
FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:37 AM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: David Chai [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:12 PM

To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; +district1@sanjoseca.gov; +district2@sanjoseca.gov; +district3@sanjoseca.gov; +district4@sanjoseca.gov; +district5@sanjoseca.gov; +district6@sanjoseca.gov; +district7@sanjoseca.gov; +district8@sanjoseca.gov; +district9@sanjoseca.gov; +district10@sanjoseca.gov

Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; info@billboardsno.org

Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
- The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
David Chai

[REDACTED]
District 10

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:37 AM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Courtney Granner <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:20 PM

To: +district1@sanjoseca.gov; +district2@sanjoseca.gov; +district3@sanjoseca.gov; +district4@sanjoseca.gov; +district5@sanjoseca.gov; +district6@sanjoseca.gov; +district7@sanjoseca.gov; +district8@sanjoseca.gov; +district9@sanjoseca.gov; +district10@sanjoseca.gov

Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; info@billboardsno.org

Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

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- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
- The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
JC Granner

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:38 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Yoga with Lupe [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:39 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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To all city council persons and to Mayor Mahan:

I oppose digital billboards because they are just another distraction, isn't enough that people are on their phones while driving? I'm not going to offer scientific evidence here but the evidence exists and if you really care you would have your aides look into it. The amount of money supposedly to be gained doesn't come close to the damage it would cause in terms of environmental effects on various species, inviting litigation, consumption of energy, negatively affecting Lick Observatory, contributing to light pollution and disrupting wildlife.

Please be thoughtful and don't be lured by a lousy \$1M a year. Direct city resources to housing and job creation.

Cordially,

Lupe Friez
[REDACTED]

SJ

-

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FW: No more billboards!

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:38 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Bill H <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 7:50 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: No more billboards!

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I'm not sure why the city keeps coming up with more reasons to put in billboards! Please don't.

As a resident of San Jose, I don't want my city to look like the others with the visual pollution, give revenue to national companies that advertise on the billboards or national companies that run the billboards.

Sincerely,
Bill Herndon

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:39 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: ochavez [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 9, 2025 8:53 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community. • The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose. •

Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?

The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.

Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property.

Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back. Please vote against any new proposals. Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
Ofelia Smith
95126 resident

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:46 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: mariastaken [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 6:39 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

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- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits, costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals. Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025, City Council meeting.

Regards, Maria Burrus
Japantown Association member.

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:46 AM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Frances Respicio [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 7:19 AM

To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; +district1@sanjoseca.gov; +district2@sanjoseca.gov; +district3@sanjoseca.gov; +district4@sanjoseca.gov; +district5@sanjoseca.gov; +district6@sanjoseca.gov; +district7@sanjoseca.gov; +district8@sanjoseca.gov; +district9@sanjoseca.gov; +district10@sanjoseca.gov

Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; info@billboardsno.org

Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

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Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
Frances Respicio
District 3

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 7:57 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Suzanne Morrone <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 7:54 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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I have written many times stating all the science based facts regarding the negative impacts of digital billboards. The City has continued to ignore the fact that they are actually harmful, that the majority of people do not want them, and that many respected environmental organizations oppose them.

I have stated before, and say again, anyone who votes for digital billboards will never get my vote, ever, in any election. This is one more drop in the bucket of San Jose becoming an ugly, generic, environmentally damaging town.

I could not oppose them more.

Please expand your thinking! Do you think you know more, or are a better judge of what's good for the community than the actual science behind the damaging added light pollution, the distraction for drivers the pure and utter ugliness of them?

WE do not want this!!!

Suzanne Morrone

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 10:08 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Kate Steffens [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:00 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Hi there,

I am writing to express my opposition to the installation of digital billboards at the following locations:
Willow St & Hwy 87
Mission St & Hwy 87
Maybury Rd & Hwy 101

Digital billboards are a driving hazard and make it difficult to see while driving. Digital billboards cause light pollution. I can see these billboards from my house in the East foothills and they are an eyesore. Digital billboards harm wildlife.

To be completely frank, you have repeatedly ignored the needs and desires of your constituents, who have been overwhelmingly opposing these billboards for years. I've been writing to you about this for years at this point. WE DON'T WANT DIGITAL BILLBOARDS! Please actually listen to us for once.

Kate

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 10:25 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Viet-Hung Nguyen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:13 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Good Morning,

I oppose billboards because they have been shown to be dangerous and distracting for drivers, not to mention that they also clog up our landscape, making it much uglier.

The US has one of the highest traffic fatality rates in the developed world. Children die from that, despite how preventable they are. This is embarrassing, humiliating, and tragic that this is the richest metro area in the entire US, and this bill is on the table.

I ask you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Viet-Hung Nguyen
Evergreen San Jose

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 11:09 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: Nancy DeMattei [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:49 AM
To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
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Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,

Nancy DeMattei

D3

Sent from my iPhone

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 3:40 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Stephanie [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 3:32 PM
To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; +district1@sanjoseca.gov; +district2@sanjoseca.gov; +district3@sanjoseca.gov; +district4@sanjoseca.gov; +district5@sanjoseca.gov; +district6@sanjoseca.gov; +district7@sanjoseca.gov; +district8@sanjoseca.gov; +district9@sanjoseca.gov; +district10@sanjoseca.gov
Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community. I and everyone I speak with is against this. I also suspect that all those 30 billboards to be taken down in exchange for the 3 along the highway will not be in District 3. At the very least, this should be required- if new placed in D3, the old billboards removed shall be in D3!!

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
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Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
Stephanie Patterson
Vendome Resident, District 3

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Wed 6/11/2025 8:08 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: John Fioretta [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 6:17 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council:

I write to oppose placing digital billboards anywhere in San Jose. I've lived in District 3's Naglee Park neighborhood for more than 34 years.

My personal experience is that they are worse than regular billboards because they are more distracting due to changing lights and movement and therefore more dangerous. One of the City's responses to comments downplays concerns such as this because they aren't backed up by a study. I don't need a study to know how digital billboards affect me while driving. I have experienced and been distracted by them. I'm not the only one.

