

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:30 a.m. on January 16, 2004 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Nick Jordan- excused  
Senator Pete Brungardt- excused  
Senator Susan Wagle- excused

Committee staff present:

Kathie Sparks, Legislative Research  
Susan Kannarr, Legislative Research  
Helen Pedigo, Revisor of Statutes  
Nikki Kraus, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Scott Allegrucci, Director, Kansas Travel and Tourism Division, Department of Commerce

Others attending:

See Attached List.

Chairperson Brownlee opened the meeting by introducing Mr. Allegrucci to the committee and thanking him for his appearance.

Mr. Allegrucci presented the committee with a variety of materials outlining important upcoming events in Kansas. He began with a sheet entitled "2004 Lewis & Clark in Kansas Bicentennial Commemoration: Events and Marketing Updates" which covers the creation and ongoing mission of the Bicentennial Commission and the Travel and Tourism Division's role in facilitating this commemorative celebration. (Attachment 1) For additional information, the celebration's website is [www.lewisandclarkinkansas.com](http://www.lewisandclarkinkansas.com).

Mr. Allegrucci went on to present the committee with an outline entitled "KANSAS! Magazine Facts" which explains the purpose of the publication and gives examples of some of its features. (Attachment 2) For additional information, KANSAS! magazine's website is: [www.kansmag.com](http://www.kansmag.com). He also provided reference materials to the committee including the Kansas Travel and Tourism Programs Guide, Rediscovering Lewis and Clark, and the 2004 Getaway Guide to Kansas, which is also has a website, [www.travelKS.com](http://www.travelKS.com).

Mr. Allegrucci cited two different articles during his presentation as evidence of the power of brand names on consumers' recognition of certain states and on a potential marketing idea for the state. The first article was: Siegel, Bill. "Brand it and they shall come: Tourism and economic development both benefit when memorable branding campaigns bring attention to states and communities" *Midwest Real Estate News*. July 2003, pp.42. The second article was an editorial: "Flat, and Just Plain Great" *Los Angeles Times*. August 2, 2003, pp.24, Part B. He referred to both articles in an effort to explain that a possible marketing strategy for Kansas might be to embrace what some may see as flaws. As the latter article states, "Kansas is truly flatter than a pancake, which, come to think of it this morning, still tastes pretty good regardless of contour or shape....As one stands outside these towns on warm summer nights, the stars in the black sky are too numerous to grasp, let alone count. The crickets are chirping by the millions....All this beauty and richness, thanks to flat."

Mr. Allegrucci also submitted his testimony, which further detailed the mission of the division as, "...promot[ing] the State of Kansas to travelers and to generate and facilitate tourism- and travel-related spending throughout the state." (Attachment 3) He explained that tourism generates 55,000 jobs, \$3.5 billion in annual spending, and \$546.1 million in annual total tax revenues.

The committee thanked the speaker for his presentation.

Senator Brownlee recognized Mr. Allegrucci's emphasis on the many unique treasures of Kansas beyond eccentricities or novelty displays. The committee agreed that Mr. Allegrucci has a good idea in regard to

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE at 8:30 a.m. on in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

embracing Kansas' stereotypical qualities, such as flatness, and using them to emphasize the state's natural beauty and unique history related to these. Senator Steineger also suggested the use of the Wizard of Oz association because of its positive connotations and world-wide recognition.

In response to a budget question from Senator Emler, Mr. Allegrucci explained that the division's total budget for FY '04 was between \$4.1 and \$4.2 million; these funds are generated from EDIF, not the state general fund. In regard to a question about Abilene development and STAR Bonds, Mr. Allegrucci said it was a very promising idea because Abilene has so much historical significance, ranging from the being the terminal point of the Chisolm Trail as well as the home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. He said that economists at the Regent's universities were reviewing the feasibility of and the Department of Commerce was looking for someone to manage the STAR Bond.

