

**City of Ann Arbor – Sign Ordinance Amendment Meeting  
May 29, 2013**

**Addressing the Reasons for Proposed Changes**

**Mitch Gasche, Real Estate Manager for Adams Outdoor Advertising,  
analysis of the town hall meeting moderated by Wendy Rampson, Ann  
Arbor City Planning Manager, regarding the proposed changes to the sign  
ordinance**

**Driver Distraction**

- Wendy indicated that there were a few studies from across the globe that researched all types of distractions including billboards. She did say that no study had found that billboards increased accidents.
- We mentioned that an independent study conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation indicated that digital billboards are safety neutral.
- SEMCOG traffic data indicates, at our three (3) digital billboards locations in Washtenaw County (two (2) in Whitmore Lake on US 23 and one (1) in Ypsilanti at Huron Exit of I-94), there was a decrease in the number of accidents after the boards were built. The traffic around the boards showed a range from approximately 5% increase or decrease after the boards were built. (See attached data.)
- Wendy indicated that the dwell time of fifteen (15) minutes was excessive. The State of Michigan standard is six (6) seconds.

**Visual Clutter**

- We stated that regulation of location for digital signs can be done to allow them in appropriate locations without banning them completely.
- Adams suggested three (3) possible locations for digital billboards (See attached).
- No one at the meeting thought the current city limit of 30 sign faces was too high.
- Some people suggested the limit was too low.

## **Light Pollution - LED**

- Wendy had mentioned that the only way the city heard about signs were from complaints about them. She did not say that there were any complaints about billboard lighting.
- The Zon LED Representative mentioned that 0.1 foot-candles standard above ambient light was very low. He stated that 0.1 foot-candles are not even equal to moonlight. We added that 0.5 foot-candles would be indistinguishable to the human eye.
- We mentioned that the city had begun to convert city street lights to LED to improve lighting and reduce the utility use.
- We stated that foot-candles are the accepted measurement of illumination for billboards in our industry.
- We stated we provided levels of foot-candles above ambient light to the city to insure that the sign will not add any significant light to the surrounding ambient light levels at certain distances.
- We stated that LED signs have 256 dimming levels.

## **Increased Energy Use**

- The Zon LED representative stated LED lights are more energy efficient. The LED lights used in digital billboards are the most efficient lights available for signage.
- The question was raised whether the city was concerned with the increased energy usage of other businesses other than the billboard business. If the goal is to reduce energy consumption, why not address the energy usage of other businesses? Wendy commented that the digital billboards are not the same as a business. Adams Outdoor Advertising strongly disagrees with this misconception. There are 25 employees that rely on the billboard business to support their families. Billboard advertising provides a great return-on-investment for local business. We are asking to be treated in the same manner as any other business in the City of Ann Arbor.
- The LED lights used in our digital billboards are the most energy efficient technology. As an example a 10' X 30' digital billboard uses 43% less energy in a year, then the holiday lights which are hung along the roadways in the City of Ann Arbor every year for a period of 100 days.

## General Thoughts

- Many local businesses, non-profits, lessors and residents spoke in support of digital billboards.
- It was indicated that the impact of limiting the number of billboards was greater than the impact on the 25 families that are supported by the workers at Adams Outdoor Advertising.
- No one at the meeting indicated they were against billboards including digital.
- We stated a better solution might be to regulate the location of digital billboards along certain corridors and provided 3 possible locations (see attached).
- Wendy explained that First Amendment Rights prohibit regulation of content. Adams Outdoor Advertising prohibits advertising that we believe would be offensive to the community. As a policy, Adams Outdoor Advertising does not accept adult entertainment or cigarette advertisements.
- Adams Outdoor Advertising uses our digital network to provide Amber Alerts and a variety of community, public and non-profit messaging. The lack of digital billboards in the City of Ann Arbor restricts our ability to provide this messaging in a timely manner.