Of course there are other reasons to oppose digital billboards that I agree with and I've expressed them in previous emails. But safety is the primary concern for me.

As Councilmember Salas has written, eliminating 10 standard billboards for each digital billboard is a good deal. I agree. The better deal would be to eliminate them all. But if I must choose I'd rather prevent the additional distraction and safety concerns of the digital variety.

Respectfully,

John Fioretta
[REDACTED]

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Wed 6/11/2025 8:08 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Freda Hofland [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 6:30 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Once again, I strongly oppose digital billboards in San Jose. I am not alone in this. There is overwhelming public opposition. The billboards will cause driver distraction, light pollution, needless energy use and will bring in little revenue.


Please listen to your constituents as you were elected to do.

Sincerely,
Freda Hofland

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FW: Letter of Support – Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 12:07 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (318 KB)
ARSCSBA support letter.pdf;

From: Helen Masamori <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 11:57 AM
To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; Rocha, Vincent <Vincent.Rocha@sanjoseca.gov>; Dang, Tara <Tara.Dang@sanjoseca.gov>; Salas, Carl <Carl.Salas@sanjoseca.gov>; Arreola, Kiara <Kiara.Arreola@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Letter of Support – Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association

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Good afternoon,

I am submitting a letter of support on behalf of the Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association. Please find the signed letter attached.

This letter pertains to Item 8.7 on the June 17 City Council agenda:
“Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.”

Thank you!

Helen Masamori
Co- President
Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association

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June 6, 2025

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
City of San Jose
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mayor Mahan, Council Member Ortiz, and Members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association (ARSCSBA), we would like to express our support for City Council Policy 6-4 regarding signs on City-owned land and for the approval of freeway digital billboards at your June 17, 2025, meeting.


The ARSCSBA board and our members have long awaited the direct and indirect benefits associated with the 2019 RFP process and the 2023 selection of freeway digital billboard locations.

In addition to the anticipated revenue for the City, we are particularly supportive of the removal of static printed billboards citywide—especially the two locations along Alum Rock Avenue proposed by Clear Channel Outdoor. We also welcome the community messaging opportunities these digital billboards can offer, which we believe will uplift East San José residents and businesses, raise awareness of major events, and help spotlight the Entertainment Zone identified by Councilmember Ortiz.

While we support the changes proposed, we respectfully emphasize the importance of ensuring that any future modifications—whether removals or additions of billboard infrastructure—are made thoughtfully and in a way that clearly benefits the surrounding community and stakeholders. We believe Clear Channel Outdoor bears a significant responsibility to conduct thorough and transparent outreach before implementing any future changes. This includes proactive engagement with local business owners, residents, and community organizations to ensure that such decisions reflect the priorities and values of those most directly impacted.


Finally, we thank City staff for their efforts in advancing this process and ensuring that community benefits remain at the forefront of implementation.

Sincerely,


Helen Masamori
Co-President, Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association

FW: June 17, 2025 City Council Meeting, Agenda item 8.7, Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/10/2025 3:41 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachment (1 MB)
LifeMoves Billboard Letter 6.4.2025.pdf;

From: Sarah Fields [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 10, 2025 3:40 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Aubrey Merriman <[REDACTED]>; Anat Leonard-wookey [REDACTED]
Subject: June 17, 2025 City Council Meeting, Agenda item 8.7, Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

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Good Afternoon,

Please see the attached letter in reference to Item #8.7 for the June 17th Council meeting.

Thank you,
Sarah

Sarah Fields, MUP (she/her/hers) | Director, Community Engagement & Public Affairs

[REDACTED]
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#)
www.lifemoves.org

2550 Great America Way, Suite 201, Santa Clara, CA 95054

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Board of Directors

Melissa Selcher
CHAIR

Lori Castillo Martinez
1st VICE CHAIR

Lauren Koenig
2nd VICE CHAIR

Greg Eckert
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Pamela Weiss
SECRETARY

Ahmed Khatib

May Topper

Danielle Fontaine

Laura Green

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Carrie O. Plietz

Tammy Crown

Leslie Little

Chair Emeritus Circle

Patrick Heron

Rod Ferguson

Marcia Pade

Christina Dickerson

William "Bill" Regan

Joe Stockwell

CEO

Aubrey Merriman

June 4, 2025

Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
City of San Jose
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Approval of lease agreements with Clear Channel Outdoor for two freeway digital billboards

Dear Mayor Mahan, Vice Mayor Foley, and Members of the City Council:

I am writing on behalf of LifeMoves, which operates the Guadalupe Emergency Interim Housing (EIH) site located at 702 Guadalupe Parkway, San Jose, CA 95110.

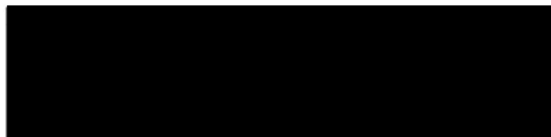
We have reviewed the proposed installation of a digital billboard on city land near our facility along the Highway 87 corridor. After consideration, we find no objection to the planned installation, provided that it adheres to all applicable local ordinances and regulations, including those concerning brightness levels and operational hours.

We respectfully request that the billboard operator takes into account the well-being of our EIH program participants by ensuring that the sign does not display any content that could be considered offensive or harmful to vulnerable individuals.

Please consider this letter as our formal statement of no objection to the proposed digital billboard installation.

Thank you for your cooperation and for including us in the consultation process.

Sincerely,



Sarah Fields
Director of Community Engagement and Public Affairs

Fw: SJ Chamber Support -- Items 8.6 & 8.7

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Fri 6/13/2025 9:28 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

 2 attachments (552 KB)

SJ Chamber Support for 8.7 - Digital Signage 061625 (1).pdf; SJ Chamber Support for 8.6 - 2026 Major Event Zone Ordinance061625.pdf;

Office of the City Clerk | City of San José

200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Main: 408-535-1260
Fax: 408-292-6207

How is our service? Your [feedback](#) is appreciated!

