

NO: R137

COUNCIL DATE: July 12, 2021

---

## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **July 5, 2021**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **5460-70**

SUBJECT: **Digital Billboard Relocation and Installation**

---

## RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information;
2. Authorize staff to initiate the processes to relocate an existing digital billboard from the Surrey Sport and Leisure site to Highway 17/Grace Road in order to support the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain Project; and
3. Authorize staff to initiate the process to install a new digital billboard on City-owned land adjacent to Highway 1 (18087 – 96 Avenue).

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's authorization for staff to initiate the process of relocating an existing digital billboard from the Surrey Sport and Leisure site to Highway 17/Grace Road to support the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain Project and to initiate the process to install a new digital billboard adjacent to Highway 1.

## BACKGROUND

There are currently eight digital billboards in Surrey. These billboards are owned and operated by Pattison Outdoor ("Pattison"), with the City receiving minimum annual revenue guarantees and a percentage of advertising revenues. Site selection for these installations took into account safety, proximity to residents and businesses, and capacity for public service messaging to all Surrey neighbourhoods (approximately 12% of displayed content is developed by the City, in support of parks, recreation, and cultural events).

Since 2012, analysis of traffic incidents adjacent to the installations have indicated no discernible/negative impact on safety. Public opinion regarding the signs is generally positive.

## DISCUSSION

The City is working in collaboration with TransLink and the Province to relocate the existing digital billboard at the Surrey Sports and Leisure Centre due to alignment of the new Surrey-Langley SkyTrain (“SLS”) Project. A comprehensive review of alternative locations was completed in 2020, and as part of that review process, another candidate site was identified for a new billboard which provides an additional non-taxation revenue source for the City.

### Location Review/Selection Criteria

As part of the location review, staff applied the following selection criteria to determine feasible locations:

- Safety impacts: a local analysis of Motor Vehicle Accidents (“MVAs”) in proximity to previously installed signs indicates no correlation between displayed content and MVAs. The signage is Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure licensed and under that license must adhere to strict conditions related to brightness, transition time between messaging, proximity to points of decision such as directional signage and traffic lights, and best practices.
- Traffic volume: Traffic volume and exposure to diverse commuter routes are the key determinants, a minimum traffic volume count is required.
- Proximity: Distance and sightlines to residents and businesses to maximize separation and not obstruct view corridors.
- Public Service messaging: Potential for public service messaging to a broad and diverse area/motorists.

### Recommended Locations

The two proposed sites are on the outer boundaries of the City and communicate primarily to traffic outside City and community centres. The proposed sites are as follows:

1. Highway 17 (“Site 1”), as shown in the attached Appendix “I”; and
2. 18087 - 96 Avenue/Highway 1 (“Site 2”) as shown in the attached Appendix “II”.

Site 1 is a deactivated portion of Grace Road terminating at Highway 17 (South Fraser Perimeter Road). The location has advantageous characteristics for a digital billboard, specifically:

- Adjacency to a high traffic volume east-west corridor;
- No proximity or sightlines to residential homes;
- No proximity to “decision points”, such as other signage, off-ramps, or intersections;
- No impacted vegetation or habitat; and
- Approved by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (“MOTI”).

Site 2 was purchased by the City in 2017 for purposes of installing the proposed digital billboard. It also has unique characteristics that make it particularly suitable:

- Adjacency to a high traffic volume (>55,000 vehicles per day) east-west corridor;
- No proximity or sightlines to residential homes (industrial zoning);
- Approved by MOTI; and

- Low value vegetation that, per an arborist's report, could be replanted with species more supportive of birds and small animals.

These locations are also consistent with past Council instruction that digital billboards should not be permitted within the City core and that sites on peripheral boundaries/highways are preferable to any internal corridors.

### **General Terms/Conditions**

The current Digital Structures and Components Agreement with Pattison includes terms and conditions that govern all aspects of the proposed installations. These require the structures to be manufactured, installed, and maintained at Pattison's cost and expense.

The City retains the ability to post community-benefit content of its own design for 12% of the total display time. This is a highly successful means of public outreach to residents, equivalent to \$1.8 million of paid advertising time annually. City advertising content is generated by the City's Marketing Section and typically features Parks, Recreation & Culture events, programming, and other public awareness content. Examples of typical content are provided in Appendix "III".

### **Environmental Considerations**

Site 1 has no impact on any trees or vegetation as the site is a deactivated roadway.

Site 2 was purchased by the City in 2017. It was the subject of an Arborist Report and internal environmental review in 2018. Consistent with the latter review, neighbouring watercourses will be protected from any construction activity. The location of the sign's base will exceed the standard setbacks required and behind a protective/buffer strip as required by the existing Neighbourhood Concept Plan.

