

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2020-4

**TO:** ALL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS, AGENCY HEADS, CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS, AND THE CITY CLERK

**SUBJECT:** EXTENSION OF MORATORIUM ON APPLICATIONS FOR PERMITS AND/OR LICENSES FOR OFF PREMISES ADVERTISING SIGNAGE

**DATE:** July 1, 2020

Under Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, 'Zoning,' an advertising sign is a sign, "whether billboard or painted wall graphic, which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment, that is conducted, sold, or offered elsewhere than on the premises where the sign is affixed, located or painted, or only incidentally sold or offered on the premises." The proliferation of illegal advertising signage and their deleterious impacts on the neighborhoods across Detroit have dramatically increased in recent years. Many illegal advertising signs have been maintained despite existing prohibitions. Abandoned or illegal advertising signs or sign structures create visual blight and can significantly impair the surrounding neighborhood's aesthetic value. Abandoned or illegal advertising signs that are poorly maintained or are otherwise structurally unsound pose physical dangers. Illegally erected advertising signs, through excessive size, illumination or dynamic operation can create unsafe distractions for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and others traveling in the public right-of-way. Further, illegal and abandoned advertising signs that are excessive in size, scale, or intensity can interfere with the communicative value of legally erected signs, and with neighboring buildings' access to air and natural light.

In order to provide for effective enforcement against illegal advertising signage, the need for reform of the City's existing sign regulations has become increasingly urgent. A comprehensive amendment to the 2019 City Code to reform the City's advertising sign regulations was introduced by the Detroit City Council on October 5, 2019. This amendment was initially proposed to become effective on July 1, 2020 in order to allow City departments to adequately prepare for its implementation. However, due to delays in the public hearing schedule arising from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the revised version of this amendment as adopted by the City Council will not become effective before December 9, 2020. As City departments undertake preparations for implementation of this amendment before new regulations can take effect, it is in the City's interest to continue to temporarily prohibit the establishment of new and the alteration of existing advertising signs until a new regulatory framework is implemented.

Therefore, it is ordered that, effective as of the date of this order, the moratorium imposed by Executive Order 2020-1 is extended, such that no City department may issue any permit, license, or other approval, or grant any petition for appeal, hardship or variance thereof, to establish a new advertising sign or to expand, intensify, or otherwise alter the dimensions, operation, or illumination of an established advertising sign in the City of Detroit until the latter of the date that new advertising sign regulations become effective, or December 9, 2020. This Order shall not be construed to prohibit the change of copy of established advertising signs in compliance with existing regulations, or to prohibit the annual renewal of existing sign licenses or certificates of compliance required by the City Code for applicable uses included herein, which shall continue.

Pursuant to the powers vested in me by the 1963 Michigan Constitution and by the 2012 Detroit City Charter, I, Michael E. Duggan, Mayor of the City of Detroit, issue this Executive Order. This Executive Order is effective on the date set forth above.



Michael E. Duggan  
Mayor