

FOCUS AREA: Economy, Community Development
STAFF CONTACT: Jessica Schuller, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: Report on UDO25-0001 pertaining to Signs

TITLE:

Report regarding proposed amendments to Title 18 Unified Development Ordinance Chapter 18.50 (UDO 18.50.190) pertaining to Signs and Olathe Municipal Code 12.10.050 pertaining to signs in the public right-of-way.

SUMMARY:

The Olathe 2040: Future Ready Strategic Plan prioritizes increasing unique experiences and places in Olathe, and establishing the City as the premier business, retail and entertainment draw in the region. As part of the annual update program, staff recommends changes to Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) 18.50.190 pertaining to rooftop signs, wall signs, projecting signs, and canopy signs in the Downtown zoning district. The proposed amendments necessitate general sign code updates, including sign definitions, and the process for approving exceptions to sign code requirements. Olathe Municipal Code 12.10.050 pertaining to signs in the public right-of-way will be amended for consistency with these updates.

On June 3, 2025, a discussion was held with the City Council and based on feedback, updates were prepared which accomplish the following objectives:

- Provides flexibility and creative opportunities for business owners,
- Builds upon the unique identity of Downtown,
- Streamlines the process for exceptions to sign standards Citywide,
- Maintains high quality visual standards, and
- Responds to emerging technologies.

The proposed amendments were discussed at the July 28, 2025 Planning Commission Workshop, and a public hearing was held before the Planning Commission on August 25, 2025. No members of the public spoke at the public hearing, and after discussion, the Planning Commission voted 7-0 to recommend approval of UDO25-0001.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None.

ACTION NEEDED:

Accept the report. Unless directed otherwise, staff will prepare the ordinance for formal consideration on October 21, 2025.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Planning Commission Packet
- B. UDO 25-0001 Presentation
- C. Ordinance No. 25-XX (UDO Redline Amendments)
- D. Ordinance No. 25-XX (Municipal Code Redline Amendments)



Unified Development Ordinance Amendments (UDO25-0001)

UDO 18.50.190 & OMC 12.10.050

Jessica Schuller, Senior Planner

Lauren Winter, Planner I



**Increase unique
experiences and
places.**

Olathe 2040

**Establish Olathe as the
premier business, retail, and
entertainment draw in the
region.**

Olathe 2040



General Standards

❑ Definitions (new or modified):

- ❑ Indirectly (Externally) Illuminated Sign
- ❑ Internally Illuminated Sign
- ❑ Window Area
- ❑ Backer Panel
- ❑ Building Identification Sign

❑ Sign Permit Applicability:

- ❑ Clarifying which signs require a permit
- ❑ Requiring consent of property owner

Example: Window Area



General Standards

■ Illuminated Signs

- Permitting directly illuminated incandescent bulbs and LED tube lighting with dimming capability

■ Sign Placement

- Must not dominate or obscure architectural features



General Standards

Exceptions

- ▶ Granted by the Planning Commission through a deviation with regard to size, location, illumination, and number of signs
- ▶ Deviations within Original Town approved by City Council

Consider the following criteria:

1. General spirit and intent of this ordinance,
2. Adverse affect on adjacent property owners or residents,
3. Safety implications,
4. Visual clutter,
5. Site constraints,
6. Lighting impacts on adjacent property,
7. Promotion of high-quality signage,
8. Any other factors which may be relevant to a particular application.

