

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/25/2019 01:05 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: I would like like to protest the short notice given to the public about this meeting. This issue is of public concern and impacts the quality, safety, property and health of the public.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/25/2019 02:46 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: Nothing detracts from the public space and beauty of a community more than billboards. Get rid of as many as you can. Your economic stability and resident satisfaction depend on it!!

Communication from Public

Name: Josephine Stephens

Date Submitted: 05/25/2019 09:18 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed sign ordinance. To: Members of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee Re: Council File 11-1705, Citywide Sign Ordinance We do not support the version of the Citywide Sign Ordinance that the PLUM committee commissioned in December 2017. The legislation has many objectionable features: the takedown ratios are too low; signs could be made 20 percent taller or larger on request; it allows on-site digital signs which have never been permitted before. But the most important problem is that it would allow new digital billboards on almost any commercial lot, opening the way to a vast amount of visual blight that would clutter our city, reduce local property values, and make our streets less safe. We much prefer the version that the City Planning Commission wrote in 2015, known as Version B Plus. This legislation has stronger takedown ratios for new signs; it keeps them farther from residential zones than the PLUM version; it has no provision for on-site digital signs; and, most important, it allows digital signs only in highly commercialized sign districts that are already zoned Regional Commercial. This is the version that the PLUM committee should adopt because it regulates digital billboards with a much stronger hand.

Communication from Public

Name: Rivers

Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 08:19 AM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: To: Members of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee Re: Council File 11-1705, Citywide Sign Ordinance
We do not support the version of the Citywide Sign Ordinance that the PLUM committee commissioned in December 2017. The legislation has many objectionable features: the takedown ratios are too low; signs could be made 20 percent taller or larger on request; it allows on-site digital signs which have never been permitted before. But the most important problem is that it would allow new digital billboards on almost any commercial lot, opening the way to a vast amount of visual blight that would clutter our city, reduce local property values, and make our streets less safe. We much prefer the version that the City Planning Commission wrote in 2015, known as Version B Plus. This legislation has stronger takedown ratios for new signs; it keeps them farther from residential zones than the PLUM version; it has no provision for on-site digital signs; and, most important, it allows digital signs only in highly commercialized sign districts that are already zoned Regional Commercial. This is the version that the PLUM committee should adopt because it regulates digital billboards with a much stronger hand.

Communication from Public

Name: Pacific Palisades Community Council
Date Submitted: 05/27/2019 12:38 PM
Council File No: 11-1705
Comments for Public Posting:



PACIFIC PALISADES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

May 27, 2019

Hon. Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Chair, City Council Planning & Land Use Management Committee
Via email: councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org

Re: Council File 11-1705 (Citywide Sign Ordinance); hearing 5/28/19

Dear Councilmember Harris-Dawson:

Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC) is the most broad-based organization in Pacific Palisades and has served as the voice of our community since its formation in 1973, 46 years ago.

Since 2011, PPCC has consistently expressed its strong position on the proposed Citywide Sign Ordinance: We seek appropriate regulation in order to protect our parks, scenic highways, Specific Plan areas and residential neighborhoods from the visual blight of off-site signs and billboards, including digital signs. In our most recent position letter (May 2016), we expressed support for Version B+ of the proposed Ordinance, as approved by the City Planning Commission. See past PPCC position letters filed in CF 11-1705 at:

<http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/letterPLUMsignordinance.pdf>

<http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/letterCPCsignordinancefinal.pdf>

<http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/lettercpcsignordinance-2.pdf>

http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/11-1705_misc_10-18-11n.pdf

We are concerned that the PPCC CIS statement is not listed on the agenda and that this significant matter was suddenly agendized for hearing immediately before a three-day holiday weekend. This leaves inadequate time for neighborhood and community councils to review carefully the details contained in the attached reports.

