

Outdoor Visual Entertainment Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Presentation to ZOCO
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Commercial Market Resiliency Initiative (CMRI)

Addressing increasing vacancy & declining values



Addressing Office Demand

Focus on a robust business retention and expansion program, aggressive efforts to attract high-growth companies in emerging markets, and new and creative uses to lease office space



Rethinking Office Supply

Streamlining zoning and land use processes to enable the alternative use, conversion, redevelopment and repositioning of office buildings through the County's Commercial Market Resiliency Initiative

Remove regulatory barriers to achieve market solutions

Redevelopment

Tear downs and reconstruction of an entirely new building (although sometimes parking is retained).

Conversion

Converting an existing building to an adaptive reuse. Includes Conversion+ - when some floors are added.

Repositioning

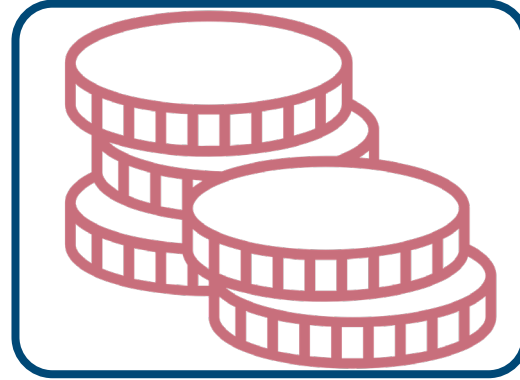
Making significant investments in existing office buildings to upgrade market competitiveness.

Why it matters to Arlington



50/50

Historically, Arlington had close to an even split between its residential and commercial tax bases.



Taxes

A decrease in commercial property tax revenue shifts more burden to residential tax revenue.



Services

When these revenues decrease, services and programs that benefit all residents are impacted.