From: Kat Angelov <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, June 13, 2025 9:15 AM
To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Leah Toeniskoetter <[REDACTED]>
Subject: SJ Chamber Support -- Items 8.6 & 8.7

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Dear Mayor and Honorable Councilmembers,

On behalf of the San Jose Chamber of Commerce, I'd like to express our support for items 8.6: Major Event Zone Ordinance and 8.7: Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

Please find our letters of support attached.

Thank you for the consideration of our comments.

Kind regards,
Kat

|

**BUY YOUR
TICKETS!**



08/21/2025

Kat Angelov
Policy Manager
San Jose Chamber of Commerce

www.sjchamber.com

101 W. Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA 95113

Mailing Address: PO Box 149, San Jose, CA 95103



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**San Jose
Chamber of Commerce**

June 11, 2025

City of San Jose City Council
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San José, CA 95113

RE: Item 8.7: Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

Dear Mayor Mahan and Honorable Councilmembers,

On behalf of the San Jose Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our support for the proposed staff recommendation supporting actions related to large format digital electronic signs on City-owned property.

This agenda item is another timely and strategic step as our region prepares for several large sporting events in 2026, namely the World Cup, Super Bowl, and NCAA games. These events are not just entertainment, but major economic engines of the sports and entertainment economy the city is thoughtfully seeking to create. The approval of these signs will also build on the recent and unanimous City Council decisions to approve digital signs on City-owned buildings downtown, modify permit provisions for Supergraphic signs related to large events, and establish entertainment zones across the city.

Digital signage also presents an important revenue opportunity for the city, with a minimum contribution of \$21.3 million guaranteed as part of the contract. Further, the lease agreement includes several important provisions including usage of the signage for emergency PSAs, 100% renewable energy, and "off hours" from midnight to 6 am. Each of those provisions has been requested from members of the community, and we appreciate the inclusion of each provision.

With that, we urge you to move forward with this proposal.

Sincerely,

Leah Toeniskoetter
President & CEO
San Jose Chamber of Commerce

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 9:44 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Nina Heldt [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, June 14, 2025 2:35 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Dear City Clerk and members of the Council,

Please vote 'No' for digital billboards. They are a distraction to drivers, light pollution and not really part of quaint San Jose.

Thank you

Nina Heldt
D3 neighbor

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 9:45 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Stacey Winters <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, June 15, 2025 11:23 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
- The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals. Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,

Stacey Winters
District 10

FW: City Council Meeting - 06/17/25: Item # 8.7 - Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 12:06 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Tod <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 12:05 PM
To: The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: City Council Meeting - 06/17/25: Item # 8.7 - Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property.

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Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

We can only wonder if part of the strategy is that residents will get burnt out on this issue after such a long delay. The only "City of San Jose survey" I have seen shows 93% of residents oppose billboards on freeway facing property.

One of the many concerns we have brought up is that the City of San Jose allowing digital billboards on city/public land would "open the door" to additional billboards including on privately owned land with associated lawsuits. We have been informed via the city attorney *"that the City can distinguish between signs on City property and signs on private property. And that our sign code is set up with that distinction."* And *"If we get sued there is a line of cases, primarily out of Los Angeles, as well as the City's experience with litigation, which has supported the City's positions on signage on public property and continued limits on signs on private property, including along freeways."* So, in theory, the city would still need to deduct all the lawsuit costs from any profit.

This does seem to go against common sense and it was always curious that any studies (RFPs) on privately owned billboards were dropped early on. Even if all this is the case, it seems strange that the city would restrict these wonderful signs and hold a monopoly on them?

I would like to minimally suggest that as a safeguard and for our peace of mind that the city put in the contracts with the 2 billboard companies some clause (in good faith) that **they will not erect any additional new billboards or convert any existing billboards to digital billboards** since that is the plan??

I also would ask to **include a set/specific generous distance from residential homes be included** if this item is adopted.

I still believe it would be a mistake to “open the door” on any billboards and various sound reasons have been given. We can refocus and find a way to completely rid San Jose of all billboards. As we are often asked, now we must ask you to consider the greater good and reinstate the long-standing billboard ban and support the will of your constituents by rejecting and voting NO to these billboards.

Thank you,

Tod Williams
Vendome Neighborhood-District 3

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 12:57 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: rose.steele [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 12:54 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Please register my opposition to digital billboards in San Jose. I share and support the concerns of Billboardsno.org that digital billboards are a terrible idea for San Jose, primarily for the reasons below (of the many valid reasons that organization has presented.)

These are the reasons that are most important to me:

- Insignificant revenue - The small amount of revenue relative to a \$6B City budget can't possibly outweigh all of the negative aspects of billboards. The tradeoff: compromising the character, architectural integrity, and positive street environment of Downtown, turning San Jose into Anyplace USA, for \$1M annually from freeway-facing billboards.
- Driver distraction - Digital billboards are designed to distract drivers. They are counter to the city's Vision Zero policy.
- Energy hogs - Digital billboards are giant symbols of wasted energy, counter to the City's environmental stewardship policies.
- Light & sight pollution - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution. Light would shine on nearby commercial and residential buildings. I remember when the first billboard went up at Almaden Plaza; the output was stunningly awful and was eventually reduced significantly. We don't need more of that!
- Wildlife disruption - Digital billboards are opposed by the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. Even slight increases in ambient light at night can disrupt their behavior patterns. (Just like the infamous "Breeze of Innovation"). The cascading consequence of this disruption will not be known until the damage has been done.
- Last, but not least, the idea of putting a giant billboard in front of a significant architectural landmark like the CPA as a STARTING POINT is appalling. What's next? One on top of the Winchester Mystery House? The Museum of Art?

[REDACTED]

Rose Steele

[REDACTED]

FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 1:29 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Pat Blevins <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 1:22 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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The City Council and the Mayor already know why the residents of San Jose overwhelmingly object to digital billboards and yet you push on and on with plans for more and more digital billboards. Why don't the residents/voters/taxpayers of San Jose have a voice in this matter that the Council and Mayor listen to? This is our City and you were elected to serve the needs and the will of the residents of San Jose, not the billboard industry.