Senator Emler asked if Mr. Allegrucci's department was planning to ask the Legislature for any help in funding this effort. Mr. Allegrucci responded that at the moment his division was focused on building a coalition, and that they were already receiving grants and partnering with Farm Bureau. Future plans include a partnership with an agricultural community that would involve extension agents, rural bankers, and others.

In response to a comment from Senator Emler about the definition of agritourism, Mr. Allegrucci stated that it was a term with several meanings, including everything from hunting to petting zoos; because of the nature of the term, it is important that agritourism is marketed carefully to different communities and segments of the population who might be interested in one facet but not another. Mis-marketing a petting zoo to a community interested in hunting would obviously be highly ineffective.

Senator Barone expressed interest in being able to measure the division's success over time, recognizing that the current status may not be an accurate benchmark against which to measure because of the economic recession over the past couple of years. Mr. Allegrucci stated that there were several components to a successful outcome, but that certain parts were more obvious than others. He stated that research, for example, is a somewhat risky component because, although necessary, it produces less pizzazz at the end; tourism is difficult to directly measure, but its effects can be seen through indirect measures like gas stations, small stores, and other attractions and their sales tax. He stated that a better measure would be a good idea for the future.

Senator Barone and Mr. Allegrucci discussed Cabela's, a sporting goods store hailed as the number one tourist attraction in the state of Kansas. Mr. Allegrucci stated that, although a retail store, Cabela's had focused their marketing very effectively on making themselves a tourist attraction. He said that the division did not have a specific way to measure attendance at attractions other than taking the numbers they have collected themselves. Senator Barone expressed concern at referring to the store as the number one tourist attraction because it somehow detracted from other events or places by relegating them to non-attractions. He stated that the state of Kansas ought not accept companies' word on attendance. He also said that Kansas should consider hunting as an important attraction and look into making hunting licenses easier to obtain in an effort to promote out of state outfitters to come here and thus bring in out of state dollars.

The committee briefly discussed an upcoming development of a salt mine that should be opening in a year or two and planned to get an update about it in the future from Senator Kerr.

Chairperson Brownlee thanked Mr. Allegrucci for appearing before the committee and complimented his division's partnership with Merideth publications, producer of MidWest Living Magazine, in the latest edition of the 2004 Kansas Getaway Guide. Mr. Allegrucci added that the company also owned a television station in Kansas City that was planning to air around a dozen vignettes about the state on Kansas City television.

Chairperson Brownlee suggested the committee members especially take time to review the upcoming Lewis and Clark events. The Chair announced that the next meeting would include a presentation by Senator Nick Jordan and Representative Kenny Wilk from the Joint Committee on Economic Development.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m. The next meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. on January 20, 2004 in Room 123-S.







## 2004 Lewis & Clark in Kansas Bicentennial Commemoration

### Event & Marketing Updates

*Submitted by Scott Allegrucci  
Director, Kansas Travel & Tourism Division*

#### Kansas Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission

On March 28, 2000, Governor Bill Graves established the Kansas Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission. He appointed 11 volunteer members to this organization and designated Karen Seaberg, Atchison, as chairman. The governor charged us to "review the travels of the Lewis and Clark expedition through Kansas and the role the expedition played in expanding the nation, and make recommendations on ways the State can pay tribute to Lewis and Clark and participate in the national Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration."

The mission of the Kansas Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission is to commemorate the journey of Lewis and Clark, rekindle its spirit of discovery, and acclaim the contributions and goodwill of and towards native peoples.

One of the primary goals is to promote programs that focus on education, cultural sensitivity, and harmony. We have worked closely with representatives from federal, state and tribal governments, state and local organizations and communities to integrate the Lewis and Clark story into existing programs or develop new programs that include the heritage of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

All Commission members are involved in planning "A Journey Fourth," a bicentennial commemorative event on July 3-4, 2004, that is one of 15 Signature Events recognized by the National Council of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. For more information about this event, visit [www.journey4th.org](http://www.journey4th.org).

