

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

File #: 2019-00762, **Version:** 1

Title:

Clear Channel Billboard Relocation (P18-036) [Noticed 08/16/2019] {Continued from 08/27/2019}

File ID: 2019-00762

Location: District 3, North side of U.S. Highway 50, 400 feet east of Redding Avenue (APN: 015-0010-040-0000)

Recommendation:

Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion adopt: 1) a Resolution exempting the project from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 - New Construction Projects; and 2) a Resolution approving a Billboard Relocation Agreement to remove four existing signs at various locations and to construct a new billboard with a total sign area of 1,872 square feet and construct one double-sided, 1,344 square foot sign on 1.05 acres within the Light Industrial (M-1) zone, a Variance to exceed 35 feet in height, and Site Plan and Design Review to construct a new billboard.

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Presenter: Michael Hanebutt, Associate Planner, Community Development Department

Applicant: Robert LaGrone, Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc., 401 Slobe Ave, Sacramento, CA 95815

Property Owner: Eric Komar, Sacramento-Placerville Transportation Corridor Joint Powers Authority, 1400 29th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

Attachments:

- 01-Description/Analysis
- 02-Background
- 03-Draft Environmental Resolution
- 04-Draft Entitlements Resolution
- 05-Exhibit A: Relocation Agreement
- 06-Exhibit B: Project Plans
- 07-Community Comments
- 08-P18-036 Planning and Design Commission Staff Report

09-General Plan Map
10-Aerial and Zoning Map

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: The applicant proposes to construct a double-faced billboard with 1,344 square feet of display area north of the United States Highway 50 (Highway 50) overcrossing of Redding Avenue and to remove four existing sign faces with a total of 1,572 square feet from various other sites within the City. The proposal results in a net reduction of 528 square feet in sign face area (from 1,872 square feet to 1,344 square feet) and a net reduction of three in the number of sign structures (from four to one). The subject site is partially vacant with a length of Sacramento Regional Transit's Gold Line light rail tracks crossing the property. The proposal requires a Billboard Relocation Agreement, a Variance to exceed the height limit for signs, and Site Plan and Design Review for the new billboard.

Policy Considerations:

General Plan

The subject site is near Redding Avenue has a land use designation of Urban Center Low (UCNTLOW) in the 2035 General Plan. Although the proposed billboard is not inconsistent with the UCNTLOW designation, City Code Section 15.148.815 requires that new offsite signs be located within specific zones: Heavy Commercial (C-4), Light Industrial (M-1 or M-1S), and Heavy Industrial (M-2 or M-2S). The project site is located within a zone which allows for siting of new offsite signs, consistent with the General Plan goal of reducing visual clutter (LU 6.1.12) as the project will reduce the total number and square footage of off-site signs within the City. The project is also consistent with policy ER 7.1.3 which seeks to limit outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary. The project proposes static images and is lit directly with no blinking or flashing lights. For these reasons, staff finds the project to be consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.

Goal LU 6.1 Corridors. Support the development of major circulation corridors that balance their vehicular function with a vibrant mix of uses that contribute to meeting local and citywide needs for retail, services, and housing and provide pedestrian-friendly environments that serve as gathering places for adjacent neighborhoods.

Policy 6.1.12 Compatibility with Adjoining Uses. The City shall ensure that the introduction of higher-density mixed-use development along major arterial corridors is compatible with adjacent land uses, particularly residential uses, by requiring such features as: buildings

setback from rear or side yard property lines adjoining single-family residential uses; building heights stepped back from sensitive adjoining uses to maintain appropriate transitions in scale and to protect privacy and solar access; landscaped off-street parking areas, loading areas, and service areas screened from adjacent residential areas, to the degree feasible; and lighting shielded and directed downward to minimize impacts on adjacent residential uses.

Goal ER 7.1 Visual Resource Preservation. Maintain and protect significant visual resources and aesthetics that define Sacramento.

Policy ER 7.1.3 Lighting. The City shall minimize obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary, and requiring light for development to be directed downward to minimize spill-over onto adjacent properties and reduce vertical glare.

East Sacramento Community Plan

The project site is located within the East Sacramento Community Plan Area and also within the 65th Street / University Transit Village. The proposed project does not conflict with Community Plan Policy ES.TV 1.1 in that the sign will not hinder transit ridership and is not incompatible with the surrounding area. The site is located in an existing infrastructure corridor with future development potential to the north. The new billboard at the proposed location and height will be oriented to drivers on the adjacent Highway 50 overpass with the sign faces generally not be visible from the surrounding properties to the north.

Policy ES.TV 1.1 Incompatible Uses. The City shall discourage uses in the 65th Street/University Transit Village that might be detrimental to transit ridership such as those with low frequency patronage, or automobile related uses, such as warehouses, self-storage, service stations, or car sales lots.

65th Street Station Area Plan

The purpose of the plan is to guide future development and redevelopment within the plan area towards land uses that support transit ridership, reduce auto dependence, and provide needed housing. This document was adopted by City Council Resolution No. 2010-00623 on October 26, 2010. Staff believes the proposed billboard does conflict with the stated goals and visions of the 65th Street Station Area Plan. The plan focuses on developing an accessible circulation framework and encouraging transit supportive land uses. This proposed project has the General Plan and zoning designations which allow for the project, is located adjacent to the freeway and multiple sets of rail tracks, and its location and size will not undermine the stated goals and visions for a transit-oriented community.

Economic Impacts: Not applicable.

Environmental Considerations: The environmental Planning section of the Community Development Department reviewed this proposal and determined that it is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is limited to the construction of one new, small structure - the new billboard - at a location that is not a particularly sensitive environment, in addition to the permanent removal of four existing billboards.

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: On May 9, 2019, the Planning and Design Commission considered the project. Other than the applicant, no members of the public provided testimony. Staff's recommendation to the Commission was to recommend denial of the project based on: 1) the project being inconsistent with the vision for the area and potential impacts on the feasibility of residential projects in the area to develop at the intensity envisioned by the General Plan; and 2) the project adding to visual clutter. The Commission noted during deliberations that they did not find staff's basis for the recommendation to be persuasive, citing other communities that have had developments constructed adjacent to billboards. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission voted 8-3 to forward a recommendation to the City Council to approve the project. The staff report which includes staff's analysis is included as Attachment 7. Consistent with the Commission's action and the record of the hearing, staff has prepared resolutions supporting approval of the proposed project.

Rationale for Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Sacramento City Council approve the requested entitlements based on the findings of fact and subject to the conditions of approval listed in Attachment 4. The project complies with the General Plan, is compatible with the M-1 zone, and complies with the City's standards for billboard relocations.

Financial Considerations: Not applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.

Public/Neighborhood Outreach and Comments: The proposal was routed to East Sac Give Back, East Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, East Sacramento Improvement Association, East Sacramento Preservation, Power Inn Alliance, and Tahoe Park Neighborhood Association, as well as property owners within 300 feet of the site. Correspondence from the public received by staff are mostly in opposition with one group taking a more neutral stance while asking for community events to be advertised if the billboard were approved. This position was later amended to be in opposition to the project. Comments in opposition generally concern the impact to adjacent and surrounding properties and additional visual clutter in the area. The comments received are included as Attachment 6.