Here's why digital billboards are a bad idea:

- **Insignificant revenue** - The small amount of revenue relative to a \$6B City budget can't possibly outweigh all of the negative aspects of billboards. The tradeoff: compromising the character, architectural integrity, and positive street environment of Downtown, turning San Jose into Anyplace USA, for \$1M annually from freeway-facing billboards.
- **Vibrancy myth** - There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the local economy. It's more than likely billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- **Lawsuits** - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

- **Public opposition** - Remember that City survey with over 2000 respondents showed overwhelming opposition to billboards?
- **Driver distraction** - Digital billboards are designed to distract drivers. They are counter to the city's Vision Zero policy.
- **Energy hogs** - Digital billboards are giant symbols of wasted energy, counter to the City's environmental stewardship policies.
- **Light & sight pollution** - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution. Light would shine on nearby commercial and residential buildings.
- **Local businesses do not benefit** - Digital billboards typically advertise national consumer products and services. Lack of content control and association of products to San Jose landmark buildings is a marketing risk.
- **Wildlife disruption** - Digital billboards are opposed by the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. Even slight increases in ambient light at night can disrupt their behavior patterns.

I hope you agree that more billboards of any kind in San Jose is the last thing we need, and that city resources would be better spent on more important issues facing our community. Do the right thing and stop this madness now. NO DIGITAL BILLBOARDS!

Patricia Blevins

San Jose resident

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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 1:48 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Pat Bergman - [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 1:41 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new digital billboard proposals in our community.

I find it hard to believe anyone wouldn't be scared to death to know people could be so distracted while driving by digital billboards. I wonder how many additional accidents have occurred because of them--and maybe deaths! I think safety is the most important issue. We have too many people walking around looking at their cellphones and walking across streets without looking--then we're adding distracted drivers that we are encouraging to be distracted?


Unless you all are trying to reduce the population, I beg you not to approve this very dangerous proposal!!

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny

fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life? • The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away. • Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back. Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
Patricia G. Bergman



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FW: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 3:23 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: vickie r [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 3:16 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: info@billboardsno.org
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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Billboards make for a trashy look. They are such a waste of product and resources. And dangerous to living things—including drivers. Which, of course is the point, right?

All true:

- The small amount of revenue relative to a \$6B City budget can't possibly outweigh all of the negative aspects of billboards. The tradeoff: compromising the character, architectural integrity, and positive street environment of Downtown, turning San Jose into Anyplace USA, for \$1M annually from freeway-facing billboards.
- **Vibrancy myth** - There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the local economy. It's more than likely billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- **Lawsuits** - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.
- **Public opposition** - Remember that City survey with over 2000 respondents showed overwhelming opposition to billboards?
- **Driver distraction** - Digital billboards are designed to distract drivers. They are counter to the city's Vision Zero policy.
- **Energy hogs** - Digital billboards are giant symbols of wasted energy, counter to the City's environmental stewardship policies.
- **Light & sight pollution** - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution. Light would shine on nearby commercial and residential buildings.

- **Local businesses do not benefit** - Digital billboards typically advertise national consumer products and services. Lack of content control and association of products to San Jose landmark buildings is a marketing risk.
- **Wildlife disruption** - Digital billboards are opposed by the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. Even slight increases in ambient light at night can disrupt their behavior patterns.

We hope you agree that more billboards of any kind in San Jose is the last thing we need, and that city resources would be better spent on more important issues facing our community. Thanks again for your ongoing support.

Regards,

Victoria Rivard, RN



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FW: "Item 8.7 - Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property"

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 3:23 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Judy Pisano [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: "Item 8.7 - Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property"

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No Digital Billboards in San Jose!

I am opposed to digital billboards in San Jose. This item should be rejected by the City Council at its June 17th meeting.

Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the proceeds from all these billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is, a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
- The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,

Judith Pisano



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Fw: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Mon 6/16/2025 4:29 PM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

Office of the City Clerk | City of San José

200 E. Santa Clara St., Tower 14th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
Main: 408-535-1260
Fax: 408-292-6207

How is our service? Your [feedback](#) is appreciated!

From: Jay Canteenwala [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 3:53 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 Billboards

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You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,
I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community.

- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- .NO Ugly electronic billboards in San Jose- they are a distraction to drivers

Please vote against any new proposals.
Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.
Regards,
Jay Canteenwala
District 10

Fwd: No Digital Billboards In San Jose Public Comment for 6/17/2025 Council Agenda Item Item 8.7 25-724

From jhemp [REDACTED]

Date Mon 6/16/2025 4:38 PM

To City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc Taber, Toni <toni.taber@sanjoseca.gov>; Les Levitt [REDACTED] John Miller [REDACTED]

 1 attachment (992 KB)

NDBSJ City Council Agenda 25-06-17 Item 8.7 25-724 Rev D.pdf;

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Hi Megan & Toni,

Can you confirm receipt of the following public comment for tomorrow/Tuesday's Council meeting? I didn't see it attached to item 8.7 25-724 as of 4:30pm today/Monday.

See below and attached letter accordingly.

Regards,

Jason Hemp

No Digital Billboards In San Jose

Begin forwarded message:

From: NDBSJ Steering Committee <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

Subject: No Digital Billboards In San Jose Public Comment for 6/17/2025 Council Agenda Item Item 8.7 25-724

Date: June 13, 2025 at 2:19:41 PM PDT

To: "cityclerk@sanjoseca.gov" <cityclerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: "mayor@sanjoseca.gov" <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>, "district1@sanjoseca.gov" <district1@sanjoseca.gov>, "district2@sanjoseca.gov" <district2@sanjoseca.gov>, "district3@sanjoseca.gov" <district3@sanjoseca.gov>, "district4@sanjoseca.gov" <district4@sanjoseca.gov>, "district5@sanjoseca.gov" <district5@sanjoseca.gov>, "district6@sanjoseca.gov" <district6@sanjoseca.gov>, "district7@sanjoseca.gov" <district7@sanjoseca.gov>, "district8@sanjoseca.gov" <district8@sanjoseca.gov>, "district9@sanjoseca.gov" <district9@sanjoseca.gov>, "district10@sanjoseca.gov" <district10@sanjoseca.gov>, Michael Lomio <michael.lomio@sanjoseca.gov>, Vince Rocha <vincent.rocha@sanjoseca.gov>, Matthew Quevedo <matthew.quevedo@sanjoseca.gov>, No Digital Billboards In San Jose [REDACTED] Nora Frimann <nora.frimann@sanjoseca.gov>, Jennifer Maguire <jennifer.maguire@sanjoseca.gov>, Chris