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## SEMCOG

Southeast Michigan Control of Governments  
Traffic/Accident History Data

**\*Digital Structure erected - 2009**

**From: Huron/W I 94 Ramp -**

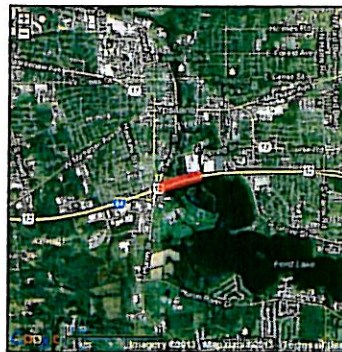
**To: W I 94/Hamilton Ramp**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2006-2008 = 33
- Average # of Crashes per year = 11

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2009-2011 = 16
- Average # of Crashes per year = 5



**From: W I 94/Hamilton Ramp -**

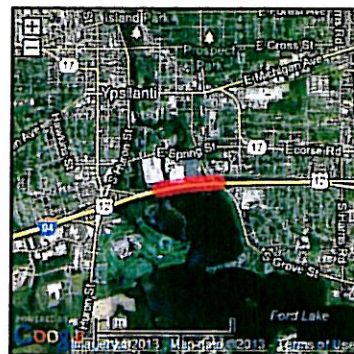
**To: Grove St**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2006-2008 = 21
- Average # of Crashes per year = 7

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2009-2011 = 11
- Average # of Crashes per year = 4



**From: Huron St S -**

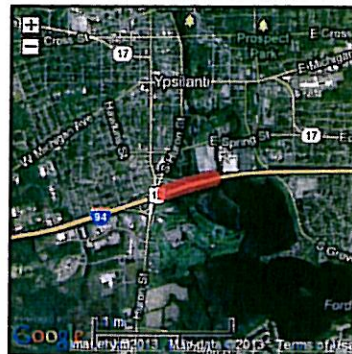
**To: Whittaker/E I 94 Ramp**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2006-2008 = 68
- Average # of Crashes per year = 23

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2009-2011 = 50
- Average # of Crashes per year = 17



# SEMCOG

## Southeast Michigan Control of Governments Traffic/Accident History Data

### \*South Face Digital Structure erected 2007

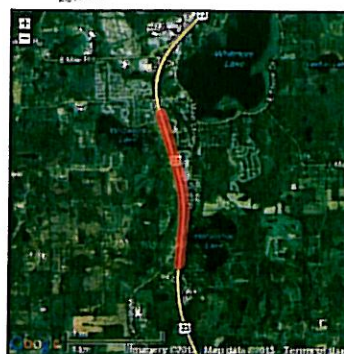
**From: 6 Mile/N US 23 Ramp –  
To: N US 23/Barker Ramp**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2004-2007 = 46
- Average # of Crashes per year = 12

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2008-2011 = 48
- Average # of Crashes per year = 12



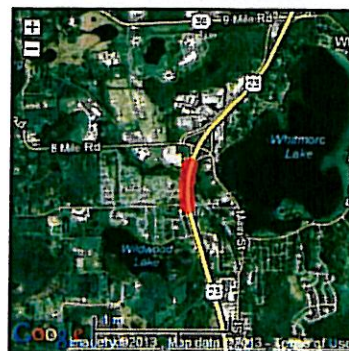
**From: N US 23/Barker Ramp –  
To: Barker Rd**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2004-2007 = 26
- Average # of Crashes per year = 7

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2008-2011 = 22
- Average # of Crashes per year = 6



### \*North Face Digital Structure erected 2010

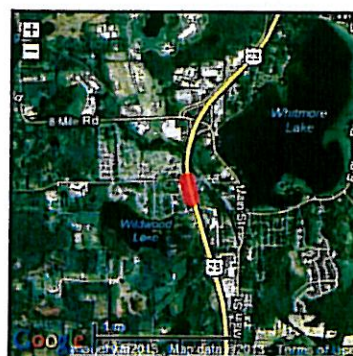
**From: Barker Rd/S US 23 Ramp -  
To: Barker Rd**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2008-2009 = 12
- Average # of Crashes per year = 6

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2010-2011 = 7
- Average # of Crashes per year = 4



**From: Barker/S US 23 Ramp -  
To: S US 23/6 Mile Ramp**

Before Structure:

- Total Crashes 2008-2009 = 39
- Average # of Crashes per year = 13

After Structure:

- Total Crashes 2010-2011 = 19
- Average # of Crashes per year = 10







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## PHOTO SHEET

### I-94 0.3 mi W/O Jackson Rd NS

Media Type: Custom Bulletins

Unit Type: Single

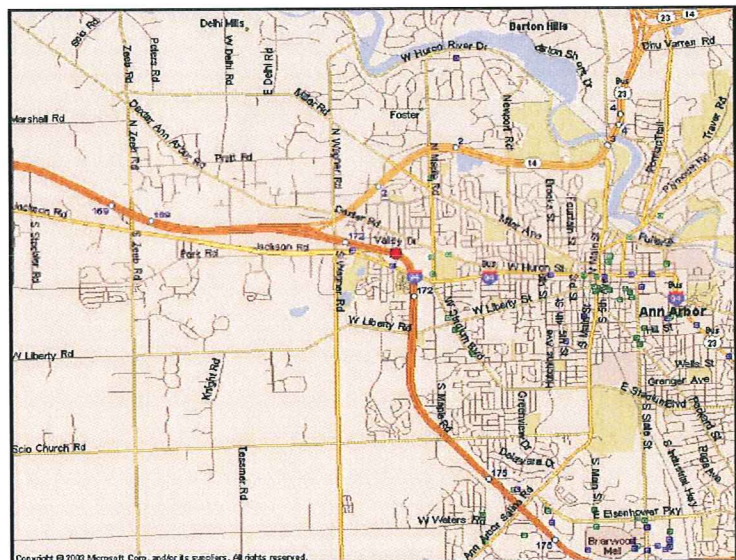
City: Ann Arbor

County: Washtenaw



Face Number: 20001  
Direction Facing: East  
Illuminated: N  
  
Size: 12'3" X 24'9"  
City: Ann Arbor  
County: Washtenaw  
State: Michigan  
ZipCode: 48103  
  
Latitude: 42.284900  
Longitude: -83.787580

**ADAMS OUTDOOR ADVERTISING**  
880 James L. Hart Parkway  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
TEL: (734) 327-8999 FAX (734)  
www.adamsoutdoor.com







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## PHOTO SHEET

### Main St N 645 ft N/O Summit St WS

Media Type: Custom Bulletins

Unit Type: Single

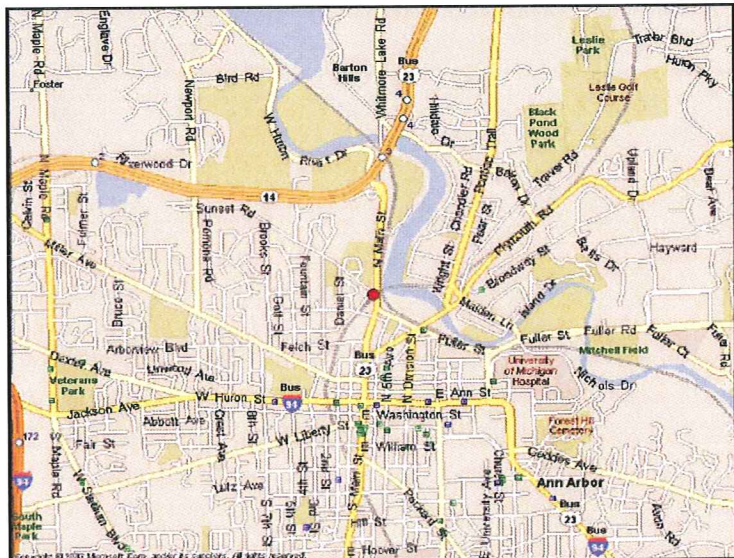
City: Ann Arbor

County: Washtenaw



Face Number: 3901  
Direction Facing: South  
Illuminated: Y  
Size: 12'4" X 49'1.5"  
City: Ann Arbor  
County: Washtenaw  
State: Michigan  
Zip Code: 48104  
Latitude: 42.290160  
Longitude: -83.747320

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**Madison St 70 ft E/O Main St NS**

Media Type: Custom Bulletins

Unit Type: Backlit

City: Ann Arbor

County: Washtenaw



**Face Number:** 20021  
**Direction Facing:** West  
**Illuminated:** Y  
  
**Size:** 12' X 24'  
**City:** Ann Arbor  
**County:** Washtenaw  
**State:** Michigan  
**ZipCode:** 48104  
  
**Latitude:** 42.274310  
**Longitude:** -83.748470

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