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## City of Ann Arbor passes ban on digital billboards

ANN ARBOR, MI – The Ann Arbor City Council has passed an amendment to the city’s outdoor advertising ordinance that prohibits new billboards, including digital billboards. The amendment also prevents the conversion of existing static signs to digital.

“[Billboards] were described on the council floor as blight. I think they intrude on the visual environment of the city,” said Councilmember Chris Taylor. He said digital billboards only increase the level of intrusion and therefore the ordinance was changed to protect the residents of Ann Arbor.

“We applaud city leaders in Ann Arbor for taking this bold and forward-thinking step,” said Mary Tracy, president of Scenic America. “Cities all across the country are under immense pressure from a powerful industry to allow these glaring, blinking digital billboards within their borders. Ann Arbor is among the cities leading the way by saying ‘No’ to these new forms of visual pollution.”

Municipalities around the country are moving to prohibit digital billboards over safety, aesthetic and quality of life concerns. Ann Arbor joins other cities such as Denver, St. Louis, San Francisco and Knoxville in banning the signs.

“The case against digital billboards grows every day,” said Tracy. She cites numerous incidents of neighborhoods and cityscapes being dramatically altered by the introduction of the glaring, constantly-changing signs. “We get calls all the time from residents whose quality of life has been greatly diminished by a digital billboard glaring into their bedrooms, living rooms or back porches.”

Tracy also cites a growing body of evidence that suggests digital billboards pose a threat to traffic safety. Experts agree that anything that takes a driver’s eyes off the road for more than two seconds greatly increase the risk of a crash. “Bright, constantly-changing digital billboards are designed expressly to attract and hold the attention of drivers,” she said.

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*Scenic America is the only national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated solely to preserving and enhancing the visual character of America's communities and countryside.*