

NEBRASKA HERITAGE TOURISM PLAN

Prepared for:



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Heritage Tourism Program
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Amy Webb, Heritage Tourism Program Director

About the Heritage Tourism Program: The National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Heritage Tourism Program in 1989. Four states (Indiana, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Texas) were selected to participate in the intensive three-year pilot program. Through this demonstration project the National Trust for Historic Preservation created a cultural heritage tourism development model using five guiding principles for successful and sustainable programs and four basic steps for getting started in heritage tourism development or for taking an existing program to the next level. These principles and steps have been successfully used to develop sustainable cultural heritage tourism programs in the United States and abroad.

The Heritage Tourism Program has helped to develop statewide heritage tourism programs and plans. Statewide planning efforts include Kentucky's first statewide Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategic Plan (2000) and a statewide heritage tourism plan for New Jersey (2010). Statewide programs include the Hoosier Heritage Development Program in Indiana (1994-1998), the Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Initiative (1994-1997), the Iowa Heritage Tourism Program (1994-1996) and the Colorado Heritage Tourism Program (2007-2010). In addition, the Heritage Tourism Program has documented the successful development of cultural heritage tourism programs across the country. This practice has resulted in the most comprehensive resource inventory available for researching programs and identifying best practices that could be adapted to other areas.

Nebraska State Historical Society

“The Nebraska State Historical Society collects, preserves, and opens to all, the histories we share.”

Through this mission and the various functions of the Nebraska State Historical Society “opens to all” the rich heritage and cultural diversity of the state. It maintains a comprehensive program for the preservation of our state’s historic places. This provides the basics of a state heritage tourism program, which include inventories of historic places across the state, recommending properties to the National Register of Historic Places and administering the state historical marker program. The Nebraska State Historical Society also provides educational outreach and provides services to historical societies, government officials and other agencies with interest in history and historic preservation. These functions are integral to the development and enhancement of heritage tourism strategies.

The Nebraska State Historical Society recognizes that heritage tourism is an important means to accomplish not only its mission, but the shared missions of historical museums and historic sites. And historic sites and museums are the very infrastructure of heritage tourism, providing the means of interpreting and sharing the state’s rich heritage and diversity to all that travel the state.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development is to provide quality leadership and services that enable Nebraska communities, businesses, and people to succeed in a global economy. The Department has three major divisions—Business Development, Community and Rural Development, and Travel and Tourism. To some extent, all three divisions have programs to assist the development of heritage tourism in the state, but especially the Travel and Tourism Division. As the primary marketer of Nebraska tourism, the Travel and Tourism Division promotes historic places and attractions throughout the state in its widely circulated Nebraska Travel Guide, the comprehensive Nebraska tourism internet site, and in varied advertising media. The Division annually awards tourism marketing grants to promote events and regions and tourism development grants for the physical development of attractions. These funds are used by many of the grant recipients to market and develop heritage tourism. The Travel and Tourism Division also organizes an annual Travel Industry Conference to bring together the diverse members of the industry and exchange information. And Division staff frequently visit Nebraska communities in response to requests for assistance in evaluating and developing local tourism potentials.

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INTRODUCTION

Heritage Tourism is a solid contributor to Nebraska's tourism industry—and there is tremendous potential to grow the economic impact of this sector. While heritage trips currently account for 6percent of all person-trips in Nebraska, they constitute 13percent of all visitor spending. Heritage travelers tend to stay longer and spend more than other travelers, making them a sought-after high-value traveler for the tourism industry. The total annual economic impact of the heritage tourism industry in Nebraska is more than \$196 million, supporting over 3,010 jobs in Nebraska and generating \$16.4 million in state and local tax revenue impact. More than most industries, the heritage tourism industry benefits Nebraska's rural regions in addition to the metropolitan areas.

Investing in heritage tourism is a cost effective approach for Nebraska because it represents an asset-based economic development strategy that builds on Nebraska's existing assets and resources. Through this study, 220 existing heritage museums have been identified in Nebraska. The experiences at these museums can be supplemented by Nebraska's 1,000+ historic sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 500+ state historic markers across Nebraska and numerous historic Main Street communities. In addition, the Nebraska Historic Resources Survey and Inventory includes documentation for 72,000 historic resources from every county in Nebraska.

