

I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Michael Kevane [REDACTED]

Thu 5/16/2024 8:40 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

[External Email]

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Dear CED Committee,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new ad-driven digital kiosks (aka Wayfinding signage) in our community. Here are some reasons why.

- Visual blight - We don't need more obstructions in our public right-of-way. These 8-foot monoliths would be installed on sidewalks or street islands impacting the flow of pedestrian traffic. As if we need more obstacles to avoid when navigating downtown!
- Driver distraction - Digital billboards threaten driver safety and runs counter to the city's Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities. Just like billboards, they are designed to draw attention from pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.
- Who exactly needs directions? - Proponents claim these digital kiosks will aid visitors to our downtown by letting them know of local events and even provide a map on how to get there. However in our modern day and age, most of us have direct access to Google Maps in our pocket - our smartphones.
- Wasteful spending - The City has previously authorized \$2,000,000 in funds for Wayfinding signage that otherwise would have gone towards parking or affordable housing projects. Let's stop this boondoggle from continuing to leech funds from other projects that could better our community.
- The myth of urban vibrancy are all talking points of the billboard industry. There is no evidence electricity-hungry digital kiosks in the public right-of-way would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. These ad-infested kiosks all over downtown will drive people away. Look what happened in the early days of Santana Row - they disabled and removed all of them. Let's not make the same mistake again.
- Public opposition - Remember that City survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose. Ad-driven digital kiosks are just another type of billboard.
- Lobbyists and special interests are the ones asking for digital billboards. Council members have had many meetings with lobbyists from billboard companies in the last three months and not one meeting with anyone who thinks digital billboards are bad news.

- Light pollution - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution, like the already intrusive Levi's stadium Jumbotrons.
- Local businesses do not benefit - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would likely advertise national consumer products and services. Just visit Berkeley or Oakland to see for yourself.
- Wildlife disruption - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would have the same characteristics that would negatively impact wildlife.

Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards, Michael Kevane
District 3

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Pat Blevins

Thu 5/16/2024 9:08 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

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- Light pollution - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution, like the already intrusive Levi's stadium Jumbotrons.
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Patricia Blevins
District 9

5/18/24, 8:00 AM



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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Peter Ross [REDACTED]

Thu 5/16/2024 10:09 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: No Digital Billboards In San Jose <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

[External Email]

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Regards,
Peter Ross

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I oppose add-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

TIM ZADEL [REDACTED]

Thu 5/16/2024 10:15 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Regards,

Tim Zadel

District 9



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NDBSJ Public Comment for CED Meeting May 20th Agenda Item CC 24-353,

Leslie Levitt

Thu 5/16/2024 10:31 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: Taber, Toni <toni.taber@sanjoseca.gov>; The Office of Mayor Matt Mahan <mayor@sanjoseca.gov>; District2 <District2@sanjoseca.gov>; District 10 <District10@sanjoseca.gov>; District9 <district9@sanjoseca.gov>; District8 <district8@sanjoseca.gov>; District1 <district1@sanjoseca.gov>; District3 <district3@sanjoseca.gov>; District4 <District4@sanjoseca.gov>; District5 <District5@sanjoseca.gov>; District 6 <district6@sanjoseca.gov>; District7 <District7@sanjoseca.gov>

 1 attachments (1 MB)

NDBSJ letter to CED Cmte May16 2024 rev C.pdf;

[External Email]

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Please add the attached memo to the Community and Economic Development Meeting package for May 20th 2024.

Subject: Community & Economic Development Committee Meeting May, 20th 2024

Agenda Item CC 24-353

Downtown and Regional Wayfinding Status Report

Thank you.

Les Levitt

No Digital Billboards in San Jose Steering Committee

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

May 16, 2024

To: City of San Jose CED Committee

From: Jason Hemp, John Miller, Les Levitt, Tina Morrill (No Digital Billboards in San Jose)

Subject: Downtown and Regional Wayfinding Status Report agenda item CC 24-353, May 20, 2024 meeting

Dear Committee members,

We urge the City Council to direct staff to abandon the digital kiosk-based Wayfinding project.

You already know from the City's own survey that residents are strongly opposed to new digital billboards. Make no mistake, Wayfinding kiosks are ground level digital billboards. You may also know that our No Digital Billboards in San Jose is a coalition of residents, Neighborhood Associations, and Environmental groups opposed to new digital billboards in San Jose.

