

Scenic Watch



Confusing Road Sign



Photo: CBC News Nova Scotia

"People driving on the south shore of Nova Scotia might feel a little lost after seeing a bewildering road sign near Port Mouton..."

The sign — on Highway 103 a few kilometres before exit 21 — appeared in late August when, according to the Department of Transportation, a local Best Western took down its billboard, revealing the patchwork underneath..."

-- CBC News, Nova Scotia

[Read entire article](#)

Legal: "Miami Design District building allegedly lost \$5M

Covering News From
March
2019



Fun Festivals and Events

Central

April 2-7
Sun 'n Fun International Fly-in and Expo,
Lakeland
April 4-7
Celebration Exotic Car Festival,
Celebration, Orlando and Daytona Beach
April 5-7
Grant BBQ Fest, Grant
April 5-14
Sarasota Film Festival, Sarasota
April 6
First Saturday Jam, Barberville
April 6
Florida Lighthouse Day, Ponce Inlet
April 6-7
Downtown Sarasota Craft Festival,
Sarasota
April 12-14
Tampa Bay Blues Festival, St Petersburg
April 12-21
Florida Film Festival, Orlando
April 13
Brewmaster's Invitational Beer Festival,
Port Canaveral
April 13-14
Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks Art and
Craft Festival, Tarpon Springs
April 13-15
Blues at the Winery, Clermont
April 20

in value due to billboard ban lawsuit"



Photo: Google Maps, Art: The Real Deal

"The owner of a commercial building in the Miami Design District is suing the city for approving a billboard ban that allegedly sunk the value of the property by nearly \$5 million.

Karenza Apartments LLP, which owns the building at 100 Northeast 38th Street, alleges it also lost a lucrative contract with a billboard advertiser after city commissioners passed the measure that prohibits billboards north of I-95, at the behest of Miami Design District developer Craig Robins of Dacra...

According to the complaint, the city commission passed the ban on second reading on July 27, 2017, about a year after it was introduced by Commissioner Keon Hardemon at Robins' request. At the time, Karenza had an agreement with Becker Boards Miami to place a large mural above its one-story property, which is currently occupied by the offices of architecture firm Shulman + Associates. Karenza's building was one of three properties in the Design District with billboard permits, the lawsuit states.

Karenza claims the city commission ignored a planning and zoning appeals board recommendation that its building be grandfathered in because the proposed measure included an exemption for one of the other

Earth Day, Orlando
April 20
Downtown DeLand Classic Car Cruise-In, DeLand
April 20
Art Walk, Sanford
April 20-21
Mainsail Arts Festival, St Petersburg
April 25
ARTLife, Daytona Beach
April 26-27
Leesburg Bike Fest, Leesburg
April 27-28
Downtown Melbourne Festival of the Arts, Melbourne
April 27-28
Mount Dora Blueberry Festival, Mount Dora
April 27-28
Siesta Fiesta, Sarasota
April 27-28
Pepper Fest, Pinellas Park

South

Thurs April 27
BBC Earth Presents
Incredible Predators 3D, Fort Lauderdale
April 6
Seven-Mile Bridge Run, Marathon
April 6
Black Gold Jubilee Festival, Belle Glade
April 6
Naples City Live Music Festival, Naples
April 6
Cardboard Boat Regatta, Cape Coral
April 7
BBQ, Bands and Brew, Fort Myers
April 7
JM Lexus Sunday Jazz Brunch, Fort Lauderdale
April 11-13
Barret-Jackson Auto Auction, West Palm Beach
April 12-14
The Annual Delray Affair, Delray Beach
April 12-14
Sharks Tooth Festival, Venice
April 18
Downtown Gallery Walk, Punta Gorda
April 20
Earth Day 5k, Key West
April 24-28
Fort Myers Beach Film Festival, Fort Myers Beach
April 26-28
Pompano Beach Seafood Festival, Pompano Beach
April 26-28
SoFlo Cake and Candy Expo, Miami
April 28
Sweet Corn Fiesta, West Palm Beach

North

April 4-13
Clay County Agricultural Fair, Green Cove Springs
April 5
First Friday at Railroad Square Art Park, Tallahassee
April 5
First Friday Art Walk, St Augustine
April 5-6
Antique Tractor and Engine Show, White Springs
April 5-7
St Augustine Rhythm and Ribs Festival, St Augustine
April 5-7
Springing the Blues, Jacksonville Beach
April 5-7
Tallahassee Film Festival, Tallahassee
April 5-7
Suwannee River Paddling Festival, Live

neighboring billboard properties, at 3704 Northeast Second Avenue...

On Aug. 26, 2017, when the ban took effect, Becker Boards Miami relocated its mural to a property south of I-195 since Karenza's property was no longer allowed to have billboards. Karenza is suing the city for \$4.8 million in damages, which represents the dollar amount of the property's diminished value, the suit states..."

-- Francisco Alvarado, Research Haru Coryne, The Real Deal South Florida Real Estate News

[Read entire article](#)

Giant solar farms: Floridians concerned about visual impact, ecology and rural life

"Tampa Electric faces opposition from Pasco residents over solar panel project"



Photo: Tampa Electric

"Tampa Electric's solar panel project is facing pushback from residents in Pasco County, as homeowners have filed lawsuits against the installation of the facility.