We urge that the committee adopt Version B+, or continue the file to permit careful review by impacted constituencies. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

George Wolfberg
Chair, Pacific Palisades Community Council

cc (via email):

Hon. Mike Bonin, Councilmember, CD11

Rita Moreno, Legislative Assistant, PLUM Committee (w/ request for filing in CF 11-1705)

Communication from Public

Name: Kevin Tent

Date Submitted: 05/27/2019 02:55 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: Dear City Council, I understand you are having a meeting Tuesday regarding the banning of digital billboards. I wholeheartedly support this ban. We have a beautiful city which is already littered with too many billboards and signage. Digital billboards are not only blight in the daytime but especially at night. Please support the ban. Your children and grandchildren will thank you. Sincerely, Kevin Tent

Communication from Public

Name: Jan Book

Date Submitted: 05/27/2019 08:32 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: To Members of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee: I do not support the Citywide Sign Ordinance that the PLUM Committee commissioned in December 2017. And I prefer the version that the City Planning Commission wrote in 2015, known as Version Plan B for the following reasons: the digital signs (which are a visual blight in our residential neighborhoods) will only be allowed in highly commercialized sign districts already zoned Regional Commercial; there will be more signs removed than new signs added to our communities; and the signs will be kept further from residential zones than under the PLUM version. I have lived near the digital signs which were installed at the intersection of Washington Blvd. and Lincoln Blvd. in Marina del Rey/Culver City. And at night, the constantly changing slide show of glare may be silent in sound but it screams loudly when the light invades the privacy of your home and destroys the "quiet enjoyment" we are entitled to under California law.

Communication from Public

Name: chris van hook

Date Submitted: 05/28/2019 10:31 AM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: Please do not allow digital advertising on cars!!!!!!!!!!!!!! All digital advertising should be banned. It is ruining our visual environment in Los Angeles. The fact that you decided last minute, on a holiday weekend, to address this matter is very suspicious. You work for the people of Los Angeles. You are supposed to think of us in all that you do. You don't work for sign companies that give you money so you will support them. We are watching you. Unfortunately, enough of us can't attend a meeting called during the day, during the week, with very short notice. Most people are working to improve their, and their families lives. You are the ones elected to protect our environment on all different levels. Stop selling us out to advertisers. It's awful to drive a car, in traffic, while neon signs are flashing in front of you. Now you want to have them flashing in cars all around you. Wake up and stop this nightmare!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Communication from Public

Name: Philip R. Recht
Date Submitted: 05/28/2019 10:43 AM
Council File No: 11-1705
Comments for Public Posting:

VIA E-MAIL AND FACSIMILE

May 28, 2019

The Honorable Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Chair, PLUM Committee
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Council File 11-1705; Billboard Blight
Reduction Program Options

Dear Chairman Harris-Dawson:

This firm represents Summit Media (“Summit”). We write concerning Council File 11-1705, Item No. 6 on today’s PLUM agenda, which addresses options for a billboard blight reduction (i.e., digital sign) program in the City.

We appreciate the effort of the Department of City Planning (“DCP”) and the City Attorney in preparing the report and draft guide to be considered at today’s hearing. The documents identify many of the key issues the Council must address in considering the wisdom, fairness, and legality of a digital sign program for the City. Towards that end, we provide here some preliminary comments for your consideration.

Before doing so, we commend the consensus that any digital sign program ultimately allowed in the City must encourage, allow, and realistically facilitate the participation of both large and small outdoor advertising companies. This Committee, in various prior hearings, has expressed its support of that goal. The report and draft guide equally acknowledge that any digital sign program should not be geared only towards a few large outdoor advertisers. Instead, it must bring smaller advertisers like Summit into the fold. We appreciate and support that consensus view.

As discussed below, however, the report and draft guide both contain policy proposals or options that, rather than facilitating the inclusion of small operators, would serve to shut them out of any digital sign program allowed in the City.

For example, the discussion of the public property option in the DCP report lays out the following three options to encourage a variety of companies to participate in the public procurement process: (1) limit a single company from buying more than a pre-determined number of billboards; (2) implement a fee on companies that own more than pre-determined

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number of billboards; and (3) require that each company from a pre-qualified list be selected once before any company is selected twice.

