

General Comments Received

Dear Ms. McNabb,

Although I live in Knoxville, TN, I have occasion to visit San Antonio for business. You have a lovely city and it would be a shame to see digital billboards proliferate.

I urge you to:

- 1) Not allow any more digital billboards.
- 2) Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards.

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,

Lisa Starbuck

Knoxville, TN 37924

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Dear Ms. McNabb,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for our economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to our City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

I urge you to:

- 1) Not allow any more digital billboards.
- 2) Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards.

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,

Erika Steinhardt

Spokane , WA 99203

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I appreciate the fact that San Antonio City Council is seeking input regarding a Pilot Digital Billboard program. I would urge you to carefully consider this issue because once digital billboards are given a go-ahead, the visual quality of your city will be impaired. San Antonio is a beautiful city that attracts many visitors because of its scenic beauty, history and uniqueness. Why would you want to jeopardize that scenic beauty and uniqueness by introducing intrusive billboards that will distract visitors from what you have to offer?

I am a citizen of Knoxville, TN which is known for its greenscapes, hills, mts and lakes. To protect what we have here, our City Council wisely put a ban on digital billboards in the city in 2008. Previously, in 2001, the Council put a ban on any new billboard sites because, like many cities, large, unneeded billboards were taking over our city.

I urge you to protect what makes San Antonio unique and gives economic value to your City by attracting visitors who seek your scenic vistas. Please say NO to digital billboards.

Marsha Grieve
Knoxville, TN 37919

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

When I visited San Antonio, I was disappointed to see the very bright electronic sign at the stadium - it blocked my beautiful nighttime view of the city because of its brightness and garishness.

I realize that this is an on-premises sign and not part of the digital billboard trial, but its effect is the same. Please do not put up any more of these awful eyesores in your beautiful city!

I urge you to:

1. Not allow any more digital billboards
2. Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards

Thank you,
Holly Eaton
Houston, TX 77082

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for local economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

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I live in Washington State but visit friends in your lovely city. My own City of Spokane had been trying to fight off digital signs and billboards for years now. The City allowed signs to be erected during the "fight" and now our town looks horrible. It's an assault to the senses and destroyed the pleasure of getting around our town. Be wise leaders of your community and don't let it happen to San Antonio.

Thank you,
Sheila Mulligan
Spokane, WA 99204

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for our economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to our City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

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2. Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,
Suzanne Markham
2627 S. Manito Blvd
Spokane, WA 99203

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for our economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to your City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

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I speak from experience on this issue because these awful, distracting signs are all over the Phoenix metro area and they are a blight here and would be obscene in an area as beautiful as San Antonio.

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,
Connie Morrison
Chandler, AZ 85226

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am not a resident of San Antonio, but visitor, tourist and admirer of your lovely city. You are absolutely correct in calling these digital signs a blight and driving hazard. We here in Spokane, WA are fighting the same fight.....mostly losing to the sign and advertising business concerns.

My personal story is one of barely avoiding a rear-end collision while being distracted by a digital sign....red blinking lights of some cartoon character chasing something across the sign. This sign is huge and placed on the side of a building directly in front of a turn on the main arterial.

In addition to the driving hazards these signs and billboards pose, they are just plain ugly and detract from the surroundings. If I want to look at a bunch of garish billboards and blinking digital signs....I'll vacation in Las Vegas.

I urge you to:

1. Not allow any more digital billboards
2. Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,

Linda McHenry
Spokane, WA 99203

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

As an occasional visitor to San Antonio I wish to express my concern that digital signs will help destroy the wonderfully unique character of the city. With signs flashing in a person's face, the city's character fades into the background and you start looking like every other city with flashing signs. I understand that business needs to make its presence known with signs but I believe signs that support the city's character rather than detract from it are much more appropriate and indeed more inviting to the shopper. I also understand that sign company's will tell you the opposite, that companies will go out of business if they can't compete. But I tell you as a shopper, and entertainment "goer", I prefer to support (and will support) businesses with a sense of their community. I hope any changes you make with your signs add to the character of your city. Companies will continue to do business just fine with "character" appropriate signs.

Thank you.

Paula Whitson
Spokane, WA 99203

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for our economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to our City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

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Sincerely,

Bill Jonson
Clearwater, FL 33761

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Thank you,

Mary Moltke

Spokane, WA 99201

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am opposed to off-premise outdoor advertising because it blights San Antonio's scenic environment; may be unsafe to me as a driver; is not good for our economy, especially the tourism and military industries; and runs counter to our City's environmental goals for energy consumption.

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2. Declare a moratorium and put in place an ordinance to ban the construction of all new billboards

I look forward to hearing from you on how you will act on this matter.

Thank you,

Linda Gry

Spokane, WA 99203

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Mr. Spurgin, comments re: digital billboards. 1. So many ads w/such quick switchover times one wonders how advertisers could be happy; depending on when you are able to finally get close enough to read fine print, the ad switches...by this time you've passed it by = a frustration at best, a traffic/public safety concern definitely!! 2. From a strictly aesthetic angle, graphics are really poor, colors are garish, much too bright at night. 3. Then again, digital saves energy, the billboard is easily managed/programmed/reprogrammed from remote locations, potential injury to workers is substantially reduced. 4. Finally, in the event of a public weather, health or police emergency...the billboards could be quite useful...certainly superior to the "transguide" system that is so VERY LOW TECH. 5. So, how about getting the digital lobby to agree to public service spots, weather/traffic updates (real time), etc. + longer view times +

better graphics and content + lower light settings at night??!! Thanks for open forum...appreciate the chance to weigh in.

Daniel Ochoa III, AIA – Principal, 2 Architects.
San Antonio, TX

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Andrew, I live in Crown Ridge subdivision. I'm against the use of digital billboards. The new Dury Inn at 1604 and I-10 has one. I don't believe it gets them more business and it detracts from the sky line. This is San Antonio with charm and elegance not a cheap flashy Las Vegas.

Regards, Warren
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I come to San Antonio to see the beauty of the Riverwalk and experience the culture and history of the city, not to see billboards and flashing signs.

Thank you,
Margaret Lloyd
Houston, TX 77005

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Andrew,

Our community is riddled with the vast visual blight of off premise signage of every imaginable sight. Digital signage/billboards are the worst offender. Digital signs/billboards are dangerous distractions on our public roadways and consume vast amounts of energy burning brightly during the day in order to compete with the light of the sun.

How futile an endeavor. How wasteful must we be as a society to allow these energy hogging eyesores to further diminish the safety and attractiveness of San Antonio. Have citizens no protection from the intrusion of endless advertising? How can we allow Clear Channel and other off premise signage companies to dominate our cities landscape? Please note my opposition to such signage and any action or ordinance which allows them.

Sincerely,
Robert Harris
San Antonio, TX

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I would like to go on record as saying that I don't feel that digital billboards are safe. They are often overpoweringly bright and highly distracting at night. San Antonio roads have enough distractions we don't need more. I'm also very concerned about the impact

they will have on animals in the area. Light pollution as you may know has been a concern with Camp Bullis, and also with caused some issues with migration of birds.

Matthew Rottman
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin: In regard to digital billboards -- I believe that they should not be allowed along major roads and highways because they are very distracting, and, therefore, dangerous to vehicular traffic. They also contribute excessively to light pollution of the night skies. San Antonio and Bexar County should allow no further installation of them. None.

Thank you for offering the opportunity to speak on this issue.
Frederica Kushner
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I was unable to attend the public meetings regarding digital billboards, but I wanted to make my opinion known. I strongly oppose these signs. I find them completely unnecessary and believe that they are unsightly and rather tacky. They affect the scenic beauty of our city, not to mention being a possible distraction to drivers. They are also a source of light pollution that affects the night sky even beyond San Antonio.

Sincerely,
John Eaccarino
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Sir:

Not only are the billboards causing distraction to drivers (SA already is one of the top 5 cities of bad drivers), but they are also detractions to the beauty of our city. Please consider how much more attractive are ALL THE OTHER CITIES in other states which have serious restrictions to ugly, unsightly, blight billboards. As a city which relies so much on tourism for our economy, why wouldn't SA want to maintain attractive trees, park areas and NO BILLBOARDS to encourage tourists to RETURN to SA, instead of arriving here only to find we are overrated in the beautification area. Who is benefiting financially from that scar on our city? Who is being BOUGHT AND PAID FOR by the billboard owners? Isn't the general wellbeing and future of the city the primary consideration for any city planning?

