

## Policy Agenda

- **Restore the National Scenic Byways Program to a thriving program supported by Congress and the Secretary of Transportation.** Scenic byways benefit economies in small towns and rural areas across the country, and those designated as National Scenic Byways are sought out by both domestic and international travelers.
- **Promote scenic conservation and economic development in gateway communities to America's public lands.** Scenic America promotes programs in the small towns and rural communities which serve as gateways to our public lands that are consistent with local character and with the scenic, historic and cultural character of the nearby public lands.
- **Prohibit cutting and removal of public trees for purposes of improving visibility of billboards.** A simple and sensible solution for protecting scenic beauty and public investment in our roadways is to prohibit billboard companies from cutting down publicly-owned trees to improve views of privately-owned commercial billboards.
- **Require the undergrounding of utility wires in new development or when replacing aging roads, sidewalks and infrastructure.** Overhead utility wires and poles are a visual blight and are at risk of damage from increasingly volatile weather. Underground utilities improve both streetscape aesthetics and the reliability of power delivery.

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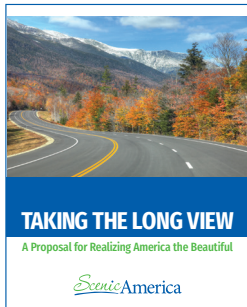
**Scenic America** was founded in 1981 by a group of citizens from around the country who were concerned about the state of America's visual character, particularly that of our country's roadsides. We are now the national leader of a network of 50 state and local affiliates that help us preserve and enhance the scenic character of America.

Scenic America believes all communities possess scenic assets. Scenic conservation occurs with:

- An educated citizenry
- A corps of committed scenic activists
- A business community that understands the economic value of beauty
- Public policy that defends natural beauty and distinctive character

Every day Scenic America helps citizens, public officials and neighborhood groups improve the character and aesthetics of their communities.

Scenic America's current work is focused on the five issue areas of our white paper *Taking the Long View: A Proposal for Realizing America the Beautiful*.



### *Preserving* Community Character

America's downtowns and suburban areas are suffering from the kind of ubiquitous visual pollution that turns communities into "Anyplace, USA." We advocate for strategies including historic preservation, adaptive reuse and strict limits on corporate architecture in order to preserve and promote the true character of American communities.

### *Honoring* Parks and Open Spaces

America's parks, open spaces and greenways are among our best national assets. We advocate for increased funding and protections of these areas that connect our built and natural environments and are so important for human health, property values and the environment.



### *Celebrating* Byways and Gateways

We are working hard to reinvigorate the National Scenic Byway Program, a network of 150 special roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation as among America's most unique. We also

advocate for the visual environment of the communities that act as gateways to our great places like National Parks.



### *Mitigating* Overhead Wires

Overhead wires and poles dominate so much of the American landscape that they seem an unchangeable part of our viewsapes. However, many communities are finding ways to mitigate the visual impact of overhead wires. Ideally the lines are put underground, and the result is immensely improved aesthetics with the added benefit of a more reliable utility grid.

### *Promoting* Beautiful Highways

We advocate for the vision of America's highways promoted by Lady Bird Johnson, who through her advocacy for the 1965 Highway Beautification Act sought to rid our roadways of unsightly billboards and other visual blight, and instead have them lined with native plants, wildflowers and trees.

