

Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



April, 2012

City of Miami - Wave of Ordinances Proposed Would Allow Advertising On Any Surface



Photo: Al Crespo -- [The Crespogram Report](#)

"...not only do they want to plaster giant LED billboards on city buildings, now they want to allow advertising signs on the sidewalks."

--Al Crespo, [The Crespogram Report](#)

Miami considers selling advertising space on public buildings, fire hydrants, rights-of-way

"Only two weeks after giving preliminary approval to a controversial bill that allows electronic ads on large city facilities, Miami commissioners are considering selling ad space on all city fixtures and rights-of-way. "

"The mere idea of city ads on trees, no matter how remote, struck one city resident as disgraceful.

'Over my dead body,' said Ginger Vela, whose Shorecrest home is shaded by three mature crape myrtles growing in the public swale. 'My son planted them for me. The government already took my grapefruit tree.'

Miami-Dade County Attorney's Opinion

"Miami's LED billboards not allowed under Miami-Dade sign laws, county attorney says"

"The new LED billboards authorized by the city of Miami, as well as proposed digital ads on the Gusman theater downtown, violate Miami-Dade laws that restrict electronic outdoor advertising, County Attorney Robert Cuevas has concluded in a [newly issued memo](#).

Cuevas' memo, drafted at the request of Miami-Dade Commissioner Barbara Jordan, also confirms a previous county warning that the Miami Heat is violating the county sign law by showing ads on the digital mesh at the county-owned AmericanAirlines Arena for products and services not sold at the facility.

The comprehensive legal opinion provides new ammunition to billboard opponents who have long argued that city officials are flouting county law - which applies to municipalities as well as unincorporated areas - by authorizing revenue-producing LED billboards under a money-making agreement with ClearChannel. The city also approved the arena sign at the Heat's request.

Cuevas' memo leaves the enforcement up to Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez and the County Commission. But the elected officials have been reluctant to intervene in the past. Other municipalities, including Doral and West Miami, have also permitted LED billboards. The legal opinion says the county has the power to fine ClearChannel and other sign companies for improper billboards..."

-- The Miami Herald

Billboard opponents say the measure could have serious consequences beyond trees, allowing streets and sidewalks to be 'plastered' with ads.

The city, which is in financial straits, has increasingly turned to outdoor advertising as a source of revenue, entering into a money-making agreement with Clear Channel permitting the company to erect digital billboards along highways and commercial corridors within the city.

Two weeks ago, the commission gave preliminary approval to a plan to place LED billboards on the Gusman theater downtown, the Miami Children's Museum on Watson Island, and the Knight Convention Center on the Miami River.

At the urging of Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones, the ordinance was amended to include advertising in city parks, though the legality of using parks for advertising remains in question. The plan has not been set for a final vote..."

-- The Miami Herald

[Read Miami Herald article here>](#)

Are city commissioners desperate, insensitive or greedy?

" As long as the city can pocket something to fill budget gaps that elected officials created, it's proving quite willing to ruin its assets.

That is the most flattering interpretation of the city commission's vote last week to allow firms to plaster blinking illuminated billboards all over city parks and municipally owned venues..."

--Miami Today

[Read Miami Today article here>](#)

[Read the Miami Herald article here>](#)
[Read the County Attorney Letter here>](#)

Scenic Miami-Dade's Barbara Bisno transmits county attorney's opinion to City Of Miami

"The Sign Code of Miami-Dade County Governs in the City of Miami"

"...Mr. Mayor, as so many of us have said so many times before, you and your City Commission colleagues may not make legal by municipal action that which is illegal by the governing Sign Code of Miami-Dade County. The City Attorney may wish to advise you regarding the significant risk to the City, its reputation and its financial resources if the City were to continue to knowingly take official actions that clearly violate the governing Sign Code of Miami-Dade County...."

-- Scenicdade.org

[Read Scenic Miami-Dade letter here>](#)



Photo: Al Crespo -- www.thecrespogramreport.com

April - May



Fun Festivals and Events

Update:

Billboard Employee Disrupts Scenic Wisconsin Press Event



CLICK Photo to view video: WXOW.com

While struggling to continue their interview, frustrated crew fires back "You are being a bully, sir".

Central Florida

April 28-29

The Cotee River Seafood & Blues Festival, New Port Richey

May 1

Taste of Collier, Naples

May 6-7

Smoke n' Blues, Bikes and BBQ, St. Cloud, Florida

May 7-8

Mayfaire-by-the-Lake, Lakeland

May 7-8

Jazz on the Vineyard Green, Clermont

May 12

Windsor Zucchini Festival, Windsor

May 12

Great Dock Canoe Race, Naples

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South Florida

April 28-29

The Cotee River Seafood & Blues Festival, New Port Richey

May 2-6

SunFest, West Palm Beach

May 2-6

Key West Songwriters' Festival, Key West

May 6

Greynolds Park Annual Love-In, North Miami Beach

May 12

Battle in the Bay Dragon Boat Festival, Marathon

May 12

Arcadia Watermelon Festival, Arcadia

May 18-20

Redland International Orchid Show, Homestead

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North Florida

April 27-29

Interstate Mullet Toss and Gulf Coast's Greatest Beach Party,

" Emotions run high in Onalaska (WI) Monday as the city considers whether to allow electronic billboards.

