

SIGN BY-LAW PROJECT

COMMENTS

*The following is a consolidation of comments received, via e-mail, to the Sign By-law Project Team.
This consolidation last updated October 20, 2008.*

Advertising is not a problem but there is a need to be careful not to be overwhelmed by it.

Establish clear separation distances between signs - these distances could possibly vary between residential, industrial and mixed neighbourhoods.

Put the onus on applying for sign permits on the property owner and thus make the property owner responsible for removing illegal signage on their property. Owners can, of course, have arrangements with billboard companies but the legality or illegality of the billboards would be the owners' responsibility.

Make a clear distinction between "first-party" signage which simply identifies a property from "third-party" signage which is trying to sell a product or idea, even if the product is made by the property owner.

Try to discourage "moving signs" - the ones which are attached to trucks. These cause both visual and air pollution.

Regulate "A frame" signage on sidewalks. Too often Toronto sidewalks are like obstacle courses for pedestrian.

Ensure the new by-law deals with the signage itself not so much with what kind of sign it is. Is a vinyl sign necessarily different from one painted directly onto a wall?

No matter what by-law is passed ensure it is enforced. Enforcement of the present law is almost non-existent and this simply encourages people to test the waters, knowing it will take ages for any enforcement action to start and that it takes years to be concluded.

Publish a listing of all sign permits so that citizens can clearly see if signage in their neighbourhood is legal or illegal.

What action is being taken to prosecute those commercial businesses that post flyers on bus shelters? It is a nuisance and disgusting to see driving school flyers, immigration, divorce, nanny, etc. flyers illegally posted everywhere on TTC bus shelters.

As a small business owner I have had to deal with the existing Toronto sign by-laws...it is my hope that what you are doing will be an improvement over the inefficient, delay ridden system currently in place, because it certainly doesn't need to be more complicated than it already is.

The guidelines [in the current sign by-laws] are clearly laid out but the processing of applications is extremely slow and there seems to be no one individual who is responsible for this problem.

Outdoor third party visual advertising in the City should be banned. It is exceedingly ugly very distracting to motorists and an affront to the senses. Toronto has little enough in the way of natural or architectural beauty. Billboards fascia and free-standing advertisements detract immensely from what we do have.

Outdoor third party advertising is totally unnecessary. Companies and organizations have more than ample opportunity to get their messages to the public via newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the Internet. Inescapable, in-your-face outdoor advertising is insulting and often embarrassing and serves only to make the City less attractive to everyone. For drivers there are more than enough distractions from the harrowing task of navigating the City streets. Outdoor street advertising is designed to catch the eye of everyone including drivers making the City more dangerous for all of us.

The current situation is quite unacceptable and out of control. Current city bylaws are weak, inconsistent and not even enforced allowing advertisers to maintain illegal signage everywhere. It is at best a bad joke and creates at least the impression of corruption. The City even shamefully contracts with these same outlaw companies for advertising laden street furniture which looks like billboards with seats or shelters awkwardly appended. I would rather pay higher taxes and have respectable street furniture.

I urge you to stand up to the unethical greedy outdoor advertisers who for years have been thumbing their noses at city bylaws. They are leaches who care nothing about the liveability of our City. Their product only serves to clutter the landscape. They are purveyors of ugliness.

The very least which should be done is placing severe enforceable restrictions on placement, size and density of outdoor advertising with the goal of greatly reducing the current level of eye-pollution. Proliferation should be discouraged by imposing hefty annual licence fees.

[The] billboards we have [in the city] are boring and there's way too many everywhere. Why can't we have a designated space for all the advertising in the city that people could go to and look for what they need? This could be a terrific arts project as well as clean up our streets from the visual noise.

