

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT STAFF REPORT  
September 22, 2025

**ZBA-74-25**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Petitioner**

Matt Calderone

**Requested Action and Purpose**

Petitions for a variance from the sign regulations.

**Location and Existing Zoning**

1200 McFarland Boulevard Northeast. Zoned GC. (Council District 3).

**Size and Existing Land Use**

Approximately 1.05 acres, Commercial

**Surrounding Land Use and Zoning**

North: Commercial, GC

East: Commercial, GC

South: Commercial, GC

West: Commercial, GC

**Applicable Regulations**

[Sec. 25-179.](#) - General provisions.

e. *Maintenance.* All signs and billboards and their supporting structures shall be maintained in accordance with the building code and in good repair, free of rust, peeling, fading, broken or cracked panels, broken or missing letters, or any condition that would constitute a fire or health hazard. Nonfunctioning light bulbs shall be replaced within ten (10) days of becoming nonfunctioning. Vegetation shall be properly maintained and the general area in the vicinity of the sign or billboard shall be kept free and clear of spare or discarded sign materials.

g. *Abandoned signs.* Except as otherwise provided in this division, a sign shall be deemed abandoned if it is located on property that is vacant or unoccupied for a period of greater than ninety (90) days, pertains to a business which does not maintain a current business license, or pertains to a time, event, or purpose which no longer applies. Each abandoned sign shall be removed by the owner of the sign or the owner of the property. If the abandoned sign's supporting structure complies with this ordinance, the supporting structure is not required to be removed, otherwise, the supporting structure shall either be removed or made to conform to this ordinance.

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[Sec 25-180](#). – Freestanding sign general standards.

### *(a) Number of freestanding signs allowed.*

1. Except in the D district, freestanding signs are allowed in accordance with the following:

- i. For a parcel with one street frontage, a single freestanding sign is allowed.
- ii. For a parcel with more than one street frontage, up to two (2) freestanding signs are allowed, with no more than one on a single street frontage, and each sign shall be oriented to be perpendicular to the street.
- iii. For a parcel with frontage along the Black Warrior River or Lake Tuscaloosa, a single monument sign is allowed along the frontage. Pole signs are prohibited along the Black Warrior River or Lake Tuscaloosa.

2. Freestanding signs are not allowed in the D district.

### *b. Pole signs.*

1. The portion of a pole sign below the sign structure shall be covered with materials similar to the materials used on the principal buildings on the site.

2. The pole of the sign structure below the sign shall not be considered part of the display area if it does not establish a logo or other representation of the establishment on the site where the sign is located, and contains no message other than the address of the site.

### *c. Maximum height.*

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2. below, the maximum height of a freestanding sign is established in table VI-16: maximum freestanding sign display area.

2. The maximum height of a freestanding sign on a lot abutting Interstate I-20/59 or I-359 south of I-20/59 shall be sixty-five (65) feet measured from the grade of the interstate with a maximum structure height of one hundred (100) feet if:

- i. The development, including developments located at designated exit ramps, lies contiguous to the interstate right-of-way; and
- ii. The development is adjacent to a locally classified road with no privately owned property between the right-of-way of the local street and the interstate right-of-way.

*d. Maximum display area.* The maximum height and display area allowed for each freestanding sign shall be as set out in table VI-16: maximum freestanding sign display area.

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**SUMMARY**

The petitioner is requesting a variance to utilize an existing nonconforming and abandoned freestanding sign. The petitioner states the primary hardships to keep the sign are related to visibility and access to the site. The petitioner believes that the signages will be critical to the success of the site. If approved the petitioner will install a blank face in the display area to comply with the ordinance.

City staff received a complaint about the freestanding sign located at 1200 McFarland Blvd NE. City staff informed the property owner that the freestanding sign, which was utilized by the previous business, was considered abandoned and in disrepair, since said business had been closed for more than ninety (90) days. The freestanding sign is considered nonconforming as it measures at greater than 25 feet in height. Additionally, the sign is considered to be in disrepair because it is missing the sign face. The requested sign is approximately 45-50 feet in height. A variance from the freestanding sign and sign regulations is needed to allow the sign to be used in its current condition.

Office of Urban Development, Planning Division: No comment

Office of Urban Development, Codes and Development Services Division: 1 complaint received.

Office of Urban Development, Building and Inspections Division: No comment

Infrastructure and Public Services, Engineering Division: No comment

Fire and Rescue Department, Fire Administration: No comment

# Variance Application

## Property Information:

**Site Address:**

1200 McFarland Blvd. NE, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35406

**Total Acres:**

1

**Number of Existing Structures:**

1

**Current Zoning:**

General Commercial (GC)

**Current Land Use:**

Commercial

## Applicant Information:

**Applicant Name:**

Matt Calderone

**Applicant Address:**

1407 10th Ave, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

**Is the applicant also the property owner?**

No

## Property Owner Information:

**Property Owner Name:**

R & A Development LLC

**Property Owner Address:**

1407 10th Ave, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

**Property Owner Phone Number:**

(205) 758-5371

**Property Owner Email Address:**

mc@rumseyco.com

**The primary consideration for a variance request is whether a literal enforcement of a zoning ordinance will result in an unnecessary hardship. Circumstances that are not hardships include self-inflicted or self-created, inconvenient, financial or personal. The petitioner must specifically state a hardship for the variance.**

**Detailed Description of the Proposed Request, including Hardship:**

Requesting a variance from the sign ordinance to allow for a sign structure more than 25 feet tall. 1200 McFarland Blvd. NE is one of the last undeveloped corners on McFarland Blvd. The property has several challenges that have kept it from being developed. The primary hardships are that of visibility and access. While corner properties along Hwy 82 are very desirable, this property sits further back from 82 when compared to others and is separated by a service road. Many major retailers and developers have identified the service road, access points, side of Hwy 82, and visibility as their primary concerns and

points of hardship for development. These concerns make having highly visible signage of the utmost importance. If the site is ever to be development, signage will be critical to its success and allowing signage beyond the existing height limitations is justifiable. The petitioner request that this sign be allowed to remain and will make it further compliant by installing a blank in the sign structure.

## **Supporting Documents:**

### **Site Plan (if applicable):**

1200 McFarland Blvd. Site.pdf

### **Elevation Drawings (if applicable):**

### **Additional Documents:**

**Once submitted, a staff member will contact the applicant using the email provided on this form within 24 hours. If more documents are required, the staff member will clarify what is required in that email. By submitting this application, you recognize the city will send public notification and place a sign on the property with information for the public.**





# 1200 McFarland Boulevard Northeast

1 inch = 100 feet  
0 50 100 150 200 Feet







# 1200 McFarland Boulevard Northeast

1 inch = 1,500 feet  
0 750 1,500 2,250 3,000 Feet











