

## **WRAC-Recommended Motion regarding STAP RFP**

The Westside Regional Alliance of Councils supports the Bonin/Blumenfield motion in CF 20-1536, and further requests that:

- prior to contract finalization, the City conduct an extensive and open public process, in which detailed information about STAP, the RFP and the contract negotiation process is made widely available and members of the public, community leaders and neighborhood/community councils are invited to provide ongoing input on community impacts, problems and ridership needs with respect to STAP;
- in connection with any contract that is eventually negotiated, the City 1) respect and abide by Community Plan, Specific Plan, Scenic Highway and Coastal Zone protections and requirements, including in the public right of way, and 2) address constituents' concerns about preservation of community character, protection of residential neighborhoods, public safety, environmental impacts and privacy infringement;
- all protections for scenic corridors, for local street furniture preferences and for neighborhoods with Specific Plans and codified prohibitions against off-site advertising that were negotiated and included in the JCDecaux contract be carried forward in any new contract that is negotiated; and
- the City restrict any new digital signs in or near bus shelters to sign districts in the 22 areas already zoned as Regional Commercial for high-intensity commercial use.
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### **Report -- Background Facts/Additional Support for Motion**

#### **Background:**

In 2018, seven (7) member councils of the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils (WRAC) passed motions that 1) opposed automatic renewal of the City's existing sidewalk furniture contract with JCDecaux; 2) called for community input in connection with negotiations for renewal of the JCDecaux contract; and 2) called for issuance of an open RFP to address community impacts, problems and ridership needs.

The City engaged in continuing contract renewal negotiations with JCDecaux in 2018-2019; during that time, unknown to WRAC or its member-councils, BSS/StreetsLA began developing a new "Streets and Transit Amenities Program" (STAP), which included a proposal to install digital signage (moving images) in bus shelters citywide, expected to begin upon expiration of the existing contract in 2021.

The negotiations with JCDecaux were unsuccessful, and on November 27, 2019, the City Council authorized BSS/StreetsLA's development of STAP and the process of issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the new program.

StreetsLA disseminated a Request for Information (RFI) to business community/industry reps in February 2020 (preliminary to RFP issuance), but neither WRAC nor its member councils had any knowledge at the time of STAT, the RFI, the RFP or any proposal to install digital signage in bus shelters citywide; no City officials conducted outreach to WRAC or its member councils regarding the program, nor were WRAC or its member councils given advance notice or any opportunity to provide substantive input or comment on the program prior to issuance of the RFP.

Ten (10) WRAC member councils having passed motions supporting Version B+ of the proposed citywide sign ordinance, on November 16, 2020, WRAC officially adopted its position to support Version B+ of the proposed citywide sign ordinance, which would restrict any new off-site signs, including digital billboards, to sign districts in the 22 areas already zoned as Regional Commercial for high-intensity commercial use and would also enforce a ban on conversion of existing billboards to digital format.

On November 23, 2020, having only recently learned about STAP, the RFP, the proposal to install digital signage in bus shelters and about an upcoming November 24th hearing by the Board of Public Works Commissioners (BPWC), WRAC submitted a letter to City officials objecting to issuance of the RFP for STAP or making decisions as to the specifications of street furniture or scope of the program without making a dedicated effort to seek input from local councils, community leaders and the public.

On November 24, 2020, the BPWC approved issuance of the RFP for STAP, despite opposition by WRAC, by individual WRAC members (including Pacific Palisades, Brentwood and Westwood Community Councils), by Scenic LA and by a number of other individuals and organizations.

In oral testimony and/or written communications, community leaders and organizations expressed concerns, among other things, about insufficient outreach and/or lack of prior notice; about preservation of local character and the incompatibility of digital signs with residential neighborhoods; about Scenic Highway and Community and Specific Plan restrictions and protection; about public safety and other environmental impacts (placement of digital signs at street level resulting in driver distraction and increased risk of collisions; excessive sign illumination); and about privacy infringement (data-tracking technology installed in digital signs resulting in possible capture of individual information of passers-by).

At the November 24th BPWC hearing, BSS/StreetsLA General Manager Adel H. Hagekhalil acknowledged that “more outreach and engagement is needed and necessary before the program elements and the contract are finalized and presented to the policy-makers,” and further stated that STAP “will not be one size fits all; the program will focus on the needs of the community . . . while respecting the protection of our residential areas, scenic corridors and specific community plan areas.”

