

Attn: Municipal Issues / Arts Desk  
Toronto, November 5, 2009

## City Committee Unanimously Endorses New Tax and Law for Billboards

Toronto's new tax and regulatory regime for billboards overcame a major hurdle last night and will now be voted on by City Council at its next meeting. The unanimous vote at City Council's Planning and Growth Management Committee came more than seven years after the Beautiful City Alliance launched its campaign for a billboard tax for art and greater accountability and oversight of the outdoor advertising industry.

Devon Ostrom, a founder of the BeautifulCity.ca Alliance, was pleased with the committee's decision.

"The committee made the right decision last night because it embraced the vision of the vast majority of Torontonians who want Toronto to be a beautiful and creative city," said Ostrom. "We hope that City Council will see the wisdom in the committee's decision and give its approval without delay."

Rami Tabetlo, coordinator of IllegalSigns.ca and BeautifulCity.ca Alliance endorser, believes that Planning and Growth Management Committee sent a clear message to billboard companies.

"The Billboard Industry in Toronto has a culture of non-compliance with the law; that should come to an end with this by-law," said Tabetlo, a prominent outdoor advertising industry watchdog. "Between now and the next council meeting, we're going to be meeting with decision-makers to be sure each and every councillor understands the proposed tax is something the billboard industry brought upon themselves with their own outrageous conduct."

Toronto City Council will consider the new sign by-law and billboard tax at its November 30-December 1 meeting.

Free use, print quality images from Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> PGM at: <http://tinyurl.com/yz28kob>  
Research and Polls: <http://www.beautifulcity.ca/bcbf.asp?id=29>

### Inquiries

Devon Ostrom  
[devon@beautifulcity.ca](mailto:devon@beautifulcity.ca)  
647 267 4221

Rami Tabetlo,  
[rami@illegalsigns.ca](mailto:rami@illegalsigns.ca)  
416 822-3696

Julia Che  
Agents of Change  
[julia@beautifulcity.ca](mailto:julia@beautifulcity.ca)  
416 928 1978

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[julia@beautifulcity.ca](mailto:julia@beautifulcity.ca)  
416 928 1978

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