However, only options (1) and (3) ensure that multiple companies, including small companies, will be able to participate in a public property program. Option (2), in contrast, would allow a very few large and deep-pocketed companies to pay whatever fee is necessary to buy all the public property sign opportunities in the City and, thus, shut out smaller competitors. If the City chooses to utilize a fee system as suggested in option (2), the City should establish a maximum number of signs that any individual company can buy to prevent this from happening.¹

Similarly, while the DCP report indicates that a takedown requirement could be part of a public property sign procurement, the report does not indicate that such a procurement could also include an in-lieu public benefit option. Such an option is necessary for smaller companies without significant takedown inventories to participate in public bidding. There is no reason why the in-lieu public benefit approach, which is a significant component of the private property digital sign option, should not equally apply if a takedown requirement is included in a public property program.

The draft guide's discussion of the private property option similarly contains a proposal that could significantly impact the ability of smaller advertisers to participate. Specifically, the draft guide on pages 5-6 appears to indicate that an advertiser seeking to erect a digital display at an entirely new site must meet a minimum sign reduction ratio of at least 2:1. However, an advertiser seeking to convert an existing static display to digital at the existing location must meet a sign reduction ratio of at least 4:1.

It is unclear what rationale exists for requiring a higher takedown ratio for conversions at existing locations than for new digital displays at entirely new locations. Indeed, a conversion at a location where a sign already exists would seem to pose less impacts than a wholly new digital display at a location where a sign has not before existed. Further, a 4:1 takedown requirement constitutes a major barrier to entry to small operators like Summit. For all these reasons, conversions at existing locations should not be treated more harshly than new displays. Both should be available at the 2:1 takedown ratio.

In the same vein, it is unclear how the 40% in lieu revenue sharing requirement for companies utilizing the 2:1 takedown ratio was determined. On the surface, a 40% revenue sharing requirement over a 20 year period would seem to dwarf the cost of removing a larger amount of existing static signage, particularly since the proposed private property scheme would allow 50% of the takedowns to be as far as 5 miles away from the converted sign and the other

¹ To ensure participation by multiple companies, the City should also explore the lottery system that successfully was used in Miami to distribute a limited number of sign opportunity among pre-qualified companies.

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50% in any City location whatsoever. Under this scheme, the City's largest companies will be able to take down signs with minimal, if any, market value and pay no revenue sharing at all. In contrast, small operators like Summit that lack takedown inventory will be forced to pay exorbitant, if not confiscatory, amounts. Absent a concrete justification, the 40% revenue sharing requirement should be substantially reduced lest it pose an unreasonable and unjustifiable barrier to participation by smaller companies.

We also note that the draft guide contains a major loophole for large operators with inventories of unpermitted signs. Specifically, page 14 of the draft guides makes clear that "[o]nly legal off-site signs may count towards sign reduction requirements." Yet, page 7 of the draft guide effectively nullifies that statement for large operators by allowing them to offset up to 30% of their in-lieu payments by removing certain unpermitted signs that do not qualify for sign reduction credit. The law should not permit indirectly what it prohibits directly. Large operators should not be rewarded for removing unpermitted signs, be it with direct sign reduction credits or credit towards the public benefit payment alternative.

We hope these comments are helpful, and look forward to continued discussions on these and other important issues related to the proposed digital sign program.

Very truly yours,



Philip Recht

cc: The Honorable Bob Blumenfield
The Honorable Curren D. Price, Jr.
The Honorable Gilbert A. Cedillo
The Honorable Greig Smith

