



City of Manteca Planning Commission AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 19, 2026

PROJECT NAME: ZTA to Section 17.56.030 and 040 of MMC

PROJECT LOCATION: Citywide – Properties owned by the City

APPLICATION NUMBERS: Zoning Text Amendment 26-13

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing to consider adoption of a resolution recommending City Council find Zoning Text Amendment 26-13 exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3), "Common Sense" of the California Environmental Quality Act, and adopt an ordinance for ZTA 26-13 to amend Sections 17.56.030 (General Prohibition) and 17.56.040 (Signs Allowed on City Property) of Chapter 17.56 of Title 17 of the Manteca Municipal Code.

APPLICABLE CODES AND PROCEDURES

2043 Manteca General Plan
 MMC 17.08.050 – Public Hearing and Public Notices
 MMC 17.10.190 – Zoning (Text/Map) Amendment
 MMC 17.54.040 – Exempt Signs
 MMC 17.56.020 – Intent as to Public Forum
 MMC 17.56.030 – General Prohibition
 MMC 17.56.040 – Signs Allowed on City Property
 Section 17.100.060 – Universal Definitions
 California Government Code § 65800, et seq.
 CEQA Guidelines, 14 Cal. Code Regs. §15061

Procedures

The Manteca Municipal Code (MMC) designates the Planning Commission as the reviewing authority over numerous land use permits ("permits") and entitlements. The Planning Commission may approve, conditionally approve, deny, or deny without prejudice a permit or entitlement authorized by Title 17 (Zoning), provided that a public hearing is held on the proposed use or development project, and members of the public are allowed to provide public testimony.

Prior to the public hearing, a staff report, environmental review and determination, and general plan findings for the permit or entitlement must be made available to the Planning Commission, interested agencies, and the public.

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The permit(s) or entitlement(s) should be denied if the Planning Commission cannot make the appropriate findings. Conditions may be attached to the approval of the permit or entitlement to ensure compatibility. A Project's design may be altered, and site improvements may be required to make a Project compatible with nearby uses. In addition, the permit or entitlement may be subject to future review, modification, or revocation by the Planning Commission as deemed necessary.

When a permit or entitlement requires a determination or action from the City Council, all project permits or entitlements must be processed concurrently, and final action must be taken by the City Council for all such requested permits or entitlements.

Appeals

Any person dissatisfied with the determination or action of the Planning Commission may appeal such action to the City Council within (ten) 10 days from the date of determination or action. Appeals must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a filing fee to the Development Services Director, identifying the determination or action being appealed and specifically stating the basis or grounds of the appeal.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Background

The City of Manteca is proposing a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) to Sections 17.56.030 (General Prohibition) and 17.56.040 (Signs Allowed on City Property) relating to signs allowed on City property of Chapter 17.56 of Title 17 of the Manteca Municipal Code. The proposed ZTA would allow private parties to install, erect, and maintain signs on city-owned property, subject to a city-approved agreement, franchise, license, or permit. Non-city-owned signs on City property have been generally limited to exempt signs listed under Section 17.54.040 (Exempt Signs). Exempt signs include but are not limited to: signs from other governmental agencies, legal notices, advertisements prescribed by law, direction, warning, or information signs or structures required or authorized by Federal, State, County, or City authority, such as traffic control signs (e.g., stop, yield), highway route number signs, and construction zone signs.

Presently, Section 17.56.030 expressly prohibits the display of privately-owned signs on City property. The overarching purpose and intent of Chapter 17.56 is to prevent the deleterious or inappropriate use of City properties by private parties for public forums or economic gain.

Further, the provisions of sub-Section 17.56.040(C) only allow the City and other government agencies to install, erect, and maintain signs on city-owned property. Examples

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include signs installed or erected by the State Department of Transportation and San Joaquin County on City properties, generally to promote legal notices or advertisements prescribed by law or of regional interest.

ANALYSIS

The ZTA aims to create and ensure flexibility for mutually beneficial partnerships between the City and private parties that are not just safe but also attract and serve the economic viability of the community, while maintaining City oversight, protecting public property, and ensuring consistency with adopted City policies and regulations. By allowing carefully structured public-private partnerships on city-owned properties, the ZTA enables the City to leverage existing public assets to generate economic value, support local investment, and increase visibility for community-serving initiatives.