### **Next Steps**

Subsequent to Council approval, staff will coordinate the following project elements with Pattison Outdoor:

- Permit application process for the two signs;
- Decommissioning of the Surrey Sport & Leisure sign and transfer to a new base/installation at Grace Road;
- Relocation of various directional signs on Highway 1 in coordination with MOTI so as to provide separation from the 18087 96 Avenue sign; and
- Subsequent installation and commissioning of 96 Avenue sign.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The proposed installations support the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, they correspond to the Sustainability Charter 2.0 themes of Economic Prosperity and Livelihood, and Infrastructure. Specifically, these installations support the following Desired Outcomes ("DO"):

- Economy DO6: Efficient land use and well-managed transportation infrastructure are in place to attract business and support a thriving economy;
- Economy DO9: Economic activities recognise the importance of, and have minimal impact on the natural environment; and
- Transportation DO13: Low-emission vehicles predominate and are supported by the necessary fueling infrastructure.

## CONCLUSION

The relocation and addition of these digital billboards will support procurement readiness of the SLS Project and help provide additional non-taxation revenue source for the City.

Scott Neuman, P.Eng.  
General Manager, Engineering

RV/DH/cc

Appendix "I" – Aerial View of Site 1

Appendix "II" – Aerial View of Site 2

Appendix "III" – Samples of Advertising Content

Site 1 Location: Highway 17 and Grace Road

Figure 1: Blue dot indicating proposed location of digital billboard

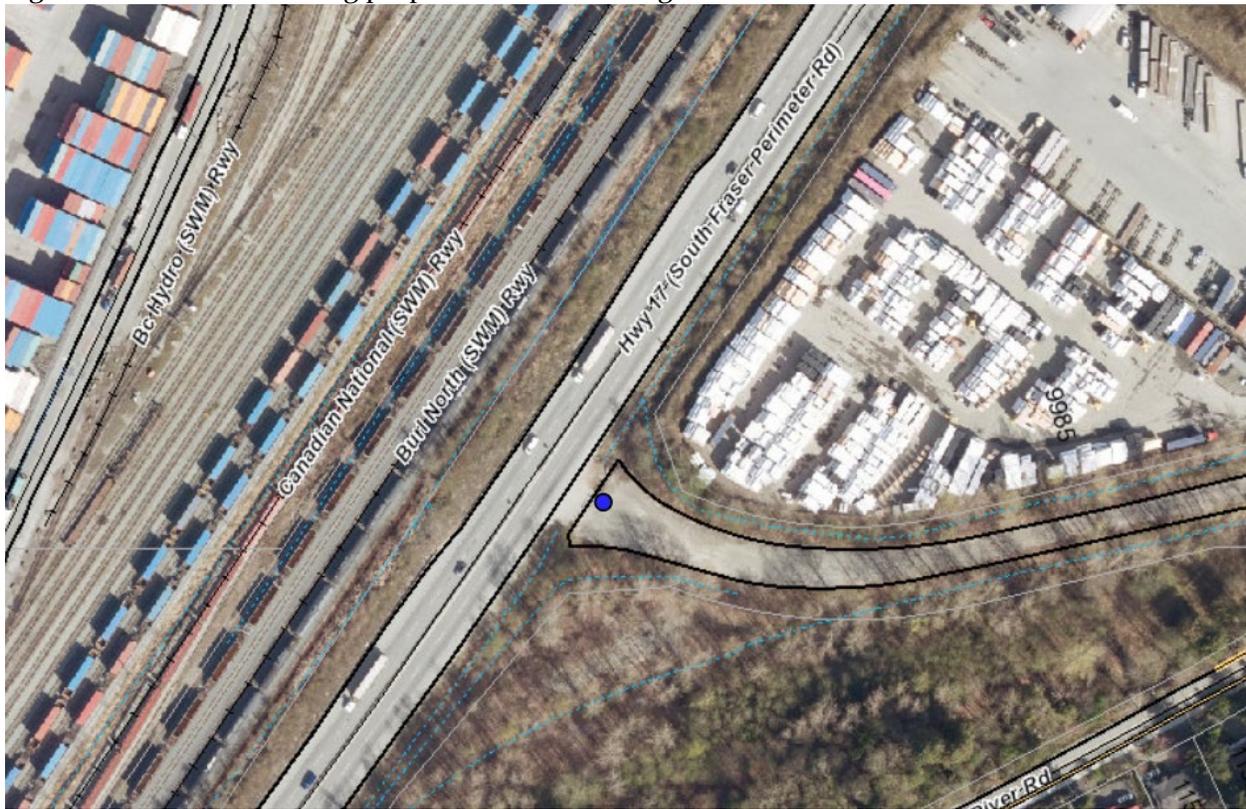


Figure 2: Highway 17 view east, showing proposed location for digital billboard



Site 2 Location: 18087 - 96 Avenue

Figure 1: Aerial view of 18087 - 96 Avenue with proposed installation indicated by blue dot

