

ORDINANCE _____

(As modified by the City Planning Commission at its meeting on October 22, 2020)

An Ordinance establishing The Grand Sign District (Sign District) pursuant to the provisions of Section 13.11 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will be located in the Downtown Center, where the General Plan Framework calls for the continuation and expansion of commercial, residential, transportation, entertainment, and visitor-serving functions that distinguish and uniquely identify the Downtown Center;

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will be located directly across Grand Avenue from the Walt Disney Concert Hall, adjacent to The Music Center, and in close proximity to the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Colburn School, the Broad, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, hotels, and restaurants, and will continue to transform the Bunker Hill neighborhood into a vibrant area comprised of creative signage, world-class entertainment venues, historic buildings, and regional attractions;

WHEREAS, additional urban infill and redevelopment, including hotels, multi-family residential, commercial and retail uses, on and around Grand Avenue continue to transform the Bunker Hill, Historic Core, and Civic Center neighborhoods into an energetic area comprised of world-class entertainment venues, creative signage, historic buildings, regional attractions, and residential uses with a distinct demographic and aesthetic identity;

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will foster a lively urban environment with a unified aesthetic and sense of identity, by setting standards for uniform signage design, providing well-planned placement of signage with consideration for surrounding uses, while also providing functional way-finding and building identification along streets, thereby connecting regional transit, entertainment, and cultural venues;

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will be part of the Grand Project which will include programming that is designed to serve the surrounding community, including a goal of 10,000 square feet of retail space leased to local tenants, 20 percent on-site affordable units for households with incomes at or below 40 percent and 50 percent of median income (89 units), a public plaza, streetscape improvements, and embedding sustainability features throughout the project, guided by a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver commitment further evolve the physical and aesthetic identity of the area for residents, visitors, and businesses in the Central City area and to further promote the entertainment character of the Bunker Hill neighborhood and surrounding areas;

WHEREAS, the permitting of off-site digital display signs and wall signs located on the interior of the site will directly advance the purposes of improving the aesthetics of the area by carefully regulating the placement and design of such signs;

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will contribute to the activation of all sides of Parcel Q and promote accessibility for patrons arriving on foot as well as by car or transit;

WHEREAS, the Grand Sign District will emphasize the importance of Parcel Q as a gateway to the cultural icons mentioned above by displaying artwork, programming, identification, and current events messaging for local cultural venues;

WHEREAS, the signage plan has been designed to complement the architecture, facilitate directional and informational signage at The Grand's perimeter and interior including for pedestrians and transit users, and to allow for intuitive circulation through and within Parcel Q; and

WHEREAS, on December 11, 2019, the City Council instructed the Department of City Planning Major Projects Unit to initiate a Sign District for Parcel Q appropriate for a mixed-use project with various commercial uses including hotel, retail, restaurants, and entertainment.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES DO ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Sec. 1 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRAND SIGN DISTRICT.

The City Council hereby establishes The Grand Sign District (Sign District), which shall be applicable to that area of the City shown within the heavy dashed line on Exhibit 1 - Sign District, comprising approximately 3.22 acres, bounded by Grand Avenue on the northwest, 1st Street on the northeast, Olive Street on the southeast, and 2nd Street on the southwest, including without limitation those properties located at 100 South Grand Avenue and 111-161 South Olive Street.

Sec. 2 PURPOSES.

The Sign District is intended to:

A. Support and enhance the land uses and urban design objectives of the Central City Community Plan, the Grand Avenue Project, and Downtown Los Angeles;

B. Create a unique and recognizable identity utilizing creative signage elements, to draw visitors to the Grand Avenue Project to benefit the local economy and reduce lingering blight;

C. Permit a variety of signage elements to allow for creativity and flexibility in design over time;

D. Ensure that new off-site digital display signs and wall signs are responsive to and integrated with the aesthetic character of the structures on which they are located; E. Protect adjacent residential uses from potential adverse impacts by concentrating signage, and setting standards for signage numbers, size, illumination, and sign motion/animation; and

F. Coordinate the location, type, and display so as to enhance the pedestrian realm, minimize potential traffic hazards, protect public safety, and maintain compatibility with surrounding uses.