#### Kansas Travel & Tourism Division Efforts

Kansas Department of Commerce's Travel & Tourism Division is not an official appointed member of the Bicentennial Commission. However, the Travel & Tourism Division has played a significant role in assisting with promotional and marketing efforts with the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission. The Division's efforts include the underwriting of numerous print advertisements for both 2003 and 2004, extensive public relations efforts with national and regional travel media, distribution of all Lewis & Clark promotional brochures to visitors through the Division's fulfillment house, promotion at multiple trade shows, editorial coverage of Lewis & Clark in the 2003 and 2004 *Kansas Getaway Guides* (official state travel publication) and *KANSAS! magazine*, as well as various other efforts.

A sample of one of these cooperative marketing efforts is the Lewis & Clark promotional brochure that is included in your packet. This insert was reproduced from the 2003 winter issue of *KANSAS!* magazine for promotional purposes, including mailing to visitors and distribution at travel information centers and trade shows. Included in this brochure is a list of the Lewis & Clark events that will take place in the northeast Kansas communities of Kansas City, Atchison, Leavenworth and White Cloud (Doniphan County) during the months of June-July 2004.

Kansas Travel & Tourism Division will also promote the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial events through a statewide campaign that will take place April – October 2004 to encourage Kansans to get out and explore their own backyard, Kansas.

All Lewis & Clark marketing efforts have currently been focused on the 2004 National Signature Event. However, as a result of this 2004 commemoration new Lewis & Clark attractions have been developed in northeast Kansas that will allow for continued promotion of Lewis & Clark from here on out.

For more information on Lewis & Clark in Kansas Bicentennial Commemoration, visit [www.lewisandclarkinkansas.com](http://www.lewisandclarkinkansas.com).

Senate Commerce Comm.  
01/16/04  
Attach #1

### ***KANSAS!* Magazine Facts**

*KANSAS!* magazine is a seasonal publication covering the upbeat, positive, and exciting things to do and see in Kansas. The emphasis is upon travel and lifestyle articles that encourage residents and visitors to explore and learn more about Kansas. The magazine is published quarterly as the Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter issues. Seasonal photography is emphasized to showcase the unexpected and beautiful landscapes and scenery in Kansas year round.

- The State of Kansas began publishing *KANSAS!* magazine in 1945. Subscriptions were free.
- In December of 1977, the magazine changed to paid subscriptions.
- The subscriber base varies, but averages between 40,000 and 43,000.
- A limited retail distribution in gift shops, bookstores, and museums throughout the state averages 800 magazines per issue.
- The magazine is 40 pages, including the cover.
- *KANSAS!* magazine is ad-free.
- In 1987 *KANSAS!* magazine began offering the full-color *KANSAS!* wall calendar supplement with each paid subscription. The calendar mails with the fall issue. It features the best scenic photographs from contributing free-lance photographers. An additional 3,000 to 6,000 calendars are also produced under a different cover for retail sale.
- *KANSAS!* magazine has one designated staff person — the subscriptions coordinator — employed by the Kansas Department of Commerce Travel & Tourism Development Division. The rest of the positions are contracted. On an ongoing basis, the magazine is staffed by 2 FTEs, with an additional 3-5 FTEs for shorter periods to facilitate production, printing, and distribution.
- Free-lance writers and photographers are used for about 90 percent of *KANSAS!* magazine content.
- *KANSAS!* magazine developed a web site and acquired a domain name in December 2003. [www.kansmag.com](http://www.kansmag.com)
- *KANSAS!* magazine is a member of the International Regional Magazine Association (IRMA). IRMA magazines are travel and state destination

publications. Among the organization's members are *Arizona Highways*, *Oklahoma Today*, *New Mexico Magazine*, *Cottage Life*, and *Texas Highways*.