Burton <chris.burton@sanjoseca.gov>, Martina Davis <martina.davis@sanjoseca.gov>, anthonyforsanjose [REDACTED] Gabby4D3 [REDACTED]

Please include the attached memo in the public comment for Council Agenda Item 8.7 25-274
"Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property"

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**Public Comment for City of San Jose Council Agenda Item 8.7 25-724
"Actions Related to Large Format Digital Electronic Signs on City-Owned Property"**

**From: No Digital Billboards in San Jose
June 13, 2025**

Dear Mayor Mahan and City Council Members,

We urge you to reject the current proposed freeway-facing digital billboards on City property at your Tuesday, June 17, 2025, City Council meeting. We collectively believe this is not in the best interest of our community, and that there are other ways to beautify the city and generate revenue.

Who Are We?

No Digital Billboards in San Jose is a coalition of residents, neighborhood associations, environmental advocacy and historic preservation groups. We represent over a thousand residents in all city districts.

Why Is This Proposal Not In The City's Best Interest?

There are many reasons to oppose digital billboards, but we would like to highlight the following "short-list" of concerns.

- * Litigation Risk - Is This About More Than (3) Digital Billboards?
- * Revenue Generation – What is Meaningful Economic Development?
- * Outdoor Advertising Companies Track Records Should be Examined Before Giving Them New Opportunities
- * Downplaying a Billboard's Impact On A Nearby Interim Housing Community Is NOT Okay

Litigation Risk - Is This About More Than (3) Digital Billboards?

Back in September 2018, after City Council revoked the ban on new billboards that had been in place for 40 years, there was a plan called Phase 2, to allow 110 digital billboards on private property around San Jose. This is not speculation. This is what was originally proposed by the billboard companies and brought forward by CM Peralez. It got pretty far through Planning and Council before there was enough public outcry to table it (at a live Council meeting in February 2021).

Isn't approving these billboards on public property a step toward eventually circling right back to that goal?

Does the City really think it can allow new billboards on public property but not on private property? That is where things stand today as far as San Jose Municipal code. Where is the City's analysis of this situation?

No Digital Billboards in San José

Why should residents think that billboard companies won't do everything they can to see more digital billboards in San Jose beyond these three and those downtown and planned at the airport. There really may be more coming, not necessarily by City plan, but the result of litigation. The basis of litigation would be fundamentally that private property owners would seek the same rights the City is claiming to have exclusively - the right to erect billboards on their property.

The article shown below, written by a lawyer in a billboard industry publication, suggests that that is exactly how this will play out over time. She called it "the San Jose problem" citing Federal law.

Litigation

The San Jose Problem

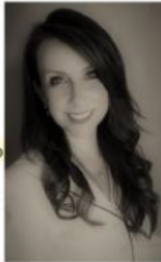
October 5, 2018 12:05 am

By Jennifer Sloane, Esq.

As an attorney for the OOH industry, I love to see comments by local governmental officials such as those pointed out in the article [New Digital Signs Headed For San Jose, CA](#). In that article, the city councilperson stated, in summary, that they wanted to allow billboards on city land but not on private land because if they allowed billboards on private land "...it makes it more competitive and it makes it more difficult for the city to get the ad revenue." These comments are setting the City up for a potential suit challenging the law that would preclude advertising on private property so that the City can get their hands on all of the ad revenue spent within their City limits. This, my unsuspecting city councilmember, constitutes a violation of the Sherman Act that precludes anticompetitive legislation.

Most governments think they are immune from anticompetitive lawsuits. But that is not the case. The courts have held that local governments act for the benefit of their constituents. And since local governments are independent economic actors, they pose the same threats to the national economy that private corporations do. Thus, local governments do not get to share in the state immunity from anticompetitive lawsuits. When a municipality is acting in its financial self-interest, its motives and conduct are that of a private party and, thus, there is municipal antitrust exposure.

In the case of San Jose, the comments of the city councilmember will make it difficult for the local government to show a non-anticompetitive



goal behind the legislation because its motive will have been to improve its market position rather than to remedy a local problem.

Obviously, it comes down to what the local government cites as the basis for their denial of the commercial advertising on private property at the time the legislation is adopted, and not what a council member said at a preliminary hearing. However, if the basis behind the legislation precluding signs on private property is ambiguous (i.e. they did not cite aesthetics, safety, etc.), then those wonderful comments made on record at a preliminary hearing will not only make for a great argument that there are antitrust violations behind the legislation, but it will also make for a tantalizing headline... "City Precludes Residents From Earning Income To Hoard All The Money For Themselves."

While representing the OOH for 20 years I have turned down many potential cases that operators have wanted to file against local governments that lack merit. However, I would gladly take the call of any OOH operator that wants to challenge a San Jose law that allows the City to have billboards on their land, but not grant the same rights to the citizens of San Jose. It's a no-brainer!

Law Office of Jennifer Sloane, Esq.

JSloane@Sloanelawoffice.com

Despite raising this concern at previous Council meetings, with Nanci Klein and Blage Zelalich from OED, and with other City Staff, we have not ever seen an answer to this question. The pat answer is always along the lines of these are the billboards under consideration today and we are not aware of any more coming.

Have you looked at any other City that opened the door to new billboards and seen the trajectory? Have you seen how many cities are mired in litigation and an ever-increasing proliferation of digital billboards?

