

Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



April 2, 2010

Digital Billboards Hit Roadblock:

Among the state and local governments limiting them:

Bans

Alaska
Amarillo, TX
Austin
Dallas
Denver
Durham
Fort Worth
Galveston
Gilbert, AZ
Hawaii
Houston
Knoxville, TN
Largo, FL
Maine
Montana
Pima County, AZ
St. Petersburg, FL
San Francisco
Vermont

Moratoriums on New Digital Billboards

El Paso
Los Angeles
Minnetonka, MN
Oakdale, MN
Pinellas County, FL
San Antonio
St. Louis

Considering Moratoriums

Atlanta
Michigan
Minnesota

Source: USA Today ref to Scenic America

City Government News:

More Cities Ban Digital Billboards



"Several communities have banned digital billboards outright, the most recent being Denver earlier this month (March). Other places have put a moratorium on them pending a federal study on whether they distract drivers."

-- Larry Copeland, USA TODAY

[Read Article Here](#)

[See Map Here With STATUS per community](#)

April



Fun Festivals and Events

North Florida

April 1-10

Clay County Agricultural Fair, Green Cove Springs

Breaking News: St. Petersburg

Council of Neighborhood Associations (C.O.N.A.) Affirms Position on Digital Billboards

"The C.O.N.A. Board has given due consideration to the February 25, 2010 draft proposal to swap out non-conforming static billboards for eight new digital billboards within the City, receiving presentations from C.O.N.A.'s Land Development and Historic Preservation Committee and Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc.

After hearing from both parties and allowing for Q&A and discussion the CONA Board reaffirmed it's previous position **AGAINST** the city's adoption of the proposal at this time due to concerns over safety, impact on the city's image, environmental downsides, and economic and legal risks. " - Scenic St. Petersburg

Go to ScenicStPete.org's website to read the text of the C.O.N.A. letter with the recommendations to the city



April 10-11

Santa Fe Spring Arts Festival, Gainesville

April 10-11

2010 Eglin Air Force Base 75th Anniversary Open House and Air Show, Eglin AFB

April 17-18

Third Annual Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks Art and Craft Festival, Tarpon Springs

April 18

Spring Festival, Alachua

April 24

Farm and Forest Festival, Gainesville

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Central Florida

April 2-24

DeSoto Heritage Festival, Bradenton

April 9-11

Tampa Bay Blues Festival, St. Petersburg
Sharks Tooth Festival, Venice

April 15-16

Earth Day "Back to Nature" Celebration 2010, Lake Wales

April 16-17

Central Florida Dragon Boat Festival, Tavares

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South Florida

April 3

Lower Keys Reggae Fest, West Summerland Key

April 3-4

Orchid/Bromeliad Expo at Flamingo Gardens, Davie

April 7-8

All-Tackle Spring Bonefish Tournament, Islamorada

April 10

14th Annual Miami Riverday Festival, Miami

April 10

TurtleFest 2010, Juno Beach

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council.

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Breaking News: Tampa

Homeowners will not oppose Digital Billboards

"Opposition from the Tampa group, which represents dozens of homeowner associations, is a major hurdle for ... two companies, which have been in talks with city officials for the past year on a proposed ordinance to regulate digital billboards.

'In a perfect world, we wouldn't have any billboards' said homeowners group vice president Randy Barron."

"Council members reached Wednesday said they hadn't seen the letter from the homeowners group but expressed concerns that the city wasn't involved. 'Until we've got it on the record, it's not a done deal,' said council Chairman Tom Scott. Councilman John Dingfelder said the board needs to decide whether it wants to allow digital billboards in the city at all before it decides how many or where they could be installed.

"We have even crossed that threshold yet," he said.

City Attorney Chip Fletcher said the city's legal department is reviewing the proposed changes to determine whether they can be worked into a final draft of the digital ordinance. " - Christian M. Wade, Tampa Tribune

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Light Trespass Issue:

International Dark Sky Association

Members of their organization joined in at a recent meeting about digital billboards, so we thought we would let you know about their organization.

"Darkness is as essential to our biological welfare, to our internal clockwork, as light itself."

-Verlyn Klinkenborg, "Our Vanishing Night," National Geographic magazine, November 2008

When it comes to light pollution and designing lighting/signs to minimize the impact, these folks have resources online and members in communities across the world. Activities include a program to approve fixtures as "Dark-sky Friendly".

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Experience: Rapid City



Note from the Editor

Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

[Click here to send me an email.](#)

-- Trudy Barker, Editor
Scenic Watch



AFTER a digital signs swap deal, industry claims it is unfair.

"...Brendan Casey, Epic's president, told aldermen the current rules essentially require them to sacrifice private property in order to expand their business.

Mayor Alan Hanks came out hard against electronic billboards last week in proposing a 120-day moratorium on all new billboards and electronic business signs. He says billboard companies are taking advantage of a 'loophole' in the city's sign code to convert traditional billboards into digital message centers that show multiple advertisements every minute.

Sign code says for each billboard a company puts up, they have to take down two. But the rule doesn't apply if you're just switching out the old model for the new one. Hanks says the increased number of advertisements, plus the increased possibility for driver distraction, are reason enough to have to give up at least two billboards elsewhere.

The council passed a 90-day version of the moratorium Monday, but not before the city's major billboard companies, Lamar and Epic Outdoor Advertising, weighed in.

Many communities in the region have taken a strong stance against L.E.D. billboards – a few cities in Minnesota, the state of Montana and Denver have all enacted bans or moratoriums in the last few years." - Emilie Rusch, Rapid City Journal

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New Technology:

Digital Billboards Reading License Plates?

Castrol Withdraws Ads

"...the signs have proved controversial, including digital billboards Castrol set up in London in September. Equipped with cameras, the signs read the passing license plates, accessed a database that revealed the automobile's model and year and flashed the drivers a message about what type of oil their vehicles should use.

The ads were blasted as intrusive and a unsafe distraction; Castrol halted them after a few days." - Steve Johnson, San Jose Mercury News

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[Read Background on Interactive Digital Signs>](#)

Other News:

Clear Channel Spent \$819,000 in 4Q Lobbying

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New digital signs popping up through Edmonton could be creating dangerous distractions for drivers, a city report suggests.

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New Technology - New Thinking?:

Be First on the National Billboards-May-Not-Talk-to-Me List

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