I WONDER...
Connie Fitzgerald
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

As an astronomer [who uses the city's freeways] I am opposed to adding still more light pollution and I am very apprehensive about the dangerous distraction that animated bill boards will inflict upon drivers. I would prefer a ban upon all bill boards but, since even Lady Bird Johnson failed at that, **I'll settle for NOT allowing animated signs within the view of drivers.**

Cordially,
Tom Mote, PhD
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Sir:

We would like to express our opposition to digital billboards. We find them distracting and dangerous. We are both 40+ year tax-paying San Antonio residents.

Thanks:
Steve and Marty Hixon
San Antonio, TX

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I am very opposed to any and all digital billboards, currently in existence and in the planning stages. They are very distracting and ugly. While we are on the subject of billboards I am also very interested in doing away with all the old plain billboards which are spread throughout the city. There should be a moratorium and not allow any more to be erected period.

Minerva Paredes
San Antonio, TX

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Mr Spurgin,

I was not able to attend the meeting regarding the use of LED "enhanced" signs along our streets in San Antonio. However, I have been alarmed for some time at the spread of these signs. They have distracted me on more than one occasion along 281 as I have proceeded from 1604 to 410. I have also begun to see them sprouting along I-10 west of the city.

These signs are very distracting at night. We need to all understand that there are already far too many lights distracting us and lighting up the sky instead of the ground. They light up the countryside and they glare through my windshield like a search beam.

I have been concerned about the lack of discipline used in light design and installation in my home city of Helotes, and have appeared before the city council to ask that we bring back a light pollution code that will help get our dark skies back by the time my grand children grow up.

But to save the dark sky for our children, San Antonio needs to not increase its light pollution of the sky.

I have seen photographs from space of San Antonio, and was amazed how bright we already look from orbit. How much of this light is absorbed by clouds and reflects down to light up areas where wildlife needs darkness to survive. How many night creatures are getting disoriented by the lights? How many birds are losing their way?

But beyond all that, these signs are ugly and are a new form of pollution of our pretty city which we have a chance to say NO about.

Please let our city government know of my displeasure at the thought of allowing more such signs. I'd be in favor of eliminating all those already in place. At the very least, lets get the present signs turned off at sunset.

Rick Allnut, MD
Helotes, TX

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Dear Mr Spurgin,

I am very concerned about the digital billboards going up. Not only are they unattractive, they are very distracting. I am concerned from a safety standpoint. They really should not be allowed.

Thank you,
Melanie Ross
Conservation Society Member
San Antonio, TX

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Do away with all digital billboards. Do not allow ANY new ones.

Sonny Collins
San Antonio, TX

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I didn't have access to a printer but wanted to submit my comments regarding the electronic billboards.

I find them very distracting while driving. I just want to see what's coming next on the board.

I think the 10 second dwell time is about right.

If we have to have them I think they should be for emergency announcements.

Intensity levels for both daytime and night time about right

I think they should never be placed near driver decision points such as exits, intersections, directional signage. Additionally they should not be placed in the scenic corridors.

I really don't like the billboards at all but I understand that they are here to stay and compromised must be made.

Thank you for allowing this input.

Denise Schneider
San Antonio, TX

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Mr Spurgin,

As I am unable to make any of the meetings, I am emailing my vote for NO MORE DIGITAL SIGNS in San Antonio.

Thank you,
Julie Agena
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Sir:

I wish to offer my opinion on the digital billboard issue. I am against adding any further billboards to the landscape of San Antonio. As a matter of fact, I am in favor of removing the existing signs. The signs create visual clutter, light pollution in the night sky, driver distraction (and while I know the studies are incomplete, they are a distraction to MY driving) and they consume considerable energy that could be used more efficiently for the benefit of homeowners. San Antonio does not need any more outdoor advertising signs of any kind.

I am a (native) resident of San Antonio (District 8) but I work in Kerrville and it is very pleasant to view the hill country landscape with so few billboards.

I realize you are probably besieged by the local sign lobby in favor of billboards, but the character of our beautiful city should not be compromised for the sake of this industry.

And it doesn't matter how many signs are removed to create a new one – there will always be too many billboards in our city. Billboards, especially these obnoxious digitals, are a blemish on the complexion of San Antonio and should not be allowed.

Keep San Antonio Beautiful – say NO! To digital billboards.

Respectfully,
Patti Zaiontz
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin:

I have been following the information on the City's hearings on the future of digital billboards, although I am unable to attend the hearings.

You may please record that I favor "no more digital billboards."

If you need reasons, my primary reason is that they are visual clutter and a distraction to drivers. My secondary reason is that they use so much energy. We do not need them.

Respectfully,
Theresa G. Gold
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Sir:

Please do not support any municipal legislation or rulings that would allow for more digital signboards. They tarnish the vistas of our beautiful city and serve only to distract local drivers from the conditions and hazards to which they must attend when navigating our byways.

With regards,
George E. Pierce
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I am writing to you about digital billboards around our city. I am a new member of the San Antonio Conservation Society and agree with that organization's position on the issue.

The billboards are an attraction, to be sure, but I think that with San Antonio drivers talking on cell phones and generally being distracted when they drive-- that one more distraction is just too much.

I have noticed the signs around town and one thing that happens psychologically is that I do look at the signs and can really see why advertisers love them, but they are a safety hazard for those who look at them for an extended length of time, such as when the message is just changing to a new one.

Another problem is just the visual clutter on our roadways. I'd really like to see us Keep San Antonio Beautiful, but the digital signs do not enhance our beauty at all.

Please help us to have a safer, more beautiful city by discontinuing the digital billboards.

Thank you,
Jeanette Pierce
San Antonio, TX

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I am OPPOSED to digital billboards -- all billboards, in fact. I find them distracting and unsightly, a real blemish on our beautiful city.

Thank you.
Diane Malone
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin,

I would like to go on record as opposing the expansion of digital billboards.

Barbara Lawrence
L. E. Lawrence
San Antonio, TX

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I am NOT in favor of any additional digital signs. I think they require too much electricity, and they are a distraction to drivers.

I am opposed to the digital signs.

Susan Closner
San Antonio, TX

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Andrew:

Please - No more digital or electronic billboards.

Thanks

David Martin
San Antonio, TX

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Good Morning,

My vote on the Billboard issue would be to not have any more. I find them distracting when driving. I, however, am not opposed to the digital signs used as Amber alerts.

Thanks,

Linda Fugit
San Antonio, TX

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PLEASE!!!! NO DIGITAL BILLBOARDS IN CROWNDRIDGE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ronald and Michelle Hockett

San Antonio, TX

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Dear Sir:

We are against Digital Signs as they are an attractive nuisance. They clutter up the highways and are a distraction to drivers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Viviano & Patricia Gomez,
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin:

No more digital billboards are needed in San Antonio, I believe. They and all other billboards are a blight on our city.

Thank You,
Helen Jacobs
San Antonio, TX

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Please don't allow any more digital billboards of any kind or size in San Antonio (and surrounding areas - if possible). They are very distracting to drivers and sometimes confuse drivers because they think they are public Service announcements about difficulties ahead on the roads.

Thank you,
Sally Hoffman McNeel
San Antonio, TX

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Just wanted to let you know I am for no more digital billboards in San Antonio.
Sandra O'Banion
Lytle, TX 78052

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Mr. Spurgin,
Please no more billboards. San Antonio is a city of historical importance to all Texans as well as other Americans, and citizens of other countries.
No great battles of the American Revolution or the Civil War were fought in Texas. There are no major monuments or cemeteries. But there is the Alamo and our culture which represents what is best about our city, state and country.
Billboards, in my opinion, detract from our city, they add nothing of value. They block the sun, the sky, the natural beauty of San Antonio. This is not Las Vegas, for that matter, it is not Houston or Dallas either. We want a city that welcomes people because of who we are, not because we have big signs that tell you what is for sale.
Keep San Antonio beautiful, historical, cultural and as they said in a recent movie, "They will come." When they come they spend money.
Bobby Kremer
San Antonio, TX

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Good Morning Mr. Spurgin
Thank You for reviewing comments on the video Billboards issue. While I am not opposed to signs and billboards totally, as some are, I am opposed to bright garish distracting outdoor video LED displays, which as I experience them are unsafe for drivers, and in general a detriment to our city, on aesthetic grounds.

