

More Digital Billboards Coming? Say Something!

As you know, the prior City Council passed a Pilot Digital Billboard Ordinance on Dec 6, 2007.

Many, including VJ members, asked for a delay until the independent safety studies had been done. The Council refused to heed our request. The first phase of the independent safety study shows that San Antonio's Ordinance does not meet the study's recommendations. So, the City staff will be conducting a 4-month process to modify the Ordinance – beginning with a series of public meetings – even though the second phase of the independent safety study will not be available until 2010. (These will be on-the-ground traffic safety studies to determine if a link can be made between digitals and driver safety.)

Unfortunately, the City's public meetings will have been held before you receive this newsletter. That's the bad news. The good news is that the City is starting with a public comment period which will be open through July 31, 2009.

The proposed digital billboard ordinance is now available at www.sanantonio.gov in the Planning and Development Services Dept. section. I urge you to look for it and respond. You can also go to the Scenic San Antonio website, www.scenicsanantonio.org, which has been updated to inform you of this ordinance.

While it is true that the ordinance needs revision to address the 13 digital billboards that have been put up to date, it is not true that any more digitals need to be allowed. If you think there should be no additional digital billboards, let the City staff know. This time, the City wants to hear from you before the major decisions are made. I have been told that they will consider all public comment. Send to:

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Of the ten largest cities in Texas, only San Antonio permits digital billboards.

From all indications, this City Council will be much more supportive of our neighborhood's desire to curb the proliferation of billboards. Please let our new councilman Reed Williams know of your communication with City staff.

June Kachtik, Chair
Scenic San Antonio