Memorandum

TO:	City Council
FROM:	Izaak Peterson , Senior Planner
DATE:	February 17, 2026
SUBJECT:	3854 Lexington Ave N- Comprehensive Sign Plan Amendment - ACR Properties
ITEM NUMBER:	8.g
SECTION:	CONSENT AGENDA

REQUESTED MOTION

To approve the comprehensive sign plan amendment, subject to the following conditions:

1. The signs shall comply with the plans submitted for the Comprehensive Sign Plan application, and conditions set forth in this approval. Any significant change will require review by the planning commission and city council.
2. The proposed message center sign shall comply with the following:
    a. Lighting shall be set at a minimum level which the billboard is intended to be read and shielded to minimize glare.
    b. The light level shall not exceed 0.3 footcandles above ambient light as measured from a pre-set distance depending on sign size. Measuring distance shall be determined using the following equation: the square root of the product of the message center sign area and 100.
    c. The sign must have an automatic dimmer control that automatically adjusts the sign's brightness in direct correlation to ambient light conditions. The sign shall be equipped with a photo cell designed to measure the ambient lighting conditions and adjust the sign brightness as needed so as to be in compliance with the ordinance.
    d. No portion of the message may flash, scroll, twirl, fade in or out in any manner to imitate movement.
    e. Display of messages shall be limited to those services offered on the property and time/temperature display
3. Landscaping shall be installed at the base of the proposed monument sign and maintained at all times. A bond, in an amount equivalent to 125 percent of the landscaping cost, is required in order to ensure that the landscaping is planted and survives at least one year after planting.
4. The proposed pylon sign shall be restricted in height to 36-feet, and a combined sign area of 180 sf, as required by Chapter 113 of the Development Code. Expansion beyond these dimensions shall require approval by the city council.

INTRODUCTION

On September 15, 2025 ACR Properties, in collaborations with Holiday (Circle K) gas, received site plan, variance, and conditional use permit approvals to demolish the existing fuel station

at 3854 Lexington Ave N and construct a new fuel station with a convenience store facility on the property. Concurrently, a comprehensive sign plan approval was requested of a unified sign package that deviated from development code requirements. Due to the requested height and area of proposed pylon sign within the plan, a condition of comprehensive sign plan approval restricted the size of a pylon sign on the northern portion of the site to the size restrictions outlined within the development code.

The applicants have submitted revised 180 square foot pylon sign which is reduced in height and area compared to the last comprehensive sign plan, but exceeds the comprehensive sign plans condition of approval. As a result, the applicants request the following:

1. Comprehensive Sign Plan Amendment - Requesting approval of a revised pylon sign, with proposed deviation to the previously approved sign plan underlying sign code standards.

DISCUSSION

Site & Project Description

The property is 1.97 acres in size, and contains frontage along three roadways. The abutted by Lexington Ave N to the west, I-694 to the north, and Red Fox Rd to the south. The property is zoned C2 General Commercial, and adjacent to C2 property to the east, and a commercially zoned planned unit development to the south. Commercially zoned property within Arden Hills is located to the west.

On September 15, 2025 the city council approved Conditional Use Permit Amendment, Site and Building Plan Review, and Comprehensive Sign Plan submittals to redevelop the property with a new 5,650 sf convenience store and fuel station. At that time a 40-foot tall pylon sign was proposed, adjacent to I-694, which contained a 144 sf Holiday sign and 143 sf of changeable copy (gas price) signs. The height and area of the requested pylon sign were denied due to their size, and restricted to the development code standard of 20 feet in height, and 40 sf in sign area.

The applicant has revised the pylon sign plan to 180 sf, and 36 feet in height, and is seeking amendment to the prior comprehensive sign plan approval, in order to construct the sign.

Development Code Requirements

Comprehensive Sign Plan

A comprehensive sign plan is a sign plan for a building and its associated grounds, a multi-building development site or a multi-tenant building indicating the number, types, locations, dimensions, materials, and colors of signs proposed. An approved plan may vary from the design and dimensional standards set forth in this chapter without approval of a formal variance, provided it meets the criteria set forth in Sec 103-97.