Communication from Public

Name: Dan Silver, MD
Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 11:30 AM
Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: FOR DISTRIBUTION TO PLUM COMMITTEE AND CITY COUNCIL May 26, 2108 RE: Support for Version B Plus, Citywide Sign Ordinance, May 28, 2019 Honorable Members of the PLUM Committee: Endangered Habitats League (EHL) strongly supports the City Planning Commission's actions of 10/22/2015 and urges the PLUM committee and City Council to adopt that version of the ordinance. This version of the ordinance is Version B Plus. For your reference, EHL is Southern California's only regional conservation group, and is dedicated to the quality of urban environments as a vital part of comprehensive land use policy. I am also a resident of downtown Los Angeles. The version approved by the PLUM Committee in 2017 is terrible. It would open the entire City to offensive and dangerous signage. It caters to the billboard companies, which as you know, are major donors to Council campaigns. Please stand against special interests ruining the aesthetic fabric of the City's public spaces for their financial gain. And digital signs cause distracted driving! The Planning Commission action: a) Disapproves any AMNESTY for existing billboards that lack permits or have been altered in violation of their permits. b) Disapproves the "grandfathering" of any sign districts that weren't approved or applied for in April, 2009, when the CPC approved the initial version of the new sign ordinance. c) Restricts any new off-site signs, including digital billboards, to sign districts in 22 areas zoned for high-intensity commercial use. d) Requires existing billboards to be taken down before any new off-site signs can go up in sign districts. The takedown ratio of existing signs to new signs would be 5 to 1 for conventional and 10 to 1 for digital. e) Sets administrative civil penalties for sign violators that will act as a real deterrent to illegal billboards and other signage. f) Prohibits off-site signage in city parks and recreation facilities. While this ordinance could and should have gone further, and spared our finest commercial areas from billboard blight, we nevertheless support this compromise. Please reject the prior PLUM action and adopt Version B Plus. Thank you. Yours truly, Dan Silver, MD
Dan Silver, Executive Director Endangered Habitats League 8424 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite A 592 Los Angeles, CA 90069-4267
213-804-2750 dsilverla@me.com www.ehleague.org

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 12:19 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: As an admirer of the important work done by the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight, I would like to register my strong objection to the scheduling of the hearing on the Citywide Sign Ordinance on the Tuesday following Memorial Day paired with what appears to deliberate efforts not to inform the groups concerned about the ordinance. Getting to a meeting in downtown Los Angeles, given the huge traveling distances in our city, requires planning ahead for appropriate access and participation by citizens. This seems to be a clear instance of trying to limit access and to avoid fulfilling the legal rights of our city's residents.

Communication from Public

Name: Brad Pitt
Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 01:36 PM
Council File No: 11-1705
Comments for Public Posting: Allow me to mention the council file no. 11-1705, and state a clear preference for Version B Plus.

Communication from Public

Name: Sarah Hays

Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 02:41 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: For the members of the PLUM Committee at their Meeting on May 28, 2019. Stop caving to the sign industry and approve the Version B Plus Citywide Sign Ordinance written by the Planning Commission. Do what is right for the city and we who live here by approving this reasonable version for the ordinance.
APPROVE VERSION B PLUS!

Communication from Public

Name: Barbara Broide

Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 03:42 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: This measure has been stuck in the PLUM Committee for YEARS as the PLUM Committee members proposed amendments to weaken the ordinance from the measure passed by the City Planning Commission (Version B+) which numerous neighborhood councils support. It is especially galling to community people who have been following this measure since its inception and who have come out for over 20 hearings, to receive notice of a pending Tuesday, May 28 Sign Ordinance PLUM agenda item/ discussion late on a Thursday afternoon just prior to a three-day holiday weekend. We received no "heads up" prior to the Thursday evening email notice. However, if this hearing is handled as others have been in the past, it will be quite clear that the lobbyists advocating for a weakened Sign Ordinance will have been made aware of the May 28th agenda item well in advance of the Thursday evening notice to the community. This measure is of broad interest to many Angelenos across the City. The current PLUM Committee members were not present and did not hear much of the testimony presented over these many years. And, they are likely only hearing the voices of the outdoor advertising industry who have been relentless in their efforts to place digital billboards at will in locations where they will garner the most financial return for their bottom line -- with no regard for (and with actual denial of) the safety hazard/dangers these signs cause. In a City where the Mayor and DOT claim to seek to reduce injuries and death from traffic accidents ("Vision Zero" program), it is preposterous to permit a roll out of digital billboards on our busy streets. It is, in fact, irresponsible for there are numerous studies from cities around the globe that document the dangers posed by these driver distracting signs. The PLUM Committee, in its consideration of the Sign Ordinance, will be defining the future of LA's visual environment. We will soon be welcoming people from around the world to the Los Angeles Olympics. Do we want our visitors to enjoy the views of the Hollywood Hills, Griffith Park Observatory, our palm trees and landmarks – or do we want them to be overwhelmed by the glaring lights of a digital billboard landscape? Los Angeles has a current BAN on all new billboards and has had this ban since 2002. Permitting digital billboards in defined sign districts permitted in regional commercially zoned areas is a generous

