

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Meeting Date: September 15, 2025

Agenda Item: 6B	Prepared by: L. Suzanne Pritchard, PLA, AICP, CFM
Agenda Section: Unfinished Business: Ordinance. Second Reading	Date: September 10, 2025
Subject: Amendments to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, revising allowed locations for electronic message board signs [ZTX-25-7]	Division: Planning and Development

Background:

Electronic message signs are currently prohibited in the Resort Residential (R-4) and Resort Commercial (RC) districts. These two districts run the entirety of Ocean Boulevard adjacent to the beachfront, with the exception of some isolated Planned Development Districts and the area between 5th Avenue North and 18th Avenue North, which is zoned Single-Family Residential, Low Density (R-1). The prohibition in these two zoning districts appears to have been enacted to preserve the visual quality and character of the oceanfront corridor by limiting the presence of dynamic or illuminated signage. However, several of the City's key redevelopment corridors (Main Street, 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, and Sea Mountain Highway) terminate at Ocean Boulevard and include RC-zoned properties near their base. These areas have been identified as priorities for reinvestment and revitalization.

Proposal:

The proposed amendment would maintain the current prohibition of electronic message signs along Ocean Boulevard but would allow them within the RC zoning district when located along designated historic main streets: 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, Main Street, and Sea Mountain Highway. The intent is to support ongoing redevelopment and aesthetic improvements in these corridors by allowing modernized signage that can enhance visibility and attract investment, while continuing to protect the scenic integrity of Ocean Boulevard. This approach also helps level the playing field for businesses that have chosen to locate in priority redevelopment areas, rather than in other zoning districts like Highway Commercial (HC), where electronic signs are already allowed but which are not emphasized for reinvestment in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July 22, 2025, and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the zoning amendment. There was no public comment.

Recommended Action:

Approve or deny the proposed ordinance on second reading

Reviewed by Department Head	Reviewed by City Manager	Reviewed by City Attorney
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Council Action:

Motion By _____ 2nd By _____ To _____

ORDINANCE

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH
PROVIDING THAT THE CODE OF ORDINANCES,
CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA,
BE AMENDED BY REVISING CHAPTER 23, ZONING,
ARTICLE III, SIGN REGULATIONS, § 23-36,
SIGN REGULATIONS, SUBSECTION (5), PROHIBITED SIGNS,
PARAGRAPH (P) OF SAID CODE.**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA,
IN COUNCIL DULY ASSEMBLED, THAT:**

Section 1. That *Sec. § 23-36, Sign regulations, subsection (5), Prohibited signs, paragraph (p)*, be revised to read as follows (*new matter underlined, deleted matter struck-through*).

Sec. 23-36. Sign regulations.

(5) Prohibited signs:

(p) Electronic message signs in the R-4 (Resort Residential) and RC (Resort Commercial) districts located on Ocean Boulevard.

Section 2. That the North Myrtle Beach Planning Commission has provided the required public notice of this request and has held the necessary public hearings in accordance with applicable State Statutes and City Ordinances.

DONE, RATIFIED AND PASSED, THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

ATTEST:

Mayor Marilyn Hatley

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney

FIRST READING: 8.18.2025
SECOND READING: 9.15.2025

REVIEWED:

City Manager

ORDINANCE: 25-38

6E. ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT ZTX-25-7: City staff has initiated a text amendment revising allowed locations for electronic message board signs.

Background:

Electronic message signs are currently prohibited in the Resort Residential (R-4) and Resort Commercial (RC) districts. These two districts run the entirety of Ocean Boulevard adjacent to the beachfront with the exception of some isolated Planned Development Districts and the area between 5th Avenue North and 18th Avenue North which is zoned Single-Family Residential, Low Density (R-1). The prohibition in these two zoning districts appears to have been enacted to preserve the visual quality and character of the oceanfront corridor by limiting the presence of dynamic or illuminated signage. However, several of the City's key redevelopment corridors—Main Street, 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, and Sea Mountain Highway—terminate at Ocean Boulevard and include RC-zoned properties near their base. These areas have been identified as priorities for reinvestment and revitalization.

Proposed Changes:

The proposed amendment would maintain the current prohibition of electronic message signs along Ocean Boulevard but would allow them within the RC zoning district when located along designated historic main streets: 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, Main Street, and Sea Mountain Highway. The intent is to support ongoing redevelopment and aesthetic improvements in these corridors by allowing modernized signage that can enhance visibility and attract investment, while continuing to protect the scenic integrity of Ocean Boulevard. This approach also helps level the playing field for businesses that have chosen to locate in priority redevelopment areas, rather than in other zoning districts like Highway Commercial (HC) where electronic signs are already allowed but which are not emphasized for reinvestment in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed amendment addresses *Chapter 23, Zoning, Article III. Sign Regulations, § 23-36, Sign regulations, subsection (5), Prohibited signs, paragraph (p)* and would appear in the Ordinance as follows (new matter underlined):

Sec. 23-36. Sign regulations.

(5) Prohibited signs:

(p) Electronic message signs in the R-4 (Resort Residential) and RC (Resort Commercial) districts located on Ocean Boulevard.

According to § 23-4, *Amendments*, of the Zoning Ordinance, the advertisement requirement for Zoning Ordinance amendments is 15 days, and that advertisement notice has been met. The amendment is presented to the Planning Commission for a recommendation that will be forwarded to City Council at their next meeting scheduled for August 18, 2025.

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission may recommend approval, recommend approval with modifications and/or conditions, or recommend denial of the proposal as submitted.

Alternative Motions

- 1) I move that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the zoning ordinance text amendment [ZTX-25-7] as submitted.

OR

- 2) I move that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the zoning ordinance text amendment [ZTX-25-7] as submitted.

OR

- 3) I move (an alternate motion).