- *KANSAS!* magazine was awarded the Bronze in Cover Design in 2002, and the Silver in Cover Design in 2003 at the annual IRMA Awards. Many free-lance contributors have also been independently awarded by different associations for work published in *KANSAS!*
- *KANSAS!* magazine attempts to cover all six designated tourism regions in each issue. When possible we also try to cover the tourism niches — Western Frontier, Nature-Based Tourism, Arts, Aviation, Hunting/Fishing, and Agritourism.
- Stories are chosen based on their interest, immediacy, special statewide events, and whether they have been covered in the magazine in the past. Stories are not repeated for at least ten years unless updated information would benefit state travelers.
- Stories are assigned at least one year in advance of publication to allow for seasonal photography. Work begins five months prior to distribution.
- *KANSAS!* magazine is financially self-supporting. Sales of issues and the calendar cover the costs of design, production, printing, and distribution.

Senate Commerce Committee  
Friday, January 16, 2004

Kansas Department of Commerce  
Scott Allegrucci, Director of Travel & Tourism Development  
Travel & Tourism Division Overview

Madam Chairwoman and members of the Committee, my name is Scott Allegrucci, and I serve as the Director of the Travel & Tourism Development Division in the Kansas Department of Commerce. It is my pleasure to have this opportunity to provide you an overview of activities conducted by the Travel & Tourism Division, with emphasis on how those activities fit into overall efforts to realize prosperity in Kansas.

**The mission of the Travel & Tourism Development Division is to promote the State of Kansas to travelers and to generate and facilitate tourism- and travel-related spending throughout the state.** This mission is built upon the belief that travel and tourism activities are an important part of the State's economic development portfolio, supporting 55,000 jobs throughout Kansas, and helping to generate \$3.5 billion of annual spending and \$546.1 million in annual federal, state and local tax revenues. But those very important tangible benefits are only a part of what travel and tourism provides Kansas.

Though our division is called the Travel and Tourism Development Division, the greater balance of our activities are marketing and message oriented. Anchored by Commerce programs that help to make Kansas a great place to work and own a business, the marketing focus of the Travel & Tourism Division highlights the resources and experiences that define the American, Midwestern, and, more specifically, the Kansas lifestyle. The very things that make Kansas a unique and rewarding place to visit, also make it a great place to own and operate a business. Travel & Tourism bridges the economic underpinnings of a productive, innovative work environment with unique recreational and quality-of-life resources. Together, these elements offer a rich and rewarding lifestyle that is, by definition, unique to Kansas.

Tourism, however, is more than mere "play." We are fortunate to live in a relatively affluent, mobile era. People all over the world share a great interest in educational and recreational activities and the ability to explore the unique nature, culture, and heritage of our neighbors, be they across the county line, or an ocean away. Travel is big business; and it is a business built upon two things: the existence of natural and cultural and heritage elements unique to each and every place (**the product**); and the efforts of each and every place to make those elements known and accessible to people from other places (**marketing**). The product that is the focus of the Travel & Tourism Division is **Kansas**— particularly it's nature, culture, and heritage. Our charge is to promote this state — as a whole — within the travel marketplace, to help position Kansas as an attractive destination to decision-makers in the travel marketplace, whether those decision-makers are individual travelers or travel professionals. In addition, while we endeavor to promote the state's existing travel offerings, we are also charged with helping Kansans maintain and develop high-quality, sustainable product and experiences that exceed the expectations of travel customers.

This dual task of quality, sustainable **Product Development** and effective, accountable **Marketing** is the core of Travel & Tourism's work. Currently within the Department of Commerce, the Division of Travel & Tourism is fortunate to enjoy a close and productive working relationship with all other Commerce divisions whereby the expertise and resources available in other divisions are being utilized to make both travel and tourism product development and marketing more effective.



The Travel and Tourism Development Division utilizes a number of programs and resources to meet the Department of Commerce goals related to prosperity, employment, and economic development. These include:

**Staff:**

- Includes 12 full time staff in the Department of Commerce office, as well as staff at the Goodland Travel Information Center.
- A portion of our International Marketing, Public Relations, Request and Fulfillment, Travel Information Centers, Marketing/Media Planning, and *KANSAS!* Magazine work is contracted.