No Digital Billboards in San José

We remind you that there was a billboard company called Blip that installed several digital billboards on private property in San Jose a few years ago. One was a stone's throw from the HWY 87 billboard now proposed by OutFront. The City Attorney went after them in court and they were forced to remove the signs. You think Blip and other companies are not watching this? You think all of the defendants who were individuals (there was quite a large number) with property adjacent to freeways from that lawsuit are not watching this?

One other note is that the City was sued already once by OutFront because it gave a no-bid contract to Clear Channel as part of this Phase 1 BB process for new billboards at the Airport. In this case, City Council and staff were so confident in awarding the contract despite recommendations twice from the Airport Commission to not proceed and explicit warning from our organization about the litigation risk.

The City lost the case and was rebuked in the decision. Op-Ed here: <https://sanjosespotlight.com/op-ed-judge-voids-airport-billboard-contract-after-san-jose-failed-to-follow-its-own-rules/>.

Litigation

- Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City has already been on the losing side of a BB lawsuit.
- If San Jose continues to pursue billboard projects exclusively on public property, it will face litigation on the grounds that the city cannot go into the billboard business while denying that opportunity to others on private property.
- The City Council has a fiduciary responsibility to their stakeholders, the residents of San Jose, to heed warning signs in factoring the total cost-benefit to our community in pursuing digital billboards.

Revenue Generation – What is Meaningful Economic Development?

Annual revenue generated from new digital billboards (including downtown billboards) will be a tiny fraction of the City of San Jose budget (est. 0.04%). One new mid-size company attracted to San Jose would probably generate more revenue for the city. That would be meaningful economic development vs. digital billboards. Putting up digital billboards is not economic development. Local business does not benefit since advertising will be mostly national brands and the billboard companies do not employ people in San Jose other than lobbyists.

The No Digital Billboards in San Jose group has suggested that step one to generate revenue from billboards could be an annual fee for existing static billboards. Many other major cities have this structure. This would also tie permit renewals into a cross check of whether a billboard was maintained or flagged as a code enforcement problem, which would render it un-renewable (= to be removed) with enough violations. Win-win.

Outdoor Advertising Companies Track Records Should be Examined Before Giving Them New Opportunities

Through the course of our advocacy for five years, we have never once heard anyone at City Hall question the track record of outdoor advertising companies. We assert that before awarding new contracts or business opportunities to a company (whether it is billboards or any other City contract), the history of the company should first be assessed. See slides below. There are dozens of Code Enforcement cases for situations like these. The burned billboard was in that state for 8 months.

Yet, everyone at City Hall proceeds as if none of this blight and time and effort from Code Enforcement factors into today's decisions. What's even more galling is that Clear Channel is now asking for credit to take down some billboards, like the one at 10th and Hedding, which have been subject to Code Enforcement complaints many times. That billboard should come down simply based on blight laws.

Misconception: Significant Blight Removal. No!

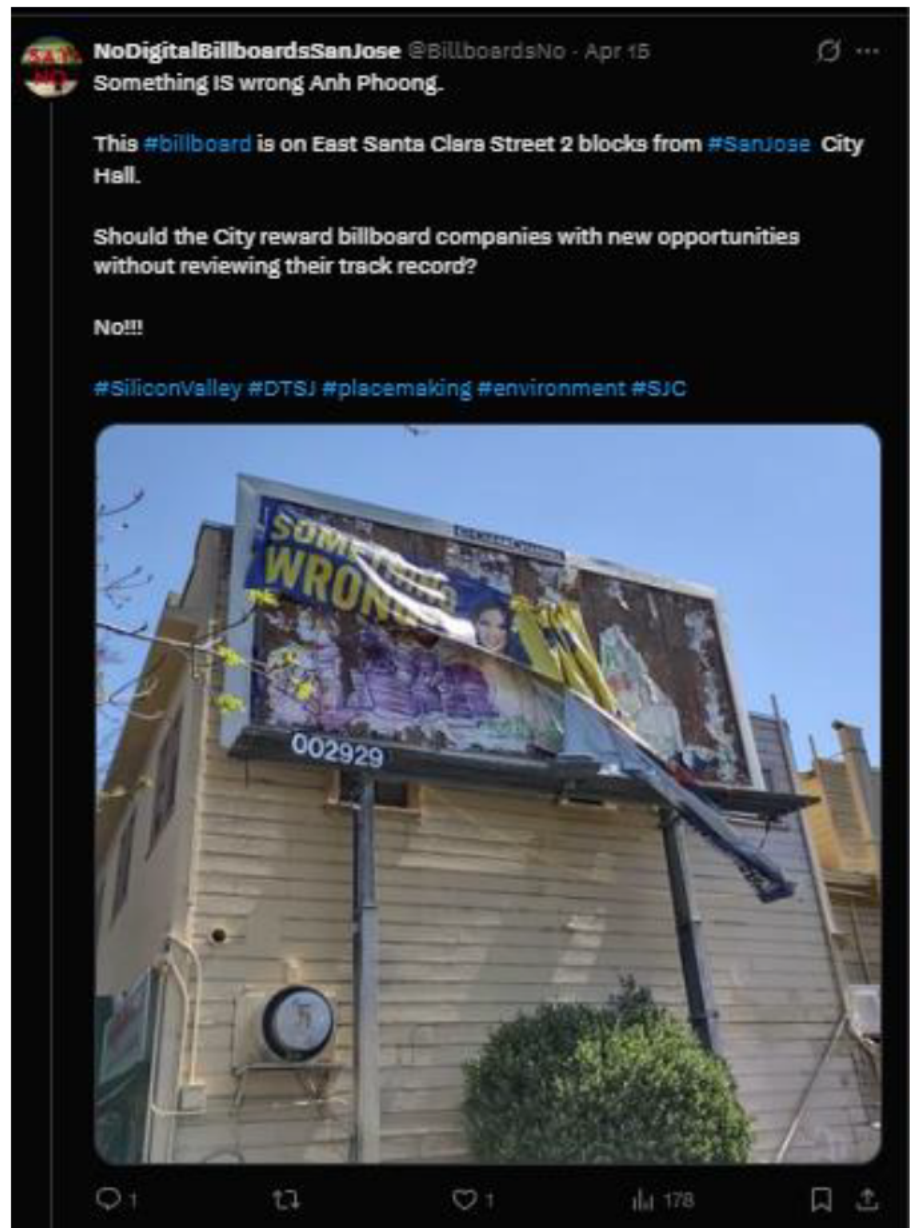
- San Jose does nothing to use Code Enforcement & blight laws, especially in low income neighborhoods - letting billboards stay in this state for months or years. And now they want us to think the only way to get BBs to come down is a deal with BB companies for new signs. No!



