REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ZONING & PLANNING

Voting Members:
Esther Kia'āina, Chair; Tommy Waters, Vice-Chair;
Radiant Cordero, Val A. Okimoto, Andria Tupola

Committee Meeting Held
February 5, 2026

Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair, City Council
City and County of Honolulu

Mr. Chair:

Your Committee on Zoning & Planning, which considered Bill 7 (2026) entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO SIGN STANDARDS FOR APARTMENT AND APARTMENT MIXED-USE DISTRICTS,"

transmitted by Departmental Communication 11 (2026), dated December 30, 2025, from the Planning Commission ("Commission"), and which passed First Reading at the Council meeting on January 28, 2026, reports as follows:

The purpose of Bill 7 (2026) is to amend the Land Use Ordinance ("LUO"), Chapter 21, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021 ("ROH"), relating to the regulation of signs for the Apartment and Apartment Mixed Use ("AMX") zoning districts ("Districts").

LUO amendments proposed by the Council are processed by the Department of Planning and Permitting ("DPP") and the Commission. The Council proposed amendments to the sign standards for the Apartment and AMX Districts by adoption of Resolution 24-223. The Council's proposed bill was attached as Exhibit A to Resolution 24-223, and introduced as Bill 7 (2026).

The Bill would allow for one sign for each ground floor establishment with building frontage. Under current LUO provisions, only one sign is allowed for each principal pedestrian or vehicular entrance to the building. If there are several ground floor establishments that have street frontage, the Bill allows a sign for all ground floor establishments with street frontage.

ADOPTED ON FEB 18 2026

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 34(26)

The DPP reports that the proposed LUO amendment would impact the AMX District because commercial establishments are permitted in the AMX District. Existing mixed-use buildings are most likely to use additional signage for ground floor establishments. Existing multi-unit dwellings (in the AMX District) are the least likely to use additional signage because they do not have ground floor establishments, but could convert the ground floor in the future. Undeveloped land (in the AMX District) could be developed with mixed-use buildings that could take advantage of the modified sign standards.

The DPP concludes that allowing additional signage for ground floor establishments would have minimal adverse visual or health and safety impacts on surrounding areas because signs are already restricted in size and direct illumination is prohibited. Also, since establishments on higher floors are not allowed additional signage, visual impacts will only occur at the ground level.

Your Committee finds that the Planning Commission, after a public hearings held on October 29, 2025, and December 10, 2025, at which one public and two written testimonies were received, voted to recommend approval of the Council's proposed bill that was attached to Departmental Communication 11 (2026), and to incorporate the DPP's recommendation to include the second paragraph of ROH § 21-7.40(d) (which was inadvertently omitted from the bill), and the Commission's recommendation to reduce the size limit for signs from 12 square feet to 9 square feet.

At your Committee's meeting on February 5, 2026, a DPP representative provided a brief presentation on the DPP's analysis of the proposed LUO amendment, and responded to questions from Councilmembers.

In response to a question from a Councilmember, the DPP Director stated that the DPP will provide information on the sign permit process, including volume and processing time.

Your Committee received no verbal or written public testimony on the Bill.

Your Committee plans to consider these matters further after receiving public testimony on the Bill at the public hearing to be held as required by law.

Your Committee has prepared a CD1 version of the Bill that makes the following amendments:

A. Decreases the maximum size of the sign for ground floor establishments with building frontage from 12 square feet to 9 square feet (as recommended by the Planning Commission) and makes further amendments to ROH § 21-7.40(d) as follows:

"(d) *Apartment and apartment mixed-use districts.*

(1) In connection with any [~~use permitted other than single-unit, two-unit, or duplex-unit dwelling use,~~] permitted use, except for single-unit dwelling, two-unit dwelling, or duplex-unit dwelling uses, only one wall or marquee fascia identification or directory sign, not directly illuminated and not exceeding [~~12~~] 9 square feet in area, [~~will be~~] is permitted for each [~~street front having a principal pedestrian or vehicular entrance to the building.~~] ground floor establishment with building frontage.

(2) If all buildings on the street frontage of the zoning lot are set back a minimum of 50 feet from the property line on their entry sides, one ground identification or directory sign, not directly illuminated and not exceeding 8 square feet in area, will also be permitted for each [~~such~~] building entry side. The ground sign may not be located in any required yard. Instead of [~~these signs,~~] one ground sign, one garden sign for each building entry side may be permitted;"

B. Makes miscellaneous technical and nonsubstantive amendments.

Your Committee believes that additional public testimony at the public hearing recommended herein to be scheduled on this Bill will provide further assistance to your Committee and to the Council in their deliberations on this Bill.

Your Committee on Zoning & Planning is in accord with the intent and purpose of Bill 7 (2026), as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading, be scheduled for public hearing, and be referred back to Committee in the form attached hereto as Bill 7 (2026), CD1. (Ayes: Cordero, Kia'āina, Okimoto, Tupola, Waters – 5; Noes: None.)

Respectfully submitted,

Esther Kia'āina

Committee Chair

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

ORDINANCE _____

BILL **7 (2026), CD1**

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

RELATING TO SIGN STANDARDS FOR APARTMENT AND APARTMENT MIXED-USE DISTRICTS.

BE IT ORDAINED by the People of the City and County of Honolulu:

SECTION 1. Purpose. The purpose of this ordinance is to amend the Land Use Ordinance relating to the regulation of signs for apartment and apartment mixed-use zoning districts.

SECTION 2. Section 21-7.40, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021 ("Specific district sign standards"), is amended by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

"(d) *Apartment and apartment mixed-use districts.*

(1) In connection with any [~~use permitted other than single-unit, two-unit, or duplex-unit dwelling use,~~] permitted use, except for single-unit dwelling, two-unit dwelling, or duplex-unit dwelling uses, only one wall or marquee fascia identification or directory sign, not directly illuminated and not exceeding [~~12~~] 9 square feet in area, [~~will be~~] is permitted for each [~~street front having a principal pedestrian or vehicular entrance to the building.~~] ground floor establishment with building frontage.

(2) If all buildings on the street frontage of the zoning lot are set back a minimum of 50 feet from the property line on their entry sides, one ground identification or directory sign, not directly illuminated and not exceeding 8 square feet in area, will also be permitted for each [~~such~~] building entry side. The ground sign may not be located in any required yard. Instead of [~~these signs,~~] one ground sign, one garden sign for each building entry side may be permitted;"

SECTION 3. Ordinance material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New material is underscored. When revising, compiling, or printing this ordinance for inclusion in the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, the Revisor of Ordinances need not include the brackets, the material that has been bracketed and stricken, or the underscoring.

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

SECTION 4. This ordinance takes effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:

Andria Tupola

Tommy Waters

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

January 13, 2026
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Deputy Corporation Counsel

APPROVED this _____day of _____, 20 ___.

RICK BLANGIARDI, Mayor
City and County of Honolulu

Report Title:
Land Use Ordinance ("LUO"); Signage; Apartment District; Apartment Mixed-Use District

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.