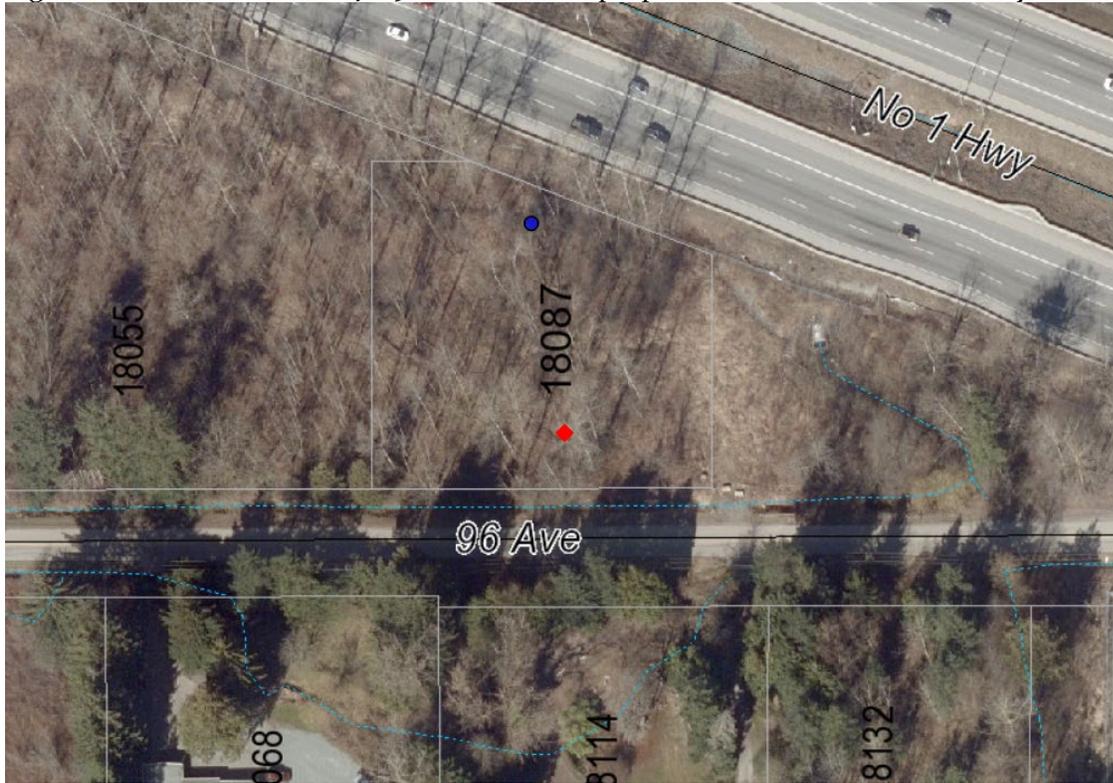


Figure 2: View east on Highway 1 adjacent to proposed sign location, with outline of sign in black



APPENDIX "III"

Samples of Advertising Content

**YOUR BOULEVARD TREE NEEDS WATER TOO**

SURREY PARKS  
Connecting through nature + play

[surrey.ca/trees](http://surrey.ca/trees)

604 501 5050 / [surrey.ca/trees](http://surrey.ca/trees)

**TODAY'S FIRE DANGER RATING**

LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME
-----	----------	------	---------

USE CAUTION WITH MATCHES & OTHER FIRE HAZARDS.

**WOMEN IN FIRE FIGHTING**

ONE DAY WORKSHOP  
MAY 12 | JUN 16 | JUL 14

[SURREY.CA/REGISTER](http://surrey.ca/register)

**PICK UP A VOTER GUIDE**

Available at any city facility

[surrey.ca/election](http://surrey.ca/election)

**Bike to Work Week**  
MAY 28 – JUNE 3

btww.ca

**Family Sunday**

MARCH 18  
11am – 3pm

[surrey.ca/familysunday](http://surrey.ca/familysunday)

**Seniors WEEK**  
JUNE 3 - 9

FREE

[SURREY.CA/SENIORS](http://surrey.ca/seniors)

**\$60** provides a warm bed

[SURREYHOMELESS.CA/GIVE](http://surreyhomeless.ca/give)

#OPENADORSURREY

**SURREY FUSION FESTIVAL**  
FOOD · MUSIC · CULTURE 2018

**WALK OFF THE EARTH**  
**RANJIT BAWA**

JULY 21-22 | FREE ADMISSION HOLLAND PARK

[SURREYFUSIONFESTIVAL.CA](http://surreyfusionfestival.ca)

**Something BIG IS COMING**

SEP 29 - MAR 31

[surrey.ca/museum](http://surrey.ca/museum)

**TRUCK PARKING OPEN HOUSE**

Help Create Truck Parking Solutions

SATURDAY MARCH 9, 2019  
SURREY CITY HALL 1-4 PM

[surrey.ca/truckparking](http://surrey.ca/truckparking)