**Programs:**

- General Marketing and Media Campaign – Uses various methods and media (focused on print media) to promote Kansas to the traveling public.
- Co-op Marketing Campaign – Provides Kansas travel industry a cost-effective means to reach a larger marketplace, focusing upon print media placements.
- International Marketing Campaign – Focuses upon domestic receptive and foreign travel professionals in the identified target markets of Germany, the U.K., and soon, Japan.
- Public Relations – Works with travel writers to promote coverage of Kansas, as well as a wide array of press activities and targeted industry promotions to generate and exploit Kansas's presence in the travel media.
- KANSAS! Magazine – With a current subscription base of just over 40,000, the award-winning magazine is a self-supporting, beloved fixture among Kansas and other readers, and aiming for increased growth and distribution over the next few years.
- Group Tour Marketing – In conjunction with the travel industry and communities, annual events such as the Familiarization (FAM) Tour and sponsorship/attendance at the National Tour Association (NTA) convention promote Kansas attractions and communities to group tour professionals.
- Attraction Development Grant – Provides financial assistance to entities involved in tourism development statewide. Between 1999 and 2003, the division awarded \$3,776,446, leveraging \$207,806,568 in additional funds, bringing the total fiscal impact of 143 grants in that time period to \$211,583,014 across 75 communities around the state.
- TravelKS.com – A consumer-oriented web site providing interactive and comprehensive information about Kansas events, attractions, and destinations, as well as a means to identify potential customers.
- The Kansas Getaway Guide – Over 450,000 Getaway Guides are printed and distributed annually, supported in part by Kansas travel industry advertising. The division recently partnered with Meredith Publications/Midwest Living Magazine to produce the 2004 Getaway Guide.
- Niche Support – With limited funding, the division seeks to support the six tourism niches (Aviation, Arts, Nature-Based, Hunting/Fishing, Western Frontier and Agritourism) with technical assistance, grant funds, trade show, conference and marketing support, the co-op advertising program, and the web site.
- Travel Information Centers (TICs) – Three official state TICs welcome visitors to Kansas near Goodland, Belle Plain, and the Kansas Speedway in Kansas City. The TICs are continually staffed and provide traveler services and information. The division partners with Kansas Transportation Authority, Kansas Department of Transportation, and several private sector entities to staff, maintain, and support the TICs.



## **Operational priorities:**

In 2004, the department and the division have identified several key priorities in our ongoing attempt to fulfill our mission. These include:

### **2004 Travel Season Promotion**

- Focusing on in-state travelers – an attempt to encourage Kansans to travel in Kansas.
- Intended to encourage exploration of the entire state.
- Enhanced focus upon four key Kansas tourism resources:
  1. Bleeding Kansas heritage (Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial events)
  2. Brown v. Board (opening of National Historic Site)
  3. Lewis & Clark (national signature event near Atchison)
  4. Tallgrass prairie (efforts to enhance visitor access to the National Preserve)
- \*All attractions and events on travelKS.com or in the Getaway Guide are eligible.
- Participants qualify for prizes by traveling, taking photographs of their trip, and submitting those photos.
- Prizes given for qualified entrants in the program. Grand Prize will be a Chevy Malibu Sport from the Kansas GM plant (tentative). Other prizes from Kansas companies (Coleman, Garmin GPS, FLOK, Sprint, KBBA, TIAK, etc.)
- Grand Prize drawing to be held as part of a unique, publicized entertainment event in the fall.

### **Goals:**

#### **Intangible:**

- Pride, confidence, and awareness on the part of Kansans regarding tourism potential of the state that will inform future efforts to market Kansas to high-value, out-of-state travelers.
- Increased cooperation and engagement among industry partners.