As an example, the ZTA will allow the City to expand and enhance the Downtown mural and public art program in Downtown through public-private partnerships, contributing to placemaking, increasing foot traffic, and strengthening the sense of identity in key commercial areas. Additionally, city-owned properties within the Family Entertainment Zone (FEZ) and along State Routes 99 and 120 may be strategically utilized for marketing and informational purposes, increasing regional exposure and supporting economic activity within the City.

Through this ZTA, the City will further implement the 2025-2026 City Council Goals and Priorities, specifically, Goal 2 – Economic Development & Vitality directs the Development Services Department to:

Task 3: In conjunction with the City Attorney's Office, adopt a Digital Billboard Policy and/or the applicable City Ordinance.

Task 4: Complete the billboard designs for two City-owned properties.

To that end, the proposed text amendments, with new language in red and deleted language in strikethrough, are intended to implement the goals and policies of the 2043 General Plan while satisfying the required findings for approval of a zoning text amendment under the Zoning Ordinance.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed ZTA will directly and indirectly provide compliance with the General Plan's goals and policies. Below is an excerpt from the 2043 General Plan that is germane to this action.

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- A. Implementation LU-1b: Regularly review and revise, as necessary, the Zoning Ordinance to [...] ensure consistency with the General Plan in terms of zoning districts and development standards.**

Analysis: Through the proposed ZTA, the City will advance the goals and policies of the 2043 General Plan and further implement Goal 2 – Economic Development & Vitality, which entails the City making necessary ordinance updates as directed by the 2025-2026 City Council Goals and Priorities.

- B. Goal CD-3: Enhance gateways, key corridors, and wayfinding for an improved sense of arrival and orientation for residents and visitors throughout Manteca.**

Analysis: The proposed ZTA supports Goal CD-3 by allowing the City to implement coordinated signage, public art, and informational displays on City-owned properties located along key corridors and entry points into the community. By enabling limited public-private partnerships through City-approved agreements, the ZTA provides additional tools to enhance visual cues, reinforce community identity, and improve wayfinding for residents and visitors. All signage would remain subject to City review and approval, ensuring consistency with adopted design standards and the intended character of gateway locations.

- C. Implementation CD-3a: Establish City gateway features at intersections where gateway features can be established, including, but not limited to, Lathrop Road/SR 99, Austin Road/SR 99, Main Street/SR 120, Union Road/SR 120, McKinley Road/SR 120, Airport Way/SR 120, and Yosemite Avenue/SR 99.**

Analysis: The ZTA facilitates implementation of Policy CD-3a by allowing City-owned properties at or near major gateways and intersections to be used for signage, public art, and other visual elements that contribute to a sense of arrival. The proposed amendments enable the City to partner with private entities, when appropriate, to help fund, design, or maintain gateway features, while retaining full control over their placement, appearance, and messaging. This approach expands the City's ability to establish gateway treatments without compromising public oversight or land use compatibility.

- D. Implementation CD-3c: Work with Caltrans to include gateway features in the future design of the designated arterial street and highway interchanges.**

Analysis: The proposed ZTA supports Policy CD-3c by providing a flexible regulatory mechanism that allows signage and gateway elements on City-owned properties

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adjacent to State highways and interchanges, subject to coordination with Caltrans and other applicable agencies. By clarifying that non-City signs may be permitted through City-approved agreements, the ZTA enables the City to participate more effectively in collaborative gateway and corridor enhancement efforts associated with State transportation facilities, while ensuring compliance with all applicable State and local requirements.

E. Implementation CD-5c: Continue to work with Caltrans on implementing a freeway and interchange native landscaping planting and maintenance program to improve the appearance of the community from SR 99 and SR 120.

Analysis: While the ZTA does not directly regulate landscaping, it complements Policy CD-5c by supporting broader freeway and interchange beautification efforts. Strategically placed signage and public art on City-owned properties, when coordinated with native landscaping and corridor improvements, can enhance the overall visual quality of freeway approaches and interchanges. The proposed amendments allow the City to integrate signage and artistic elements with ongoing landscaping initiatives, contributing to a cohesive and attractive community image along SR 99 and SR 120.