Heritage tourism is a cost effective approach for Nebraska because it represents an asset-based economic development strategy that builds on Nebraska's existing assets and resources. An investment in heritage tourism helps build a sense of pride of place, making Nebraska a better place to live, a better place to locate a business, and a better place to visit.

Collectively, these historic resources can help to place these heritage museums into a larger historical context. These existing heritage attractions (including historic sites and museums) provide a sustainable network of travel attractions and visitor services that is already in place. While Nebraska currently does not have a dedicated heritage tourism program, there are a number of state organizations as well as leading attractions that collectively provide support for heritage tourism marketing and development.

Heritage tourism also complements other types of visitation, such as travel to experience natural attractions, agricultural attractions (commonly called agri-tourism), Nebraska's rich and varied ecology (eco-tourism), culture, such as art museums and theaters (cultural tourism), recreation and community activities. When combined with these other complementary niche markets, the impact of heritage tourism is multiplied.

While the diversity of resources and organizations contributing to Nebraska's heritage tourism industry adds to the richness of the state's heritage tourism offerings, one of the biggest challenges currently limiting the growth of Nebraska's heritage tourism industry is the lack of a coordinated effort to bring

together all of these diverse resources and potential partners. This heritage tourism plan documents the strengths and weaknesses in Nebraska’s heritage tourism industry, identifying potential opportunities and challenges that could be effectively addressed through a statewide heritage tourism program.

Chapter VI is devoted to documenting the economic impact of heritage tourism in Nebraska to help make the case for the importance of heritage tourism, and Chapter VIII includes heritage tourism best practices from Nebraska and across the United States to provide guidance and inspiration to address Nebraska’s heritage tourism challenges. Chapter VII is devoted to heritage tourism recommendations to address Nebraska’s heritage tourism challenges and build on opportunities to help Nebraska fully develop the state’s heritage tourism potential.

Nebraska’s heritage attractions help tell important stories about the state’s history—stories that can only be experienced first-hand in Nebraska, thus creating a compelling incentive to choose Nebraska as a travel destination. Sustaining Nebraska’s existing heritage attractions and investing in the expansion of heritage tourism efforts in Nebraska offers the opportunity to attract heritage travelers who stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of travelers. At the same time, an investment in heritage tourism helps build a sense of pride of place, making Nebraska a better place to live, a better place to locate a business, and a better place to visit.

I. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Nebraska State Historical Society in collaboration with the Division of Travel and Tourism of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development commissioned a study on the economic impact of heritage tourism in Nebraska as part of a heritage tourism marketing and planning study for Nebraska. To complete this study, the Nebraska State Historical Society contracted with the University of Nebraska at Lincoln's Bureau of Business Research (BBR). The BBR was the lead consultant for the economic impact research study which is included as Chapter VI of this report. The BBR subcontracted with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Heritage Tourism Program to collaborate on the statewide heritage tourism marketing and planning study for Nebraska which comprises the remainder of this report.

The goals of this plan were to:

- Assess the current status of Nebraska's heritage attractions
- Complete an economic impact study on heritage tourism in Nebraska
- Identify opportunities for Nebraska's heritage attractions to meet visitor's expectations and effectively market their offerings
- Provide heritage tourism recommendations
- Identify heritage tourism "best practices"

This report will assist with statewide planning and marketing efforts to develop, promote and enhance heritage tourism in Nebraska. Some of the recommendations outlined in this report will require support at the state level, while others are "bootstrap" strategies or ideas in the best practices section that individual heritage attractions and partners can adopt and implement on their own. In formulating the recommendations in this report, careful consideration was given to opportunities offering the greatest return on investment, recognizing that resources may be limited.

For the purposes of this report, the term "**heritage tourism**" is visitation to these attractions which tell the story of Nebraska, historic events, people, culture and place. "**Heritage attractions**" include historical museums and historic sites that interpret the history of Nebraska, its people and places. Also contributing to this interpretation are historical markers and properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places that are both interpreted and accessible to the public. While survey efforts completed for this study focused on historic sites open to the public as museums, these National Register sites and historical markers can complement and enhance heritage tourism experiences across the state. In total, these constitute a traveling experience for visitors through the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past.