If the City wants to improve Wayfinding, then static signs combined with mobile apps are the common sense answer - easy to implement, low cost, minimal staff resources required. In fact, the MTC (the umbrella for all Bay Area transit) has stated in writing to us that their existing digital screens do not carry advertising.

Reasons to Oppose Ad-Driven Digital Kiosks

- Using the term "Wayfinding Signs" for these kiosks is misleading. In all implementations in the US, the digital screens show advertising most of the time, often for national brands. They are simply smaller versions of full-size digital billboards.
- For-profit digital kiosk companies lobby cities and use the same playbook as the traditional billboard industry claiming various public service benefits of their product, touting wayfinding, public service announcements, or art. It's a cover. The only economic means to support installing these systems is to have them show advertising most of the time. In this business model the outdoor advertising companies make most of the money not the local government gullible enough to allow public sidewalks to become sites for advertising.
- The kiosks are large power hungry structures = environmentally irresponsible. They have loud fans and consume lots of power. [See video links below]

Video: Digital Kiosk in San Francisco:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P_8D1DiH8cnK6HLrjbP_ukx1_puGFA7H/view?usp=sharing

Video: Digital Kiosk in Berkeley:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tUekajwHn-3fC9Y5S-Qkj-QuMvmTL-OD/view?usp=sharing>

- Visual blight - We don't need more obstructions in our public right-of-way. These 8-foot monoliths would be installed on sidewalks or street islands impacting the flow of pedestrian traffic. As if we need more obstacles to avoid when navigating downtown!
- Inviting vandalism - Anything in the public right is subject to vandalism. Saying the vendor would be responsible for upkeep is putting on blinders. For example, Clear Channel is responsible for maintaining the blue bus shelters with advertising under a contract that was purportedly for public benefit. Many of these bus stops have been a constant mess and subject to vandalism. Does the City need a new blight risk?

Website:

Email:

Social:

Twitter/X:

Instagram:

No Digital Billboards in San José

- Overhead costs - Adding a static sign is easy. Adding digital kiosks will require a lot of infrastructure effort from planning to implementation. Doesn't the City have better things for Planning, Public Works, and other staff to be doing?
- Driver distractions - Digital billboards threaten driver safety and runs counter to the city's Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities. Just like billboards, they are designed to draw attention from pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

Let's focus on practical and common-sense approaches to improving signage and wayfinding. Let's not get seduced by billboard lobbyists hawking so called Wayfinding signs which are really digital billboards.

Lastly, we're including some commentary from our X/Twitter account on additional reasons why these are a bad idea, along with some examples of other cities and challenges they've had to deal with. Let's not bring those headaches to San Jose.



Website: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Social: [REDACTED]

Twitter/X: [REDACTED]

Instagram: [REDACTED]

No Digital Billboards in San José



NoDigitalBillboardsSanJose · 6 May 2021
@BillboardsNo

We need to pay attention to the implications of what we allow on our public streets...like exposing the public to advertising they never asked to see. #SanJose should not hand public property over to the #billboard industry!

<https://t.co/SX8uKbXCGU>

<https://t.co/tbiSF1EwQS>



In close vote, digital kiosk proposal gets approval from Houston City Council

The 8-foot tall kiosks will provide info about sights and attractions in addition to ads. Here's why some oppo...

ABC13.COM



Rendering of 4th St at SJSU with digital advertising kiosks

Regards,
Jason Hemp, Les Levitt, John Miller & Tina Morrill
No Digital Billboards In San Jose

Website:

Email:

Social:

Twitter/X:

Instagram:

No Digital Billboards in San José

I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Aurelia Sanchez

Fri 5/17/2024 5:27 AM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

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Regards
Aurelia Sanchez
district 3

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Stephanie Vargas [REDACTED]

Fri 5/17/2024 10:11 AM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Regards,
[your name]
[your district# if you know it**]

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Wanda [REDACTED]

Fri 5/17/2024 11:17 AM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Sent from my iPhone

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Duarte Art [REDACTED]

Fri 5/17/2024 1:31 PM

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"No" to digital billboards

Freda Hofland [REDACTED]

Sun 5/19/2024 9:13 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Dear Committee members:

Below is my comment comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

I oppose ad-driven digital billboards for many reasons: light pollution, distraction to drivers and a waste of money. We do not need them and they would produce a blight on our lovely area.

Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage.