- Fully implementing Phase 1 would remove a TOTAL of only 32 static billboards out of an estimated >500 existing billboards.
- Sixteen downtown locations eligible for digital billboards require no static billboards be taken down.
- There will be no significant reduction of "blighted" billboards in San Jose especially with the construction of 22 much larger and more intrusive digital billboards downtown and on freeway-facing public property at the Airport and elsewhere.

No Digital Billboards in San José

Billboard at East Santa Clara
and 9th Street
(was in this state for 3 months)



This [#billboard](#) is on East Santa Clara Street 2 blocks from [#SanJose](#) City Hall. Should the City reward billboard companies with new opportunities without reviewing their track record? No!!!

This site and others have been reported MANY times to Code Enforcement. A case is created, but historically nothing is corrected as a result the complaint. It's usually fixed when the next ad installation occurs independent of any City action.

No Digital Billboards in San José



Billboard at 10th & Hedding with a long Code Enforcement File
(Perpetually covered in offensive graffiti)

No Digital Billboards in San José

Downplaying a Billboard's Impact On A Nearby Interim Housing Community is NOT Okay

There is an Emergency Interim Housing (EIH) site within 350 ft of one of the proposed billboard locations at Hwy 87 & Mission St. Although the City's Planning Dept deemed no significant impact from the light emitted from this site on the residents, we believe they are not being objective about the situation and simply giving it a rubber stamp of approval.

Would you like a 672 sq. ft digital display 45 ft tall shining into your bedroom window just outside of your backyard window about 100 yards away, at night, as you are going to bed?

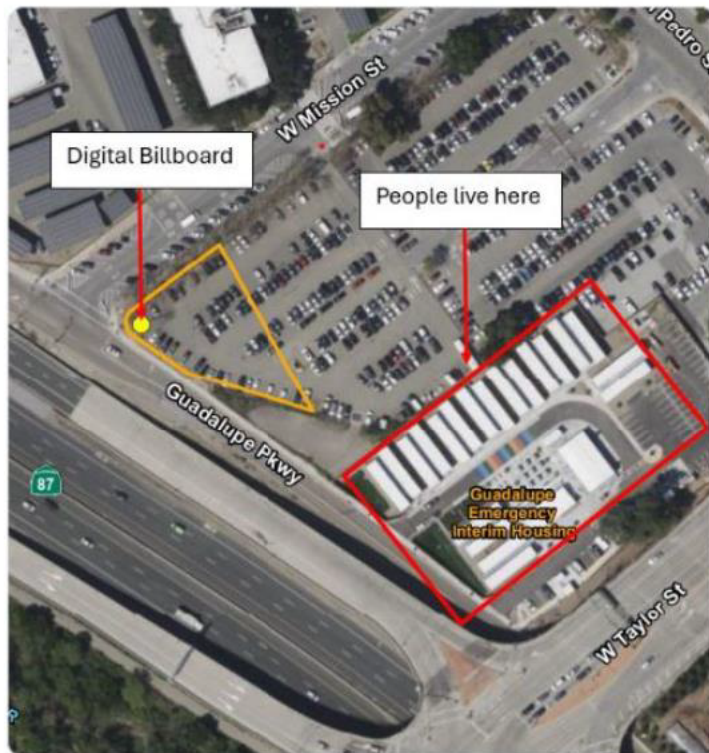
If you are OK with this, then really there are no bounds to what is OK and not OK.

Proposed Billboard



No Digital Billboards San Jose @billboardsno.bsky.social · 2d

Hypocrisy. First the [#SanJose](#) City Council adopts a policy that says static [#billboards](#) should be taken down in low income neighborhoods. Then they forge ahead with a new billboard at a site where they think it's OK to marginalize people at the Guadalupe EIH housing project.



No Digital Billboards San Jose @billboardsno.bsky.social · 2d

Ask any Council member or decision maker at [#SanJose](#) City Hall if they'd be OK with a 672 sq. ft digital display that close to THEIR house, no matter what high tech light directing technology is claimed to help mitigate the impact? Link to project plan: tinyurl.com/9p8jpfv4

Hypocrisy. First the [#SanJose](#) City Council adopts a policy that says static [#billboards](#) should be taken down in low income neighborhoods. Then they forge ahead with a new billboard at a site where they think it's OK to marginalize people at the Guadalupe EIH housing project.

Ask any Council member or decision maker at [#SanJose](#) City Hall if they'd be OK with a 672 sq. ft digital display that close to THEIR house, no matter what high tech light directing technology is claimed to help mitigate the impact? Link to project plan: <http://tinyurl.com/9p8jpfv4>

No Digital Billboards in San José

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,
Les Levitt, Jason Hemp, John Miller
No Digital Billboards in San Jose - Steering Committee

Website: www.billboardsno.org Email: info@billboardsno.org
Social: [Facebook.com/NoBillboardsSJ](https://www.facebook.com/NoBillboardsSJ) Twitter/X: [@BillboardsNo](https://twitter.com/BillboardsNo) Instagram: [@nobillboardssi](https://www.instagram.com/nobillboardssi)



FW: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/17/2025 7:40 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: María Hennessey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, June 16, 2025 9:16 PM
To: Mahan, Matt <Matt.Mahan@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>; [REDACTED]
Subject: June 17 Item 8.7 - I oppose digital billboards in San Jose

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 Dear Mayor Mahan and San Jose City Council Members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new billboard proposals in our community. We have already voted on this issue twice, once in the late 70's and one in the 80's. The citizens of San Jose do NOT want billboards. Gilroy had digital billboards and they voted to remove them after the public outcry from the city's voters.