ZONING CONFORMANCE

Zoning Amendment Findings

Zoning Amendments may be granted only when the City Council can make the following findings:

A. The proposed Zoning Amendment (text or map) is consistent with the General Plan and any applicable Specific Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs.

Analysis: The proposed Zoning Text Amendment is consistent with the 2043 General Plan and applicable implementation programs, as it supports policies related to gateways, corridors, wayfinding, and economic vitality through City-controlled use of signage and public art on City-owned properties, while providing a regulatory mechanism.

B. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City.

Analysis: The proposed Zoning Text Amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City because it does not allow unrestricted private signage and requires that any privately owned sign be approved through a City agreement, franchise, license, or permit. This process enables the City to review each proposal for safety, visual quality, traffic, and

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compatibility with surrounding uses. By maintaining oversight and enforcement authority, the amendment preserves the intent of Chapter 17.56 while allowing carefully regulated partnerships that support community and economic objectives.

C. The amendment has been reviewed in compliance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Analysis: The proposed Zoning Text Amendment do not entail allowing uses previously not considered nor does it include approval of a project specific site, it was determined that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the Project in question may have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore, the Project is exempt from further CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15061(b)(3)).

D. If a map amendment, the site is physically suitable (including absence of physical constraints, access, compatibility with adjoining land uses, and provisions of utilities) for the requested zoning designations and anticipated land uses/development.

Analysis: The proposed action is not a Rezone/Zoning Map Amendment.

E. If a text amendment, the amendment is internally consistent with other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code.

Analysis: The proposed Zoning Text Amendment is internally consistent with the structure, intent, and regulatory framework of the Zoning Code. The amendments clarify and modify Sections 17.56.030 and 17.56.040 to allow limited private signage on City-owned property under defined and controlled circumstances, while maintaining consistency with existing sign regulations, permitting processes, and enforcement provisions. The ZTA reinforces the purpose of Chapter 17.56 by preserving City authority over public property and ensuring that signage is reviewed and approved in accordance with adopted standards and procedures.

Zoning Text Amendments

The following is direct text from the Zoning Ordinance with proposed amendments. Proposed new text is in red, and deleted text has a strikethrough.

§ 17.56.030 General Prohibition.

Unless specifically authorized by this Chapter, no signs may be *installed, erected, displayed, or maintained* on City property by private parties *without a city-approved agreement, franchise, license, or permit*. Any sign posted on City property in violation of this Chapter may be summarily removed by the City as a trespass and a public nuisance.

§ 17.56.040 Signs Allowed on City Property.

The following signs may be *installed*, erected, and displayed, *and maintained* on City property:

- A. Traffic control and traffic directional signs erected by the City or another governmental agency; ~~unit~~;
- B. Signs required by law;
- C. Signs *owned* ~~erected and maintained~~ by *the City, a governmental agency, a private party, or other non-governmental entity*; ~~a public agency or on public property~~;
- D. Safety and emergency signs, including identification and warning signs concerning potential hazards or hazardous conditions, utility installations, flood hazards or flood control facilities, emergency conditions or services, and crime and accident scene control;
- E. Signs allowable under Section 17.56.050 (Temporary Signs Displaying Noncommercial Message) of this Chapter;
- F. Signs authorized under Section 17.56.060 (Street Banner Program); and
- G. Signs authorized under Section 17.54.100 (Allowed Off-Site Signage).

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN CONFORMANCE

This particular ZTA is not subject to the Climate Action Plan (CAP) because this action does not involve approval of any physical development or other activities contemplated by the implementation strategies of the CAP.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE

The proposed Zoning Text Amendment is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act. This "Common Sense" exemption applies to projects where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Because this action is solely a policy decision, not involving a direct physical change or disturbance to the environment, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the facts and findings presented in this staff report, the Project's cumulative design, use(s), and operations will not be a detriment to the public health, safety, peace, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of those residing or working in proximity to the Project. Therefore, staff recommend that the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing and recommend approval of the Project to the City Council.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 2 – Planning Commission Resolution

Attachment 3 – Exhibit ‘A’ – Ordinance

Attachment 4 – Project Presentation

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Reviewed and Approved by: Brad Wungluck, Development Services Director