



RECOMMENDATION TO AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Environmental Commission

Recommendation Number 20260219-004: Potential City Council action that would authorize larger signs, including wayfinding kiosks, in the public right-of-way that include electronic images, lights, and off-premises advertising

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission was given a presentation by the Interactive Kiosk Experience (IKE) Smart Cities at the January 28, 2026 special called meeting and additional background from City Staff was requested at that meeting to be presented at the Feb 19, 2026 meeting, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission supports strengthening the ridership and experience for public transit, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission believes amending Code Chapter 25-10 would open the door for larger electronic way-finding signs and billboards as there has already been an increase from Resolution 20241212-138 from “wayfinding kiosks should not have screens exceeding 65-inches and, for transit stations, 75-inches” to currently recommending 86-inches, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission is concerned about increasing energy consumption during a time when the City is also calling for a reduction in energy use and sustainability, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission supports the City Council resolution on Artificial Intelligence (20250424-055) that highlighted various environmental concerns regarding the rapid growth of data centers and their high energy use and water consumption. These signs have the capacity to geofence locations, and elicit interactions with users that could provide the vendor with large amounts of data, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission agrees with the Planning Commission, Chair, Alice Woods in her statement that this would be a “seismic change” in the City’s regulations and opens the door for an increase in outdoor digital advertising, and;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Commission recognizes very little public engagement has occurred on an issue deserving of more transparency.

THEREFORE the Environmental Commission recommends that,

- The City uphold the current code regarding billboards and digital signs and not weaken or change it.
- Ensure no digital billboards are allowed within the City’s limits.

- If, against the wishes of the Environmental Commission, the City Council allows for this code change, then the City will explore options to make each kiosk self-sufficient with solar or other alternative energy options.
- Allow the City to shut down kiosk and billboard operation during storms, heat waves or other events that require energy to be saved or reduced.
- Ensure that data on users or passersby is not collected– ever.
- Reduce light pollution by limiting hours of operation to only be active when public transit is operating.
- Limit the use of these signs to the downtown corridor and university areas (University of Texas at Austin and St. Edwards) only.
- Remove camera functionality of the kiosk.

Date of Approval: February 19, 2026

Motioned By: Mariana Krueger

Seconded By: Richard Brimer

Vote: 8-0

For: Isabella Changsut, Justin Fleury, Mar Moretta-Urdiales, David Sullivan, Mariana Krueger, Annie Fierro, Martin Luecke, and Richard Brimer

Against: None

Abstain: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Jennifer Bristol, Haris Qureshi, and Allison Morrison

Attest: Mariana Krueger

Mariana Krueger, Vice-Chair