An opponent of the digital signs doing interviews with local media is interrupted by a man claiming to represent the many people who support these electronic message boards. The woman doing the interview is Lori Jungck, the man who interrupted her is Les Hart an employee of the media company that erects these signs. Hart declined an interview request, referring us to the General Manager of Olympus Media.

The confrontation comes as Onalaska joins the debate over electronic billboards. A group called Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin claims the signs will detract from the landscape. They held the meeting at Oak Forest Drive and Eleventh Avenue to show the location of one of the two proposed electronic sign upgrades in Onalaska.

Lori Jungck had this to say, 'I think they're...obnoxious and I think they are a blight on the beauty of the coulee region. The second concern I have is that I do think they're a driving hazard...' "

-- ABC 19 wxow.com

BREAKING NEWS: Onalaska likely to allow electronic billboards

"...The Onalaska Plan Commission passed a new sign ordinance Tuesday night that will allow electronic billboards in the city on a case by case basis. Right now, electronic billboards aren't allowed at all.

The conversation is being driven by Olympus Media who wants to convert a pair of billboards to digital near I-90, one by the Harley Davidson store and the other behind Farm and Fleet. 'We're not impeding with additional light, we're re-using the current signs, so we're not adding billboards, and we wanted to make sure we're not facing somebody's back yard,' says Olympus Media Wisconsin General Manager Mary Niemeyer.

One of the residents at Tuesday's meeting was concerned her voice is not being heard. 'Tonight, we had our one chance to give input, and I just don't know where other venues will be for us to give our ideas,' says Onalaska resident Rachel Teske... "

-- WKBT News

[WXOW News report - Click Here >](#)

[WKBT News report - Click Here >](#)



Photo: International Dark-Sky Association

Arizona Governor Joins Veto Trend

Pensacola

April 28

Choctawhatchee Estuary Festival,
Niceville

April 28-29

Cedar Key's 48th Annual Fine Arts
Festival, Cedar Key

April 28-29

Carrabelle Riverfront Festival,
Carrabelle

May 4-6

Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival,
Fernandina Beach

May 4-6

28th Annual Pensacola Crawfish
Festival, Pensacola

May 4-6

Gamble Rogers Folk Festival, St.
Augustine

May 4-5

Spring Tour of Historic Homes,
Apalachicola

May 5

Panacea Blue Crab Festival, Panacea

May 5-7

World of Nations Celebration,
Jacksonville

May 18-20

Wild Amelia Nature Festival, Amelia
Island

May 19

Newberry Watermelon Festival,
Newberry

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Note from the Editor

Suggestions for improvement are
always welcome.

Arizona governor vetos electronic billboards after similar actions in Missouri and South Dakota

"Saying she's unwilling to jeopardize the state's astronomy industry, Gov. Jan Brewer on Wednesday vetoed legislation that would have allowed illuminated electronic billboards with changing messages along state highways.

Brewer said she recognizes that state billboard laws have not kept pace with technology. And the governor said she realizes the industry pushed the legislation because the Court of Appeals ruled last year that these signs are illegal and the 70 in existence have to be removed.

'I am also mindful, however, of Arizona's unique position as a national leader in astronomy and stargazing, thanks to our dark skies,' the governor wrote in her first veto of the session.

She said the industry has invested \$1.2 billion in Arizona, employs more than 3,300 and has an estimated economic impact of \$250 million each year.

'I simply refuse to place all of this in jeopardy,' Brewer said...

...Brewer said she already has talked with Rep. Bob Robson, R-Chandler, who sponsored HB2757 on behalf of the industry, to work out some sort of compromise "that allows outdoor advertising companies to remain viable."

--AzDailySun.com

Breaking news: AZ Compromise proposed

[Read entire article AZ Daily Sun article here>](#)
[Visit International Dark-Sky Association web site>](#)
[Read The Republic article on possible compromise here>](#)



Photo: Nathan Schar, utsandiego.com

Around the Country

Ann Arbor, MI: Imposes 180-day ban on digital signs

[Read Ann Arbor Chronicle article here>](#)

Missouri: Lawmakers continue to push digital signs

[Read Kansas City Star Editorial "Clutter Assaults Drivers" here>](#)
[Read Businessweek article here>](#)
[Visit Scenic Missouri web site here>](#)

Franklin, NJ: Digital Billboard Construction Blocked

[Read mycentraljersey.com article here>](#)