

October 29, 2009

Ms. Juanice Hagan
Manager, Right of Way Production and Program Operations
Office of Right of Way
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS22
Tallahassee, FL, 32399-0450

Mr. John Garner
Director, Office of Right of Way
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS22
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

RE: Proposed I-75 Pilot Project

Dear Ms. Hagan and Mr. Garner:

We have followed with great interest the discussions concerning the proposed I-75 Pilot Project for 144-miles of the I-75 corridor that begins at the Florida-Georgia state line (the major gateway into the beautiful State of Florida) in Hamilton County, Florida and then continues south to the junction of the Florida Turnpike and I-75 at Wildwood, Florida.

We support the positions taken and recommendations made by Citizens for a Scenic Florida, Inc., and we encourage the Department to incorporate those recommendations into the final project document. While we do not repeat all of those positions and recommendations in this letter, please understand that the omission of a recommendation should not be taken as any support for its omission in the final pilot project document.

The following points are among the essential principles that should be incorporated into the pilot project for the proposal to have credibility as a beautification effort and to meet basic scenic conservation principles.

1. Tri-vision billboards on new steel structures have no place along this corridor. This would compromise the scenic goals of the program and would be a major setback to beautification efforts. We know that the pilot project recently approved for two interstate corridors in South Carolina does not allow tri-visions. There is no reason why this pilot project cannot proceed without allowing tri-visions as part of the program.

2. A sunset date for new steel structures in nonconforming locations is critical. As currently written, the proposed pilot project allows the conversion of old wood structures into

new steel structures. Obviously, despite whatever terminology may be used to describe this conversion, it is an undisputed fact that the proposed project will allow brand new steel structures to be erected in nonconforming locations along the corridor. It is also an undisputed fact that steel structures have a much longer life than wood structures. A major study by a research arm (OPPAGA) of the Florida Legislature determined that new steel structures have a life span from 40 to 70 years. We support Scenic Florida's recommendation of a sunset date at which time any new steel structures located in nonconforming locations will be removed from the corridor, if new steel structures are allowed. While a reasonable sunset date should be in the vicinity of ten to twenty years, i.e., 2020 to 2030, there should be no sunset date longer than 40 years, i.e., by 2050. Earlier this year, in the City of Stuart, Florida, Lamar Advertising agreed to a sunset date of 40 years for new steel structures erected in exchange for the removal of multiple existing wooden structures.

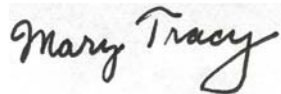
Note: Scenic America opposes the conversion of wooden structures to steel structures without a reasonable sunset date.

3. The addition of lighting to nonconforming billboards is inappropriate unless (a) the lighting is directed downward so as not to cause glare in the night sky, and (b) the lighting is turned off between midnight and dawn.

4. Hamilton County is at the gateway into this beautiful state. We believe that the first ten miles from the state line traveling south through Hamilton County should receive special attention as the focus of an enhanced beautification effort that would lead to the removal of all nonconforming billboards along that ten-mile stretch. Certainly existing nonconforming billboards in this initial section of the gateway entrance into Florida should not be enhanced or have their life span extended through conversion from wood to steel.

5. We encourage the Florida Department of Transportation and the FHWA-Florida Division to have further discussions with the scenic community in Florida, as well as with local governments.

Respectfully yours,



Mary Tracy
President
Scenic America