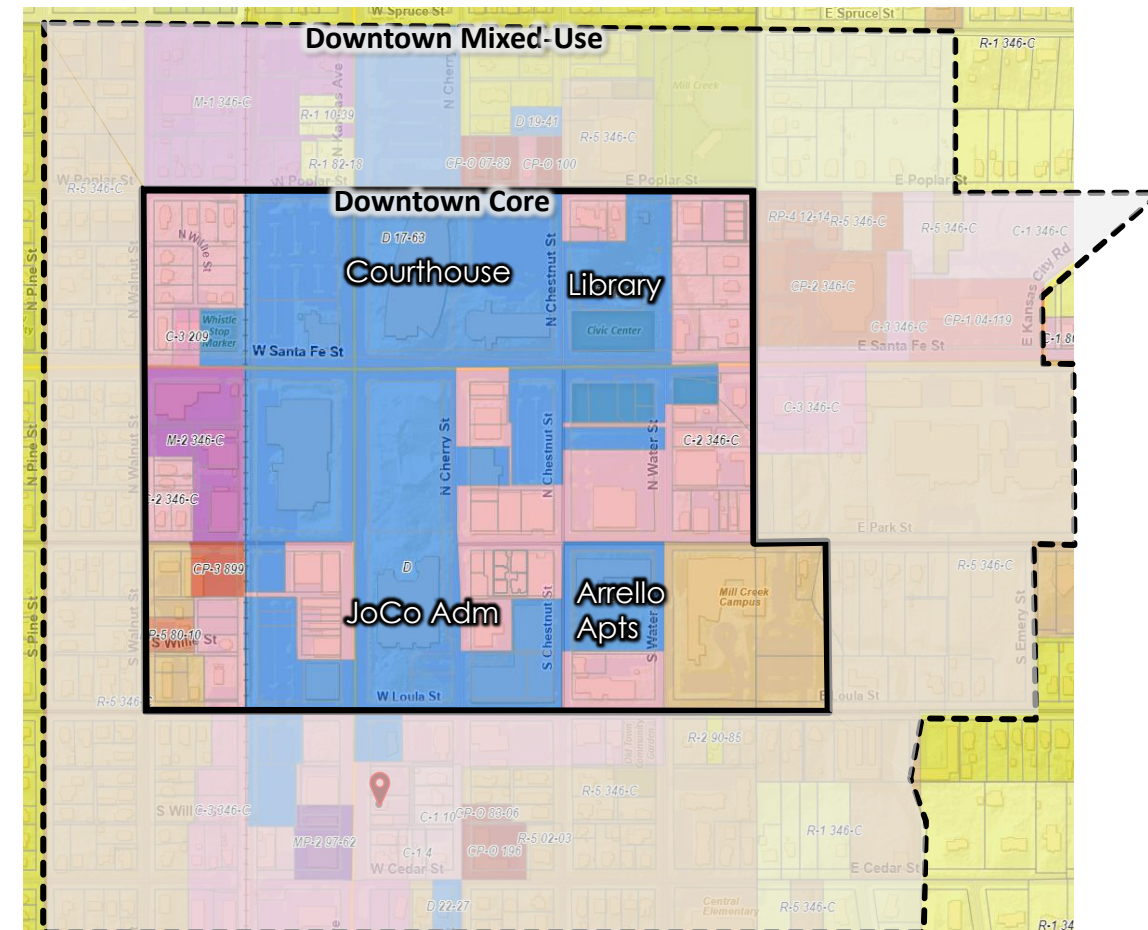
Downtown (D) District

□ Scale, character and design of building

- Must not obscure architectural features
- Signs on historically eligible or listed properties to be reviewed by Historic Preservation Board Secretary

□ Cumulative Sign Area

- Total area of sign faces on tenant façade not to exceed 15% of that façade area



Downtown (D) District

Projecting Signs

- ❑ Number permitted
- ❑ Spacing
- ❑ Size limitations

Over and Under Canopy Signs

- ❑ Clarified language for all canopy sign types
- ❑ Increased size limits
- ❑ Mounting location



