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Scenic News:

Merritt Parkway [celebrates 75 years](#) as a scenic gateway to New England...

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Davidson, NC officials [want Scenic Byway](#) designation...

Letter to the Editor: Visit to Knoxville [marred by billboards](#)...

"Billboard on the mountain" [ordered to come down](#)...

Clear Channel [makes lousy neighbor](#) in Cleveland...



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Vista, California rejects digital billboards on city property

Faced with mounting opposition, the City of Vista, Calif. has [cancelled a plan](#) to erect two double-sided digital billboards on City-owned parcels adjacent to State Route 78, a major east-west freeway in Northern San Diego County.

The project would have constituted the largest influx of digital billboard blight in San Diego County to date, and abandonment of the proposal is a major victory for those who care about traffic safety, community character and aesthetics, energy conservation and property values.



The scheme was shelved after the City received 508 pages of overwhelmingly negative comments on an environmental report identifying potential impacts of the digital billboards. Environmental assessments are required under California law for most development projects.

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National Scenic Byway Foundation releases two-year strategic plan

The directors of the [National Scenic Byway Foundation](#) have put together a [strategic action plan](#) that aims to bolster their mission of providing leadership to empower, strengthen and sustain byways.

Recent times have proved challenging for supporters of the National Scenic Byway Program. Federal budget decisions resulted in the closure of the America's Byways Resource Center



qualities of America's communities.

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Biscayne Times special report on Miami's "billboard jungle":



last year, and the current transportation law, MAP-21, provides no dedicated funding for byways projects for the first time in two decades.

But as the Foundation notes in their strategic plan, the Program was created not just to promote the "scenic route," but to empower local communities to enhance and promote resources that are important to maintaining a sense of place, authenticity, and quality of life. Byway designation is recognition that some roads not only pass through places, they *are* places, places that offer unique travel experiences!

Aesthetics is one of seven "Secrets of Successful Communities"

Ed McMahon, a Senior Fellow at the [Urban Land Institute](#) and former president of Scenic America, has written [a new article](#) and finds that while every "successful" community has its own strengths and weaknesses, they all share some common characteristics.

Published by PlannersWeb, the "[Secrets of Successful Communities](#)" finds that the communities that have retained their historic character and scenic beauty are the most likely to have sustained prosperous



economies. And they've done it without accepting the kind of cookie-cutter development that has turned many communities into "faceless" places that young people flee, tourists avoid and which no longer instill a sense of pride in residents.

McMahon believes that the image of a community is fundamentally important to its economic well-being. "Every single day in America people make decisions about where to live, where to invest, where to vacation and where to retire based on what communities look like," he says.

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