The size of all billboards should be strictly regulated and if billboards are too big or break the rules in any way they should come down. The [billboard] company should also pay some sort of fine for the visual pollution these illegal billboards create.
Enforcement should be a top priority for the City! Too many companies put ads and signs up and they don't have a legal permit, yet the billboards stay and stay and stay...very annoying when you know they have no right to be there, hanging off the public property.
I would like to see fewer billboards in Toronto; billboards make our city less beautiful.
[Do not permit] signs which would have a dangerous effect on some motorists. These would include provocative, sexually oriented billboards [and] billboards which demand more than a few seconds to get the total effect (i.e. moving figures or time-chaptered or series of changing lighting effects).
Limit sign size and prohibit ugly structures required to hold them in place.
Prohibit signs on rooftops. [They are] usually seen on low rise buildings.
Prohibit billboards at busy intersections and areas that have an already high accident rate.
Ban those horrible metal structures seen in car parking lots. [They are the] ugliest structures ever devised.
Billboards are OK - we need revenue and we're in a consumerist society. However, nobody needs 300' tall billboards and nobody needs neon flashing billboards. We can have our advertising and our revenue and keep Toronto beautiful too!!
If anything could make Toronto stand out, it would be a city of classy billboards, not corners of oversized ads making no money for us. If companies want to advertise, charge them. They won't run away, people buy when they see ads and those companies know it.
I believe that billboards, in particular those that are articulated on top of, or beside, existing buildings, are a blight on our cityscape and should be banned outright.
Public space belongs to the people of Toronto, not to the corporations of Toronto. Please help us to reclaim it.
I believe that all existing illegal billboards should be removed by the city and the people responsible for erecting them should be prosecuted for the cost of removal and fined as heavily as the law will allow.
I believe that companies advertising on illegal billboards, or for that matter, illegally in any public space (i.e. spray painting advertising on sidewalks and bike paths) should also be fined heavily and prosecuted for cost of removal.
Billboards, particularly large, bright ones aimed at auto drivers, have no place in a pedestrian friendly, transit oriented city that strives to be a thriving, mixed-use, and vibrant place to live and work. Small, pedestrian oriented billboards / signs at street-level or eye-level are fine and can add character, or even provide useful information to passers by, and can support local and independent business. Large, bright billboards, however, are in stark contradiction to the goals explicitly stated by the city of Toronto for growth, liveability and aesthetics.
I was in Vermont this summer and I realized that one of the reasons that I was so relaxed is that there were no billboards except I think on the actual business or entry to their property. These signs were usually small but totally adequate to let me know that they were there and what they offered. Greatly reducing the number and size of billboards would cut down on the excessive stimulus that we are subjected to every day.
Toronto is a pretty city. Billboards, however, are unattractive and take away from appeal of the city. They block views, provide visual clutter and bombard everyone with messages that are unavoidable. There is a billboard mounted on a rooftop in my neighbourhood and every time I am washing dishes in the sink, the view out of my window is of this billboard.
Our lives are filled with advertising and signage and I find myself desperately seeking out parts of our city that aren't plastered with outdoor advertising. I hope the city will try to curtail the volume of outdoor advertising. I suspect that by limiting billboard advertising the value of the remaining space will rise. The result will be that there won't be a big change in the total revenue raised and more money spent designing more attractive outdoor advertising.
I love Toronto. Billboards make the city feel cluttered, cheap and unattractive.
I think the bright video billboards found along the Gardiner Expressway and other major streets are a serious safety hazard.
I am of the firm conviction that the proliferation of billboards in Toronto contributes to our mental pollution. Constant bombard[ment] by visual imagery whose sole purpose is to get us to buy-buy-buy takes its toll on our well-being and the liveability of this great city.
Reduce the number of billboards cluttering Toronto and give the space back to the people and their peace of mind.
The [billboards] we already have [in the city] are enough of a visual blight. Please try to think more creatively about revenue sources and don't keep increasing the number of billboards in our city.
Billboards make Toronto much less beautiful.
Walking along Yonge to Dundas Square makes me feel dizzy. All of the stimulants coming at me of things that do not matter make me want to scream.
I think Toronto has to clean up the city and make it people-friendly by getting rid of the giant billboards, from giant money-making corporations, that do not care about our well-being, but just want to make money.
This City needs things that are good for people. Parks, tree-lined streets, room for pedestrians and cyclists.

