

## **Billboards would deface Parkway**

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One-hundred years after construction started on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway - Philadelphia's grand boulevard, modeled on Paris' Champs-Élysées - the Art Commission is being asked to approve a design scheme that is more Las Vegas than Parisian: graphic advertisements, the largest being 1,200 square feet, on the Municipal Services Building and its neighbor, One Parkway.

The Design Advocacy Group, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Parks Alliance, and the Philadelphia Crosstown Coalition, a federation of 24 neighborhood organizations, oppose this project and urge the Art Commission to do likewise.

Commercial advertising has no place on our Champs-Élysées. The parkway vista from City Hall to Logan Square to the Museum of Art is iconic. The proposal is all the more disturbing because it creates a dangerous design precedent - one not in keeping with the country's first World Heritage City.

It is not as though the ad revenue would substantially impact the city budget. The guaranteed revenue stream is a bit more than \$68,000 a year - 0.00166 percent of the city's \$4.1 billion budget.

The Planning Commission has yet to publish limitations on sign size, height, and embellishments, or identify prohibited locations, as called for in the enabling legislation. It is premature for the city to support a contract when its guidelines remain unwritten.

Let the Art Commission ([ArtCommission@phila.gov](mailto:ArtCommission@phila.gov)) know that you agree that advertising on these buildings would degrade the city.



|George L. Claflen Jr., vice chair, Design Advocacy Group; Stephen Huntington, chair, Philadelphia Crosstown Coalition; George Matysik, executive director, Philadelphia Parks Alliance; and Paul Steinke, executive director, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia

Read the full article [here](#).