Sec. 3 APPLICATION OF SUPPLEMENTAL USE DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

A. This Ordinance regulates signs within the Sign District. The regulations of this Ordinance are in addition to those set forth in the Planning and Zoning provisions of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (Code). These regulations do not convey any rights not otherwise granted under the provisions and procedures contained in the Code or other relevant ordinances, except as specifically provided for in this Ordinance.

B. Wherever this Ordinance contains provisions that establish regulations that are different from, more restrictive than, or more permissive than the Code or other relevant codes and ordinances, this Ordinance shall prevail.

Sec. 4 DEFINITIONS.

Whenever the following terms are used in this Ordinance, they shall be construed as defined in this Section. Notwithstanding Code Section 13.11, words and phrases not defined herein shall be construed as defined in Sections 12.03 and Article 4.4 of the Code.

Advertising Kiosk. A freestanding, double-sided, ground-mounted sign, which is incorporated into a freestanding architectural structure, and which may incorporate digital faces and contain on-site and/or off-site signage.

Can / Cabinet Sign. A wall sign whose text, logos and symbols are placed on the plastic face of an enclosed cabinet or recessed into the face of the enclosed cabinet.

Captive Balloon Sign. Any object inflated with hot air or lighter-than-air gas that is tethered to the ground or a structure.

Digital Display. A sign face, building face, and/or any building or structural component that displays still images, scrolling images, moving images, or flashing images, including video and animation through the use of grid lights, cathode ray projections, light emitting diode displays, plasma screens, liquid crystal displays, fiber optics, or other electronic media or technology that is either independent of or attached to, integrated into, or projected onto a building or structural component, and that may be changed remotely through electronic means.

Exposed Neon Sign. A sign made solely of shaped visible neon tubing.

Monument Sign. A sign that is erected directly upon the existing or artificially created grade, or that is raised no more than 12 inches from the existing or artificially created grade to the bottom of the sign, and that has a horizontal dimension equal to or greater than its vertical dimension.

Off-Site Sign. A sign that displays any message directing attention to a business, product, service, profession, commodity, activity, event, person, institution or any other commercial message, which is generally conducted, sold, manufactured, produced, or offered or occurs elsewhere than within the boundaries of the Sign District.

On-Site Sign. A sign that is other than an Off-Site Sign.

Projecting Sign. A sign, other than a Wall Sign, that is attached to a building and projects outward from the building with one or more sign faces approximately perpendicular to the face of the building.

Sign. Any whole or part of a display board, wall, screen or object, used to announce, declare, demonstrate, display or otherwise present a message and attract the attention of the public.

Supergraphic Sign. A sign, consisting of an image projected onto a wall or printed on vinyl, mesh or other material with or without written text, supported and attached to a wall by an adhesive and/or by using stranded cable and eyebolts and/or other materials or methods, and

which does not comply with the following provisions of the Code: 14.4.10 (Wall Signs), 14.4.16 (Temporary Signs), 14.4.17 (Temporary Signs on Temporary Construction Walls), 14.4.18 (Off-Site Signs) and/or 14.4.20 (Art Murals and Public Art Installations).

Tenant Frontage. The linear length of building frontage of a tenant space, hotel, or residential lobby along a public street or right-of-way, driveway, or pedestrian walkway or plaza. Tenant frontage length shall be calculated separately for each building story.

Wall Sign. Any sign attached to, painted on or erected against the wall of a building or structure, with the exposed face of the sign in a plane approximately parallel to the plane of the wall.

Window Sign. Any sign, that is attached to, affixed to, leaning against, or otherwise placed within six feet of a window or door in a manner so that the sign is visible from outside the building.

Note: Definitions for other Signs referenced in this Ordinance are provided in the Code.

Sec. 5 PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS.

A. Building Permits. The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) shall not issue a permit for a sign, a sign structure, sign illumination, or alteration of an existing sign within the Sign District unless the sign complies with: (1) the requirements of this Ordinance as determined by the Director of Planning (Director); and (2) applicable requirements of the Code.