- The public opposes new billboards - Remember that City's own survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose.
- Insignificant revenue – City staff estimates that the annual proceeds from all of the billboards combined would be about \$1 million annually; that is a tiny fraction of 1% of the City's annual revenue. Is it worth the tradeoff for more visual blight and an assault on our quality of life?
- The myth of so-called "urban vibrancy" are just talking points from the billboard industry. There is no evidence digital billboards on public buildings downtown would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. Billboards all over downtown will drive people away.
- Lawsuits - Cities with lots of billboards are cities with lots of lawsuits costing taxpayers lots of money. The City is inviting litigation if it thinks it's OK to allow new billboards on public property but not on private property. Next, the City's original plan to allow >100 digital billboards on private property will be back.

Please vote against any new proposals.

Please include this comment in the public record for the June 17, 2025 City Council meeting.

Regards,
Maria Hennessy
District 3

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#114057



Bill boards in San Jose

April Halberstadt ▾Jun 16 #114057 

The issue is worth some study and since history is what I do, I thought I would look through some of the local newspapers as far back as I could go on this issue.

This little survey is not comprehensive.

It is what I could come up with in a couple of days.

Bill boards and "outdoor" advertising have been with us for decades. Protests about it have covered at least a century.

Outdoor advertising includes all of those comments that people put on rocks, trees and other landscape features.

San Jose passed its first ordinance prohibiting bill boards on November 28, 1899.

Businesses who posted bills said the law unjustly discriminated against them.

Editorial comments noted only two groups were in favor of billboards; the advertising company and the landlord who was collecting rent on the billboard.

In the early days billboards were covered with papered "bills" which could then be papered over. They were very unsightly in wet weather when the paper began peeling and making a mess.

Americans were extremely impressed by the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 and adopted a new way of looking at their cities. They decided that their city could also be "beautiful" and a nationwide movement was started. There were several groups who began promoting city improvement, including the Federation of Woman's Clubs and an international group known as the Outdoor Art League.

Both the San Jose Woman's Club and the Santa Clara Woman's Club were very active in

supporting their local billboard ordinances.

The San Francisco earthquake and the resulting rebuild also encouraged people to think about civic appearance. Architect Daniel Burnham's plan for San Francisco resulted in many local improvements in neighboring cities.

The little city of East San Jose had billboard regulation that went to the California Supreme Court in 1909. San Jose also had legislation on billboards in Sacramento that passed both houses of the Legislature in 1906 but was later vetoed when it went for a signature.

Over the years many local cities, Sunnyvale, Los Gatos, Santa Clara and others petitioned their Trustees to adopt ordinances.

One of the most influential forces for urban beautification was a nationally known rosarian named Horace McFarland, who successfully promoted the creation of Municipal Rose Gardens. He was the impetus and inspiration behind the creation of San Jose's Municipal Rose Garden, along with Mrs. Charles Derby, Mrs. Fremont Older and Dr. Adams, a local rosarian. San Jose opened their garden in 1931.

In recent years most communities have zoning and land use regulations that limit billboards.

Four states have banned billboards completely; Hawaii, Alaska, Maine and Vermont.

Both San Jose and Santa Clara have tried to promote themselves as "The Garden City".



It's deja vu all over again, as Yogi Berra would say.



April on 13th
and yes, it is spelled Woman's Club

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 #114057 



FW: Billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Date Tue 6/17/2025 10:54 AM
To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

From: Janet Darrow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 10:54 AM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Billboards

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To all City Council members:

Please DO NOT approve any more billboards. They are a distraction to drivers along roadways causing safety issues, they create light pollution and they have negative aesthetic effects. Wildlife are also affected by the night lighting.

The monetary gain to the City is insignificant and 90% of residents do not approve of them. Please vote on the side of your constituents.

Janet Darrow
95136

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FW: Letter to SJ City Council in opposition to digital billboards

From City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Date Tue 6/17/2025 2:05 PM

To Agendadesk <Agendadesk@sanjoseca.gov>

-----Original Message-----

From: C Chivatero <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, June 17, 2025 1:55 AM

To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>

Subject: Letter to SJ City Council in opposition to digital billboards

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Mr. Mayor and City Council members,

I am not surprised but am dismayed to be writing, yet again, to our city leaders on the subject of digital billboards.

I won't recap, again, the numerous facts that weigh strongly and clearly against approving digital billboards in this city. The No Digital Billboards group has done that ably for literally years.

Aside from the outdoor advertising industry (and, somehow, our city leadership), very few people or organizations are in favor of digital billboards being deployed in the city. Not impacted scientists working at Lick Observatory, not major nature conservation organizations, and not the vast majority of citizens of San Jose. I have yet to speak with any neighbors who are in favor. Only the ad industry and our city's leaders (and city staff).

I learned just today, from our excellent local historian April Halberstadt, that the very first ordinance prohibiting billboards in San Jose was passed on November 28, 1899. Editorials in the day indicated that the only ones in favor then of billboards were the advertising company and the landlord who was

collecting rent on the billboard. Other ordinances controlling billboards were passed over the subsequent years. The issue is almost as old as the city, as is the opposition to permitting them.

And here we are, 126 years later, still substantially opposed, but somehow about to allow them in a far more intrusive form - digital billboards.

This city has big issues to deal with - homelessness, blight, post-Covid downtown business recovery, and of course our budget shortfall. And yet we seem unable to make the right decision even on something as clear, obvious and comparatively minor as this.

The ad industry is fighting a long war to get a new foothold in the city; you are accepting a short term payoff to look away.

San Jose took an unusual and enlightened position more than 30 (actually 126) years ago regarding billboards. We are clearly about to cash out of that principled position for nothing more than a few promised short term dollars.

The long term impacts will be hard to reverse and the costs will be largely borne by future residents of our city.

Shame on us.

Respectfully,
Craig Chivatero
22 year District 3 resident

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