

Effective 5/13/2014

17-27a-512 County's acquisition of billboard by eminent domain -- Removal without providing compensation -- Limit on allowing nonconforming billboard to be rebuilt or replaced -- Validity of county permit after issuance of state permit.

- (1) As used in this section:
- (a) "Clearly visible" means capable of being read without obstruction by an occupant of a vehicle traveling on a street or highway within the visibility area.
 - (b) "Highest allowable height" means:
 - (i) if the height allowed by the county, by ordinance or consent, is higher than the height under Subsection (1)(b)(ii), the height allowed by the county; or
 - (ii)
 - (A) for a noninterstate billboard:
 - (I) if the height of the previous use or structure is 45 feet or higher, the height of the previous use or structure; or
 - (II) if the height of the previous use or structure is less than 45 feet, the height of the previous use or structure or the height to make the entire advertising content of the billboard clearly visible, whichever is higher, but no higher than 45 feet; and
 - (B) for an interstate billboard:
 - (I) if the height of the previous use or structure is at or above the interstate height, the height of the previous use or structure; or
 - (II) if the height of the previous use or structure is less than the interstate height, the height of the previous use or structure or the height to make the entire advertising content of the billboard clearly visible, whichever is higher, but no higher than the interstate height.
 - (c) "Interstate billboard" means a billboard that is intended to be viewed from a highway that is an interstate.
 - (d) "Interstate height" means a height that is the higher of:
 - (i) 65 feet above the ground; and
 - (ii) 25 feet above the grade of the interstate.
 - (e) "Noninterstate billboard" means a billboard that is intended to be viewed from a street or highway that is not an interstate.
 - (f) "Visibility area" means the area on a street or highway that is:
 - (i) defined at one end by a line extending from the base of the billboard across all lanes of traffic of the street or highway in a plane that is perpendicular to the street or highway; and
 - (ii) defined on the other end by a line extending across all lanes of traffic of the street or highway in a plane that is:
 - (A) perpendicular to the street or highway; and
 - (B)
 - (I) for an interstate billboard, 500 feet from the base of the billboard; or
 - (II) for a noninterstate billboard, 300 feet from the base of the billboard.
- (2)
- (a) A county is considered to have initiated the acquisition of a billboard structure by eminent domain if the county prevents a billboard owner from:
 - (i) rebuilding, maintaining, repairing, or restoring a billboard structure that is damaged by casualty, an act of God, or vandalism;
 - (ii) except as provided in Subsection (2)(c), relocating or rebuilding a billboard structure, or taking other measures, to correct a mistake in the placement or erection of a billboard for which the county has issued a permit, if the proposed relocation, rebuilding, or other measure is consistent with the intent of that permit;

- (iii) structurally modifying or upgrading a billboard;
- (iv) relocating a billboard into any commercial, industrial, or manufacturing zone within the unincorporated area of the county, if:
 - (A) the relocated billboard is:
 - (I) within 5,280 feet of its previous location; and
 - (II) no closer than:
 - (Aa) 300 feet from an off-premise sign existing on the same side of the street or highway;
or
 - (Bb) if the street or highway is an interstate or limited access highway that is subject to Title 72, Chapter 7, Part 5, Utah Outdoor Advertising Act, the distance allowed under that act between the relocated billboard and an off-premise sign existing on the same side of the interstate or limited access highway; and
 - (B)
 - (I) the billboard owner has submitted a written request under Subsection 17-27a-510(3)(c); and
 - (II) the county and billboard owner are unable to agree, within the time provided in Subsection 17-27a-510(3)(c), to a mutually acceptable location; or
- (v) making the following modifications, as the billboard owner determines, to a billboard that is structurally modified or upgraded under Subsection (2)(a)(iii) or relocated under Subsection (2)(a)(iv):
 - (A) erecting the billboard:
 - (I) to the highest allowable height; and
 - (II) as the owner determines, to an angle that makes the entire advertising content of the billboard clearly visible; and
 - (B) installing a sign face on the billboard that is at least the same size as, but no larger than, the sign face on the billboard before its relocation.
- (b) A modification under Subsection (2)(a)(v) shall comply with Title 72, Chapter 7, Part 5, Utah Outdoor Advertising Act, to the extent applicable.
- (c) A county's denial of a billboard owner's request to relocate or rebuild a billboard structure, or to take other measures, in order to correct a mistake in the placement or erection of a billboard does not constitute the initiation of acquisition by eminent domain under Subsection (2)(a) if the mistake in placement or erection of the billboard is determined by clear and convincing evidence to have resulted from an intentionally false or misleading statement:
 - (i) by the billboard applicant in the application; and
 - (ii) regarding the placement or erection of the billboard.
- (d) If a county is considered to have initiated the acquisition of a billboard structure by eminent domain under Subsection (1)(a) or any other provision of applicable law, the county shall pay just compensation to the billboard owner in an amount that is:
 - (i) the value of the existing billboard at a fair market capitalization rate, based on actual annual revenue, less any annual rent expense;
 - (ii) the value of any other right associated with the billboard structure that is acquired;
 - (iii) the cost of the sign structure; and
 - (iv) damage to the economic unit described in Subsection 72-7-510(3)(b), of which the billboard owner's interest is a part.
- (3) Notwithstanding Subsection (2) and Section 17-27a-511, a county may remove a billboard without providing compensation if:
 - (a) the county determines:

- (i) by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant for a permit intentionally made a false or misleading statement in the applicant's application regarding the placement or erection of the billboard; or
- (ii) by substantial evidence that the billboard:
 - (A) is structurally unsafe;
 - (B) is in an unreasonable state of repair; or
 - (C) has been abandoned for at least 12 months;
- (b) the county notifies the owner in writing that the owner's billboard meets one or more of the conditions listed in Subsections (3)(a)(i) and (ii);
- (c) the owner fails to remedy the condition or conditions within:
 - (i) except as provided in Subsection (3)(c)(ii), 90 days following the billboard owner's receipt of written notice under Subsection (3)(b); or
 - (ii) if the condition forming the basis of the county's intention to remove the billboard is that it is structurally unsafe, 10 business days, or a longer period if necessary because of a natural disaster, following the billboard owner's receipt of written notice under Subsection (3)(b); and
- (d) following the expiration of the applicable period under Subsection (3)(c) and after providing the owner with reasonable notice of proceedings and an opportunity for a hearing, the county finds:
 - (i) by clear and convincing evidence, that the applicant for a permit intentionally made a false or misleading statement in the application regarding the placement or erection of the billboard; or
 - (ii) by substantial evidence that the billboard is structurally unsafe, is in an unreasonable state of repair, or has been abandoned for at least 12 months.
- (4) A county may not allow a nonconforming billboard to be rebuilt or replaced by anyone other than its owner or the owner acting through its contractors.
- (5) A permit issued, extended, or renewed by a county for a billboard remains valid from the time the county issues, extends, or renews the permit until 180 days after a required state permit is issued for the billboard if:
 - (a) the billboard requires a state permit; and
 - (b) an application for the state permit is filed within 30 days after the county issues, extends, or renews a permit for the billboard.

Amended by Chapter 189, 2014 General Session