B. Director Sign-Off Required. LADBS may issue a permit for the following types of signs with only a Director sign-off on a sign permit within the Sign District:

1. Advertising Kiosks;
2. Digital Displays;
3. Monument Signs;
4. Projecting Signs;
5. Wall Signs; and
6. Window Signs in compliance with the standards in Section 7.H of this Ordinance (for Window Signs which do not meet the standards of Code Section 14.4.14.A).

The Director shall sign off on the permit application if the sign complies with all of the applicable requirements of this Ordinance and Exhibits and the applicable requirements of the Code. The Director's approval shall also be indicated by stamping the permit plans.

C. Exempt Signs. The following types of signs shall be subject to LADBS review, based on the applicable requirements of this Ordinance and the Code, but are exempt from Director's review and do not require a Director's permit signoff:

1. Information Signs;
2. Original Art Murals;
3. Public Art Installations;
4. Temporary Signs; and
5. Window Signs in compliance with Code Section 14.4.14.A.

D. Requests for Deviations from or Interpretations of Regulations. The procedures for adjustments, exceptions, amendments and interpretations to this Ordinance shall follow the procedures set forth in Section 11.5.7.E-H of the Code.

Sec. 6 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.

A. General Requirements of Code. Unless specified in this Ordinance to the contrary, the general sign requirements set forth in the Code shall apply to this Sign District for permits, plans, design and construction, materials, street address numbers, identification, maintenance, prohibited locations and sign illumination. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any combined area restrictions in Article 4.4, including but not limited to Sections 14.4.14.B, 14.4.10.A.4 and 14.4.10.A.5, shall not apply to signs within the Sign District. A building permit shall be obtained from LADBS in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Code for all signs, sign structures, and/or alterations to existing signs, other than changes to or replacement of sign face copy.

B. Permitted Signs. Except as otherwise prohibited in Section 6.C (Prohibited Signs), below, and notwithstanding Section 14.4.4.B of the Code, all signs described and regulated in Section 7 (Standards for Specific Types of Signs) of this Ordinance and all signs otherwise permitted by the Code shall be permitted within the Sign District.

C. Prohibited Signs. The following signs shall be prohibited:

1. Banner Signs;
2. Can / Cabinet Signs;
3. Captive Balloon Signs;
4. Illuminated Architectural Canopy Signs;
5. Inflatable Devices;
6. Pole Signs, excluding Information Signs;
7. Supergraphic Signs;
8. Roof Signs;
9. Exposed Neon Signs;
10. Supergraphics; and
11. Any sign not specifically authorized by this Ordinance or by the Code

D. Permitted Sign Types by Location. The location of signage within the Sign District is subject to standards identified in Section 7 (Standards for Specific Types of Signs) of this Ordinance, and Code Section 14.4.4.C (Prohibited Locations). In addition:

1. Signage shall be installed in substantial conformance with the approximate locations identified for each sign type in the Sign Location Map (Exhibit 1) as applicable.
2. Signage shall only be permitted from the street level to the 12th building story and shall be permitted within 50 vertical feet below the top of the building parapet of Tower 2, in accordance with the following Vertical Sign Zones (VSZ), as depicted in Exhibit 1:
 - a. **Vertical Sign Zone 1:** All signage types permitted by this Sign District shall be permitted from street level (L-1) to the 12th building story (L-12)

- b. **Vertical Sign Zone 2:** No signage shall be permitted from the 12th building story (L-12) to within 50 vertical feet below the top of the building parapet of Tower 2.
- c. **Vertical Sign Zone 3:** Within 50 vertical feet below the top of the building parapet of Tower 2, only two Wall Signs shall be permitted. All other signs and sign types shall be prohibited.
- d. No sign shall be placed over the exterior surface of any opening of a building, including its windows, doors, and vents, unless the Department of Building and Safety with the concurrence of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) determines, in writing, that the sign would not create a hazardous condition.