Anything that can stop and reverse the putting up of large advertisement boards will be greatly appreciated. Stricter laws and enforcement of those laws.
Billboards make Toronto tacky.
Those [billboards] along the Gardiner are a real danger because one shouldn't drive and read.
The most offensive [signs] are the little 'Map-in-the-Park' things. Parks are meant to be places of beauty. It's clear that no tourist actually uses these fraudulent posts to get a map (the one in Allan Gardens isn't even accessible by a park sidewalk and has no purpose but to attract the Jarvis through traffic), so they are also dishonest, which makes them ugly both physically and morally.
Please take as many billboards down as the advertising lobby will allow you to.
Billboards are an urban blight, but they are even worse when placed in the countryside, as is happening more and more all over Ontario. In the city, it seems that anyone who owns a structure can rent its sides or its roof for advertising. Not only is this commercial use of space garish and offensive, it can also distract drivers and obscures the fabric of the city. How far can we push the limits of the public awareness? It seems to me we have already pushed them quite a bit, as younger people seem unaware, or [de]sensitized, to the way the streets and structures look without advertising (perhaps because they have never experienced them without billboards).
I suggest that billboards be permitted only to advertise the commercial establishment where they are placed. That said, there should be limits to their size to ensure that they have minimal impact on the streetscape.
Billboards make Toronto less beautiful. Return this city to its original glory.
Our lives are infiltrated enough by advertisers as it is, and billboards everywhere are more than an eyesore. They distract drivers and they take away from their surroundings: little bits of interesting architecture, street culture, natural beauty or public art go unnoticed in the presence of an imposing billboard.
[Billboards] are often lit from below; contributing to the terrible light pollution we suffer from in this city, where it is impossible to see the stars.
Please take a stand against visual pollution. Please make Toronto less ugly. Please make Toronto a billboard-free city.
Billboards should be severely curtailed in the City of Toronto and its approaches. They distract drivers and cyclists, making the streets less safe, and they make our city much less attractive to look at.
Every time I go to Dundas Square and feel assaulted by all the billboards and advertising, I think of the Councillors who proposed all that stuff as an exciting idea like Times Square. Please don't let that happen to other parts of our city.
Toronto already has too many outdoor advertising spaces.
I am in favour of reducing the presence of (visual and audio) advertising as perceived from public spaces, particularly spaces that have yet to be disturbed by them (i.e. billboards on and around the Don Valley Parkway).
Put a halt to the abundance of billboards in our otherwise beautiful city.
Billboards wreak havoc on the landscape. [In] some places it is unquestionable that it has a negative impact such as a waterfront or a naturalized area. More commercialized areas are less conspicuous but may also detract from urban design efforts and aesthetics.
I'd like to express my desire to see the number of billboards in Toronto significantly reduced.
Billboards pollute our visual environment, reduce our creativity and remove our sense of Toronto as a distinctive city (rather than a generic sea of advertising). The advertising on them demoralizes the public and makes the city much less interesting and enjoyable than it might be otherwise.
Please implement significant regulations on billboards and reduce the number of billboards in our city dramatically.
I am a fan of public art, not advertising. I would much rather see the natural beauty this city has to offer, be it in nature, art or architecture, than an ad for vodka, soda pop or cell phones. I would like to strongly encourage you to restrict the number of billboards and ads I have to see as I move about Toronto. We are inundated with advertising from the moment we wake up - having it spread 50 feet in front of you makes it difficult to ignore.
As a frequent visitor to Toronto, I find billboards diminish, rather than enhance, Toronto's public spaces. Fewer billboards would certainly make Toronto a more beautiful city.
I live in New York City but am impressed with Toronto's initiative to control its visual environment. Billboards make a city less beautiful, more prone to commercial influences and generally less about the people and more about capital.
I would like to recommend severe restrictions on billboards in general. The kinds of billboards that are most offensive are those which attract most attention, and which in fact capture people's attention regardless of their location (street, sidewalk), their gaze direction, and their disposition (looking around, enjoying the scenery, on their way to a specific event, etc). In fact, it is the power of billboards to rivet attention that makes them such powerful advertising tools and that makes them so offensive and invasive. Billboards that are most intrusive are those that are oversized - either the free-standing type or those painted on the walls of buildings - and those with moving imagery, in particular video ads. Those should be completely banned, and even regular billboards should be restricted in number and location.

