

July 28, 2011

TO: The City of St. Petersburg  
FR: The PACT  
RE: Digital Billboard Proposal

The PACT has examined arguments for and against the adoption of the proposal by the Billboard Industry to allow digital billboards in the city in exchange for removing a number of the remaining static billboards. Given the fact that digital billboards are not currently allowed and that the city has had a virtual ban on new billboards, we acknowledge CONA's concern that allowing new billboards will negatively impact the appearance of the city. It will also create additional driver distractions, add to the city's carbon footprint, use public highway view space for private gain, and possibly lead to expensive litigation should the city want to change or remove the digital billboards in the future. In addition, we are particularly concerned that neighborhoods were not consulted regarding which billboards to remove.

We therefore stand with CONA in opposing the City's adoption of the Digital Billboard Ordinance at this time. We support further dialogue on the City's plans, and encourage you to develop an inclusive and expansive approach to community feedback. Chief among the concerns that lead us to oppose adoption is the inequitable distribution of the number of billboards being taken down in Midtown, compared with other parts of the City.

Respectfully yours,

Gypsy Gallardo and Gwendolyn Reese  
Co-Chairs, The PACT