On November 24, 2020, Councilmembers Mike Bonin and Bob Blumenfield co-sponsored a motion in Council regarding the RFP for STAP (CF 20-1536), which among other things calls for establishing “[p]arameters of digital advertising and/or digital displays to ensure compatibility with their surrounding environments, traffic safety, and land use zones such as specific plans and scenic highways.”

Since the November 24th BPWC hearing, the RFP has been issued and public meetings have been scheduled in December with Mr. Hagekhalil and other BSS/StreetsLA representatives to present information about STAP and the RFP to community members.

#### *Additional Support*

##### ***2018 WRAC-recommended motion re renewal of Decaux contract (2018 Motion):***

“The \_\_\_\_\_ Council strongly opposes the automatic renewal of the City’s Bus Shelter/Advertising 20-year contract with AC Decaux. The Council further requests the City to withdraw the renegotiation of the sidewalk furniture contract with Decaux from the City Attorney’s office, and to allow a process of community input which can culminate in an open RFP, awarded based on parameters laid out by community impact and ridership needs. The City should solicit comments from the community about problems/issues, and then issue an open RFP that addresses these issues/problems to numerous advertising firms.”

As of August 2018, the motion was passed by 7 councils: BABNC, BCC, PPCC (*modified; see below*), SORONC, VNC, WCC, WWNC; motion withdrawn in October 2018 (*issue became moot; negotiations with Decaux ongoing*). See: 2018 WRAC minutes: <https://westsidecouncils.com/meetings/> and BSS/StreetsLA memo to City Council: [https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2000/00-1073-s1\\_rpt\\_BOSS\\_10-30-2019.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2000/00-1073-s1_rpt_BOSS_10-30-2019.pdf)

##### ***PPCC modified version of 2018 Motion:***

Additional sentences at end of the motion: “Problems noted include lack of bus shelters at mass transit stations and major arterials, which harms the rider experience during rainstorms and windstorms, and which may further reduce the already declining use of transit. PPCC also strongly urges that local control and Specific Plan, Scenic Highway and

Coastal Zone protections be respected in connection with any contract that is eventually negotiated.”

See: <http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Resolution-to-Oppose-the-Automatic-Renewal-of-the-City%E2%80%99s.pdf>

***Council File 00-1073-S1 (11/27/19):***

City Council approved BSS/StreetsLA’s development of new street furniture program (STAP) and RFP.

See: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=00-1073-S1>

***Request for Information (RFI) for STAP (2/26/20):***

Information process preceding development of RFP; dissemination to business community/industry reps

See: [https://www.labavn.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=contract.opportunity\\_view&recordid=39274](https://www.labavn.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=contract.opportunity_view&recordid=39274)

***WRAC adopted position -- Support for Sign Ordinance Version B+ (11/16/20):***

See: <https://westsidecouncils.com/adopted-positions/>; scroll down to “Support for Sign Ordinance Version B+”

***WRAC Standing Rule 4 (11/16/20):***

See: <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Standing-Rules-of-the-Westside-Regional-Alliance-of-Councils.pdf>

***WRAC Letter regarding STAP RFP (11/23/20):***

See: <https://westsidecouncils.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WRAC-Digital-Bus-Shelter-RFP.pdf>

***Audio of 11/24/20 BPWC hearing (quoted remarks by GM Hagekhalil begin at approx. hour 2:04.06)***

See: [https://lacity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=193&clip\\_id=20403](https://lacity.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=193&clip_id=20403)

***Bonin/Blumenfield Motion in CF 20-1536 (11/24/20):***

See: <http://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Motion-STAP-Policies.pdf>

CM Bonin statement to community leaders re the motion: “This morning, Councilmember Blumenfield and I introduced a motion directing StreetsLA to report on the controls that would be included in any new contract. When the JCDecaux contract was awarded in 2001, my predecessor, Bill Rosendahl, included important protections for our neighborhoods, including prohibiting advertising along scenic highways and in specific plan areas where local preferences for street furniture design and off-site advertising have been codified. At a minimum, the same protections that my predecessor included need to be carried forward into the new contract.”