<p>Our attention is the one sure route to our state of mind. Attention is precious, so it is not surprising that advertisers pay a lot of money to grab a piece of it. In an enlightened society, people's visual attention would not be sold off to the highest bidder. Our attention is a private, personal mental space that has a big impact on our mood, our sense of who[m] we are, and our place in the world. Having products and commercial images constantly invade our attention as we move about the urban environment erodes our sense of community. It destroys the impression that we live in a friendly, beautiful environment, and makes us feel depersonalized - consumers rather than people.</p>
<p>Advertising is never something to be enjoyed - it simply is a message. I can never imagine someone coming to Toronto and remembering the lovely billboards.</p>
<p>I am against the proliferation of advertising signs and billboards on our city streets and highways. At the very least, the current by-laws should be enforced and the amount of the fines imposed be increased to the point where [it] will be a deterrent to offenders, especially repeat offenders.</p>
<p>If possible the number of signs and billboards allowed should be reduced.</p>
<p>The city belongs to its citizens not to large companies who do not obey the laws of the city. There is too much visual garbage in our city. Everywhere we look someone is trying to sell us something we don't want. I believe this diminishes our quality of life and I would like the elected officials and the bureaucrats of the city to do something about it, now.</p>
<p>The most abominable signs are the ones that have moving text that is capable of distracting drivers.</p>
<p>Being bombarded by billboards erected by companies who have no interest in my community, except as a source of potential profit, makes me ignore my surroundings. In an effort to shut out the obnoxious attempts billboards make at capturing my attention, they have influenced me to close my eyes to the world.</p>
<p>I am staunchly opposed to increasing ad displays in this city. The adverse effects of inescapable advertising are very clear at this point in our society. They frequently create unhealthy ideas of normal and encourage constant and unrestrained consumption.</p>
<p>I have lived in Toronto for about 15 years and I have noticed that our city has become increasingly ugly and bombarded with more advertisements. I avoid the downtown core, especially Yonge and Dundas, because it is so ugly and overwhelming with grey concrete and billboards. I would prefer to see more trees and green space.</p>
<p>Restrict billboards in the city. Dundas Square is enough.</p>
<p>Billboards make Toronto less beautiful.</p>
<p>I don't believe that advertising should be forced upon me. I make the choice to watch television, listen to the radio, and surf the internet, in these circumstances I understand and realize the necessity of commercials and advertising. When I go outside I can't choose to shut off billboards, I cannot close my eyes from the bombardment of companies trying to sell me their products.</p>
<p>This city is beautiful; please don't ruin it with eyesores that do not benefit anyone except big businesses. It has been said that children can identify more logos than plants and animals. Do you think that is right?</p>
<p>I believe that advertisers have a right to get their message out. I also believe that persons who are the target of those messages have the right to avoid being targeted. For example, a person who doesn't want to hear radio advertisements can buy a subscription to advertising free radio. Or simply listen to music that they purchase. Similarly, a person who doesn't want to see newspaper advertising can simply discard the flyers that come with their newspaper, turn the page or stop buying the news paper altogether. Similarly a person who doesn't want to see television ads in their movies will watch HBO. A person who wants to walk down their neighbourhood main street should have a similar choice. But of course there is no such choice by the very nature of outdoor advertising. The result of outdoor advertising is that the community that ought to belong entirely to its residents belongs less to its residents and instead belongs partly to the business interests that erect the outdoor advertising. Outdoor advertising causes residents in the community to feel alienated from the very community in which they live. Outdoor billboards are fundamentally different from other advertising and must be treated as such. There must be strict limits on it - out of respect for the residents of the community affected by outdoor advertising. The industry must be put on notice that there is already too much outdoor advertising and that over the next several years, outdoor advertising must be curtailed.</p>
<p>I would like to see outdoor advertising limited to storefronts facing the street.</p>
<p>I would like to see the end of free standing billboards one day, and effectively immediately, no more new ones.</p>
<p>Moving, animated billboards showing "live action" ads are shocking and dangerous. Why they aren't already illegal is a mystery.</p>
<p>Perhaps a certain proportion of billboards could be reserved for community groups and arts organizations to use freely. These could be supported by the revenue from commercial billboards. Let's give billboards a chance to be good!</p>
<p>I think that Toronto should ban all third-party outdoor advertising along roadways with a speed limit greater than 50km/hr because they are a safety hazard. At the very least, outdoor signs along roadways should [not] be allowed to have variable display.</p>
<p>I hate going to Dundas Square even though it is supposed to be a great public space. It's terrible.</p>

