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## Taiwan capital to tax advertising billboards

NT\$100,000 fines for air conditioners, metal window bars and cables

Taiwan News, Staff Writer

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TAIPEI (Taiwan News) – Advertising billboards in the capital will be subject to a “scenery impact fee,” Taipei City Mayor Hau Lung-bin announced Tuesday.

The levy is the first of its kind in the country and will amount to 0.2 percent of operating costs, reports said.

The fees will apply to flat billboards longer than 3 meters, suspended billboards longer than 3 meters, vertical panels in empty plots or on roofs taller than 6 meters, and digital advertising panels, reports said.

The capital also plans to draw up rules for air conditioners, metal bars on windows and cables on outside walls, with maximum fines of NT\$100,000 for violators.

Taipei should turn into a beautiful and green city, Hau said. The new scenery management rules were not only the first in Taiwan, ahead of a national-level counterpart, but would also serve as a basic law to protect the capital’s look, according to the mayor.

Urban Development Commissioner Ding Yuh-chyurn said anyone applying for a billboard would have to pay a license fee. The city was also considering the example of Japan in levying the “scenery impact fee” according to the duration of the billboard and the income it generated, he said.

The fees would be moved into a NT\$100 million Scenery Management Protection Fund, Ding said.

The Taipei City Council still has to give its approval before the regulations can take effect next year. The fees and fines will not be applied retroactively, reports said.

Opposition Democratic Progressive Party councilor Liu Yao-jen accused the mayor of trying to wring more money out of citizens. Existing laws already regulated the setting up of advertising billboards, he said.

Ruling Kuomintang city councilor Wang Chih-ping said the new measure sounded as if it was alright to mess up the scenery as long as one paid for it. The city should

remove intrusive billboards and fine owners instead of asking for fees, she said.

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