Sincerely,
Freda Hofland

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

james rogers [REDACTED]

Sun 5/19/2024 2:01 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

[External Email]

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Dear CED Committee,

Digital is Driving us to Distraction! Honestly, it is NOT good for our mental or physical health. For the reasons below, please vote NO.

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new ad-driven digital kiosks (aka Wayfinding signage) in our community. Here are some reasons why.

- Visual blight - We don't need more obstructions in our public right-of-way. These 8-foot monoliths would be installed on sidewalks or street islands impacting the flow of pedestrian traffic. As if we need more obstacles to avoid when navigating downtown!
- Driver distraction - Digital billboards threaten driver safety and runs counter to the city's Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities. Just like billboards, they are designed to draw attention from pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.
- Who exactly needs directions? - Proponents claim these digital kiosks will aid visitors to our downtown by letting them know of local events and even provide a map on how to get there. However in our modern day and age, most of us have direct access to Google Maps in our pocket - our smartphones.
- Wasteful spending - The City has previously authorized \$2,000,000 in funds for Wayfinding signage that otherwise would have gone towards parking or affordable housing projects. Let's stop this boondoggle from continuing to leech funds from other projects that could better our community.
- The myth of urban vibrancy are all talking points of the billboard industry. There is no evidence electricity-hungry digital kiosks in the public right-of-way would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. These ad-infested kiosks all over downtown will drive people away. Look what happened in the early days of Santana Row - they disabled and removed all of them. Let's not make the same mistake again.
- Public opposition - Remember that City survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose. Ad-driven digital kiosks are just another type of billboard.

- Lobbyists and special interests are the ones asking for digital billboards. Council members have had many meetings with lobbyists from billboard companies in the last three months and not one meeting with anyone who thinks digital billboards are bad news.
- Light pollution - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution, like the already intrusive Levi's stadium Jumbotrons.
- Local businesses do not benefit - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would likely advertise national consumer products and services. Just visit Berkeley or Oakland to see for yourself.
- Wildlife disruption - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would have the same characteristics that would negatively impact wildlife.

Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards,
Connie Rogers

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Item CC-24-353: I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Tina M [REDACTED]

Sun 5/19/2024 1:30 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Dear CED Committee members,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new ad-driven digital kiosks (aka Wayfinding signage) in our community and also provide comment on past wayfinding efforts.

My concerns about ad-driven digital kiosks:

Visual blight and reduction of walkability - We need pretty, walkable and clean streets. Trees and pedestrian friendly right of ways that are ADA compliant and can also accommodate our growing senior population who sometimes use walkers and wheelchairs are extremely important. We do not need more obstructions in our public right-of-way.

Driver distraction - Digital billboards threaten driver safety and runs counter to the city's Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities. Just like billboards, they are designed to draw attention from pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

Lack of creativity: Directional signage can be accomplished in more creative and diverse ways. Yes, we want people to know of local events so using both technology (on smartphones) AND creative signage can do both. Some previous efforts by the City have been quite creative (1) "Walk Your City" and 2) The San Jose Symphony Ads that played actual music upon the press of a button are two that come to mind).

Wasteful spending: Consultants are hired instead of using the bright minds in our city departments to cultivate ideas. How much money has already been poured into this project over the years? Spending our tax dollars that need to go to other urgent priorities (park maintenance for example) does not serve the community. Let's stop this boondoggle from continuing to leech funds from other projects that could better our community.

Costly: Urban vibrancy can be realized in more creative and less costly ways: There is no evidence electricity-hungry digital kiosks in the public right-of-way would be good for the economy. Local businesses and events are unfortunately secondary in advertising when they should be THE focus. Create clean, pretty and safe streets where people want to walk, stroll and discover.

Wildlife disruption: San Jose has the honor of a once beautiful river (and river park& gardens) running through it. - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would have the same characteristics that would negatively impact the wildlife that makes the Guadalupe river their home.

Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community. (And plant more trees!)

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

5/20/24, 10:38 AM

Thank you,

Tina Morrill
Resident of District 3

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Michael Kutilek <[REDACTED]>

Sat 5/18/2024 3:05 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Dear CED Committee,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new ad-driven digital kiosks (aka Wayfinding signage) in our community. Here are some reasons why.