E. Illumination. Except for Temporary Signs (which may not be illuminated), all signs may be illuminated by either internal or external means. The illumination regulations set forth in the Code, including but not limited to Section 93.0117, shall apply. Methods of signage illumination may include, but are not limited to: electric lamps, such as neon tubes; fiber optics; incandescent lamps; LED; LCD; cathode ray tubes exposed directly to view; shielded spot lights and wall wash fixtures. In addition, signage shall be subject to the following regulations:

- 1. All illuminated signs shall be designed, located or screened so as to minimize to the greatest reasonable extent possible direct light sources onto any exterior wall of a residential unit and into the window of any commercial building. If signs are to be externally lit, the source of the external illumination shall be shielded from public view on adjoining lots.
- 2. Signage shall not use highly reflective materials such as mirrored glass.
- 3. All light sources, including illuminated signage, shall comply with CALGreen (Part 11 of Title 24, California Code of Regulations) and the Green Code of the City of Los Angeles.
- 4. Each Digital Display shall be fully dimmable, and shall be controlled by a programmable timer so that luminance levels may be adjusted according to the time of day and applicable lighting standards.

F. Refresh Rates.

- 1. **Refresh Rate.** The Refresh Rate is the rate at which a Digital Display may change content. The Refresh Rates are as follows and shall apply to Digital Displays as set forth in Section 7.G.
- 2. **Non-Controlled Refresh Rate.** The Non-Controlled Refresh Rate shall permit images, videos, animation, parts and/or illumination that flash, change, move, stream, scroll, blink or otherwise incorporate motion to change at an unrestricted rate.

G. Visual Maintenance. All signs shall be maintained to meet the following criteria at all times:

1. The building and ground area around the signs shall be properly maintained. All unused mounting structures, hardware, and wall perforation from any abandoned/removed sign shall be removed and building surfaces shall be restored to their original condition.
2. All signage copy shall be properly maintained and kept free from damage and other unsightly conditions, including graffiti.
3. All sign structures shall be kept in good repair and maintained in a safe and sound condition and in conformance with all applicable codes.
4. Razor wire, barbed wire, concertina wire, or other barriers preventing unauthorized access to any sign, if any, shall be hidden from public view.
5. No access platform, ladder, or other service appurtenance, visible from the sidewalk, street, or public right-of-way, shall be installed or attached to any sign structure.
6. Existing signs that are no longer serving the current tenants, including support structures, shall be removed and the building facades originally covered by the signs shall be repaired/resurfaced with materials and colors that are compatible with the facades.

H. Hazard Review. Signs that adhere to the regulations outlined in this Ordinance shall be exempted from hazard determination review procedures in the Code.

I. Alterations, Repairs or Rehabilitation. Any alteration, repair or maintenance work on a legally permitted sign or sign structure shall be governed by the Code.

J. Materials. The materials, construction, application, location and installation of any sign shall be in conformance with the Los Angeles Building Code and the Los Angeles Fire Code.

K. New Technologies. The Director may permit the use of any technology or material that did not exist as of the effective date of this Ordinance provided that the material is approved by LADBS, utilizing the Director's Interpretation procedure outlined in Code Section 11.5.7.H, if the Director finds that such technology or material is consistent with the regulations described herein.

Sec. 7 STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF SIGNS.

A. Information Signs.

1. **General.** Information Signs are allowed within the Sign District and shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Code. Notwithstanding Code Section 14.4.7.B, this Ordinance authorizes Information Signs to be located at heights greater than six feet six inches above the sidewalk grade or edge of roadway grade nearest the sign.

B. Monument Signs.

1. **Sign Area.** Each tenant is limited to one Monument Sign. The sign area of each Monument Sign shall not exceed 2 square feet per foot of Tenant Frontage and each individual Monument Sign shall not exceed 30 square feet in area per sign face. Monument Signs may be incorporated with landscape walls and other architectural elements. The individual sign area of a Monument Sign is measured based on the area containing signage, and does not include any adjacent or attached landscape or architectural elements.
 - a. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any on-site residential building shall be permitted two Monument Signs and each individual Monument Sign shall not exceed 30 square feet in area per sign face.
2. **Height.** The top of a Monument Sign shall be limited to a maximum height of 8 feet above grade, planter, or adjacent finished floor level.
3. **Location.** The location of the Monument Sign shall not interfere with or present a hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
4. **Design.** Monument Signs may be double sided.
5. **On-Site Signs.** Monument Signs shall be On-Site Signs and shall not be Off-Site Signs.

