



# City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk  
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columbuscitycouncil.org

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 0707-2017, Version: 1**

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### BACKGROUND:

The use of Ad Murals in downtown Columbus was initiated in 2002 as a means to enliven and introduce creativity to the built environment through their placement on underutilized building facades, such as blank walls. Ad murals require approval by the Downtown Commission and constitute approximately 50% of all commission cases. They are temporary in nature, allowing for periodic replacement.

This proposed code update provides for staff approval of ad murals that meet a set of criteria. Downtown Commission approval would be required for new ad mural locations and ad murals not meeting the stated criteria. This approach is intended to reduce commission caseload, better align the review process with advertising timeframes, and respond to recent court guidance regarding the regulation of temporary graphics.

On February 28, 2017 the Downtown Commission recommended adoption by City Council of the code update. The Columbus Development Commission met on March 9 and also recommended Council adoption of the update.

DOWNTOWN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION: Approval

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

To amend Section 3359.25 of the Columbus City Codes addressing ad murals within the downtown district.

**WHEREAS**, the use of Ad Murals in downtown Columbus was initiated in 2002 as a means to enliven and introduce creativity to the built environment through their placement on underutilized building facades, such as blank walls.

**WHEREAS**, ad murals require approval by the Downtown Commission and constitute approximately 50% of all commission cases; and

**WHEREAS**, this proposed update allows for staff approval of ad murals that meet a series of criteria; and

**WHEREAS**, this approach is intended to reduce commission caseload, better align the review process with advertising timeframes, and respond to recent court guidance regarding the regulation of temporary graphics; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 28, 2017, the Downtown Commission recommended adoption by City Council of the code update; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 9, 2017, the Columbus Development Commission also recommended Council adoption of the update; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Development will prepare a report summarizing implementation of this new approach during its first year; now, therefore,

### **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**Section1.** That Section 3359.25 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby amendment to read as follows:

#### **3359.25 - Graphics**

(A) Within the downtown district, graphics which require a permit as determined by Chapter 3375, General Provisions

(Graphics), also require a certificate of appropriateness and, excepting the provisions of division (B) of this section, are subject to the provisions of Subsection 3359.05(C)(1), Design review. Such graphics are also subject to the provisions of Chapter 3375, General provisions (graphics) and Chapter 3381, Implementation (graphics). Nonconforming graphics are defined and regulated by the provisions of Section 3381.08, nonconforming graphics. Whenever there is a conflict between the Graphics Code and the provisions of this chapter, the latter shall prevail.

(B) The use of ad murals in downtown was initiated to enliven the built environment and create visual interest through their placement on underutilized secondary building surfaces, such as blank walls. For purposes of this section, ad murals are defined as off-premises graphics composed of paint, vinyl, plastic, or other similar materials and are applied to a building wall surface either directly or by means of an approved mounting system. Applications for ad murals meeting all of the following conditions may be administratively approved by downtown commission staff per Section 3359.13:

1. The proposed location, including specific building façade, has previously received a certificate of appropriateness from the downtown commission for placement of an ad mural on or after August 14, 2013. The location is not listed on the Columbus Register of Historic Properties, either individually or as part of a district.
2. The dimensions of the proposed ad mural are no larger in any direction than those most recently granted a certificate of appropriateness by the downtown commission for the same location, provided however that temporary physical extensions or 3-dimensional objects may be approved when integral to the design of a particular ad mural.
3. The ad mural does not incorporate electronic changeable copy or other electronic display.
4. The total surface area dedicated to text and trademarked logos of the replacement ad mural copy is no more than fifteen percent of the total area of the mural surface. This percentage is determined by drawing a right-angle box around proposed text and calculating the total area, rather than the area of individual letters.
5. The attachment system and lighting remain the same as those previously approved by the downtown commission, commission staff, or the department of building and zoning services for that location.

Applications not meeting the above requirements shall be considered by the downtown commission.

(C) The downtown commission may approve a location for an ad mural associated with a temporary event. In such cases, approval does not qualify that location for staff approvals as outlined in division (B) of this section unless designated as such by the commission.

(D) A certificate of appropriateness, as required by division (A) of this section, shall be issued to the applicant upon an administrative approval issued pursuant to this section. Such issued certificates of appropriateness are valid for one year from the date of issuance. The department of development may institute a fee to cover the administrative costs associated with processing ad mural applications associated with this section.

**Section 2.** That prior existing Section 3359.25 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby repealed.

**Section 3.** That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period provided by law.