- Visual blight - We don't need more obstructions in our public right-of-way. These 8-foot monoliths would be installed on sidewalks or street islands impacting the flow of pedestrian traffic. As if we need more obstacles to avoid when navigating downtown!
- Driver distraction - Digital billboards threaten driver safety and runs counter to the city's Vision Zero policy to eliminate traffic fatalities. Just like billboards, they are designed to draw attention from pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.
- Who exactly needs directions? - Proponents claim these digital kiosks will aid visitors to our downtown by letting them know of local events and even provide a map on how to get there. However in our modern day and age, most of us have direct access to Google Maps in our pocket - our smartphones.
- Wasteful spending - The City has previously authorized \$2,000,000 in funds for Wayfinding signage that otherwise would have gone towards parking or affordable housing projects. Let's stop this boondoggle from continuing to leech funds from other projects that could better our community.
- The myth of urban vibrancy are all talking points of the billboard industry. There is no evidence electricity-hungry digital kiosks in the public right-of-way would be good for the economy. It's more than likely just the opposite would happen. These ad-infested kiosks all over downtown will drive people away. Look what happened in the early days of Santana Row - they disabled and removed all of them. Let's not make the same mistake again.
- Public opposition - Remember that City survey with over 2000 respondents showed 90% opposition to billboards? Bottom line - the public is not asking for billboards in San Jose. Ad-driven digital kiosks are just another type of billboard.
- Lobbyists and special interests are the ones asking for digital billboards. Council members have had many meetings with lobbyists from billboard companies in the last three months and not one meeting

with anyone who thinks digital billboards are bad news.

- Light pollution - Lick Observatory would be negatively impacted due to light pollution, like the already intrusive Levi's stadium Jumbotrons.
- Local businesses do not benefit - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would likely advertise national consumer products and services. Just visit Berkeley or Oakland to see for yourself.
- Wildlife disruption - Like digital billboards, these digital kiosks would have the same characteristics that would negatively impact wildlife.

Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards,
[your name]
[your district# if you know it**]

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Doris Tuck <[REDACTED]>

Sat 5/18/2024 3:04 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: No Digital Billboards In San Jose <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

[External Email]

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[REDACTED]
with anyone who thinks digital billboards are bad news.

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Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

We ABSOLUTELY do NOT need more advertising in this culture. We ESPECIALLY do not need digital billboards. This city is enough of a mess with all the existing messes we are talking all around and doing little about, except allocating (and somehow using or misplacing) a lot of taxpayer money. And always looking for more when you cannot control or well account for what you already receive. I am really tired of this.

Regards,
Doris Lea Tuck
District 4

--

Doris Tuck
[REDACTED]

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Thalia Productions [REDACTED]

Sat 5/18/2024 1:37 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Please reject any proposals regarding ad-driven wayfinding signage, and preserve the existing aesthetic of our community.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards, Thalia Lubin

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

Thomas McRae <[REDACTED]>

Sat 5/18/2024 1:07 PM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

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Dear CED Committee,

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Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards,
Thomas McRae
District 3

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I oppose ad-driven digital kiosks in San Jose

iq4rent sc [REDACTED]

Mon 5/20/2024 11:20 AM

To: CEDCommittee <CEDCommittee@sanjoseca.gov>

Cc: steering.committee@billboardsno.org <steering.committee@billboardsno.org>

[External Email]

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Dear CED Committee,

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new ad-driven digital kiosks (aka Wayfinding signage) in our community. Here are some reasons why.

I have a medical condition commonly known as the "suicide disease" and one of the things that sets it off is bright light. There are numerous times I have spent minutes to hours writhing in uncontrollable pain as the result of passing a lighted billboard around 24th/Santa Clara, along the freeway or in other cities. The effect of these signs (and Sonic Runway), for me, is like an ice pick going through my eye and all I'm focused on is the excruciating pain, driving is secondary.

I know I'm not alone in this, there are other people with medical issues like seizure related conditions, people with astigmatism and other medical conditions where additional and/or unexpected bursts of light can affect them negatively and, as a result, affect their driving ability.

I used to live a block from city hall and one of the things I loved was how dark it still was at night in such a large town, how easy it was to see the stars. I now live one block outside of San Jose in an area that's even darker, the stars are even easier to see and it feels really special. Anything that increases light pollution and robs people of the beauty of the night sky with all its constellations and stars is not a win for the people.

Please include this comment in the public record for the May 20, 2024 Community and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Regards,
Shaunn Cartwright
One short block out of D9

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