C. Projecting Signs.

1. **Sign Area.** A maximum of four Projecting Signs shall be permitted. Each individual Projecting Sign shall not exceed 600 square feet in area, including a maximum of 300 square feet in area per sign face. Cylindrical signs shall be interpreted as having two sign faces, each face comprising half of the cylindrical sign area.
2. **Height.** A Projecting Sign shall not be located lower than eight feet above finished grade of finished floor level directly below the sign face or structure.
3. **Location.** Projecting Signs shall be in substantial conformance with the locations shown in Exhibit 1. The plane of the sign face of a Projecting Sign shall be within 15 degrees of being perpendicular to the face of the building, except at the corner of the building.
4. **Design.**
 - a. A Projecting Sign shall align with major building elements such as materials, scale, and general design aesthetic. Projecting Signs may be double-sided or cylindrical.
 - b. The width of the sign face of a Projecting Sign that is perpendicular to the building shall not exceed ten feet. This measurement shall not include the dimensions of the sign's supporting structure.

- c. No portion of a Projecting Sign that is parallel to the face of the building shall not exceed four feet in width.
 - d. No portion of a Projecting Sign that is parallel to the face of the building shall contain any text, message, or logo.
5. **On-Site Signs.** Projecting Signs shall be On-Site Signs and shall not be Off-Site Signs.

D. Wall Signs. Wall Signs do not include Supergraphic Signs or Digital Displays.

1. **Sign Area.**

- a. **Vertical Sign Zone 1:** Below the 12th building story (L-12), the following shall apply:

Each tenant shall be limited to a maximum of two Wall Signs. The sign area of each Wall Sign shall not exceed 2 square feet per foot of Tenant Frontage. Each individual Wall Sign shall not exceed 150 square feet. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following Wall Signs shall be permitted in addition to other signs allowed by this Sign District:

- (1) Three additional Wall Signs or areas for Wall Signs shall be permitted, in substantial conformance with Exhibit 1:
 - (a) one along Olive Street and not to exceed 400 square feet;
 - (b) one along 1st Street and not to exceed 150 square feet; and
 - (c) one along the Valet Parking area on Level L-3 (Porte Cochere), not to exceed 420 square feet. This sign shall be located a minimum distance of 50 feet from any public right-of-way.
- (2) For any on-site hotel uses, three additional Wall Signs shall be permitted. Each individual Wall Sign shall not exceed 100 square feet.

- b. **Vertical Sign Zone 3:** Within 50 vertical feet of the top of parapet of Tower 2, the following shall apply:

A maximum of two Wall Signs shall be permitted. The sign area of each Wall Sign shall be limited to a maximum of 300 square feet. Each Wall Sign shall be located on a wall and shall not be located on a roof, including a sloping roof, and shall not obscure views out from the interior of the building.

2. **Height.** Wall Signs shall not extend above the top of the wall of the building.

3. Design.

- a. Within 50 vertical feet of the top of parapet of Tower 2, Wall Signs are encouraged to meet the following guidelines:
 - i. The use of symbols or logos, rather than names or words, is encouraged.
 - ii. Wall Signs should be integrated into the architectural design of the building.
 - iii. Wall Signs should be designed to be easily changed over time, in order to accommodate new tenants.
 - iv. Wall signs should be designed to preserve outward views.
 - v. Nighttime lighting of Identification Signs, as well as of distinctive building tops, is encouraged and the two should be integrated. Lighting of Identification Signs should include backlighting that creates a “halo” around the Wall Sign. Backlighting may be combined with other types of lighting.
4. **On-Site and Off-Site Signs.** Wall Signs shall be On-Site Signs and shall not be Off-Site Signs, with an exception to allow for one Off-Site Wall Sign to be located on the Valet Parking area on Level L-3 (Porte Cochere), for a maximum of 420 square feet in sign area.

