

BRENTWOOD RESIDENTS COALITION

zoning | land use | planning | environmental

April 5, 2021

Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Chair
Members of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, City Hall Room 1010
Los Angeles, California 90012
Via online portal: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/publiccomment>
Email: clerk.plumcommittee@lacity.org

RE: BRC Urges a Re-write of the Ordinance on Temporary Signs, CF No: 17-0893

Dear PLUM Committee:

In keeping with our commitment to appropriate regulatory constraints on visually-obtrusive roadside signage, Brentwood Residents Coalition (“BRC”)¹ strongly opposes the proposed ordinance for temporary signs (CF 17-0893).

Signage clutters our visual environment while creating safety hazards for drivers and pedestrians alike. Furthermore, in its newest, most technologically insidious form, it now has the ability to invade our cell phones and steal private data from unknowing passersby (without regard to whether they are adults or children), in order to more effectively target advertising dollars.

Signage poses very real threats, both physical and psychological, to the well-being of our citizens and to the beauty and health of our environment. This is why strong and comprehensive regulation and enforcement are so essential. The existing temporary sign ordinance, abused and inadequately enforced for years, is certainly not up to the task, as evidenced by the “temporary” (but always there) street banners, sandwich boards, wall signs, and so on that line – one might even say *litter* -- the Institutional Corridor area of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. Instead of the low-density residentially-compatible and parkway-enhancing “sensitive development and uses” called for by the Specific Plan, these signs make it look as if a circus is coming to town.

¹ BRC is a grass roots, non-profit advocacy group whose purposes are to preserve and enhance the environment and quality of life in Brentwood, to protect the integrity of residential neighborhoods, to assist with planning, to uphold zoning and municipal codes, to encourage traffic safety, and to educate the public on issues that affect quality of life and the environment.

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As a group dedicated to protecting our hillsides and scenic resources, BRC is particularly opposed to signage in this and other scenic corridors such as Sunset and Sepulveda in or adjacent to our hillside communities. To be clear: such signage is a flagrant violation of the general plan² as well as the applicable specific plans. And yet it is there for all to see, distracting from, obstructing, and actually ruining the beautiful views and unique character of these supposedly protected scenic corridors. A new temporary sign ordinance needs to address this problem directly.

Like its predecessor, CF 17-0893 will give the sign industry way too much latitude. (The word *temporary*, loosely defined and loosely enforced, can easily turn out to be, for all intents and purposes, synonymous with *permanent*.) More rigorous regulations are needed, including:

- banning of “temporary” signs on functioning businesses;
- banning of the new illuminated temporary signs, with or without tracking devices;
- significant fines for non-compliance (a major problem with the current ordinance is fines are so low violators internalize them as a cost of doing business).

In addition, rather than plastering temporary construction walls with temporary posters, we support Scenic Los Angeles’ idea of grated windows every hundred feet, to provide transparency and accountability regarding what is really happening behind those construction site walls.

And, of great importance to BRC, we urge the City to include very explicit regulations prohibiting ALL temporary signage along scenic corridors and in parks.

After so many years working to get a decent universal sign ordinance, it is painful to contemplate that all the hard work could be undone by a poorly written *temporary sign* ordinance.

BRC urges this Committee to reject these weak and permissive revisions to the proposed temporary sign ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,



Wendy-Sue Rosen

² See Mobility Element of the General Plan, pages 168-172,
https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/523f2a95-9d72-41d7-aba5-1972f84c1d36/Mobility_Plan_2035.pdf.