Prior Comprehensive Sign Plan Approval

Wall Signs

For building less than 50,000 sf, one wall sign per building wall is permitted. Sign areas per wall are restricted to 10 percent of a wall area, with a minimum size of 20 sf. On the convenience store, a 20 sf western wall sign, a 69 sf southern wall sign, and a 90 sf southern wall sign is approved. These wall signs are consistent were consistent with development code requirements.

Canopy Sign
The fuel station canopy contains Holiday signage on the facade. Similar to wall signs, areas per wall are restricted to 10 percent of a wall area, with a minimum size of 20 sf. The proposed canopy signage 68 sf, and is consistent with development code requirements.

Monument & Message Center
The approved monument sign located at the corner of Lexington Ave N and Red Fox Road is 18 feet tall, with a total sign area of 118.1 sf. This sign area consists of a sf message center, 28 sf of changeable copy signs, and a 28 sf Holiday sign. The total height of the sign, and combined sign area exceeded sign code standards, as a result comprehensive sign plan consideration was required and approved.

STAFF REVIEW
The applicant has submitted a comprehensive sign plan package with respect to proposed signage on the site, the proposed signage is and associated development code requirements specified in Development Code Chapter 113 are outlined below:

Proposed Amendment
Pylon Sign
The application proposes a revised freestanding pylon sign at the north of the property adjacent I-694. A secondary freestanding sign may be permitted in this location. A pylon sign on the site is limited in height to 20 feet with a maximum area of 40 sf. The revised pylon sign is 36-feet tall, and contains a a 100 sf Holiday sign, and 80 sf of changeable copy (gas price) signs. The total height of the sign, and combined sign area exceeds sign code standards, as a result comprehensive sign plan amendment consideration is requested.

When a deviation to the regulations is proposed, the comprehensive sign plan requires review by both the planning commission and city council.

Comprehensive Sign Plan Review
Staff has reviewed the proposal and believes the revised pylon sign is reasonable and in keeping with the spirit and intent of the sign ordinance and comprehensive sign plan criteria. While the proposed monument sign area and height exceeds the area and height permitted, this design and surrounding landscaping is consistent with the site. The proposed pylon sign deviations from the standards of chapter 113 result in a more unified sign package and greater aesthetic appeal between signs on the site. The proposed monument deviations result in a more unified sign package that is compatible with community standards.

The area of the proposed signage is partially obstructed by tree's located within MnDOT right-of-way, which may constitute a practical difficulty with respect to sign height, the revised height and are consistent with the degree of practical difficulty present, as illustrated by the elevation renderings. Staff is generally in favor of the proposed comprehensive sign plan amendment, with conditions.

Public Comment
Notice of the proposed application was mailed to affected property owners within 150 feet of the site. At the time of this report, no comments have been received.

Planning Commission
The planning commission reviewed the proposed comprehensive sign plan amendment at

their January 27th meeting, no members of the public wished to speak on the item. The planning commission discussed the size and location of the proposed pylon sign, and compared it's size to nearby pylon signs on I-694. The commission ultimately recommended approval of the amendment with a 6-1 vote.

RECOMMENDATION

The comprehensive sign plan has been reviewed in accordance with the development code. Staff is recommending the city council approve the comprehensive sign plan amendment, subject to the following conditions:

1. The signs shall comply with the plans submitted for the Comprehensive Sign Plan application, and conditions set forth in this approval. Any significant change will require review by the planning commission and city council.
2. The proposed message center sign shall comply with the following:
    a. Lighting shall be set at a minimum level which the billboard is intended to be read and shielded to minimize glare.
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4. The proposed pylon sign shall be restricted in height to 36-feet, and a total area of 180 sf, as required by Chapter 113 of the Development Code. Expansion beyond these dimensions shall require revised comprehensive sign plan approval by the city council.

ATTACHMENTS

Location Map
Comprehensive Sign Plan Package
Pylon Sign Elevations and Renderings