



CPED STAFF REPORT

Prepared for the City Planning Commission

CPC Agenda Item #8
April 7, 2014

ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT SUMMARY

<i>Initiator:</i>	Council Member Glidden
<i>Introduction Date:</i>	February 21, 2014
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<i>Specific Site:</i>	Citywide
<i>Ward:</i>	Citywide
<i>Neighborhood:</i>	Citywide
<i>Intent:</i>	To allow for donation collection bins operated by for-profit entities as an accessory use.

APPLICABLE SECTION(S) OF THE ZONING CODE

- Chapter 537, Accessory Uses and Structures

BACKGROUND

In 2011, a zoning text amendment was passed that allowed donation collection bins as an accessory use for non-profit entities, provided several criteria were met. The criteria minimize adverse impacts of collection bins in the area they serve. All donation collection bins are subject to an application in which the proposal is evaluated based on said criteria.

With growing demand for sustainability, green jobs, and reducing waste, for-profit entities are looking to collect unwanted household items including clothing, shoes, linens, blankets, etc. through donation collection bins. The collected items are then sold to thrift stores and wholesalers and distributed in the local area and around the world.

There are five licensed donation collection bins operating in Minneapolis.

Currently, the zoning code does not allow for-profit entities to operate donation collection bins as an accessory use.

PURPOSE

What is the reason for the amendment?

The purpose of the amendment is to allow for-profit entities to operate donation collection bins as an accessory use. There are green jobs associated with the collection and shipping of used textiles and current zoning code prohibits this in the for-profit sector. Amending the zoning code should be

considered in evaluating the proposal that allows for-profit entities to operate donation collection bins as an accessory use.

What problem is the amendment designed to solve?

Donation collection bins are a solution to reduce the amount of discarded textiles that can be re-used or re-purposed. Statistical estimates vary but a large percentage of used textiles that end up in landfills are re-usable or are able to be re-purposed. The expansion of these bins will make donating more convenient which in turn may reduce the amount of textiles thrown away.

Green jobs sought after in the community and they are created with the collection, processing, and shipment of donated textiles. This adds diversity in the private-sector and creates growth associated with sustainability.

Used textiles are in great demand for underprivileged populations both in the United States and globally.

What public purpose will be served by the amendment?

This amendment aims to expand the number of entities that are allowed to operate donation collection bins. With more opportunities to donate throughout the community, an increase the amount of reusable textiles donated can be expected. This increase in donated textiles would then demonstrate the amount of used textiles that would have otherwise been throw away and would have ended up in a landfill. This amendment aims to reduce waste through re-use and re-purposing.

On the local level, this creates green jobs associated with the collection and preparation of these textiles. On the global scale, the re-usable textiles will be offered to those in need.

What problems might the amendment create?

The expansion to include for-profit entities will allow significantly more businesses to operate donation collection bins as an accessory use. The impacts of expanding the donation collection bins as an accessory use may include: items being left outside of the bins leading to overflow of materials onto surrounding areas, activity occurring outside of normal business hours, and the bins being placed in areas that could obstruct onsite circulation, visibility, pedestrian flow, etc.

There are regulations in place that aim to combat these adverse effects, but it would be imprudent to think that no adverse conditions will arise.

TIMELINESS

Is the amendment timely?

This amendment is a part of the continual process of updating the zoning ordinance. For-profit businesses have inquired about allowing donation bins to support sustainability initiatives and a push for increasing the number of green jobs.

Is the amendment consistent with practices in surrounding areas?

Allowing for-profit donation collection bins is not a popular practice in the surrounding area or nationwide, although some cities, most notably St. Paul, do not prohibit them from operating. As sustainability, recycling, and re-use grow in popularity, municipalities may reconsider existing ordinances on prohibiting for-profit businesses from operating donation collection bins.

Are there consequences in denying this amendment?

If this amendment is denied, status quo would remain the same regarding donation collection bins and the amount of refuse associated with the disposal of re-usable textiles. Donation collection bins would

continue to serve only non-profit entities. For-profit businesses would not be able to create green jobs associated with the collection and shipping of textiles. The opportunity to donate and the general promotion of sustainability will remain the same.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The amendment will implement the following applicable policies of [The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth](#):

Policy 1.1: Establish land use regulations to achieve the highest possible development standards, enhance the environment, protect public health, support a vital mix of land uses, and promote flexible approaches to carry out the comprehensive plan.

1.1.5 Ensure that land use regulations continue to promote development that is compatible with nearby properties, neighborhood character, and natural features; minimizes pedestrian and vehicular conflict; promotes street life and activity; reinforces public spaces; and visually enhances development.

Policy 1.4: Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.

1.4.2 Continue to implement land use controls applicable to all uses and structures located in commercial districts and corridors, including but not limited to maximum occupancy standards, hours open to the public, truck parking, provisions for increasing the maximum height of structures, lot dimension requirements, density bonuses, yard requirements, and enclosed building requirements.

Policy 4.1: Support private sector growth to maintain a healthy, diverse economy.

4.1.4 Improve the coordination of economic development activity among units of government, the business community, neighborhood organizations and nonprofit agencies.

This amendment could support the business community and will allow for the creation of new, green, local jobs. The proposed amendment is consistent with these policies of the comprehensive plan if adverse impacts can be avoided.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has **no recommendation** regarding the proposed zoning code text amendment, amending Chapter 537.

ATTACHMENTS

- I. Ordinance amending Chapter 537.110 Allowed Accessory Uses and Structures