

Background Report – Recommended Motion to Oppose
the IKE (interactive kiosk) program (Council File 22-1154)
(recommended to the WRAC Board by the WRAC MTC)

Summary re CF 22-1154 -- Interactive Kiosk Experience, or “IKE”:

Council File: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=22-1154>

Motion (Buscaino): https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2022/22-1154_mot_10-04-22.pdf

Minority Report: https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2022/22-1154_rpt_T3_10-25-22_minority.pdf

City Atty Report: https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2022/22-1154_rpt_ATTY_10-20-22.pdf

Relevant facts: IKE is the City’s plan to install *hundreds of digital ad structures on City sidewalks*. The IKE 8-foot tall, two-sided digital advertising structures are being billed as a means of assisting tourists in navigating the City, yet IKE clearly presents an opportunity to put more unwanted distracting digital ads in the public-right-of-way (PROW). This effort to commercialize our PROW is the third such assault recently introduced by the City to monetize our PROW.

The program originated in the LA Tourism and Convention Board back in 2015. That board entered into a Letter of Intent to move forward with the program with vendor IKE Smart Cities (parent company Orange Barrel Media) in 2017, but had a problem: There was a prohibition in the LAMC on advertising structures in our PROW EXCEPT for transit shelters. This explains why, in the recently approved new street furniture program (STAP), despite not needing any change in the LAMC to allow for ads on transit shelters, the City inserted into STAP’s Mitigated Negative Declaration document the introduction of new LAMC provisions to allow advertising structures (not previously allowed) in the PROW! The City was preparing the way for IKE to be considered. In fact, the IKE documents refer to the need for the City to adopt necessary language to allow for such structures.

Under the new LAMC provisions (approved in connection with the STAP program), our sidewalks, streets, light poles and parkways are all vulnerable to the next proposal to share advertising revenues from the placement of advertising structures in our SHARED **PUBLIC** right-of-way, which should be used instead for pedestrians, for trees, for outdoor dining – not advertisements.

The IKE program was passed by the Council’s Trade, Travel and Tourism Committee with a Minority Report submitted by Councilmember Bonin that seeks evaluation of the program before further consideration. That report must be adopted by motion to move forward. A report by the City Attorney was also submitted, recommending further evaluation (including a CEQA analysis).

The Council’s Public Works Committee (PWC) considered CF 22-1154/IKE at its meeting on November 9, 2022. The meeting agenda noted that two lawsuits have been filed challenging the approval of the STAP program. Since the LAMC provisions needed for IKE are in the STAP program, and as public speakers raised questions and concerns about IKE, the lack of an RFP and associated issues, the Committee did not forward the measure on to the full Council. (It is next due to go to the Budget/Finance Committee; not yet scheduled as of this writing). The PWC requested a report back from the CAO (https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2022/22-1154_misc_11-9-22.pdf).

If the IKE program were to go forward as proposed, there would be no RFP and the City would instead “piggyback” or rely upon an RFP process that was done for an IKE program in Houston, Texas (a much smaller program in a very different setting). The City Charter requires giving local companies the opportunity to bid on contracts. No such opportunity was given for the IKE program.

WRAC member Councils are encouraged to **look at the maps** (linked in the Scenic LA piece below) that show where the first wave of 319 kiosks are planned across LA. The program calls for 300-500 such kiosks (90 units currently proposed for CDs 5 and 11, with more units expected to come in a future wave).

Photos of the kiosks and additional info, including maps, can be found at:

<https://www.scenic.org/blog/scenic-los-angeles-ike-interactive-kiosk-experience/>.

See also CityWatchLA article by B. Broide:

<https://citywatchla.com/index.php/cw/los-angeles/25857-backroom-deal-poised-to-deliver-hundreds-of-digital-ad-kiosks-to-la-s-sidewalks>.

Images of the kiosks:



NOTE: Not many (if any?) of LA's sidewalks are as wide as the one pictured with the New Balance ad on the IKE structure. LA's sidewalks are relatively narrow such as the one pictured above right in Venice.

*Barbara Broide,
WNC Board member and co-chair, WNC LUC/Mobility Committee
WNC rep to WRAC LUPC and alternate rep to WRAC*