#### **Tangible:**

- Increased travel-related revenue kept in state.
- Data demonstrating revenue, its impact and pattern.
- Increased travel within Kansas by Kansans.
- Enhanced Kansas traveler database.
- Increased usage of travelKS.com by travelers.
- A model for future annual, in-state travel promotions.
- National, regional, and statewide exposure regarding individual events or attractions and Kansas tourism in general.

### **Acquisition of Research and Market Information**

- Research and data acquisition focused upon:
  - Comprehensive and current market information
  - Customer identification and demographics
  - Product inventory
  - Product strengths and deficiencies related to market demand
  - State brand image identification and development
  - State tourism logo/marketing
- Research and data must:
  - Include regional and industry partners
  - Be actionable as well as qualitative or informative
  - Be shared with regional, industry and legislative partners – communication of priorities and needs based upon research findings

**Goals:**

- Comprehensive, current, actionable understanding of:
  - Customer
  - Market
  - Product
  - Strengths, challenges and potential of all of the above
- Informed, effective, sustainable marketing and product development.
- Accurate economic impact of tourism within the state.
- Accountable return on investments.

**2005 Getaway Guide**

- Follow-up and improve upon the 2004 Guide.
- Continue augmenting photographic library.
- Strategic statewide and targeted coverage.
- Continue enhancements of and industry engagement with the Guide

**Goals:**

- Improve Calendar of Events for 2005
- Effectively utilize all value-added elements of the contract.

**2004 Tourism Conference**

- Continued partnership with TIAK
- Governor's Conference on Travel and Tourism
- Cooperation with other organizations:
  - Kansas chambers of commerce
  - League of Municipalities
  - Agritourism conference

**Goals:**

- Continue to improve quality of all presentations
- Target presentations for state priorities and goals
- Increase attendance by industry professionals as well as other economic development partners
- Use the conference to strengthen key partnerships

**Increase Division's Role in Tourism Product Development**

- Respond to travel industry requests to enhance the Attraction Development Grant process through strategic and/or diversified funding.
- Consider Commerce field representation specific to tourism product development.
- Work with STAR Bond process.
- Work with entrepreneurial support programs.
- Enhance partnerships with other Commerce divisions and economic development and community partners.
- Increase Commerce research efforts/capabilities related to tourism.
- Exploit synergy with agritourism.

**Goals:**

- Increased strategic and effective application of grant funds.
- Capability to assist communities statewide with product development.
  - Responsive and pre-emptive assistance capabilities
- More high-quality, sustainable tourism product and experiences in Kansas.
- Accessible product and experiences in Kansas that are in line with tourism market demand.

**Priorities related to the Economic Revitalization Package:**

Several specific economic development priorities were identified as a result of the administration's Prosperity Summit process supported by the Department of Commerce. The Travel and Tourism Division, working in partnership with other Commerce divisions, other state agencies, and communities and private sector partners across the state, will support all the Economic Revitalization Plan priorities, while maintaining particular engagement with the following:

**State Image and Branding**

- Begin working within Commerce and with regional partners to identify goals and priorities.
- Utilize Commerce funds to conduct research, surveys, etc. to identify a short list of effective 'brand identities' for Kansas.
- Organize the process of selecting from those choices.
- Launch 'new' state brand early 2005 (calendar year).
- Manage use of brand.

**Goals:**

- To create a dynamic, flexible, durable brand image or "attitude" for the state, used to guide and coordinate marketing efforts at the state and regional level by a variety of economic development partners and initiatives.
- An environment where tourism, economic and community development, and regional partners cooperate on image priorities and goals.
- Minimum 5-7 year lifespan for brand identity.

**Agritourism**

- Coordinate with Eckert AgriMarketing and primary stakeholders regarding a workable/marketable definition of agritourism for Kansas, as well as goals, priorities, challenges and opportunities.
- Statewide product survey.
- Identify best practices in and out of state.
- Develop product development and marketing plans for targeted enterprises.
- Coordinate formation of a statewide agritourism steering committee.
- Working with Ag Products division and some stakeholder partners, coordinate and sponsor statewide agritourism conference in late fall 2004 and the printing of a Kansas-specific agritourism guidebook.

