

Scenic Overlook

January 2014

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Billboards come down on Florida's A1A Scenic Byway

There was great rejoicing among the many people present for [the tearing down](#) of the first of 10 billboards along the [A1A Scenic and Historic Coastal Byway](#) in northeast Florida earlier this month.

Flagler County bought the 10 billboards, spread out along four scenic miles of Oceanshore Boulevard, to get rid of them and restore the views along the scenic byway.

"We have achieved a milestone here today, and it's over two decades in the making," said County Commission Chairman George Hanns. "We need to do everything we can to restore the natural scenery of the area."



Bill Brinton of Scenic Florida gave an award to Flagler County leaders on behalf of Scenic America and [quoted from a speech](#) Charles Kuralt gave to a national Scenic America conference in 1997. Remarking on the need to restore natural and scenic beauty all across our country, he said: "The way it's going to have to be done is place by place, and one place after another, by the people who live there."

Michigan study shows accidents increased near digital billboards

A [new analysis of crash data](#) finds that while the total number of crashes on Michigan's highways decreased between 2004 and 2012, crashes increased on roadways where digital billboards had been introduced.

Data provided by the Michigan Department of Transportation showed that there were nine percent fewer overall crashes in 2012 compared to 2004. Yet in areas where digital billboards had gone up crash rates increased, and rates grew higher the closer one got to a digital billboard.

"These results should alarm anyone concerned about motorist safety on our country's roadways," said Mary Tracy, president of Scenic America. "While better designed cars and advances in traffic engineering are leading to overall safer roads, the

[once place!](#)

crash rates near digital billboards fly in the face of that trend."

[Click here for the full press release.](#)



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Seattle sues over illegal wall wrap advertising

The City Attorney in Seattle is [cracking down](#) on outdoor media companies who install large wallscape advertising on the sides of buildings in violation of city ordinances.

The City Council banned new billboards in Seattle in the 1980s, but some landlords have been abusing a provision that allows for on-premise advertising by renting out their building's facades to advertisers who have no real relationship to the business inside.



Examples of this have included huge wallsapes (as large as half a city block) for Apple, when only a vending machine in the building sells iPods. In another instance a giant T-Mobile ad covers the entire side of a building, but the convenience store inside only sells T-Mobile calling cards.

The wallsapes have raked in major money for Total Outdoor Advertising in amounts ranging from \$12,000 to \$40,000 per month per sign, the city says.

Seattle's local arts and design community has been at work for several years to get the city to crack down on these illegal signs which cheapen and diminish the character of Seattle's streets and public spaces.

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