One aspect never discussed is that the bright distracting signs also move quickly, as they distract. As drivers we perceive threats by observing patterns, our awareness keys off patterns of sudden motion, sudden change.

These sign owners know that, and the manufacturers teach that specifically as they instruct owners how to program the sequence of images. In my work, receive factory promotional and technical information of the mainstream manufacturers of high brightness outdoor displays, so I am quite sure of their intent to use these specific features for profit.

Our society's communication and entertainment addiction won't be solved by restricting the brightness and interference these new very bright signs are adding to driving risk, but doing nothing is a further decline. Cars and trucks are expendable, drivers are not. Would you agree and act to limit the driver risk, with these thoughts in mind?

Please consider these approaches while allowing this technology in the city.

1 restrict the brightness (rated in NITS)

2 the rate of motion as they move from account to account

3 and the signs proximity to highway traffic

This is where and how, I cannot support their use.

My greatest concern is Limiting the programming, and brightness, the signs will not go away, in reality.

The fast changing patterns are most dangerous, when that bright. Brightness is measured in "NITS".

1. LIMIT THAT TO 1500 NITS DAYTIME 1000 NITS NIGHT TIME, NOT THE 4000++ NITS IN USE 24 / 7

2. LIMIT RATE OF CHANGE TO 3 SECOND INTERVALS,

3. NO HARD CUTS,

4. NO FLASHING COLORS, SMOOTH FADES ONLY

5. SELL THEM POWER AT HIGHER PEAK HOUR DEMAND RATES AT THE SAME PRICE RESIDENCES PAY

6. THEN TAX THEM

RESULT: THEN THEY MIGHT BE WELCOME

Thanks for asking!

John Mathis

San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin;

My husband and I are unable to attend tonight's public meeting regarding digital billboards in San Antonio; however, we would like to express our opinions.

We both feel that there should be no additional digital billboards allowed in San Antonio. They are contrary to the historic ambience of the city and create light pollution and a distraction hazard to drivers.

Please note our input for the record on this issue.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Larry and Linda Draper

San Antonio, TX

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Dear Andrew - as an associate member off Conservation Society and citizen of San Antonio I want to give you my opinion of the digital billboards that are now creeping up around S.A. My observation a few years ago: They were so bright they were a driving distraction - I can tell you which ones if you actually want to know. Then after all the hub-bub about them - a few were allowed around town - but I noticed they didn't seem as bright - actually they were not bad. I understand that advertisers can get more signage out of a sign that changes frequently - but let's keep them to a few. And keep the brightness down. I am more concerned about content (men's clubs and alcohol, etc.) - that does not send positive messages for our youth than I am about the type of sign. Yes, people do care about what goes up in the air and space of our city - we are considered by the rest of the country - a pretty conservative place- clean, historic- and low-key - let's not ruin our image with a bunch of rowdy flash - if people want that - they can go to Las Vegas, New York, or LA.

Elizabeth Sherrod
San Antonio, TX

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I would like to see fewer and not more billboards in San Antonio.

Thank you,
Bruce E. Houston
San Antonio, TX

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I am absolutely opposed to more digital billboards. I live off of Camp Bullis Road and I-10, and am dismayed at the amount of growth in that area, and how it is affecting what once used to be a peaceful reprieve from inside the 1604 loop. I intend to make this an issue in the next election.

Kind regards,
Sarah Buckelew
San Antonio, TX

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Please no more digital billboards!
It makes an incalculable negative impact on the public/community/tourists.
Important for the beautification of our unique city - please keep it that way!
Sylvia Navarro Tillotson
San Antonio, TX

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To whom it may concern,
I am alarmed that electronic digital billboards, indeed billboards of any sort, are increasing. If the city government doesn't care about the residents, surely they know tourists don't come here to see these unsightly things. Let's take a stand and say all the other cities in Texas can have as many as they want.
Carolene Zehner
San Antonio, TX

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Please, please do not allow the visual pollution of our beautiful, historical city with ugly and dangerously distracting digital billboards!
Thank you,
Terri Huddleston
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,
I am opposed to increasing the number of billboards, digital or otherwise, in San Antonio. People from all around the world visit San Antonio to see old, historical homes, buildings, missions, etc. Billboards cheapen the appearance of the city and are the first things people see as they drive into our lovely city by personal car or by taxi from the airport. They detract from the very historical nature we have worked so hard to nurture and preserve.
In addition, when driving on the freeways, I find the digital billboards to be dangerous. The very nature of changing images draws my attention as a driver to the billboard and off of traffic.
Please register my opposition to this proposal before City Council. I am opposed to any increase in billboards in San Antonio.
Thank you for your indulgence.
Sincerely,
Peggy Ramsey
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin,
The purpose of the billboards is to attract attention to business interests when motorists should be paying attention to the traffic around them. It doesn't make sense to let attractive technology override our common sense. Along with cell phone use this distraction can only cause additional accidents on our city streets and highways.
Larry and Linda Segesman
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I urge you and council to BAN digital billboards throughout the city. They are a blight on our beautiful city and they are a disturbing DISTRACTION to drivers on roadways everywhere. It's bad enough to have to look at increasing numbers of billboards, but the ones that move and blink and wink and do all manner of movement are the worse.

We have enough light pollution in the city without this kind of distraction. I love to get out in the Hill Country and actually be able to see the stars. Such natural beauty. I fear that our children and grandchildren will be robbed of these awesome natural sights - and only because some greedy ---- want to make more money selling billboard space.

Please put a stop to this ugliness and keep SAT beautiful.

Thanks for listening.

Marcia G. Weser

San Antonio, TX

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I am voicing my opinion against the digital billboards.

A long time ago we worked on banning the billboards here in San Antonio, but the city council then, watered down our proposal. I have been gone from the city for a few years and returned to find that we now have an even bigger problem, with new technology.

Ban all billboards. Thanks

Mike Garcia

San Antonio, TX

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I'm startled and depressed every time I come upon a digital billboard. They are a traffic hazard that will be compounded if more are allowed. We are the last bastion of the billboard development lobby in Texas. Other major cities are more progressive and have limited billboards in general far more than San Antonio. And we call ourselves a tourist city? I can't attend the meeting but I'm agin' em!

Francille Radmann,

San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin:

Please include us as being opposed to any more digital billboards in San Antonio. Digital billboards destroy the scenic view of not only nature, but also of San Antonio's beautiful city scapes. Additionally, the billboards are distracting to drivers with the potential to be a safety hazard.

We urge the city of San Antonio not to allow any more digital billboards to be built.

Sincerely,

Mark and Peggy Oppelt
San Antonio, TX

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There are already enough distractions when driving that are difficult to control through any law enforcement type means. The flashing/changing billboards are a distraction that we can "outlaw," so we drivers are looking at the roadway instead of looking at what the next message might be. I vote "no more" of these billboards. Thank you -
Bette Delgado
San Antonio, TX

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No more digital billboards and the ones that exist should be taken down. They are ugly, distracting, ruin our night sky with light trespass. I vote NO more!!
Nelda Newman
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Andrew,
I am opposed to using any digital bill boards in San Antonio. They are an eyesore as well as a distraction for drivers. Although I am not for more government, sometimes regulations are needed. For Instance all the interstates have business and advertisements all along them. I have been to other states where you only see greenery, trees, shrubs, flowers...etc. along the interstates. What a beautiful sight to not have all those advertisements.
Sincerely
William Schlegel
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Spurgin,
As a long time resident of San Antonio I strongly oppose any additional billboards, including electronic billboards in our community. Billboards of any kind are unattractive and destroy the natural beauty of San Antonio.
Thank you in advance for your support of this issue.
Sincerely,
April Smith-Koebel
San Antonio, TX

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I think they are too bright and distracting to drivers especially the ones that change messages-the lights are actually glaring!

thank you,
Robin Getter
San Antonio, TX

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Andrew, I say no to digital signs..... the biggest reason.....power..... it goes against being green and energy efficient. Thank you.