To gain a better understanding of Nebraska's heritage attractions and the issues and opportunities they are facing, the Nebraska State Historical Society and the consultant team working on this study completed the following steps:

- The Nebraska State Historical Society established the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Ad Hoc Project Steering Committee (referred to in this study as the "Project Committee") to guide the

development of this study. The Project Committee consisted of 18 individuals representing statewide organizations with a shared interest in heritage tourism, representatives from several of Nebraska's major heritage attractions, and others with expertise in economics, historic preservation and planning.

- The Bureau of Business Research and the Heritage Tourism Program reviewed a variety of existing planning documents relevant to heritage tourism including the *State Historic Preservation Plan for Nebraska* (2007-2011), the *Nebraska Tourism Industry Development Plan* (in draft), *Nebraska's Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan* (2006), the *Nebraska Travel Impacts* study (2003-2008p) by Dean Runyan Associates, and the 2011-2015 report, *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: Guide to an Active Nebraska (SCORP)*, and the *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Nebraska* (October 2007).
- The Heritage Tourism Program reviewed print and web tourism materials for Nebraska.
- The Bureau of Business Research, working closely with the Nebraska State Historical Society, developed a baseline inventory of 220 existing heritage attractions in Nebraska.
- The Bureau of Business Research developed several surveys (described below) working in collaboration with the Heritage Tourism Program. Copies of all survey instruments are included in the Appendices of this plan.
- The Bureau of Business Research surveyed Nebraska's historic sites through the "Survey of Heritage Attractions." The survey was mailed to 220 heritage attractions, and 103 responded to the survey (a 46.8 percent response rate).
- The Bureau of Business Research completed phone and in-person surveys of a sampling of managers at 34 Nebraska's heritage attractions, including 22 on-site visits and 13 phone interviews. These in-depth interviews helped to expand upon the findings from the "Survey of Heritage Attractions."
- The Bureau of Business Research surveyed travelers visiting Nebraska's heritage attractions through the "Survey of Heritage Visitors." A total of 330 visitors at 12 heritage attractions across Nebraska were included in this survey.
- The UNL Department of Sociological Research conducted a Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Study (NASIS). A total of 719 Nebraska households responded to this survey.
- The Heritage Tourism Program completed 19 phone interviews with Project Committee members and others to discuss heritage tourism opportunities and challenges and identify potential best practices.
- The Bureau of Business Research and the Heritage Tourism Program reviewed and incorporated results of these surveys of heritage attractions and heritage travelers into this heritage tourism plan, which includes the Nebraska Heritage Tourism economic impact study (see Chapter VI).

"Core 27" Heritage Attractions

For the purposes of this study, a core cluster consisting of 27 heritage tourism attractions were selected by the Nebraska State Historical Society from the list of 220 heritage attractions in Nebraska. These attractions are referred to in this report as the "Core 27." This sampling included historic sites known to offer accessible visitor experiences with well-developed interpretive programs and established hours of

operation. Results from the Core 27 responses have been broken out from the overall responses to Survey of Heritage Attractions to provide a comparison of these facilities to heritage attractions statewide. Note that this was a sampling only, not inclusive of all facilities in Nebraska.

Table 1: Core 27 Nebraska Heritage Attractions	
1) Boys Town	Boys Town
2) Brownville Historical Society	Brownville
3) Buffalo Bill Ranch and State Historical Park	North Platte
4) Buffalo County Historical Society, Trails & Rails Museum	Kearney
5) Chimney Rock Visitor Center	Bayard
6) Dawson County Historical Society	Lexington
7) Farm and Ranch Museum	Gering
8) Fort Atkinson State Historical Park	Fort Calhoun
9) High Plains Historical Society and Museum	McCook
10) Homestead National Monument of America	Beatrice
11) Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage	Alliance
12) Mexican American Historical Society of the Midlands	Omaha
13) Nebraska History Museum	Lincoln
14) Museum of the Fur Trade	Chadron
15) Nebraska City Museums Association	Nebraska City
16) Nebraska Prairie Museum	Holdrege
17) North Platte Valley Historical Association and Museum	Gering
18) Nebraska State Capitol	Lincoln
19) Pioneer Village	Minden
20) Plattsmouth Conservancy	Plattsmouth
21) Scotts Bluff National Monument	Gering
22) Strategic Air & Space Museum	Ashland
23) Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer	Grand Island
24) The Durham Museum	Omaha
25) The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument	Kearney
26) University of Nebraska State Museum, Morrill Hall	Lincoln
27) Willa Cather State Historic Site	Red Cloud

