



March 2015

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## Scenic News:

Richmond, Calif. [city council rejects](#) digital billboards...

"Lady Bird's" Texas hill country [blooms in the spring](#)...

Residents of Alabama town [turn out en masse](#) to protest digital billboard...

County in South Carolina [set to ban](#) digital billboards on safety and aesthetic grounds...

Springtime in Washington [wouldn't be the same](#) without Lady Bird Johnson...

20 of the [most scenic campgrounds](#) in America...

Houston company [putting power lines underground](#) and removing billboards...

Judge's [ruling could limit](#) digital billboards in Connecticut...

Houston's Broadway [to be spruced up](#) with help from Scenic Houston and others...

## Proliferation of digital billboards threatens historic Philadelphia

The City of Philadelphia is seeing a proliferation of digital signage going up in prominent places on the city's skyline, and the historic Center City area took another hit recently with [City Council's approval](#) of six-story tall animated digital billboards on downtown streets.

Already a giant digital billboard on a downtown building is [angering neighbors](#) who claim the light diminishes their quality of life.

On the famous Ben Franklin Parkway, the Franklin Institute wants [to put a flashing digital sign](#) in front of the building, perhaps opening the historic street up to a barrage of digital signs. And elsewhere the city is [being inundated with proposals](#) to allow digital signage all over the city's streets.



[Speak up](#) for one of America's most historic cities by [signing our petition](#) to Philadelphia's Mayor Nutter today.

## Utah's scenic byways to stay scenic

A [bill](#) that would have allowed for a proliferation of billboards along Utah's scenic byways passed through the House but was rejected for procedural reasons in the Senate just before the end of the state's most recent legislative session.

Utah law currently allows billboards in so-called "non-scenic" byway areas, but also allows local officials to reject any billboard request they believe would compromise scenic vistas.



The proposed bill would have removed the authority of local agencies to intervene and required that any request for billboards be granted.

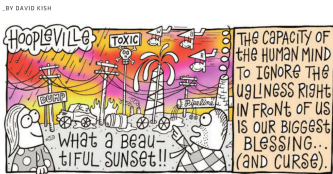
Scenic byways are popular in part because they are generally protected from new billboards. The billboard industry has for years engaged in efforts to [segment scenic byways](#) and break up the continuity of the traveler experience. A [2013 study](#) showed that



### Newsletter archives:

Read [past issues](#) of Scenic Overlook newsletters!

### Check out this month's Hoopleville cartoon by David Kish:



Utah's own [Scenic Byway 12](#) created an annual economic impact of \$12.75 million in the region.

## New study shows green space in cities is good for human health

A [new study](#) published in the *American Journal of Public Health* finds that green space relieves stress among city residents and subsequently lowers heart rates and makes people healthier.

Researches from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in Philadelphia asked people in two city neighborhoods to wear heart rate monitors when they went for walks in their area. Some vacant lots in one neighborhood underwent "greening" -- which included cleaning and debris removal and planting of grass, shrubs and trees.



The participants walked past the vacant lots three months before and three months after they received the greening treatment. Walking past the green lots was associated with an average heart rate reduction of more than five beats per minute, compared with non-greened lots.

The study's conclusions [support findings presented](#) by Amy Hillier, Ph.D., and Julie Hendricks, LEED AP, at Scenic America's 2014 conference, which showed that good design can positively impact public health.

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