James Mason
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Mr. Spurgin:

I have been unable to attend any of the public meetings concerning the new and garish digital billboards due to my work schedule, but would appreciate the opportunity to give you my input.

I think billboards in general are distracting and visual garbage. We, Americans, are surrounded by advertising on a daily basis but I have the privilege of turning off the radio or television. I can close a magazine or newspaper and put it away. But I cannot turn off a billboard – and certainly not a digital billboard.

In addition to the visual clutter that digital billboards provide, they are extremely distracting. Do they attract attention? Yes – which means their advertising works. Are they distracting? Yes – my eyes are focused on the changing graphic instead of being focused on the road where they belong. Is that safe? Of course not.

Progressive cities are concentrating on enhancing the night sky and creating beautiful streetscapes along their city streets. San Antonio has bought into more visual pollution that does not lend beauty, character, or easier way-finding along our city streets or highways.

Please do not allow any additional digital billboards in San Antonio, and if there is a way to get rid of them altogether I would support that effort.

Respectfully,
Kim Wolf

San Antonio, TX 78232

I live in Hollywood Park but work, shop, drive, etc., in the City of San Antonio.

* * * * *

Please help San Antonio preserve its natural beauty by blocking any more additions of digital billboards. Better yet, let's get rid of the present flock.

Mary Jean Williams
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please register me as being a SACS member who favors NO MORE digitals in our city !

ncamp@satx.rr.com

Nancy Camp
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I would like to vote a definite NO to anymore digital signs in San Antonio - or any other kind of billboard.

They're just unsightly and always have been.

Sincerely,
Ralene Ann Brotheman White
Harlingen, TX

* * * * *

I am writing you to express my disapproval of the existing digital billboards and the prospect of more. They are ugly. They are hard to read which distracts drivers (They are definitely not HD). They pollute the vistas approaching and leaving the downtown.

Please register my vote for "No and No More"

Thank You
Richard Malone
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Sir:

I am writing in hopes that the current DIGITAL billboards in place be REMOVED and that no further digital billboards be allowed to be erected in the City of San Antonio.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this item.

Respectfully,
John Sanchez
San Antonio, TX

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If the city truly cared about the beauty of this city we would ban outdoor billboards, like many beautiful southern cities do, such as Nashville. Unfortunately, I realize our city leaders lack the conviction to make such a move. So I ask that you reduce the amount of billboards by 8 for every 1 digital billboard. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Sally Marvin
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please, no more digital billboards---thanks
Tony Galaviz
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I almost had a wreck trying to see what the next ad was going to be on the new billboards. If I am having that problem, how many others are having it too. The brightness of the light that comes from these things at night is like driving into a strong spot light, it is a little distracting even if you are not trying to read any of the ads. I think it is more of a safety issue than anything else.
Charlie Hansen
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Spurgin,
I found the digital billboard a fascinating prospect when it was first announced, but I wondered whether its usefulness could possibly counterbalance the added clutter that it would bring to our view from our roadways.
After having opportunity to experience the billboard impact, I hope the City Council will discontinue permission for their use. Urbanization has many positive points, but such clutter serves to distract drivers, often dangerously, and contributes to an overall negative aesthetic in our urban landscape. Let's focus our civic and corporate energy on providing a more calming view rather than contributing to the already overly frenetic nature of our lives.
Sincerely,
Lou and David Williams
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I am unable to attend the public meeting but want to offer my comments.
I am opposed to off site digital billboards. I think they are dangerous because they distract drivers. They are also obtrusive and destroy view lines. We are trying to make San Antonio more beautiful and do not need anything that clutters the ROWs and distracts drivers. According to recent news articles, the billboards are also power hogs and use lots of electricity. We should be adopting laws and ordinances of other states and cities that severely limit all billboards - in number and in size. I have found it very easy to get around in these areas without having huge billboards. they use a more just-in-time signing - put up a sign when it the business is nearby (and the sign is quite small and uniform in shape and color).
I sincerely hope that San Antonio does not permit more of these billboards and perhaps can get rid of the 15 that have been the test case.

Joanne Walsh
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Sir: I oppose all digital billboards in the city of San Antonio for the following reasons:

They are distracting and pose a hazard for drivers on our city highways, especially the one located at IH37 and 281, one of the city's most dangerous curves.

They are ugly and distract from the beauty of our city. Tourism is our number one industry. Do tourists enjoy driving into and out of San Antonio with its billboard clutter on every major highway?

They waste energy.

The billboard industry pays no taxes on its billboard advertising and pays nothing to the upkeep of the highways they depend on for their advertising.

The billboard industry does a poor job of policing themselves (following the laws of Texas and the Highway Beautification Act) so why would the city reward a private industry with additional signs?

The billboards removed in exchange for the electronic billboards added are in obsolete locations. Have them remove billboards in high traffic areas such as where they are requesting electronic billboards.

The five major cities in Texas are removing billboards-why is San Antonio adding billboards???

I am disgusted that the city of San Antonio would even allow 13 test electronic billboards that supposedly will never be removed.

All billboards and especially electronic billboards are nothing more than "Litter on a Stick."

Do not allow any more electronic billboards to be erected in our city.

Albert Hausser
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I am from Houston and am dismayed when I enter what used to be a beautiful San Antonio. San Antonio should follow the lead of every other major city in Texas by stopping all new billboards including electronic digital ones. I hate having to wade through the ugliness on your freeways to get to the beauty of the River Walk. Stop this madness and turn your city back into the lovely place it used to be.

Margaret Lloyd
Houston, TX

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Please do not allow any more electronic billboards.

We should be turning off the ones that exist not adding more. We should be cutting back on all wasteful energy usage.

Thanks.
Deb Field
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I oppose electronic billboards in San Antonio, and as a matter of fact, I oppose all billboards. Our new Museum Reach Riverwalk is beautiful and a step in the right direction for San Antonio. Let's take another step and make San Antonio even more beautiful- eliminate all billboards. Billboards need us, we don't need them!

Rita Schimpff
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please, please, please. No more Digital bill boards in San Antonio. They consume energy, are dangerous for motorists and are a blight on the landscape.

Beth Milstead
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Hello,
I understand you are taking public comments from those who cannot attend the public meeting tomorrow.
Please note that I oppose any additional digital or electronic billboards.

Regards,
Rose Kanusky
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Mr. Spurgin,
I am very much against digital billboards. These billboards are intrusive and go against the beauty and historic nature of San Antonio.

Thanks.
Molly Smith-Shafer
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Andrew,
I am writing to encourage the City of San Antonio to prohibit the construction of new digital billboards, and, in fact, to remove those already erected. These billboards do not reflect the historic character of our city, and I cannot imagine that there is any pressing

"need" for them, other than for a certain company to make a profit through building and leasing them.

Darryl Ohlenbusch
San Antonio, Texas

* * * * *

Mr. Spurgin:

Existing off-premise billboards of all kinds, especially digital billboards, are a trashy distraction to our beautiful historic City. Our out-of-state and foreign visitors are shocked by such tawdry commercialism.

Please do not allow these eyesores to proliferate.

Roselyn Cogburn
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Mr. Spurgin: I am not able to attend the meetings re: digital billboards, so this email is to register my vote AGAINST digital billboards. They ruin our beautiful cityscape, and waste electricity. We should have a strong anti-billboard ordinance against ALL new billboards, whether digital or non-digital, and work over time to eliminate ALL billboards.

I can't believe you would consider votes submitted at the meetings to be a valid indicator of how the public feels. There should be a coordinated effort to poll people where you get more voters, as close as possible to a random sample.

Thank you.

Anne Larme
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Andrew,

I thought you might enjoy reading this letter to the editor in today's Express-News paper. In addition, the lack of any traffic safety studies associated with Digital Billboards, I think this letter below is right 'on-target' as far as being a sustainable technology. I note this with regards to the City Council passing of the recent Mission Verde initiative.

Pull plug on billboards

After an explosion at one of our power plants, CPS Energy urged us to conserve power. I was curious to see how much power is used by the digital billboards gracing our highways. The CPS meter is at the base of the sign, so anyone can read it.