II. PRINCIPLES AND STEPS FOR HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism can bring both economic and quality-of-life benefits to communities. Rooted in historic preservation, one challenge is ensuring that the very places that contribute to heritage tourism are enhanced and not inadvertently altered or destroyed. Conversely, these places must not be overwhelmed by tourists and destroy the qualities that attract visitation. Furthermore, tourism is a competitive, sophisticated, fast-changing industry that presents its own challenges. It is generally a clean industry—no smokestacks or dangerous chemicals—but it does require an investment in visitor services such as restaurants, lodging and shopping. Through its Heritage Tourism Program, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has developed five guiding principles and four basic steps to guide successful, sustainable heritage tourism development.

“Heritage Tourism is traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes irreplaceable historic, cultural and natural resources.”

—*National Trust for Historic Preservation*

Five Principles for Successful and Sustainable Heritage Tourism

- 1) **Collaborate.** By its very nature, heritage tourism requires effective partnerships. Much more can be accomplished by working together than by working alone.
- 2) **Find the fit between the community and tourism.** Heritage tourism should make a community a better place to live as well as a better place to visit. Recognizing local history by communities and sharing this history with others benefits both the community and its visitors.
- 3) **Make sites and programs come alive. Look for ways** to make visitor experiences exciting, engaging, and interactive.
- 4) **Focus on quality and authenticity.** Today’s heritage traveler is more sophisticated and will expect a high level of quality and an authentic experience.
- 5) **Preserve and protect irreplaceable resources.** Many community historic, and natural resources cannot be replaced if they are lost. Take good care of them because once they are gone, they are gone forever.

The four steps for heritage tourism development outlined on the following page will help launch a program or take an existing program to the next level. As new attractions and visitor services are developed and as destinations expand their marketing reach, these steps are repeated at each new phase of development.



Four Steps for Heritage Tourism Development

- 1) **Assess the potential.** Evaluate what the community has to offer, including attractions, visitor services, organizational capabilities, ability to protect resources, and marketing.
- 2) **Plan and organize.** Make good use of human and financial resources. They are the keys that open the doors to sustainable heritage tourism. Set priorities and measurable goals.
- 3) **Prepare, protect, and manage.** Look to the future as well as the present. Be sure that the choices made will improve the community over the long term.
- 4) **Market for success.** Develop a multi-year, many-tiered marketing plan that targets the heritage tourism market. Look for partners in local, regional, state, or national groups.

Over the past 15+ years, the popularity of heritage tourism has grown both with travelers and with those developing new tourism attractions. For example, between 1996 and 2002 heritage travel increased by 13 percent, more than twice the growth of U.S. travel overall (5.6percent).

As more Nebraska's tourism leaders, historic preservationist, and a range of public officials and organizations recognize the potential of heritage tourism and work to enhance their heritage tourism assets, it will be increasingly important for destinations to differentiate themselves from other emerging heritage destinations. While there is a growing market for heritage tourism destinations that have developed interactive and authentic experiences that appeal to today's high value travelers, there is at the same time increasing competition for these sought-after travelers. By learning from others who have successfully developed heritage tourism attractions, the facilities and marketers can avoid pitfalls and maximize heritage tourism potential. The best practices in Chapter VIII of this report include Nebraska as well as national examples of successful heritage tourism efforts that illustrate the five guiding principles in action.

