

c. Federal grants and loans intended for these purposes.

2. The department may enter into agreements with other state agencies, political subdivisions of the state, and private organizations for the purposes of carrying out this natural open space program or specific elements of the program.

Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 111E.4 PAYMENT IN LIEU OF PROPERTY TAXES.

As a part of the budget proposal submitted to the general assembly under section 455A.4, subsection 1, paragraph "c", the director of the department of natural resources shall submit a budget request to pay the property taxes for the next fiscal year on open space property acquired by the department which would otherwise be subject to the levy of property taxes. The assessed value of open space property acquired by the department shall be that determined under section 427.1, subsection 31, and the director may protest the assessed value in the manner provided by law for any property owner to protest an assessment. For the purposes of chapter 442, the assessed value of the open space property acquired by the department shall be included in the valuation base of the school district and the payments made pursuant to this section shall be considered as property tax revenues and not as miscellaneous income. The county treasurer shall certify taxes due to the department. The taxes shall be paid annually from the departmental fund or account from which the open space property acquisition was funded. If the departmental fund or account has no moneys or no longer exists, the taxes shall be paid from funds as otherwise provided by the general assembly. If the total amount of taxes due certified to the department exceeds the amount appropriated, the taxes due shall be reduced proportionately so that the total amount equals the amount appropriated. This section applies to open space property acquired by the department on or after January 1, 1987.

Approved June 2, 1987

CHAPTER 175

SCENIC AREAS

H.F. 623

AN ACT relating to the identification, protection, planning, and promotion of public highways and roads along scenic regions of the state.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Section 1. NEW SECTION. 306D.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE — INTENT.

1. The general assembly finds that:

a. The state offers numerous regions through which people can drive for the pleasure of viewing unusually scenic and interesting landscapes; however, routes to and through these areas have not been adequately identified for Iowans and state visitors.

b. Among those things that attract motorists to the state's landscape are agricultural lands, forests, river basins, distinctive landforms, interesting architecture, metropolitan areas, small rural towns, and historic sites.

c. The landscape qualities of unusually scenic routes throughout the state have not been protected from visual and resource deterioration particularly along routes which pass near the state's nationally significant areas such as the bluffs of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, the Amana colonies, the Herbert Hoover national historic site, federal reservoirs, communities surrounding the state's natural lakes, the Des Moines river greenbelt, the great river road, and many others.

d. A principal goal of economic development in this state is to increase the influence which travel and tourism have on the state's economic expansion.

e. Iowans and visitors should be encouraged to travel to and through unusually scenic areas of the state.

f. A program should be established, following a statewide plan, to identify and promote highways and secondary routes which pass through unusually scenic landscapes and to protect and enhance the scenic qualities of the landscape through which these routes pass.

2. In addition to other goals for the program, it is the intention of the general assembly that the scenic highways program be coordinated with the state's open space program.

Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 306D.2 STATEWIDE SCENIC HIGHWAYS PROGRAM – OBJECTIVES AND AGENCY DUTIES.

1. The department of transportation shall prepare a statewide, long-range plan for the protection, enhancement, and identification of highways and secondary roads which pass through unusually scenic areas of the state as identified in section 306D.1. The department of natural resources, department of economic development, and department of cultural affairs, private organizations, county conservation boards, city park and recreation departments, and the federal agencies having jurisdiction over land in the state shall be encouraged to assist in preparing the plan. The plan shall be coordinated with the state's open space plan if a state open space plan has been approved by the general assembly. The plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following elements:

a. Preparation of a statewide inventory of scenic routes and ranking of relative uniqueness for each route. The degree to which these routes suffer from negative visual intrusions shall be documented.

b. Recommended techniques for preserving and enhancing the scenic qualities associated with each route.

c. Forecasts of significant changes in traffic volumes and environmental, social, and economic impacts if scenic routes are publicly identified and promoted as tourism attractions.

d. Recommended techniques for incorporating scenic highway routes in state and local tourism development and marketing programs.

e. Landscape management needs including maintenance, rehabilitation, and improvements to scenic areas.

f. Funding levels needed to accomplish the statewide scenic highway program.

g. Recommendations of how federal and state transportation programs can be modified or developed to assist the state's scenic highway program.

2. The preparation of the plan is subject to an appropriation by the general assembly for that purpose. The plan shall be submitted to the general assembly by January 15, 1988. Prior to submission of the plan to the general assembly, the department shall request comments on the proposed plan from state agencies, federal agencies, and private organizations with interests in scenic highways. The comments shall be submitted to the general assembly.

Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 306D.3 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS AND PILOT PROJECTS.

1. The department's recommendations to the general assembly shall include proposed legislation for the state to acquire and protect scenic landscapes along public roads and highways.

2. Before January 1, 1989, the department shall identify four pilot scenic highway routes across two or more counties each for trial promotion in the state's tourism marketing program.

Approved June 2, 1987