

# Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Zoning Text Amendment Statement

Office of Legislative Oversight

## ZTA 22-05: SIGNS

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that Zoning Text Amendment 22-05 will have little to no impact on racial equity and social justice (RESJ) in the County.

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### PURPOSE OF RESJ IMPACT STATEMENTS

The purpose of RESJ impact statements for zoning text amendments (ZTAs) is to evaluate the anticipated impact of ZTAs on racial equity and social justice in the County. Racial equity and social justice refer to a process that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of communities of color and low-income communities with a goal of eliminating racial and social inequities.<sup>1</sup> Achieving racial equity and social justice usually requires seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social harms that have caused racial and social inequities.<sup>2</sup>

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### PURPOSE OF ZTA 22-05

The purpose of ZTA 22-05 is to overhaul the County's sign ordinance so it reflects development and urbanization patterns of the past 30 years. It is part of an initiative advanced by the Economic Advisory Group (EAG) to streamline business development and growth in the County.<sup>3</sup>

The Department of Permitting Services is responsible for the administration and interpretation of zoning laws and regulations. The Department has proposed a replacement of the specific section of the Zoning Ordinance regulating signs. The changes proposed in ZTA 22-05 include: removing certain definitions, removing the prohibition on off-site signs, adding provisions for signs in the public-right-of way, adding provisions for temporary signs, and other revisions meant to streamline this section of the Zoning Ordinance.

ZTA 22-05 was introduced to the Council on June 14, 2022.

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### ANTICIPATED RESJ IMPACTS

If ZTA 22-05 works as intended, streamlined signage opportunities for property and business owners could spur economic development in the County. However, OLO anticipates that the magnitude of increased economic development associated with this ZTA would at best be extremely limited. As such, OLO finds that ZTA 22-05 will have little to no impact on RESJ in Montgomery County.

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### CAVEATS

Two caveats to this racial equity and social justice impact statement should be noted. First, predicting the impact of legislation on racial equity and social justice is a challenging, analytical endeavor due to data limitations, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, this RESJ impact statement is intended to inform the legislative process rather than determine whether the Council should enact legislation. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the bill under consideration.

# RESJ Impact Statement

## Zoning Text Amendment 22-05

<sup>1</sup> Definition of racial equity and social justice adopted from “Applying a Racial Equity Lens into Federal Nutrition Programs” by Marlysa Gamblin, et.al. Bread for the World, and from Racial Equity Tools.

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum from Marc Elrich, County Executive, to Gabe Albornoz, President Montgomery County Council. March 21, 2022