accordance with article III, chapter 19 of this code.
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