The project, 'Mountain View Solar,' would be constructed on 350 acres of land and would include

Oak
April 5-20
Flying High Circus, Tallahassee
April 6
O'Leno Ole' Chili Cook-Off and Springs Celebration, High Springs
April 6-7
Spring Arts Festival, Gainesville
April 6-7
Pensacola Jazz Fest, Pensacola
April 12-14
Word of South Festival, Tallahassee
April 20
Brick City Beer and Wine Festival, Ocala
April 24-28
Seabreeze Jazz Festival, Panama City Beach
April 24-28
Florida's Birding and Photo Fest, Ponte Vedra Beach
April 25-27
Pink Ribbon Tennis Tournament, Pensacola
April 27
TOUR Guide - The FSU Reservation, Tallahassee
April 27
Bostwick Blueberry Festival, Bostwick
April 27
Tallahassee Pridefest, Tallahassee
April 27-28
LeMoyne Chain of Parks Art Festival, Tallahassee
April 27-28
5th Ave Arts Festival, Gainesville

[For many more events and details please visit the Orlando Times Travel Calendar here](#)



470,000 solar panels. It is part of Tampa Electric's plan to add six million solar panels in ten new locations by 2021.

The solar facility would be built alongside Blanton Road in Dade City. Nearby residents have expressed their opposition to the project with concerns that the plant would negatively affect the surrounding area, including animal habitats.

The Tampa Bay Times reported that Pasco homeowner Sandra Noble has filed two legal claims against Tampa Electric. The planned location of the solar field borders her property.

Noble 'will be significantly and adversely affected' by the county decision 'based on her interest in her property, in maintaining and protecting existing nature, use density and intensity of use of the rural property, health and safety, densities and intensities of development and compatibility of adjacent land uses,' her claim stated..."

-- Jessica Barron, WUSF

[Read entire article](#)

Hernando County:
"They moved to the country to escape development. Now Duke Energy wants to build a solar farm next door."



Photo: Douglas R. Clifford, Tampa Bay Times

"Residents have complained that the 800-acre project will be ugly and hurt property values."

"The sky catches fire out near Daly Road, above the open fields east of the yellow house Acy and Christine Akridge bought nearly a decade ago. They'd almost given up looking for a quiet place for their retirement years when they found it: a shell that had spent years in foreclosure and as a party house for local kids. But the barn was good, Christine thought, and the view was great.

They reshaped it into a home, washing their dishes in the laundry room sink while they built a kitchen. The horses moved into the barn. And Christine flooded her Facebook wall with pictures of the fiery skies at sunrise and sunset.

Now change may come to the fields in pursuit of that sun, and the Akridges and their neighbors fear it will intrude on the quiet lives they've built in this pastoral pocket of northeast Hernando County. Trustees of Florida A&M University will vote Thursday on whether to approve a proposed deal to let Duke Energy build an 800-acre solar energy farm across the road from the Akridges' home.

The deal would make money for the university, which got the land in a 2015 transfer from the federal

government. And proponents see it as a small, but necessary push in the battle to slow climate change.

But like other projects in rural central Florida, it's drawing ire from residents, who see it as encroaching on their lives. People who live near the Brooksville site said they haven't been contacted by the university; they found out about the solar farm idea through a newspaper report.

They fear it will drive down their property values, lead to disruptive glare and noise in their neighborhood and spoil their futures.

'What was this all for?' Christine, 62, wondered aloud as she stood in a neighbor's yard recently, surveying her home and the fields across. 'We can't start over again...'

The cattle were still there 20 years ago, when Dan Kavouras and his wife moved onto the hill across the road, and a decade later, when the Akridges moved in. Florida A&M owned it by the time Josh Anderson, a 36-year-old real estate broker, moved onto the property next to the Akridges last year. But he read up on the land transfer and had the same good feeling his neighbors did.

The promise Florida A&M had made to keep it agricultural seemed to guarantee that industry or development wouldn't intrude on them.

'It's almost like it was a safe haven around this property over here,' Acy Akridge said.

They didn't expect the federal government to define solar energy production as an agricultural use. That designation, granted by the Department of Agriculture, opened the door for Florida A&M to look for bidders for a solar farm...

...the residents of Daly Road fear the repercussions already have started.

Anderson bought his home just months ago. His wife is

pregnant, the baby due in April, and he sees the house as an investment in his family's future. But the possibility of the solar farm has made his property worth less than when he bought it, he said, and the value will continue to drop if the deal goes through.

He has a real estate term for this: 'External obsolescence.' It refers to something that's outside a property, but makes the property worth less.

Or, as he put it: 'I'm losing. I'm losing real, hard, green money.'

...Other residents will consider legal action to block the solar farm, just as residents in rural Pasco County have sued to stop a similar project by Tampa Electric Company.

One morning recently, the Akridges and Josh Anderson stood under the sprawling branches of the live oaks in Anderson's front yard. Acy Akridge looked past two of the Andersons' horses wandering across a field, to the open land across the road.

'People paint pictures just for that right there,' he said. 'You tell me when someone painted a famous picture with panels in the background.'"

-- Jack Evans, Tampa Bay Times

[Read entire article](#)

"California's biggest county could severely restrict solar energy projects"



Photo: Allen J. Schaben, Los Angeles Times

"The county's Board of Supervisors is slated to vote Thursday on a policy that would prohibit large renewable energy projects on much of the unincorporated private land governed by the county. The new restrictions would add to existing regulations that solar and wind developers say have made it difficult to build on federal land, which makes up the vast majority of the county's 20,000 square miles.

As local residents have told the supervisors in public comments, the restrictions would protect their quality of life. Many locals say California should shift its focus from land-intensive solar farms to smaller installations on rooftops and parking lots. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory estimates that rooftop solar could meet 74% of California's energy needs."

-- Sammy Roth, LA Times

[Read entire article](#)

In Wisconsin: Rural Wisconsin county split on solar energy project that would be among largest in nation



Photo: D. E. Shaw Renewable Investments, Wisconsin State Journal

[Read article - "Rural Wisconsin county split on solar energy project that would be among largest in nation"](#)

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