

Electronic Message Sign –

Our Ask:

BOT approval to consider the replacement of the current “wayside pulpit” manual sign with a LED outdoor message board. The new LED sign would be positioned on the west side of our driveway where the UUSD wooden sign now stands. The UUSD wooden sign would be moved to the east side of the drive where the existing wayside sign now stands.

Part 1: We are requesting that the Board agree to include a placeholder on the agenda of the January 2024 Phase 1 FY25 budget session for the funds to cover the cost of an LED welcoming sign at UUSD’s entrance on Rt. 9. Current estimates range from \$27K (uninstalled/4’X8’), \$32K (sign/installation 4’X8’) to \$39K(sign/ installation 6’X8’).

Part 2: The Board will approve funding of \$6,400 (\$5,000 legal fees/\$1,400 county fee) to cover the cost of petitioning Sussex County for a conditional use permit for installing an LED sign in an AR1 zoning area.

Part 3: To approve moving forward with submitting a Service Level Evaluation form to Sussex County. Submission is cost free and is the required first step in the Sussex County application process. Sussex County will forward this request to DelDOT. Once approved it is good for a three year period. .

LED message board justification:

1. Presents UUSD as a progressive, contemporary institution that is moving forward, as encouraged by our new vision statement.
2. Ease and speed of changing the message including emergency notifications.
3. Ability to have a sequence of several different messages running one after the other.
4. LED signs have greater curb appeal, are easier to read and provide a sense of permanence.

Drawbacks to the current, manual sign board:

1. Labor intensive – changing the current sign board requires up to 2 hours to remove the current message, refile the individual letters, pull letters for the new message and install those letters.
2. Cleaning challenge - The sign is fully exposed to the elements – highway grime, mold, and ice get embedded in the letter tracks- which requires manual cleaning.
3. Message length is limited.
4. Difficult to make last minute/emergency announcements, such as “No Sunday service today.”

Future Steps: If the BOT approves today’s request

1. Discussion with appropriate committees i.e PMC, Landscaping, Communications and others as needed on the best design for the actual sign.
2. Line item added to the proposed FY25 budget.
3. If the budget is approved for a LED sign, we are proposing to submit a package of three (3) proposals to the Contract Team.