compromise that will permit new signage in sign districts. However, coupled with the privilege to have new billboards must come with a stringent mandatory takedown requirement such as the one adopted by the City Planning Commission. And, further, the Council must instruct the City Attorney to review all relevant paperwork on existing billboards whose legal status may be questionable, to weed out any illegal signs that should not be considered applicable in any takedown agreements. Those should have been evaluated and removed years ago! With the advent of new land use zones such as the RAS and TOC zones, the City is now seeing accelerated residential development on what were formerly commercial arterials. This fact alone should sound a warning bell to those contemplating the addition of digital billboards to these streets. While these signs may distract and overwhelm a commercial location, when they operate adjacent to residential properties -- whether homes, apartments or condominiums, they have a very definite negative impact on the quality of life experienced by their residential neighbors. Those living near a digital billboard are living in the shadows of a 24/7 digital sunrise. The lights blink and shine day AND night. They create health problems for those with migraine headaches and other health conditions (such as for those who experience seizures). The outdoor and indoor residential areas nearby often feel as though they had a disco strobe ball rotating and flashing overhead. The City needs to consider and acknowledged its responsibility for providing for a reasonable quality of life for its residents. The protection of quality of life in an urban environment full of stressors should be more important than bending to the interests of the outdoor advertising industry. Instead of weakening the Sign Ordinance, LA electeds should act to significantly limit digital billboards. A very few billboards on public land where content can be regulated and where the City can share in the financial return (the Chicago model) is a reasonable compromise -- especially understanding that other cities have had the will to say no to new digital billboards. Wouldn't it be nice if LA would, too?

Communication from Public

Name: Sara Melzer

Date Submitted: 05/26/2019 05:21 PM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: As a resident of Los Angeles for 40 years, I am distressed by the growing proliferation of billboards in our city. Having traveled all over the U.S., Europe, Asia and S. America, I am struck by how Los Angeles, more than any other city I have visited, is besieged billboards, allowing consumerism to ride roughshod us. The invasion of billboards puts us at risk in many ways, not least of which is physical – in a car oriented city, drivers are often unduly distracted by the signs – which is of course the whole point of the signs. To stem this dangerous tide, I urge you to adopt the version B Plus of Council file 11-1705. I would also like to express my dismay at the short notice you have allowed the citizens to express their will on this bill. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Jay Ross