The one I looked at used 568,600 watt hours in one day, or more than 17 million watt hours per month. City Council approved 15 of these billboards for the city. Multiply this power consumption by 15 and you are wasting enough wattage to power about 130 moderately sized homes or 260 apartments.

CPS would do well to pull the plug on these billboards until the crisis is over. If they are really promoting a green environment, they would do well to eliminate these billboards altogether or at least limit the number to 15.

Wendell Peters, P.E.

Robert G. Hanley, AIA
Architect/Project Management Consultant
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Andrew - I had planned to attend, and discussed this meeting at our monthly Neighborhood meeting. However, I now have to leave town on short notice and will not return until next week.

Basic comments from those I have talked with revolve around:

1. Flashing parts and animation are distracting - would like that slowed or prohibited.
2. Way too bright - mostly at night but even in daylight (this pertains mostly to on-premise signs I believe, but since the ordinance will hopefully grow to cover those, I wanted to pass it on.

Cheers,
Ron VanKirk
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I strongly oppose digital billboards. They are dangerous to drivers, nuisances to neighborhoods and enormous energy wasters (see letter to editor in today's Express-News, "Pull plug on billboards").

Nell Fenner Grover
San Antonio, TX

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I request that you register my opinion regarding digital billboards. I vote for "no more digitals." My opinion is based primarily on aesthetic concerns.

Susan Erickson
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I was unable to attend any of the scheduled meetings on the Digital Billboard ordinance but am very concerned about this issue.

When Jim and I moved here in 1973 we both loved San Antonio but have always been concerned with the signage issues. As a city with many visitors coming here all year long, why do we have so much visual pollution? The billboards and large signs that are

way above the buildings do not give our visitors a good image of San Antonio. Please consider clearing up the roadways so we can see the city.

When the elevated lanes to HI 10 were built, we were told they would remain free of billboards but now they are at every curve in the highway and when drivers should be looking at the road they are distracted by billboards!! There were supposed to be corridors as visitors entered the city that were free from large Billboards but now they are there also. When will this stop!!

Other cities across the country and even Houston have had "No new billboard" regulations since the early 1980's. Please do not allow this to continue!

Katie Reed
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I tried to fill out a Digital sign questionnaire/comment form,
<http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd/digitalsigns.asp>, but I see no address to mail it in to.

So can I just say these things?

Digital signs are tacky, and distracting.

People should concentrate on driving, and not digital ads.

The light at night from these ads is offensive too. While driving my eyes want to focus on them.

Also, one would have to, while driving, write phone numbers down before the ad switches.

With all the drinking drivers (and there are plenty), and people on their cell phones, we do not need any more distractions. I think there should be a city ban on digital billboards.

Thank you,
Anan Gonzalez
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Re: Digital Signs, my vote is No More Signs.
Please add me to the percentage of folks voting for NO.

Thanks for your assistance.

Frances Escobedo
San Antonio, TX

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Yes, I am in favor of an ordinance that allows digital signs to be located in locations currently legal for outdoor billboards, including off-premises sites.

As an attorney who has represented outdoor sign companies for over 40 years, as well as having served as a commissioner on the SA CVB for 8 years, I believe that we already have adequate regulation of outdoor signage within the SA city limits. The new digital signs provide helpful information to our visitors as well as to our citizens. We do not need additional regulations.

Joel Klein
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

No more digitals.
They slow traffic and make us look like Las Vegas. We are San Antonio and unique.
Nita Heinchon
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please no more digital billboards. They add unnecessarily to the existing confusion on highways and streets.
I am unable to attend your meetings but I feel very strongly about this. Nancy White
Nancy Emerson White
San Antonio TX

* * * * *

Please keep digital billboards in the city ... thanks
Below you will find my address and although I do not live in your city I travel there quite often on business and varies other reasons and I am concerned with the digital billboard issue...
I try to stay informed on City ordinances and their policies for different Cities. Thanks
Barbara Pointer
Tuscola, TX

* * * * *

I vote - no more digital billboards
Bill Hurley
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Hello,
I've been informed you are taking input on digital billboards from those who cannot attend the meeting. I am a resident of San Antonio.
While I had nothing against digital billboards at first, I have noticed while driving, that I've been distracted enough when looking at them, to actually find myself starting to veer out of my lane. This is about the same feeling to a lesser degree, as the feeling of not really being in full control of the car when I am talking on a cell phone (even with a headset), which is why I don't do it.
My own vote would be no more digital billboards. I think they are actually a possible traffic hazard.

Thanks,
Sam Coffman
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Hello,
I would like to provide the attached document titled "San Antonio Presentation Letter" as feedback regarding the presentation given by the City of San Antonio Planning and Development Services Department regarding digital off-premises signs. I have also attached the presentation for ease in reference.

Daktronics, Inc. is the world leader in the design and manufacture of electronic display systems. Daktronics offers many products, including digital off-premises displays, which we commonly refer to as digital billboards. We are dedicated to helping regulators implement regulations catering to both business owner and community interests. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,
Terra Willson
Brookings, SD

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Mr. Mayor,
There have been many discussions regarding electronic billboards. I, for one, am in favor of them especially if they will replace 13 existing ones. I've been all over town to see how 'distracting' they are. I have found that they are not distracting at all. I usually have time to 'glance' at one or maybe two advertisements as I drive by. However, I don't feel they are anymore a distraction than the current billboards.

If someone wants to discuss distractions, they should be discussing cell phone usage while driving. And not just when in school zones. However, this appears not to be a discussion that people want to address. Maybe the phone people have too much clout. I don't know why but this is one of the most obvious cases of distractions I've seen. Hopefully someday someone will acknowledge the problem.

On a side note, Congratulations. Keep doing the things that are morally right - the things that your mama taught you and all will be well.

Sincerely,
Jo Ann Herrera
San Antonio, TX

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Please, no more digitals. I feel they are both ugly and distracting.
Lyn and Larry Hicks
San Antonio, TX 78257

* * * * *

I'd like no more digital billboards.
Roland Hoffmann
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I am against any additional digital or any off premise billboards. If you were to drive down I10, State Hwy 281, I410, San Pedro, or any major thoroughfare in San Antonio, you see the ugliness that these billboards create. We need to take a lesson from California (maybe the only lesson) on this issue. If you drive the thoroughfares of California you don't see all the billboards and see greenery since they have strong restrictions on signage. San Antonio can be a beautiful city if our city caretakers take great pride in making sure that we protect the inherent beauty that exists. Allowing billboards in general, let alone digital ones, is a step in the wrong direction. I strongly urge you and the city council to protect our environment and not only stop digital billboards, but start restricting all billboards within the San Antonio city limits. Thank you in advance for advocating this position.

Richard Dietz
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please do **NOT** add any additional digital billboards to our roadway areas. It looks bad enough as is. Please pass this on!

Thank you,
Sharon Koenig
San Antonio, TX

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Please be advised that my wife and I are very opposed to any additional roadway signs, particular digital.

Warren Lohoff
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please help us keep a safe and attractive highway system and vote in opposition to any more billboards.....and, also please try to get rid of the ones that are up....don't let commercialism spoil our wonderful city!!!

Marlene Richardson
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for taking your time to consider the citizens of San Antonio's opinion on billboard issues. Having grown up in North Jersey and frequenting NYC, flashing lights and billboards are not what I consider flattering to our streets of San Antonio, which would include the digital billboard signs. Another concern with these signs is their potential for causing accidents. Unlike NYC, and the consistent 20 mph flow of traffic on a good day, we San Antonions and transplanted San Antonions already have a problem w/understanding simple traffic signs, such as the 'yield' sign, tailgating, and high rates of speed while most other persons are traveling at 45-60 mph. So, to sum it up, another distraction, like trying to read a billboard and text message your friend while your singing to the radio at the top of your lungs w/the radio turned all the way up, could potentially be disastrous (no, I have not been following you...kidding :-)

I would like to see stricter sign regulations. First of all, the height of our signs is already too high, and to be quite honest, signs are sloppy and gaudy. Many cities don't allow signs or have a height restriction of 5 feet or less. How many of us head out and don't know where we're going. We can usually see the store and/or restaurant signs, etc. from the road already. We have info. signs that incorporate whether they are restaurants, lodging, and fuel. And, God help me if I leave out, GPS. Whether it's pre-installed or a hand-held device, we know where we want to go. Also, cell phones go a long way with calling the business and getting directions to surfing their web-site for their location....