III. OVERVIEW OF HERITAGE TOURISM NATIONALLY AND IN NEBRASKA

Tourism is big business. According to the statistics from the U.S Travel Association (USTA), in 2010 travel and tourism directly contributed \$759 billion to the U.S. economy. Travel and tourism is one of America's largest employers, directly employing more than 7.4 million people and creating a payroll income of \$188 billion, and \$118 billion in tax revenues for federal, state and local governments. In addition to creating new jobs, new businesses, and higher property values, well-managed tourism improves the quality of life and builds pride in the community. That is particularly true for the heritage segment of the tourism market.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as *"traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past."* Heritage tourism has seen tremendous growth in the past two decades and is now recognized as a major travel industry segment. A national study completed by Mandala Research in the Fall of 2009, *The Cultural and Heritage Traveler*, indicated that 78 percent of U.S. adults who traveled for leisure in 2009 (118.3 million travelers) were considered heritage travelers. The U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Marketing Council commissioned Mandala Research, a private tourism research firm, to complete this national research study. It should be noted that Mandala utilized a very comprehensive definition of both cultural and heritage attractions, meaning that this number should not be compared to the more focused definition utilized in the current study. This same study confirmed the findings of previous national tourism studies, which indicated that heritage travelers stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of travelers. The Mandala report found that the average spending by cultural/heritage travelers is \$994 per trip, compared with \$611 per trip for U.S. travelers in general.

Heritage travelers stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of travelers, making them a very attractive target tourism market.

Source: The Cultural and Heritage Traveler

The U.S. Travel Association (USTA)'s 2003 *Cultural/Historic Traveler* study confirmed that cultural heritage travelers take frequent trips, with 25 percent taking three or more trips a year. With growing interest in more frequent, shorter vacations to destinations closer to home, successful destinations must offer a variety of changing experiences to attract repeat visits. The *Cultural/Historic Traveler* study found that travelers to historic and cultural sites are also, in general, slightly older than other travelers and more likely to have a post-graduate degree (six in ten); less than half are from boomer households (four in ten were born between 1946 and 1964). Because heritage visitors travel more extensively and are better educated than other tourists, they expect more from their travel experiences. The Mandala study found that heritage travelers travel more frequently, reporting an average of 5 trips in the past year as compared to 3.98 trips for non-heritage travelers. As is true of other sectors of the travel market, heritage travelers are planning their trips with shorter lead times: 55 percent are planning their trips within a month of traveling.

As planning time has decreased, the use of the Internet for tourism marketing and trip planning has increased. A 2009 study by the private tourism research firm PhocusWright for the tourism industry

indicated that 56 percent of U.S. travelers choose their vacation destinations online. Social media is also becoming increasingly important for trip planning. The market research firm Destination Analysts released a study for the tourism industry in January of 2010 that found that 43.5 percent of consumers used some form of user-generated content such as a trip review or blog to plan a leisure trip in the past year, and 24 percent used a mobile phone or personal digital assistant (PDA) to find travel information. Significantly, these figures represented an 80 percent increase from the previous year, indicating a rapidly changing market as consumers become increasingly tech savvy.

The 2003 USTA study of heritage travelers also examined the travel habits of heritage travelers. The study found that heritage travelers are most likely to travel by car (68 percent). They are twice as likely as other U.S. travelers to take a group tour (7 percent versus 3 percent), although the market for group tours themselves are still a relatively small part of travel overall. The group tour industry has found that to capture today's traveler, it is increasingly important to offer value-added tours that provide exclusive opportunities for behind-the-scenes visits or other benefits that travelers can't get on their own.

Heritage travelers are more likely to take part in a wide variety of activities when they are traveling: 17 percent participate in four or more activities compared with 5 percent of all travelers. Other activities such as visiting state/national parks, participating in culinary activities such as sampling artisan food and wines, visiting farmer's markets and enjoying unique dining experiences rank highly with this target audience. The Mandala study found that heritage travelers are looking for more than just museums or historic sites. They are interested in "experiences where the destination, its buildings, and surroundings have retained their historical character...as well as lodging that reflects the local culture." Combining experiences at historic sites with complementary attractions is an effective strategy to use heritage tourism to increase the length of stay and tourism expenditures.

Although the 2009 Mandala study found that heritage travelers represent all generations, baby boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) make up one of the strongest heritage tourism markets. Boomers travel more than any other age group (241 million household trips/year), and 14 percent pay more than \$1,000 for a vacation. Like heritage travelers, boomers are more likely to stay in a hotel or motel. In 1998, the National Tour Association completed a study of boomers that predicted: *"Because boomers are more experienced travelers, they will expect more from their experiences, and terms such as cultural tourism, heritage tourism, sports tourism, active tourism, adventure travel, and ecotourism will be commonly used within the next decade."* More than a decade later in 2011, that prediction has been realized.