<p>There are messages about losing weight, controlling your breath, and eating junk food all over this city courtesy of our lovely TTC shelters and so on. My son asks me constantly about what all these images actually mean, and I have to be very creative to ensure that his self-esteem doesn't take a beating.</p>
<p>Please consider young children and those with poor self-esteem before you start putting more billboards everywhere. I'd love to be able to live on this land in a sustainable way where my child is able to grow up with the loveliness of trees and birds instead of advertisements for worthless consumer products.</p>
<p>I'm not "anti-advertisement". I understand that advertisement plays an important role in our economy/society. I choose to read magazines, watch TV, listen to the radio, browse the web; media forms in which the costs of content and delivery is subsidized by advertisers. I understand I am, in essence, trading my eyes, ears, and generally my attention, for some sort of benefit (typically entertainment). I also derive personal benefit from some types of public signs. If I'm looking to find a restaurant, it's beneficial for me to be able to see a sign to locate it. If I owned a comic book store, it would be beneficial to me that people can find it, or generally be made aware of its existence (for some potential future visit), as they pass by on the street. I believe these uses of signage are what people call "first party" use. I believe that such signage should be restricted, and rules harmonized for the entire City, but the current state of affairs for first party usage seems adequate to me.</p>
<p>I have [issues] with the status quo respecting third party use of public signage. Third party advertisements in public spaces currently provide very little benefit to me, and seem to provide all benefits to the advertisement companies and property owners. Obviously, the people who pay for advertisements must believe they are getting some benefits too. I would be happy if there was a total restriction on "third party" signs in public spaces, inclusive of TTC vehicles, "street furniture", billboards, ground signs [and] wall signs. Unlike my selective consumption of TV, radio, and magazines, I cannot, nor wish to, choose to not "consume" public spaces. Obviously restricting all third party usage of public signs is an extreme position, and one not likely to be adopted in your Bylaw recommendations. Understanding that there will be a place for third party public advertising, I believe that the public, who the space belongs to, should be the primary beneficiary of any revenue associated with this activity. If I knew that some percentage of revenues from billboards in public spaces was going to the City of Toronto, on behalf of residents, I would be satisfied. The remainder can be split between agencies and property owners, who choose to allow ground signs and billboards on their properties. I've seen on the City of Toronto website, that there is something called the "Tax on Billboard" report, so I'm guessing this is already being considered. What amount would make me satisfied? 75% to the City would leave me pleased, but 50% would make me satisfied. I would suspect that forcing companies that sell advertising to provide 75% (or ever 50%) of revenues to the City would make many locations fiscally unattractive, anyway, so perhaps tighter restrictions than those that exist in the "Old City of Toronto" may not be necessary to diminish quantity.</p>
<p>I want to see more restrictions regarding quantity and placement of signage than allowed by the current bylaws.</p>
<p>I dislike animated, illuminated signs at night time. Thankfully I don't face one out my window.</p>
<p>I dislike aerial signs targeting motorists along expressways (especially those on the Gardiner [Expressway] which I believe diminish safety for motorists) and aerial signs that block views and sightlines.</p>
<p>Large lighted displays and television screens in public spaces are particularly regrettable as, in addition to being more invasive, they are also far worse environmentally than simpler advertisements. While it may be unrealistic, I would love to see at least some public spaces free of billboards. I am thinking particularly of those public gathering places - squares and plazas like Nathan Phillips - that are so attractive to advertisers.</p>
<p>I dislike signs that block sightlines for traffic.</p>
<p>What is with all these night time billboards that light up the downtown core at night, especially at Dundas Square? I would urge [that you] put a curfew on such energy wastage and keep in mind height restrictions as many of these billboards are 2-4 stories tall and have been known to injure people when they are blown off their moorings, especially in Toronto's nasty wind tunnels. If sustainability is to work, even advertisers should be asked to switch off to save this planet from global warming and light pollution.</p>
<p>Every time I see the slew of billboards in my city I feel like I'm being cheated in two ways. Firstly, by the media companies erecting the billboards, and secondly, by City Council for allowing the illegally erected billboards to exist in the first place.</p>
<p>I feel the cramming of advertising onto and into every bit of public space that can be bought or sold completely removes any sense of beauty, community, and sometimes history that my city has to offer.</p>
<p>Toronto should make every effort to limit the expansion of billboards, while at the same time increase the city's green spaces. Our ravines and green spaces are sacred to our city and make us what we are.</p>
<p>I would like to see increased enforcement for current billboard infractions in Toronto. Steep fines and a capable policing agency are required so that the media industry doesn't have its way with our city. The media industry has a history of doing what it wants and many current billboards are up contrary to governing regulations. It is important that any new signage or billboard legislation not become more lax or deregulated than previous legislation. A balance needs to be struck between industry and community and it is up to City of Toronto officials to defend our city from the media industry's onslaught. Otherwise, the media will get into every other corner of our life [and] sightlines that they haven't yet invaded.</p>