Again, thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Cynthia D. Nemcik
Boerne, TX

* * * * *

Dear Mayor Castro, Councilperson Cisneros (via District 1 website) and Mr. Spurgin:
As a District 1 resident and registered voter, I am writing to urge you to block the passage of any ordinance that allows the further installation of digital billboards in San Antonio. They are dangerous in that they distract drivers and they are hideously ugly! Too much of SA's charm has been obliterated by commercial advertising. Building digital billboards would be a blight on our unique city.

I grew up in SA, left in 1970, then moved back last year. I am saddened that so much of SA's beauty that I remember has been obliterated by 'progress.' True, many things change with time, but can't SA be spared the onslaught of digital billboards? And, as I'm sure you know, SA has a national reputation for bad drivers -- the presence of digital billboards will only add to that unfortunate statistic! Consider this: Digital billboards have been proven to distract drivers, increasing car collisions, causing injuries/deaths. Apart from the human impact effect of digital billboards, there is the economic: increased traffic accidents are expensive! Police costs, medical costs, loss of earnings by victims, etc. etc. etc. What possible benefit could the presence of digital billboards in San Antonio create for its residents?

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE do not allow the installation of digital billboards in our city. We have too much to lose (safety, beauty, uniqueness) and little to gain (profits for advertising companies? Who cares? I'm sure you can find beautification/conservation/preservation projects to fund instead! If Clear Channel and

other digital billboard companies are so clever and profit-oriented, then they can compete for city bids for beautification projects instead of digital billboards!)

Thank you for consideration of my request.

John Nikolatos
San Antonio, TX

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Mr. Spurgin,

I understand you are accepting public comments with respect to the proposed digital billboard ordinance. I appreciate you taking the time to do so. My thoughts are as follows:

1. In general, I see many more disadvantages than advantages, with the advantages being concentrated on the owners of the boards and their ability to generate multiple revenue streams over a reduced span of time
2. disadvantage: the changing content adds to driver distraction, causing accidents - cell phones are an unregulated audio distraction at present, and now we are adding a visual distraction on top of that
3. disadvantage: there is no way to "time" the displays so that distraction will be avoided; a change in content will always occur while people are watching
4. disadvantage: people will treat these displays as "televisions" and be distracted by content intended to entertain
5. disadvantage: content will change so quickly that inappropriate content can't possibly be regulated (I have already seen content that I'd rather my children not see ...)
6. disadvantage: these boards add nothing to the beauty of our city - they only clutter the landscape
7. disadvantage: the reduction in the price of the media (large scale computerized displays) and increased revenue potential will rapidly lead to an increase in their use, leading to further clutter
8. disadvantage: these boards are extremely bright at night - the effect is akin to the light show in Las Vegas - is that really desirable?

If we must use such boards, I would suggest that we require the individual ad displays to remain in place for an hour or more, to reduce the effect of change and distraction. Also, there should be no animated elements, again to reduce the distraction. The vendors/owners will of course argue for more rapid change, to "hit" consumers with more than one ad as they traverse the viewing area of the sign. However, it is precisely this type of use that makes these signs so dangerous. At night time, they should have a substantially reduced level of illumination.

Given a choice, I am firmly opposed to the use of these boards at all. I have been in other locations where they are used more extensively (e.g., Europe, in subways, airline terminals, etc.) and they do nothing but add to the overwhelming feeling that I am being "sold" something in which I have no interest. It is a negative impression. Not one that we should be seeking in this city.

I appreciate your kind consideration, and welcome any questions you may have.

Best regards ... mvm.

Mark Muller

San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I would like to address the digital billboards I am seeing more and more around our city of San Antonio. As a citizen who respects the charm and beauty of our city these billboards distract and put our city at a disadvantage. San Antonio is a tourist town. Is a flashing, dangerous billboard the image we want visitors to take back as their memory of San Antonio?

We need to take a serious look at minimizing and stopping all digital billboards. There is the issue of safety. I have three teenage drivers. These digital billboards distract me as a vintage driver. Young people do not need another distraction while driving.

Please try to understand how our lives could be so much better minus huge " BUY ME, CALL ME, LOOK AT ME, PATRONIZE ME ugly signage that isn't necessary in our lives. Save the advertisements for magazines and newspapers, not the environments we reside.

Sincerely,

Kari Thompson
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

As an attorney who has represented outdoor sign companies for over 40 years, as well as having served as a commissioner on the SA CVB for 8 years, I believe that we already have adequate regulation of outdoor signage within the SA city limits. The new digital signs provide helpful information to our visitors as well as to our citizens. We do not need additional regulations.

Joel Klein
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Mr. Spurgin,

We would like to register two votes: NO MORE DIGITALS...PERIOD.

Cathy and Richard Kerr

San Antonio TX

Thank you.

* * * * *

Vote for Digital signs. San Antonio's tourist industry is the backbone to our economic strength. The majority of those tourist drive in and many of the remainder rent a car. Allowing an inexpensive method for businesses to provide advertising and directional information is a service we need to offer our out of town guests. The signs have been attractive and change frequently so the information is always current.

Ricky Laxson
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Spurgin,

I would like to add my opinion as totally against digital billboards for multiple reasons:

1. Aesthetically unpleasing
2. More distracting than regular billboards
3. Much more dangerous to drivers

The proliferation of these will further destroy whatever little tasteful urban development we have in this city.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours,

Tim Hlavinka
Helotes, TX

* * * * *

Hello Andrew,

We just returned from Europe and the jet lag is with us. I noted the message re: digital billboards. I am absolutely compelled to object to any additional clutter of digital billboards.

Our lovely city is losing the charm that makes us unique. Why would we choose to do more? Just returned from France last night and enjoyed the beautiful countryside and Paris, where they haven't given in to the sign lobby. They are spending their funds, similar to our stimulus funds, in restoration and beautification of historic sites.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Conner
San Antonio, Texas

* * * * *

Dear Andrew;

Thank you for the public meeting regarding the thoughts on the Digital Sign Ordinance, what has happened and what city staff is thinking regarding a proposal for a new one.

As a citizen and also as the representative for District 1 on the City of San Antonio's Electrical Supervisory and Examination Board, I have the following changes I recommend for this ordinance:

1. I have received many complaints regarding the digital sign in Balcones Heights that was set to the maximum allowable settings (using the existing San Antonio ordinance levels). While this is outside the jurisdiction, many neighborhood and fellow coworkers specifically mentioned it was a dangerous distraction. The owners of the sign changed the intensity down to 70% of the maximum allowable NITS and I have not received a complaint since. In fact, many are appreciative.

The other existing signs currently run at that same level so I propose a new lighting level maximum set at 70% of the current settings (30% lower). While there are a few different NITS ratings, the main regulation should now reflect 5000 daytime and 1500 nighttime NITS.

2. It is recommended that all signs proposed within any scenic corridor (or similar) require the removal of signs from a San Antonio Scenic Corridor or other similar corridor (SouthTown, Riverwalk, etc.)
3. The existing ordinance does not address on premise sign proximity to off premise signs. It is recommended that no on-premise digital sign allowed to be erected within 1,000 feet of an off-premise digital sign and also none within direct line of sight similar to the constraints currently that currently only apply to off-premise to off-premise digital signs.
4. Based on much local feedback from multiple communities, It is recommend that we immediately copy many of the known standards regarding the operational levels, placement, and sign requirements learned from this directly to the on-premise sign ordinance to reduce the nuisance signs currently being erected and distracting drivers in San Antonio.
5. I question the setback rule for local colleges. I wonder if it would not be advantageous for a college to take advantage of said signs to promote their school, their classes, or other opportunities. If the school has a digital sign, then the digital sign spacing noted above would avoid conflict. I question this and ask for other's input positive or negative.
6. Based on multiple examples, sign display time can vary across the country. Our current limit is 10 seconds. It is more than reasonable to allow the sign owner to choose a display time (dwell time) between 8 and 11 seconds and to leave that as a variable under the control of the owner within those limits without affecting the city or citizens.
7. Under the question of allowing digital sign effects (between different sign displays, it is recommended there be no allowable "transitions" such as a dither, a fade, a wash, a slide, etc. A simple switch from one screen to another will be the safest approach to avoid driver distraction and in the best interest of all.
8. Under the city staff's question about regarding any sign display limits to the amount of text, phone numbers, text size, websites, or other information displayed having limits, it is recommended that all signs require 25% "white space" (not required to be white of course). It is further recommended that phone numbers be limited to 7 digits in length if not a toll free number to avoid driver distraction and no more than one phone number, one website or the combination of one each be permitted on a display at one time.