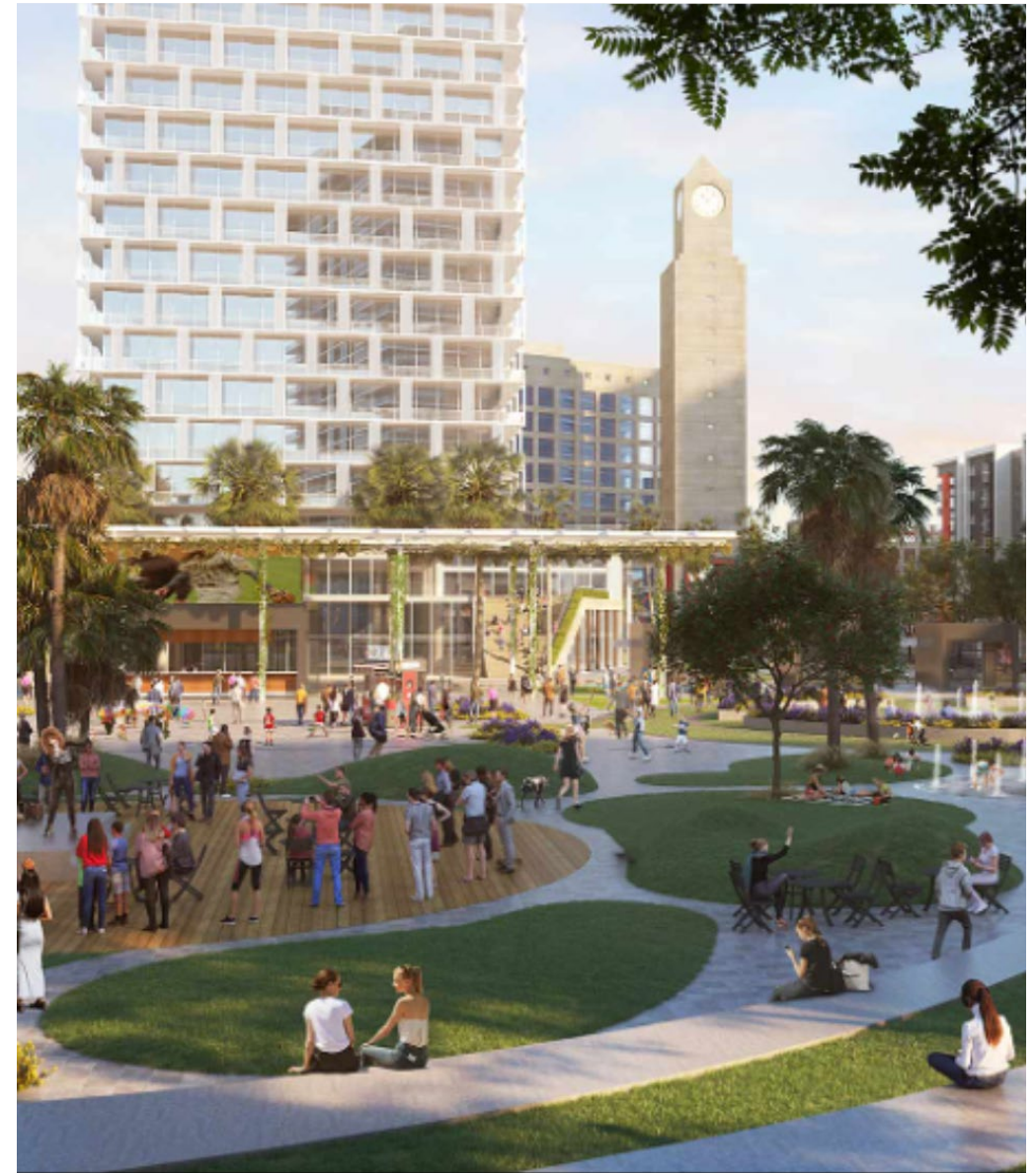


Placemaking

Strong placemaking elements contribute to an amenity-rich environment attracting residents, visitors & employees.

2015 Retail Plan

- **Vision:** Arlington will be a community where retail is convenient, appealing, activating and sustainable; that **provides interest and authenticity, entertainment and experiences**, and goods and services to residents, employees and visitors; and where local, independent, regional and national businesses thrive.
- ...centers must **increase placemaking efforts**...[by] creating activity and attractions on the outside as well as inside.
- To encourage and facilitate such changes, the Retail Plan calls for the **flexibility and creativity** required for updates to these regional centers.





Changing retail trends

- Nature of the retail experience & attraction is changing.
 - Downtown districts □ islands of retail surrounded by parking □ financially & environmentally sustainable places
 - A shift from anchor stores, to **a mix of restaurants, entertainment, and personal service offerings.**
- Increased importance of creating a sense of comfort and community – a need for new & innovative spaces– **a “public living room” for social engagement**
- Parks and an activated ground plane are key components, as are entertaining features and venues, fountains, cafes, inviting landscapes, a variety of programmed activities & amenities, including movie nights, and other visual stimuli.

Proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment for *Outdoor Visual Entertainment*

- A. Replacing all mentions of the term “large media screen” with “outdoor visual entertainment”;
- B. Increasing the maximum allowable luminance during nighttime hours for outdoor visual entertainment from 500 cd/m² to 700 cd/m²;
- C. Amending and expanding the purposes of outdoor visual entertainment signs, to include the enhancement of long-term economic viability of Arlington’s major commercial centers and fostering a sense of place in these centers through the use of dynamic visual amenities;
- D. Incorporating a new definition for commercial shopping center into Article 18 (Definitions);
- E. Amend approval criteria and use standards for outdoor visual entertainment;
- F. Permitting the establishment of outdoor visual entertainment in commercial shopping centers;
- G. Permitting the installation of outdoor visual entertainment on mixed-use and multiple-family residential buildings within a community shopping center or urban regional shopping center;
- H. Clarifying the methodology for measuring sign height for outdoor visual entertainment;
- I. Permitting commercial messages on outdoor visual entertainment for activities, services, and products within the community shopping center or urban regional shopping center for which the outdoor visual entertainment sign was approved;
- J. Establishing hours of operation for displays on outdoor visual entertainment between 9:00 am – 10:00 pm, Sunday through Thursday, and between 8:00 am – 11:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays, clarifying that sound emitted from outdoor visual entertainment shall only be permitted during these hours of operation; and permitting displays on outdoor visual entertainment beyond these prescribed hours of operation when associated with an approved Special Event Permit;
- K. Permitting modification through County Board use permit approval for certain use standards, including minimum distance from an R or RA zoning district, maximum sign area, maximum sign height, sign type, and hours of operation;
- L. Permitting approved and installed signs categorized as outdoor visual entertainment to continue to operate in compliance with all conditions of the use permit or site plan under which it was originally approved;
- M. Expanding the definition of outdoor visual entertainment to permit displays of live events, movies, or similar displays; and,
- N. Making other editorial changes for improved clarity, and for other related reasons required by public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice.

