

**CPED Planning Division Report
Zoning Code Text Amendment**

Date: February 23, 2004

Initiator Of Amendment: Council Member Johnson

Date of Introduction at City Council: October 24, 2003

Ward: All

Planning Staff And Phone: Jason Wittenberg, 673-2297

Intent Of The Ordinance: The amendment would prohibit exterior security barriers on building walls and windows facing a public street.

Appropriate Section(s) of the Zoning Code: Chapter 535

Background: The City zoning code currently does not regulate security barriers placed on building exteriors. This amendment would prohibit such devices facing a public street.

Purpose For The Amendment:

What is the reason for the amendment?

What problem is the Amendment designed to solve?

What public purpose will be served by the amendment?

What problems might the amendment create?

The amendment would prohibit exterior security barriers attached to a building and facing a public street.

The security barriers that the amendment would prohibit cause visual blight and give the impression that an area is unsafe. If the amendment is adopted, security devices facing the street would be relegated to the interior of buildings where they would be less intrusive.

The public purpose underlying the amendment is to ensure that security barriers facing a public street are limited to devices that are not visually intrusive while still allowing property owners and business owners to meet legitimate security needs.

Staff does not expect that the amendment would create significant problems. Security barriers could be installed within buildings and on exterior building walls and windows that do not face a public street. Staff has consulted with the Police Department about the proposed amendment and the department is not opposed to the amendment.

Timeliness:

Is the amendment timely?

Is the amendment consistent with practices in surrounding areas?

Are there consequences in denying this amendment?

The amendment is timely given the City's recent efforts to revitalize the City's commercial areas. Intrusive security gates and barriers send a message that a particular area is troublesome.

Staff is not aware of similar regulations in surrounding communities. Nationwide, however, a number of communities have adopted rules similar to this proposed amendment. The proposed ordinance language, for example, is similar to code text from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The consequences of denying the amendment are that security barriers could increasingly lead to visual blight, particularly on commercial corridors and commercial nodes.

Comprehensive Plan:

How will this amendment implement the Comprehensive Plan?

The proposed amendment is consistent with the comprehensive plan. In particular, the amendment implements the following provisions:

Policy: 4.1. Minneapolis will encourage reinvestment along major urban corridors as a way of promoting growth in all neighborhoods.

Relevant Implementation Step: Develop standards based on recognition of the qualities that make urban corridors desirable, viable and distinctly urban, including: diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians, access to desirable goods and amenities, attractive streetscape elements, density and variety of uses to encourage walking, and architectural elements which add interest at the scale of the pedestrian.

Policy: 9.11. Minneapolis will support urban design standards that emphasize a traditional urban form in commercial areas.

Relevant Implementation Step: Require storefront transparency to assure both natural surveillance and an inviting pedestrian experience.

Recommendation Of The CPED Planning Division:

The CPED Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the text amendment.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE

Amending Title 20, Chapter 535 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances relating to Zoning Code: Regulations of General Applicability.

The City Council of The City of Minneapolis do ordain as follows:

Section 1. That Section 535.40 of the above-entitled ordinance be amended to read as follows:

535.40. Enclosed building requirement. *(a) In general.* All production, processing, storage, sales, display or other business activity shall be conducted within a completely enclosed building, except as otherwise provided in this zoning ordinance.

(b) Exterior security barriers. No security barrier shall be placed on the exterior of any portion of an enclosed principal non-residential building façade facing a public street. The provision shall apply to window bars, fixed metal grilles, retractable metal security gates or grilles, or similar security devices.