Under previously suggested changes, I submit the following notes to help clarify and coordinate the ordinance:

9. Add or change the following definitions because there has been confusion and no clarity during conflicts when implementing signs under the original ordinance:
 - a. Reface: remove the wording "as it pertains to on-premise signs" because this chapter addresses off-premise signs now as well.

- b. Rebuilding: To remove and / or modify / and or replace more than 5% of the structural components of an existing sign's structure including the removal of the head of a sign for any reason other than simple removal and replacement of face panels.
 - c. Reconstruction: removal of the head of a sign and replacement of more than 35% of the structural materials of the base, support structure, or head of a sign not to include the face panels.
 - d. Reconfiguration: Any change in the number of faces, any change in the orientation of the faces by more than 5 degrees, any change in the height or size of sign faces or structural support system, or any changes to the electrical system (that would be considered modification by an electrician) and not to include simple repair / replacement of existing equipment without changes.
 - e. Major: more than 50%
 - f. Significant: more than 30%
10. Change Chapter 28-1 (b) (1) and (2), Chapter 28-125 (a) to add or improve citizen oversight to the process:
- a. Interpretations of Regulations: The director shall refer to the electrical supervisory and examination board all disputed questions pertaining to the installation of all electrical wiring devices and equipment, signs and permits, and other issues within this chapter. These disputed items shall be interpreted by the board in accordance with this chapter and the board shall have the authority to approve and / or deny requests accordingly.
 - b. In section 28-4 (b) (1) change the words "Explicitly" to "Explicitly and Implicitly" to allow the citizens board to have further input on the process and to avoid the appearance or possibility of any improprieties at implementation and planning levels. Citizen oversight is a critical component to this ordinance to protect the city, city staff, sign owners, and especially the citizens.
 - c. In section 28-125(a) Add: "upon approval by the electrical Supervisory and Examination Board" after ...digital sign permits... and before ...as authorized by this ordinance... to again have citizens with oversight for the protection of all those involved. It is currently a HUGE liability to allow one city staff person to have control over this, regardless of their title or competence because those staff will change over time, those staff are not independent of the process (while they hopefully remain objective), and the creation of **the Electrical Board was a critical decision years ago because of endemic problems within the city that needed citizens to oversee the city's progress. This has to remain a key component of the process.**

I request and give permission to have this posted not only on the www.sanantonio.gov/dsd website regarding citizen feedback, but also allow its dissemination in any public forum as long as any section is quoted verbatim and completely within the intended context

Jonathan Ashkenaze

San Antonio, Texas

* * * * *

I would like to see no more digital billboards and to remove the ones that are in place.
I am speaking for myself for the present.

Kenneth R. Lawrence
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Please keep digital billboards in the city ... thanks
Barbara Pointer
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Gosh, we are destroying our beautiful state. No more billboards! Stop the insanity.
Myfe Moore
Helotes, TX

* * * * *

My view is that I really hate them. I agree that they are a huge distraction and unattractive. In my opinion, these sorts of billboards take away from the charm of San Antonio. One of San Antonio's assets that many who visit or live here are amazed at the fact that for such a large city, San Antonio has been able to keep its small town charm. I'd like to see that trend continue.

So, I say NO,NO,NO to digital billboards and signs. Deb Mallard
Deborah Mallard
San Antonio, TX

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Andrew,
As digital signage public input draws to a close, I would like to suggest that like the city of Atlanta, San Antonio require digital signs to have a 30 second time interval. This is adequate for reading message and does not constitute "flashing" as the short 8 second delay seems to do. Short messages are very distracting to motorists. Safety first !!! !!
Thanks for compiling all our input,
Charlotte Kahl
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Andrew, please convey to our city planners and government officials my view that BILLBOARDS are an unsightly blight on the city's landscape-- they are energy wasters (especially the digital/electronic ones) and the majority don't serve much purpose except to "advertise." San Antonio could be a beautiful, high-class town or continue to sell its soul for a few advertising bucks. Let's stop cheapening ourselves. END THE BILLBOARDS!

Respectfully,
Virginia Burkholder Sanchez
Helotes, TX

* * * * *

Please discontinue the use of more digital signs. They are a serious distraction while driving. The flashing lights and quick changes on billboard content can be confusing and block oncoming lights. They are so bright at night and dusk that they seem to affect the visual purple in your eyes. This in turn DOES affect your vision. Sometimes from the corner of your eye they mimic emergency vehicle's flashing lights.

The one on North 281 at I 35 (near the Pearl Brewery) is particularly dangerous because of the intersection, speed of the cars, sharpness of the curve and the loss of lanes. It certainly isn't a good idea to look at that sign when driving even for a second. I frequently ask myself if the Express would really want drivers on the road to watch their sign or watch the road at that particular intersection.

Sincerely,
Debbie Bussineau-King
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

I've seen them in other cities and in underpasses. I do not think drivers need more distractions from the primary task of driving. We have enough accidents and texting and attention to children, ect now.

I am NOT in favor of roadside billboards.

Susan Riggs
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Hello Mr. Spurgin,

I have followed the city's gradual display of digital billboards through my association with Scenic Texas and Scenic San Antonio.

I have written to the Express News with reasons why I feel digital billboards are a step in the wrong direction. Road ways lined with giant advertising messages have negative effects, diminishing the value of natural landscapes.

My greatest concerns with digital billboards are the inevitable sexual or provocative images that we will be forced to watch as we drive along San Antonio

roadways. Protecting children from these offensive images should be a responsibility we all share.

Our eyes are automatically drawn to light and movement, and the advertising lobby takes advantage of this powerful evolutionary trait. It's impossible not to notice, read and absorb the messages along our drives, unless as with so many other facets of our technology-saturated culture, we become desensitized, tuning out what we are forced to see and hear.

I encourage your commission to act responsibly for our community...Keep San Antonio unique & beautiful, not homogenized and bombarded by advertisement.

Thank you,
Alicia Hoover
Helotes, TX

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Dear Sir:

I understand that the City is reviewing regulations concerning digital billboards. I would like to ask that you please limit, if not eliminate the garish eyesores. Not only are they distracting to drivers, they add a new level of tackiness to San Antonio's landscape.

As drivers, we are not allowed to have distracting visual electronic devices in our view within the car. I don't understand how it's even legal to have distracting electronic displays like these on the side of the road; displays designed to entice drivers while they are driving.

I had hoped these eyesores were a fad that would fade out as quickly as it appeared.

Please stop the spread of electronic billboards.

Respectfully,
Catherine Jackson
Helotes, TX

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I want to put my vote for no more digital billboards, they are distracting.

Patsy Robles
San Antonio, TX

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Dear Hon. -

If you want to give house-guests a bad impression, don't mow the lawn, don't flush the toilets, allow trash to accumulate in your front yard and keep a messy house. Oh, and stick a billboard in your front yard.

When we allow billboards – especially digital ones – in our front yards along our roads and public ways, we are telling visitors to our city that we don't care about the beauty of our city and we don't care that you know it. That's the message we are sending to our "houseguests."

Is this really what we want to tell them?

This isn't an issue of free enterprise. It's an issue of good housekeeping. The view corridors along all of our public roads are in our faces and no one has any sort of "right" to be in our faces without our permission. I can turn a television or a radio off. I can't turn a digital or other billboard off. Other cities figured this out long ago – why haven't we? Are we so timid that our elected officials knuckle under to those with handfuls of cash for their campaigns? I hope not, but so far the prognosis hasn't been good.