Rebranding – revised definition

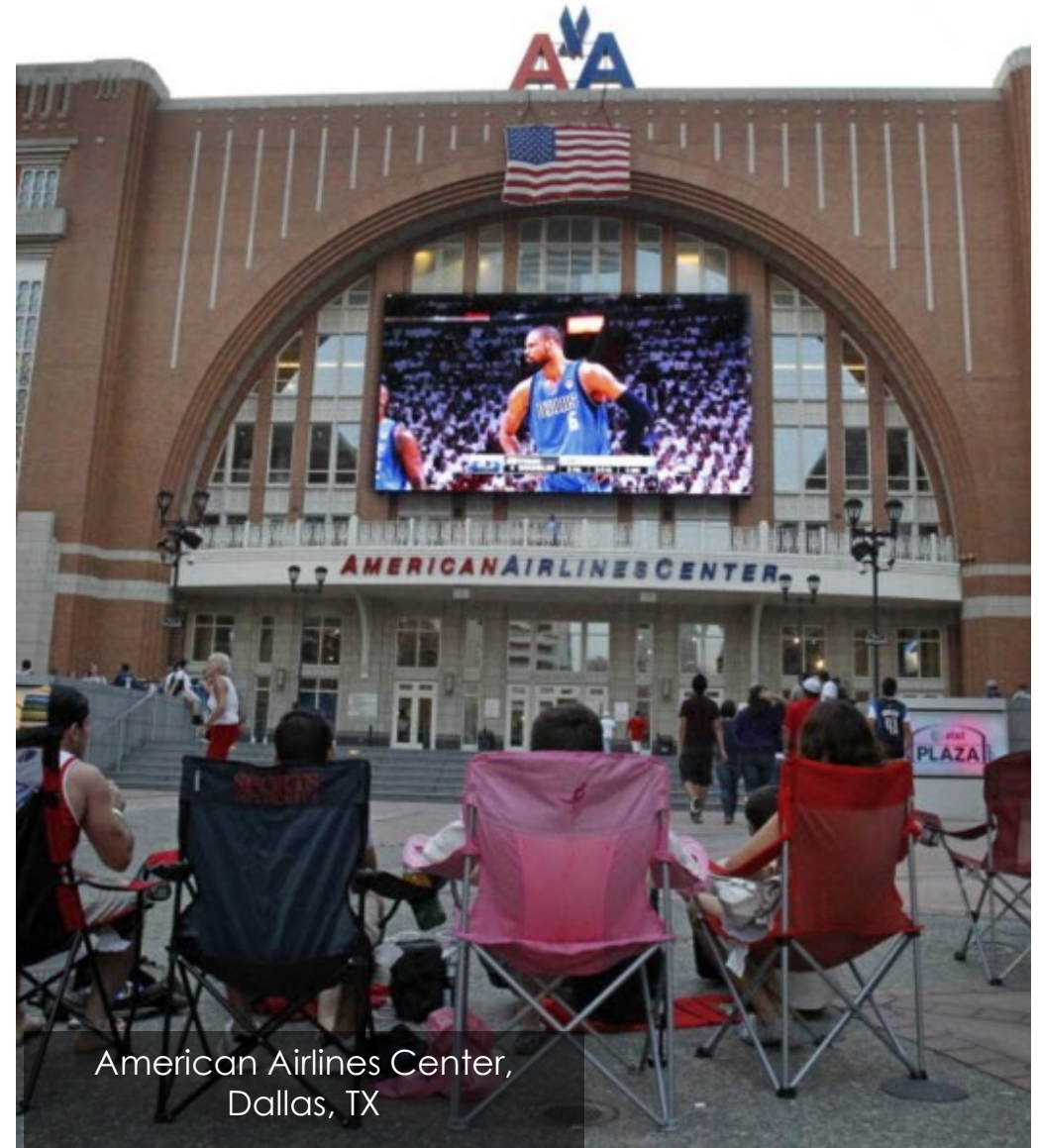
- *Outdoor visual entertainment:* An automatic changeable copy sign larger than 12 square feet that displays, on a video screen, either still, scrolling or moving images, including video, live events, media broadcasts, animation, movies, or similar displays. Such images may be changed remotely through electronic means and utilizes a series of grid lights, including cathode ray, light emitting diode display, plasma screen, liquid crystal display, fiber optic, or other electronic media or technology, and meets the requirements of §13.13.4.



Mosaic District in Fairfax, VA
<https://www.funinfairfaxva.com/outdoor-movies-in-northern-virginia/>

Updated purpose

- Promote economic development and enhance the long-term economic viability of Arlington's major commercial centers.
- Foster a sense of place in these commercial centers as gatherers of people, in part, using creative and dynamic visual amenities.
- Create a convenient, attractive, and harmonious community in accordance with visions for the mixed use settings identified in plans in the County.
- Promote public health, safety, and welfare by providing opportunities to disseminate emergency broadcast information and public service message.