**Goals:**

- Working, effective definition of agritourism for Kansas.
- Foster development and marketing partnerships regionally.
- Formation of effective statewide steering committee made up of critical stakeholders.
- Accurate inventory of product and experiences statewide.

### **Support for Nature-Based Tourism**

- Support the Cheyenne Bottoms Visitors' Center project.
- Involvement in nature-based economic development survey of Western Kansas.
- Involvement in nature-based economic development survey of the Flint Hills region.
- Support for Geary County/Milford Lake hosting of future national fishing events.
- Work with KDWP to showcase premiere Kansas hunting opportunities.
- Support the next phase of the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve's management plan, to include ecological management/restoration and increased visitor access.
- Capitalize upon synergy with agritourism.

#### **Goals:**

- To support viable, sustainable economic alternatives to current or threatened land use activities.
- To provide product and experiences that meet the increasing travel market demand for outdoor and nature-based experiences.
- To enhance visitor access to and awareness of the natural resources and landscapes of Kansas.

### **Support for Heritage Tourism**

- Continue to support Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area (NHA) efforts, especially with an eye toward placing Kansas firmly on the international Civil War map in advance of the approaching Civil War sesquicentennial.
- Support well conceived plans for other NHA efforts, especially involving pioneer and cowboy heritage and natural resources such as the Flint Hills, Tallgrass Prairie and Cheyenne Bottoms.
- Support Lewis & Clark, Brown v. Board, Kansas Territorial and other anniversaries and events that promote the unique heritage of Kansas.
- Further develop Kansas' identity with unique ethnic heritage (Native American tribes, European immigrant communities, African American, etc.)
- Capitalize upon 'cowboy connections' in Kansas (Prairie Rose Wranglers, Dodge City, Abilene, Chisholm Trail, etc.)
- Capitalize upon synergy with agritourism.

#### **Goals:**

- To meet the increasing demand for authentic, unique heritage experiences in the travel market.
- To enhance the image of Kansas by highlighting our very diverse, shared heritage.
- To support efforts to establish unique, heritage-based attractions and experiences that provide sustainable economic development potential across geographic and demographic borders

### **Ad Astra**

- Plan and develop comprehensive, sophisticated marketing analysis to assist with organizational and other decisions regarding the project.
- Continue research and appraisal of models for components of Ad Astra (current models include: Tamarack in West Virginia; the Handmade in America program of North Carolina; the John C. Campbell Folk School in North Carolina; Frog Hollow in Vermont; the Archway in Nebraska; Kentucky Department of Agriculture Country Stores; TIC and signage programs in Iowa, Vermont and Wisconsin; and various private sector retail and food businesses).
- Begin consultation with agricultural, retail, art, craft, design, and other component stakeholders to identify goals, opportunities, partners, challenges, resources, etc. for the project.
- Begin comprehensive review of signage programs, resources and opportunities with KDOT, with an eye toward Ad Astra as a unifying structure for Kansas tourism efforts along the highways.



- Review challenges and opportunities in the TIC system with an eye toward Ad Astra as a unifying structure for the state's TICs.
- Capitalize upon synergy with agritourism.

**Goals:**

- Ultimately, the goal of Ad Astra is to pursue rural and small business development using tourism in a retail environment along the interstate to enhance the image of Kansas and create economic opportunity. Additionally, Ad Astra will provide a mechanism for more Kansans to live where they want to live across the state, do what they love to do, and earn an income, while enhancing the image of the state.

I offer my thanks to the committee for the opportunity to share information about Travel & Tourism programs and goals, and our role in the Department of Commerce's efforts to realize prosperity in Kansas. This concludes my prepared testimony, and I now welcome questions from the committee.