Downtown Core District

Roof Signs

- ❑ Location
- ❑ Scale
- ❑ Sign / Mounting Type
- ❑ Illumination

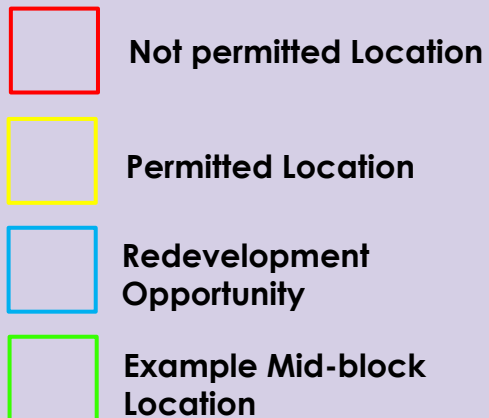
Painted Signs

- ❑ Number permitted
- ❑ Scale
- ❑ Maintenance considerations

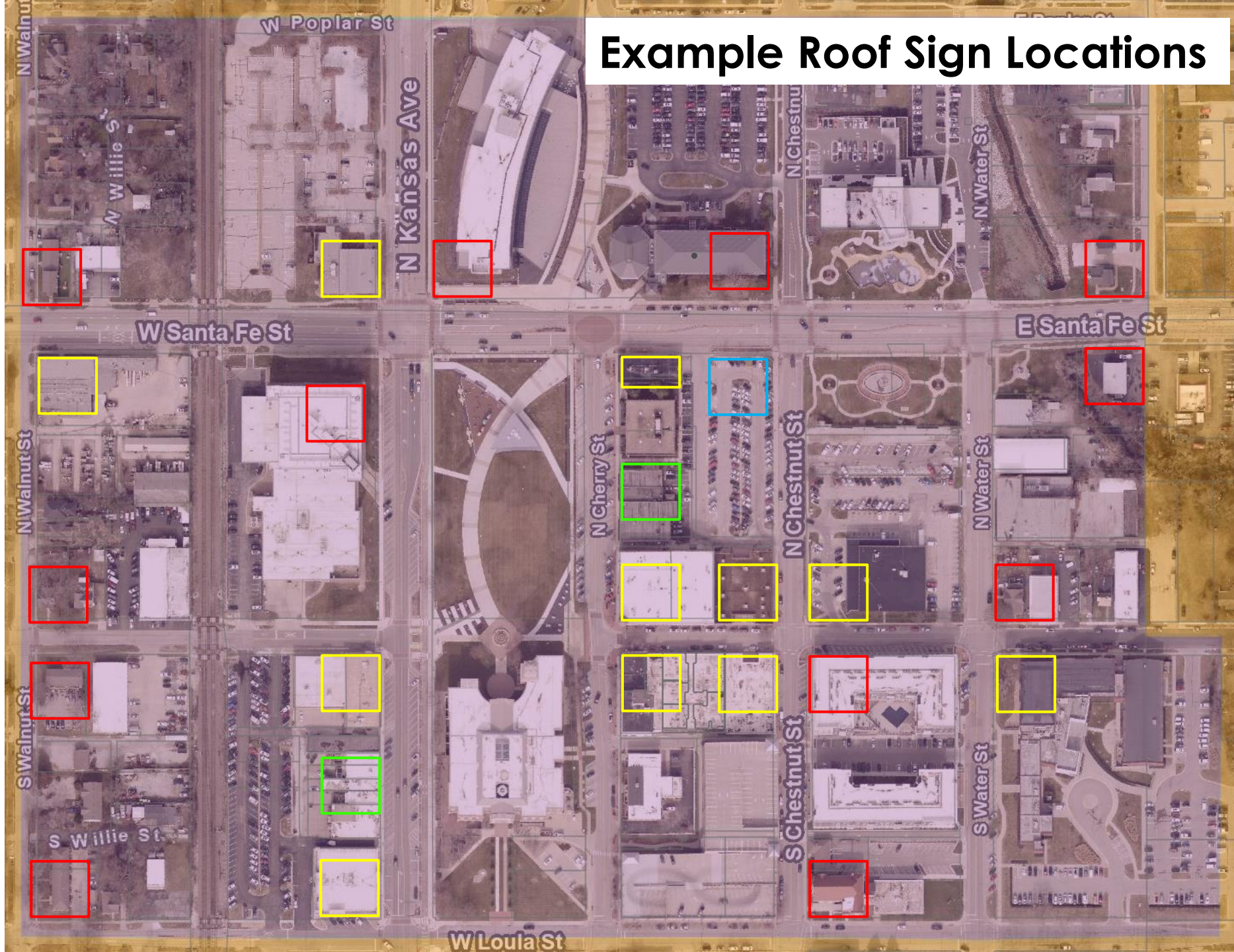


Roof Sign Requirements

1. Limited to the D-Core District
2. Corner of two intersecting streets, excluding alleyways
3. One mid-block roof sign per square block
4. Flat roofs, not including mansard roofs
5. Buildings 3 stories or less in height



Example Roof Sign Locations



Survey Engagement

- ▶ Downtown Business Owners & Residents
- ▶ Property owners in the Downtown Transition Area
- ▶ Sign Companies





Outcomes

- ▶ Provides flexibility and creative opportunities for business owners
- ▶ Builds upon the unique identity of Downtown
- ▶ Streamlines the process for exceptions to sign standards Citywide
- ▶ Maintains high quality visual standards
- ▶ Responds to emerging technologies

UDO Amendment Process

- ✓ City Council Discussion – June 3, 2025
- ✓ Planning Commission Workshop – August 11, 2025
- ✓ Planning Commission Public Hearing – August 25, 2025

City Council Consideration – Oct. 7 & Oct. 21, 2025



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