E. Advertising Kiosks. Advertising Kiosks with digital faces shall not be considered Digital Displays.

1. **Sign Area.** Each individual Advertising Kiosk shall not exceed 80 square feet in area, including a maximum of 40 square feet in area per sign face, with the exception of one Advertising Kiosk, which shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, including a maximum of 50 square feet in area per sign face.
2. **Height.** Advertising Kiosks shall not exceed a maximum of 13 feet in height from grade or finished floor level.
3. **Location.** A maximum of six Advertising Kiosks with digital faces shall be permitted and a maximum of 12 Advertising Kiosks with no digital faces shall also be permitted.
4. **Illumination and Operation.** Advertising Kiosks shall be internally illuminated.
5. **Refresh Rate and Operation.** A maximum of six Advertising Kiosks may incorporate digital faces. Any digital faces shall be subject to the Non-Controlled Refresh Rate. Digital faces shall operate only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m.
6. **On-Site and Off-Site Signs.** Advertising Kiosks may be On-Site and/or Off-Site Signs.

F. Digital Displays.

1. **Sign Area.** The total combined area of Digital Displays in the Sign District shall not exceed 164 square feet. A maximum of eight Digital Displays shall be permitted; seven of which are not to exceed 12 square feet in area, and one of which is not to exceed 80 square feet in area.
2. **Location.** Digital Displays shall be subject to the following:
 - a. A maximum of eight Digital Displays shall be permitted within the Sign District that do not face the Public right-of-way. The Digital Display which is greater than 12 square feet in area shall be located on the Valet Parking area on L-3 (Porte Cochere), and shall be located a minimum distance of 50 feet from any public right-of-way.
3. **Design.** Digital Displays shall use grid lights, cathode ray projections, light emitting diode displays, plasma screens, liquid crystal displays, fiber optics, or other electronic media or technology to be developed.
4. **Illumination and Illumination Plan.** Digital Displays shall be internally illuminated and subject to the applicable illumination standards of Section 6.E. of this Ordinance.
5. **Refresh Rates and Operation.**
 - a. The eight Digital Displays shall be subject to the Non-Controlled Refresh Rate.
 - b. The eight Digital Displays shall operate only between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m.
6. **On-Site and Off-Site Signs.** The Digital Displays permitted by this subsection may be On-Site or Off-Site Signs.

G. Window Signs.

1. **Sign Area.**

The sign area of Window Signs shall not exceed 2 square feet of tenant frontage
2. **On-Site Sign.** Window Signs shall be On-Site Signs.