I hope that the City of Toronto, consistently with its other green policies, will (a) reduce visual pollution and the private intrusions into public space by reducing the number of commercial signs to only those which identify establishments or landmarks; (b) move to reduce both light pollution and energy wastage by phasing out illuminated signs unless powered by solar panels and batteries; (c) reinforce the City's own "brand" and citizens' sense of identity by refusing to allow TTC vehicles, harbour ferry boats and all City-owned vehicles to be disguised by advertising on all surfaces.
I find most billboards unsightly, and a blight on the city. Let's beautify Toronto – get rid of billboards.
Billboards along highways (i.e. the mess along the Gardiner) are distracting, which makes them a danger to drivers. There are other jurisdictions where no billboards are allowed along roadways. Driving there is much less stressful.
The billboards at Dundas Square are an assault on all who venture there.
Billboards wrapped around TTC vehicles are an insult to all TTC patrons. They are also a danger to public safety because they prevent emergency personnel from seeing into the vehicles.
Billboards make Toronto less beautiful. I know because I live next to two billboards near Dupont and Bathurst. Just because the advertisers are willing to pay the city a great deal of money does not mean that the city does not have to listen to its citizens. Please give me more trees and less advertising.
Although many intelligent citizens realize that the city is looking for sources of revenue, the popular practice of selling public space for commercial interests has a detrimental effect for fostering a sense of respect and responsibility for the public good and one's community. The lack of true public space is essentially anti-democratic because it does not allow citizens to meet as human beings rather than "consumers." My generation knows that we have been bought and sold since birth, now is the time to prove us wrong.
Toronto should have fewer billboards clogging up the skyline and making the city ugly. Yonge and Dundas and the downtown area in general has so much advertising billboards that it makes the city look like less of a city than a commercial playground.
There are also many illegal billboards around, and the city should have more power to enforce the current laws, and heavily fine those who profit from breaking the law (and the signs should be removed immediately).
The public should be consulted whenever the city seeks to erect new billboards on public space (such as the Exhibition Grounds).
I like individual and one-time ads that are tied to local businesses, groups and events. For example I like seeing concert ads for local venues, directions in chalk on a sidewalk to special events in Kensington Market, and the decorated street poles in West Queen West that advertise an out-of-the-way ice cream shop.
I like the large video boards at Yonge and Dundas and in Chinatown at Spadina and Dundas.
I do not like advertisements that are painted on sidewalks for a long time. While they tend to get a reaction because they are in an unexpected location, they are often not cleaned up and left long after their relevancy. This also applied to ads that are left up for no discernible reason.
I would like to see more public artwork in some areas, and I agree with others who have suggested diverting any new billboard tax to funding public art. I also like to see variety in advertisements, with a good mix of national, regional and local companies. I would like to see more space for organizations and groups.
I would like to see the existing bylaws simplified so average citizens can understand what's allowed, and makes illegal signs easy to enforce. I would also like to see the city draw from resources such as illegalsigns.ca and perhaps setting up a phone number or email address for citizens to report infractions to discourage offenders. Even putting up a web page explaining the new laws in easy-to-understand terminology would be a good start.
I think all third-party advertising should be banned in all parts of the city. I really don't see any benefit at all to third party advertising. It just looks ugly and doesn't add anything to the city.
The number of openly illegal signs that are able to flout the existing regulations is staggering. I'd like to see far stricter enforcement of existing rules, and stricter penalties for repeat offenders. The amount of advertising in public space is already excessive in my opinion without the added burden of all the illegal signs.
I do not mind the "garden" signs along the railway embankment south of the CN Lakeshore tracks, between Jameson and Roncesvalles.
I recently moved to Toronto, and in my previous experience in many large cities in North America, I have not experienced such an overwhelming sense of in-your-face outdoor advertising as I have in the Toronto area. The visitor (and resident) gets the feeling that no space is protected from unwelcome advertisers.
I would like to see a differentiation made between community/local advertising and conglomerate advertising when it comes to off-premise advertising. This way, for example, the Junior Baseball Team could put up a sign in the parking lot of a church (with the church's permission) and not have to worry that it's violating the sign by-law. The Junior Baseball Team is much different from a [sign industry] Billboard. They should be treated differently in the by-law.
I do not mind signage on the exterior of TTC streetcars and busses, and the ads inside subway cars. I don't mind them as much as I know they help subsidize transit costs, and for that I already receive some benefit, even if I don't take the TTC.

