



## Staff Report

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Steven Jones, Community Development Director  
Darron Usher, Principal Management Analyst  
**DATE:** November 4, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Revisions to the Beaumont Municipal Code - Billboards

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**Description:** This discussion item is to explore the opportunity to revise Chapter 17.07.030 Basic Policies regarding billboards to allow for the potential to generate revenue from the development of billboards and to develop billboards at new locations to incentivize development within the city.

### **Background and Analysis:**

The City of Beaumont currently restricts the development of new billboards, including electronic signage, and requires ownership of existing structures to relocate or convert static billboards to electronic. This limitation has been raised by developers, businesses, and community stakeholders as a missed opportunity for economic development and potential revenue generation.

Given Beaumont's location along Interstate 10, the City has valuable freeway frontage that remains underutilized due to current code restrictions. Certain segments of the freeway corridor contain multiple static boards, resulting in visual clutter and a perception of over-saturation. Similar conditions exist throughout the City's core areas, where some billboards were established without proper land use approval or building permits. Updating the ordinance to reflect current industry standards could help reduce unpermitted structures, improve visual quality, and better align the City's appearance with its economic and development goals.

Many cities throughout the Inland Empire regulate electronic billboards as a specialized sign type through their zoning and sign ordinances. These jurisdictions typically require a discretionary review process and development agreements to evaluate land use compatibility, visual impacts, and public safety considerations. Applications often include technical studies such as brightness and photometric analyses, visual simulations, and traffic safety evaluations. Local review processes are coordinated with Caltrans and the California Outdoor Advertising Act to ensure compliance for billboards located along state highways. Some cities have adopted overlay zones or other specific

standards to regulate location, size, message duration, dimming controls, and community benefit provisions such as public service messaging. Collectively, these practices balance economic opportunity with public safety and community character.

### **Options for Council Consideration**

Staff is requesting Council direction on one of the following three options:

#### **Option 1 – Establish an Overlay Zone**

Create an **Overlay Zone** allowing new electronic billboards at designated locations primarily located near freeway entrances and exits, including the **Beaumont Pointe area** and other key development gateways along Interstate 10.

This option would:

- Encourage economic development by leveraging high-visibility freeway frontage for advertising opportunities.
- Provide potential revenue generation through lease or revenue-sharing agreements.
- Require strict spacing, height, brightness, and operational controls to protect community aesthetics and safety.
- Allow the City to limit the number and location of billboards to minimize visual clutter.

#### **Option 2 – Maintain the Status Quo**

Retain the current restrictions that prohibit new billboards and limit electronic conversions to property owners of existing structures.

This option would:

- Maintain current aesthetic conditions and visual character.
- Avoid additional staff time and costs associated with ordinance updates and discretionary review processes.
- Continue existing limitations on potential revenue and development incentives.

#### **Option 3 – Council Recommendations**

Allow the City Council to provide additional direction or identify specific amendments to be included in a revised draft ordinance.

This option would:

- Provide flexibility for Council to tailor standards and locations to specific community priorities.
- Allow staff to return with a draft ordinance that incorporates Council's input for future consideration.

## **Current Ordinance Updates – One-to-One Billboard Swap**

As part of this discussion, staff recommends that Council revisit the existing provision within the Beaumont Municipal Code Chapter 17.07.030 Section G.2 that allows a 1-to-1 swap of static to electronic billboards. Under the current model, converting one static billboard to one electronic display results in no reduction in the total number of billboard structures, thereby maintaining the existing visual saturation along the I-10 corridor.

To support visual improvement and reduce sign density, staff recommends that the City consider adopting a **4-to-1 swap ratio**—requiring the removal of four static billboards for each new electronic billboard approved. This approach would align with modern industry practices, enhance corridor aesthetics, and reinforce the City's goals of reducing clutter while promoting responsible economic development.

It is important to note that any new billboards constructed along the freeway must comply with CalTrans regulations, along with the California Outdoor Advertising Act, which is applicable to billboards placed within 660 feet from the edge of the right-of-way of an interstate or primary highway.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

The estimated cost of preparing this staff report is \$300.

The City may realize increased revenue through permitting fees, lease agreements, or revenue-sharing models. Exact fiscal impacts will depend on the number of billboards installed and negotiated agreements with developers.

### **Recommended Action:**

Discuss the three options presented, provide direction to staff on the preferred approach, and consider revising the existing 1-to-1 billboard conversion ratio to a 4-to-1 model to support corridor beautification and balanced economic opportunity.

### **Attachments:**

- A. Current Ordinance – 1166 and 1167
- B. Map of Current Billboards
- C. Potential Billboards
- D. Presentation