American Airlines Center,
Dallas, TX

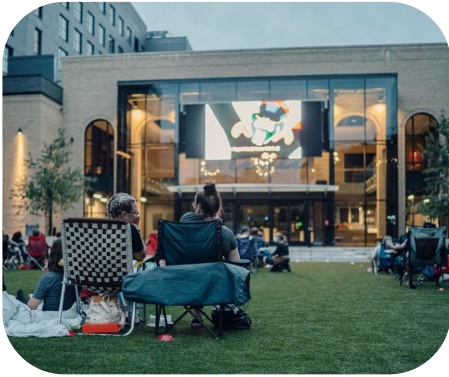
Clarified process: amended findings

1. Oriented for viewing by pedestrians or retail customers; and
2. Placed in a location consistent with visions in County plans for the area to which it is oriented, where pedestrian activity is encouraged in mixed use settings, and where it will contribute positively to the pedestrian experience and enhance the economic viability; and
3. Functions as an element separate and distinct from the building façade plan, such that the visual interest and architectural integrity of the building and its facade are not derived primarily from the placement of outdoor visual entertainment; and
4. Does not unreasonably interfere with or create a distraction that poses a hazard to drivers' operation of a motor vehicle on streets abutting or fronting the building on and/or plaza in which the sign is placed; and
5. Does not unreasonably impact the monumental core of the District of Columbia or other sites of historic or national interest.



Midtown Plaza
From City of Carmel, Indiana

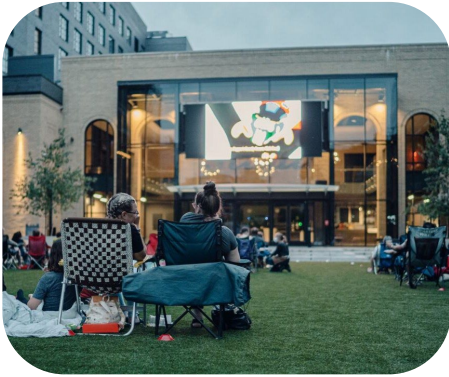
Clarified process: use standards + modifications*



Location and siting

- In a community shopping center or an urban regional shopping center within a commercial/mixed use (C) district.
- Wall signs* on commercial, mixed use, or multiple-family residential buildings within a community shopping center or an urban regional shopping center.
- Not placed within 200 feet of the common lot line of an R or RA district.*
- Placed on elevations of the building that immediately abut plazas similar open spaces that are not separated from the plaza or open space by principal or minor arterial streets.
- Doesn't substitute for fenestration on the building.

Clarified process: use standards + modifications*



Sign area

No larger than 750 square feet.*

Not included in aggregate sign area and may be approved by the County Board independently of a Comprehensive Sign Plan.

Sign height

Maximum sign height of 40 feet to the top of the sign.*

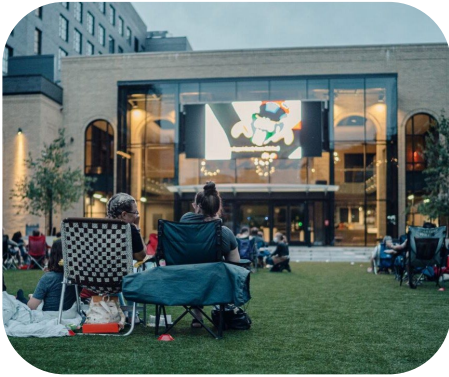
Sign height may be regulated under the regulations for urban regional shopping centers (§ 13.8) may have a maximum sign height in accordance with the placement standards specified in § 13.8.3.E.

Messages

Commercial messages are permitted.



Clarified process: use standards + modifications*



Lighting and sound

Meet all standards for lighted signs and incorporate automatic level controls to reduce light levels at night and under cloudy or other darkened conditions.

Sounds shall be permitted only during the hours of operation and comply with Chapter 15 of the Arlington County Code (Noise Control Ordinance).

Hours of operation

Sunday through Thursday: 9:00 am – 10:00 pm.

Fridays and Saturdays: 8:00 am – 11:00 pm.

Extended for special events associated with a Special Event Permit.*

New definition: community shopping center



Pentagon Centre



Westpost



The Crossing Clarendon



Village at Shirlington

Community shopping center. A building(s) or the portion of a building that includes a minimum of 200,000 square feet but less than 500,000 square feet of retail, entertainment and food establishment uses. A community shopping center is connected by at least one interior or exterior shared pathway fronted by retail, entertainment and food establishment uses and has shared, on-site parking.

Proposed schedule

- ✓ February 24, 2024: County Board public hearing & authorization for advertisement
- April 16, 2024: Zoning Ordinance Committee Meeting (ZOCO)
- May 6, 2024: Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation
- May 18, 2024: County Board public hearing and action