Date Submitted: 06/13/2019 10:52 AM

Council File No: 11-1705

Comments for Public Posting: The Sign Ordinance shall protect us residents first, not be a bailout for sign companies, who care only about profit. Houston bans billboards completely. Commercial advertising is not protected by the 1st Amendment in any way, so ignore their lawyers. Billboards, especially digital, are public health hazards: 1. They distract drivers and directly lead to car crashes. Your EIR must include proper analysis of this. 2. Light at night time prevents good sleep. That prevents the brain and body from healing at night, and creates mental instability and aggression. That leads to crime and higher healthcare and policing costs. Your EIR must include proper analysis of this. 3. Birds and other animals have their sleep cycles disrupted, which harms their reproductive cycles and overall health. Your EIR Habitat section must include proper analysis of this. 4. The takedown ratio should be 10 to 1, not a lower figure like 5 to 1 or 2 to 1 This ensures that unpermitted signs will be removed. 5. No signs should be allowed in public parks. They are nature and beauty preserves, and provide needed relief from chaos, blight, congestion and noise in the city. 6. Relocation / takedown of signs should be half in the nearby vicinity of Sign Districts, and half in areas away from Sign Districts. If you don't mandate takedowns in far away from Sign Districts, those areas never will have a decrease in signs. 7. No amnesty for existing unpermitted signs. 8. All digital signs must turn off between 8:00 pm and 7:00 am, to allow for sleep for residents. Downtown and Hollywood have many residences in their Sign Districts or close to them, and they will suffer from disrupted sleep and health problems. 9. No new Digital Sign Districts should be grandfathered in unless those districts have already undergone CEQA review and approval. Herb Wesson and other city councilmen tried to create paper districts in the past years, in advance of this grandfathering clause. Wesson put ALL of Koreatown into a proposed Sign District, which is a joke. 10. The maximum candlepower for digital billboards should be 0.25 candlepower at all times of the day. During the day, digital signs are illuminated extremely high, because they are more difficult to see. 11. Sign restrictions in Specific Plans should trump the new Sign Ordinance. Don't de-fang our Specific Plans, that's a sure way to lose political support at election time. 12. The only Sign Districts should be in Regional Centers as designated in the

General Plan as of today. 13. Signs should not be allowed in C zones, as Huizar and Englander proposed. The CUP process will approve every one of them. The city can make findings in any case to justify a sign, and that it has no impact, which is wholly false. Jay Ross West LA 90064

Communication from Public

Name: Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight
Date Submitted: 07/08/2019 10:05 AM
Council File No: 11-1705
Comments for Public Posting: Please post the attached document to Public Comments on the above matter. Thank you.

COALITION TO BAN BILLBOARD BLIGHT
Scenic Los Angeles

A Brief Definition of Billboard Blight

By Patrick Frank, President, Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight

July 1, 2019

Billboard blight takes many forms, depending on the type of sign and its location. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's definition of pornography given in 1964 ("I know it when I see it") is useful as an analogy; many people might define billboard blight in the same way. We most often learn of billboard blight through citizen complaints, but in some areas even the billboard companies admit that blight exists. The following discussion is based on consultation with board members of the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight.

For traditional static billboards, even one billboard can be too many, if it blocks or impairs an otherwise beautiful spot, or if it occupies a prominent site. The latter is the case at the north end of Gaffey Street in San Pedro, where citizens have complained to their council member about a large billboard on a lot at the top of that sloping street. The planning deputy for that council district told the citizens that someone would have to buy the land beneath the sign and terminate the lease. Just one billboard caused blight at that location.

A case where a few billboards have caused blight is along Culver Blvd in the former streetcar track in the Del Rey neighborhood. Many citizens have complained about the series of older sign structures in that parklike setting, which people use for recreation. Such aesthetically attractive settings are especially sensitive to blight.

As seen in the above cases, just one or a handful of billboards may be enough to cause blight because they distract from driving and compete unnecessarily for attention that could be given to the streetscape, the architecture, or the Los Angeles sky. Billboards in any quantity severely hobble efforts at community beautification.

In the case of digital billboards, any and every such billboard outside of a highly commercialized Sign District constitutes billboard blight. This is because such signs are visible from long distances, because they stand out from the surroundings so much that they lower nearby property values, and because most people do not want to live anywhere near them.

One of the main causes of billboard blight in Los Angeles is negligence by government officials. Lax sign enforcement over many years in the city of Los Angeles has allowed sign companies to erect hundreds of signs for which the permits are today lacking or noncompliant. Negligence by elected officials is another; some council members have softened their stances regarding billboard blight under the influence of campaign contributions of free billboard space at election time. The ultimate cause of billboard blight is the commercial imperative that sign companies constantly act upon. Preventing or reducing blight requires a countervailing sense of urgency of at least equal potency. Such urgency should energize a desire to make Los Angeles more attractive, and lead to preventing or reducing billboard blight.