H. Temporary Signs.

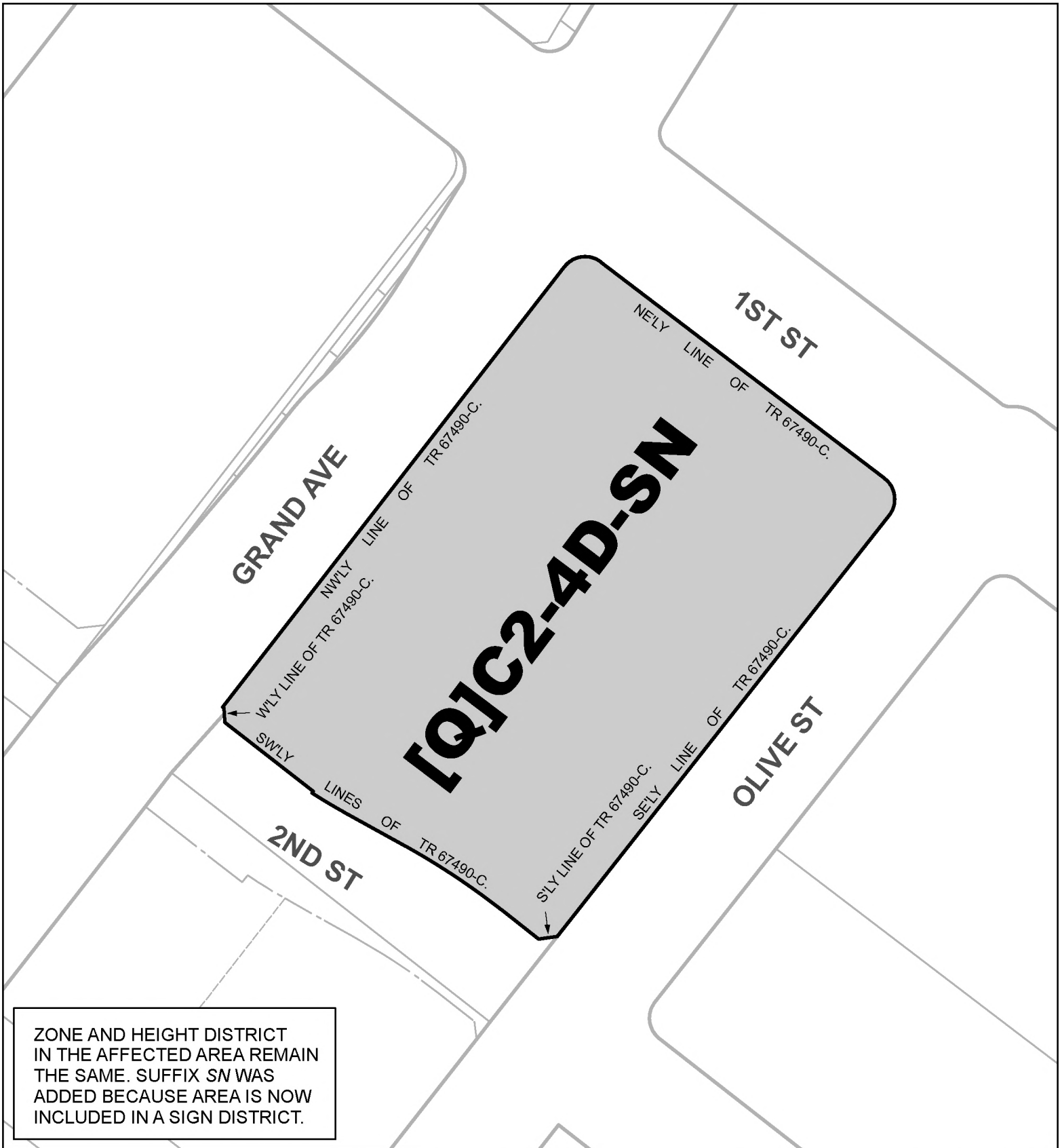
1. **General.** Temporary Signs are allowed within the Sign District and shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Code.

I. Original Art Murals / Public Art Installations.

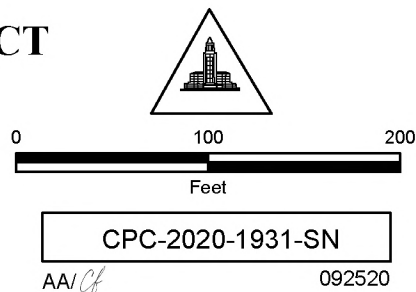
1. **General.** Original Art Murals and Public Art Installations are allowed within the Sign District and shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Code.

Sec. 8 SEVERABILITY.

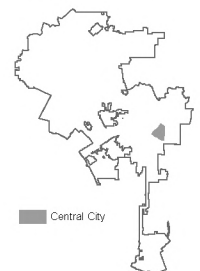
If any provision of this Ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions, clauses or applications of said Ordinance which can be implemented without the invalid provision, clause or application, and to this end the provisions and clauses of this Ordinance are declared to be severable.



THE GRAND SIGN DISTRICT



City of Los Angeles



Sec. 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance and have it published in accordance with Council policy, either in a daily newspaper circulated in the City of Los Angeles or by positing for ten days in three public places in the City of Los Angeles: one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall; one copy on the bulletin board located at the Main Street entrance to the Los Angeles City Hall East; and one copy on the bulletin board located at the Temple Street entrance to the Los Angeles County Hall of Records.

Pursuant to Section 558 of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission on **October 22, 2020** recommends this ordinance **BE ADOPTED** by the City Council.

By  _____
Irene Gonzalez
Commission Office Manager

File No. _____

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

Ordinance Passed _____

Approved _____