I recommend that of the [sign] revenue generated, the first place it should be spent would be enforcement.
I would like to see better publicized meetings about applications for billboard variances - it is my suspicion that a lot of people at least passively oppose the addition of new oversized billboards to their neighborhoods.
The present rules on signage in Toronto are confusing, open to interpretation and poorly enforced. Any new rules should be clear and unambiguous. If the new rules are clear and unambiguous, they should be easier to enforce.
My number one proposal would be for Toronto to ban billboards.
We need active enforcement. Advertising companies should not be allowed to put up illegal billboards, knowing that they can get away with it for years and will only get caught if a member of the public calls and complains about it. Increase fines [for illegal billboards]. Obviously, the fines are not enough of a deterrent to offenders.
[Sign] variances should not be allowed for third-party advertising. What's the point of having a by-law whose [regulations] don't really matter?
It should be mandated that a certain percentage of time on billboards be designated to both city advertising (especially as a way to reach out to diverse communities) and local art.
Advertising techn[ologies] that are not discussed in the new sign by-law should be deemed illegal until there has been a period of time to study new forms of advertising. Right now, there is too much of a 'loop-hole' that allows new forms of advertising to be allowed inasmuch as that are not illegal.
Place a firm cap on the number of billboards. There is a simple law of supply and demand: the fewer spaces for advertising in Toronto there are, the more advertising companies can charge for it. They won't be losing out on profit here.
I have great concerns about the proliferation of video billboards in the city, particularly at busy intersections. These are far more distracting for drivers than static signs since they are designed to capture and hold attention. They are placed at high traffic intersections for obvious commercial reasons, but these are also the most dangerous locations for pedestrians who need to cross these intersections in the face of distracted drivers. I am thinking of the numerous video billboards that have sprouted along Yonge Street. The one closest to me, at Yonge and Front troubles me because this is a complex intersection, drivers are thinking ahead to higher speed driving on the expressway, and it is a busy intersection for pedestrians. There is a balance to be struck between safety and advertising rights, and I feel this sign in particular (outside the Sony Centre) is inappropriate, and would rather not see any such signs at drivers eye level along Yonge Street and other streets that are busy pedestrian streets.
Have the new sign by-law easy to understand with an on-line area to assess whether or not a sign is illegal (i.e. sign doesn't have a permit? It's illegal!).
This is my city. I love Toronto, and I love feeling that I can make a difference in the way our city can look and feel. Billboards are ugly, and don't fit into a vision of a 'beautiful' city. I want to know that Council is not dictated by the lobbying, bullying, or threatening by advertising companies. Council represents the interests of the people, first and foremost.