



COALITION TO

Ban Billboard Blight

DEFEND OUR PUBLIC SPACES • PROTECT OUR VISUAL ENVIRONMENT

Signage Control is Good for Business

The more a community does to enhance its natural, historic, and architectural assets, the more business and tourism it attracts.

Communities can thrive without billboards. Leaders in tourism, real estate and land development believe that better aesthetics leads to better economies for communities. (6)



Most billboards have no connection to the local economy; they advertise national brands or out-of-state products and services. (2)



Traditional billboards cause reductions of up to \$31,000 in the sale prices of nearby homes. (1)



Removing one digital billboard for a road construction project has cost millions for taxpayers in one community. (5)



Communities all over the United States are banning new billboards and prohibiting digital "modernizations." (2, 3)



Vermont took down its last billboard in 1975. From 1976-1978, tourism revenues increased by over 50 percent. (2)



Billboards, traditional and digital, spoil views and degrade community character by creating clutter and blight.



Enhancing aesthetics is an economic driver, attracting new residents, business and tourists.



In 2012 billboards accounted for about 2.5% of total advertising spending in the United States. (7)

Billboard Control and Local Economies

The billboard industry sees digital displays as cash cows but the benefits to business and residents are lacking. Business owners don't need them. In fact, advertising industry giant David Ogilvy questioned their relevancy.

"I cannot believe that the free-enterprise system would be irreparably damaged if (billboards) were abolished. Who is in favor of them? Only the people who make money out of them." – David Ogilvy, in Ogilvy On Advertising.

Communities don't need billboards to be successful. Cities, counties and states that enact tough billboard controls enjoy strong economic growth.

For example, Hawaii, Alaska, Maine and Vermont prohibit all billboards, and they have successful tourism industries.

As Doug Harman, Ph.D., the former CEO of the Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau has said, "There can be no doubt that there is a connection between successful tourism and scenic protection."

Indeed, a five-year study of 35 cities by the Mississippi Research and Development Center concluded: "The way a community looks affects how both residents and visitors feel about it. An attractive community has a better chance at industry, including tourism."

Digital billboards can cost taxpayers far more than traditional displays. California law says billboard owners must be reimbursed for the sign and lost ad revenue for removals due to public projects such as roads and bridges.

The cost to remove a traditional billboard is high; the price tag for an electronic one is astronomical. In St. Paul, Minn., one digital billboard removed for a bridge project, cost taxpayers \$4.3 million in 2013.

So who really needs them? The billboard industry does.

Resources

1. "Beyond Aesthetics: How Billboards Affect Economic Prosperity," Jonathan Snyder (2011)
2. scenic.org/billboards-a-sign-control/the-truth-about-billboards/100-billboard-control-is-good-for-business
3. scenic.org/blog/124-new-poll-shows-reno-voters-opposed-to-digital-billboards
4. scenic.org/storage/PDFs/scenic%20america%20billboard%20fact%20sheet.pdf
5. finance-commerce.com "MnDOT paid \$4.3M to remove digital billboard" by Brian Johnson (2014)
6. scenic.org/resources/scenic-america-2014-conference-presentations
7. Marketing Charts and the Outdoor Advertising Association of America