If I were to tell you that I would give you a \$1000 a month to put a giant billboard in your front yard, would you do it? You might be tempted, but you would know that your neighbors would hate you for it forever. Your neighbors would tell you that you are destroying their property values.

Guess what? Billboards destroy the value of our City.

Postscript: The last time this subject came up for consideration before City Council, the overwhelming majority of speakers during Citizens to be Heard were against them. Not just a few more against it, but by a margin of at least 10 to 1. City Council showed how much our opinions mattered by ignoring those comments and voting for digital billboards. It was a slap in the face.

Of course we know that the issue is more than just digital billboards - it is the entire notion that any billboards which are not on-premise signs have any place in this city at all. Other cities "get it" and more and more cities across the state and the country are "getting it" but San Antonio appears to be captive to a billboard industry that doesn't even have to show up for council meetings to defend these hideous blemishes in public.

- Roy

Roy Lowey-Ball, AIA
San Antonio, TX

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Hello Andrew,

I hope all is well. It was nice to see you at the last Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Planning Meeting. I have a question/proposition about Digital Billboards and billboards in general that I want to see how nuts I am. I wanted to suggest a tax be placed based on location, height, sqft, and frequency of advertisements changing on the billboard.

Essentially an eyeball tax. The more eyeballs, the more tax. Prime locations get taxed more based on from traffic patterns. The higher and bigger, the longer you will see it. And if it changes while in view, it's another taxed page. I think this is not that dissimilar to web and newspaper charges. By the way, we just came back from a wonderful visit to Phoenix, no billboards, very low signage, very pretty. Actually, I've been to several places recently outside of Texas where there seems to be fewer billboards than what we have in SA.

http://www.signvalue.com/userpages/October_2001b_.html

The Supreme court ruled that a company be compensated for their income when a sign was removed by Nevada NDOT. Therefore, the income is taxable. The challenge is how to tax the income as the income stream is obtuse.

<http://www.aptcnet.com/articles/2004/OutdoorStructuresIAAO.pdf>

But there are those that think that there is money to be gained.

<http://www.iaao.org/sitepages.cfm?Page=27>

I'd rather not have billboards, but if we've made the bad choice to allow, then I'd say tax them as much as we can.

Phillip Manna
San Antonio, TX

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I am sending this in response to a message from Ron Green, HHA. I would like to see less billboards of all kinds, to include no more digital billboards. All billboards also need to be much smaller. They are totally trashing the scenic beauty of the landscape in and around San Antonio. Thank You!

Bonnie Handzlik
Helotes TX

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Dear Sir:

As a 40 + year resident and home owner in San Antonio, I am totally opposed to digital bill boards. I find them highly distracting while driving. I also find they take away from the natural beauty of San Antonio. Please do not let us become another Dallas, Houston, etc. NO DIGITAL BILL BOARDS.

Thanks for you consideration:

Steve Hixon
San Antonio, TX

* * * * *

Mr. Spurgin,
Good morning.

A friend of mine forwarded your address and said you were receiving comments regarding digital billboards.

I have always agreed with the esteemed Lady Bird Johnson that billboards are unsightly anywhere. Anyone who has traveled in regions where utilities are underground and signs are restricted will concur. Last year when the AIA opposed digital billboards at public hearings I wondered if at least digital signs would be an improvement over current billboards.

I drive through the 1604 and Braun Road intersection between 6 and 6:30 am during the week to take my granddaughter to school and have observed the digital sign there. Last week I noticed that SAWS was advertising water restrictions on it.

One intent of digital signs is to provide commuters with an increased number of advertising displays that can change rapidly and/or periodically and not become a static image that has been seen so many times it's ignored by motorists. The problem with this is that the signs may also become another distraction for drivers - something else to concentrate on rather than the road. They are particularly dangerous at intersections where stop lights control traffic.

Please record my opposition to digital billboards. They are a distraction to motorists and are large and unsightly.

Thanks,
Guy Burnett
Helotes, TX

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It is my opinion that digital billboards are unsightly. The point already gets across through TV and radio, there is already enough visual and auditive 'noise', and I also consider digital billboards a distraction and therefore a danger when driving. I hope that the people that represent my city of San Antonio consider leaving the view and panorama of San Antonio as is. We already have bad traffic, and I am concerned about the distraction, there is already enough with people using cell phones while driving. I would hate for my city to become 'loud', one reason why I do not miss CA.

Thank you,
Darling Tiffer
San Antonio, TX

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Andrew, thank you for the update. I will be out of the country from Sunday until July 18. I would like to comment for the record (June 24) that the digital billboards are a safety hazard, esp.. at night. I have been hearing from people, who have said they almost had an accident, because they were attracted/distracted by the new digital billboards. I am very upset that there is one that has been erected near Broadway and 281, along the urban corridor district and the S.A. River. It mars the view of the Pearl Brewery complex and downtown San Antonio. One can see it from everywhere near downtown, and its gateway, not to mention the new riverwalk extension. This is a policy going backwards and even in violation of the S. A. Master Plan. I was on the master plan implementation committee and also involved with the Urban Corridor District designation process. I hope the City will realize that we are hurting ourselves, economically and visually, with this new failed policy. We should look at more progressive cities, like Alamo Heights, Olmos Park, Houston, Dallas, Austin and El Paso, for some much needed enlightenment. Otherwise, San Antonio may become the Las Vegas of Texas, and I don't think that's what we are about. Thank you for inviting comment. I am hopeful that the City now has the tools and the leadership to put an end to this travesty.

Respectfully,
Kathleen Trenchard
San Antonio, TX

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The Vance Jackson Neighborhood, Inc. is opposed to the Digital Billboard pilot program for the reasons cited on our web site (http://www.vjni.org/Issues/200709_Digital-BBs/index.htm):

What's wrong with the San Antonio Digital Billboard Ordinance that was passed Dec 6, 2007?

- **Three Main Reasons: UGLY, UGLY, and UGLY** - San Antonio is littered with ugly billboards. Far more than other, major Texan cities. Digital billboards will have an even greater 'UGLY' impact
- **Lousy Representation** - Again, our city council appears content to sacrifice public good to satisfy private interests and relegate San Antonio into a second tier status among Texan cities. REMEMBER THIS WHEN YOU GO TO THE POLLS
- **Obviously Unsafe** - It's simply a matter of common sense that digital billboards with changing messages will be more distracting and hence less safe
 - There has been no, independent, national study to show digital billboards pose the same or less risk for highway safety
 - The San Antonio ordinance requires city staff to provide a "report" to city council about safety, but we can be confident that this "report" will be superficial and unscientific
- **Lousy Deal for Citizens** - Clear Channel, and the other companies, will get a 'golden handshake' of 300% to 3800% increases in gross revenues:
 - These high increases in revenues mean comparable high increases in visual impact on the community
 - Returns on investment (ROIs) will be vastly greater than economically necessary to induce trades
 - While there's nothing wrong with private profit, windfall profit at the public expense (aka 'corporate enrichment') is unacceptable
 - The City of San Antonio has conducted no credible, independent study of billboard economics to support smart negotiations
 - Other cities (such as Houston) are achieving better rates of billboard elimination with 'no new billboard' strategies
- **Trashy/Indecent Content** - Companies and advertisers will have more freedom to flash short duration advertisements with trashy or indecent pictures and messages, than they have with old vinyl signs that are up for weeks or months
- **Scenic Protections Guttled** - Protection from new billboard construction on scenic and urban corridors (I-10, 1604, 281, etc.) was lifted:
 - Given traffic and income patterns, billboard companies will be targeted these corridors for maximum coverage
- **Lousy Management Record of City Staff** - City staff is not resourced or motivated to manage an exchange program in favor of citizen interests in the short or long run
- **Financial Liability** - Taxpayers will have much greater financial risk for billboard removal for roadway modifications
- **Bad for Business** - Sure. Billboards are great for the billboard industry (Clear Channel), but degrade San Antonio's uniqueness, which is a big attraction for tourism. Also they project a low-tech appearance and lower our standing for

attracting high tech companies. Light pollution is the major concern for the Army in the Camp Bullis area.

- **Other Quality of Life Problems** - Besides trashing urban aesthetics, digital billboards will induce noise pollution, light pollution*, etc.

Ted Trakas
San Antonio, TX