The economic benefits of heritage tourism include creating new jobs and businesses, increasing tax revenues, and diversifying the local economy. These economic benefits are not the only reason why heritage tourism is good for the community—there are quality-of-life benefits as well. Heritage tourism helps preserve a town's unique character, which results in greater civic pride. Residents also have more opportunities available to them such as shops, activities, and entertainment offerings that the local market alone might not be able to support.

Investing in heritage tourism is a cost effective approach for Nebraska because it represents an asset-based economic development strategy that builds on Nebraska’s existing unique resources. Furthermore, Nebraska’s heritage sites help to tell important stories about the state’s history—stories that can only be experienced first-hand in Nebraska, thus creating a compelling incentive to choose Nebraska as a travel destination. Sustaining Nebraska’s existing heritage attractions and investing in the expansion of heritage tourism efforts in Nebraska offers the opportunity to attract heritage travelers who stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of travelers. At the same time, investing in Nebraska’s heritage helps to build a sense of pride of place, making Nebraska a better place to live as well as a better place to visit.

As noted in the draft 2010-2015 *Nebraska Tourism Industry Development Plan*, tourism is a major part of Nebraska’s economy—the third largest earner of revenue from outside Nebraska after agriculture and manufacturing. The *Nebraska Tourism Industry Development Plan* notes that “particularly in rural areas, residents view the (tourism) industry as an alternative way to make a living in a traditionally agricultural economy.” The plan also notes that total travel expenditures for Nebraska in 2009 totaled almost \$3.8 billion for trips 100 or more miles from home, and travel-related employment accounted for 42,400 jobs.

The total economic impact of Nebraska’s heritage tourism industry is estimated to be more than \$196 million.

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research, 2011

Preservation at Work for the Nebraska Economy

A 2007 study for the Nebraska State Historical Society, *Preservation at Work for the Nebraska Economy*, found that “more than \$100 million is spent annually by visitors who are attracted to Nebraska’s historic sites and museums.” This study found that “historic sites and museums spent \$19 million in operating and capital expenditures and employed a total of 372 workers in paid positions.” These types of direct spending are an important component of economic impact, which is discussed fully in Chapter VI. This study, however, did not delve into the full-range of heritage tourism.

The study also found that Nebraska’s heritage travelers are even more likely than national heritage travelers to stay longer and spend more than other travelers. Nebraska’s heritage travelers travel longer distances in larger groups and spend nearly two-and-a-half times more than other travelers per overnight stay. Nationally, the 2009 *The Cultural and Heritage Traveler* study by Mandala Research found that heritage travelers spend 62 percent more than other travelers. Like heritage travelers nationally, Nebraska’s heritage travelers are also more likely to earn higher incomes and hold postgraduate degrees.

Nebraska’s heritage travelers stay 50 percent longer than other travelers. While the 2009 *The Cultural and Heritage Traveler* study did not include comparable data regarding length of stay, the 2003 *The Historic /Cultural Traveler* study by the Travel Industry Association of America found that U.S. heritage travelers stay on average 28 percent longer than other travelers.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission produces the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP) which is updated every five years. Although SCORP is aimed at the recreational sector, the most recent 2011-2015 SCORP includes several interesting references to historic sites. Chapter 5 of the 2011-2015 SCORP report, "Participation Levels in Outdoor Recreational Activities" notes that "visiting historical sites" was among the top seven activities participated in by Nebraskans in 2008, with 57.4 percent of all Nebraskans visiting historical sites. "Museum/Visitor Center" also ranked in the top ten activities participated in during 2007 and 2009 in Nebraska's state park system.

While the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's regions are similar, but not exactly the same as Nebraska's tourism regions, a look at the top ten activities participated in by region indicates that "visiting historical sites" is popular in all regions of the state. The top activity in all seven regions was picnicking, and other popular activities ranking with or above visiting historic sites include "walking without a pet," "sightseeing," "driving for pleasure," "swimming at a pool," "going to a playground," "gardening," "observing or photographing wildlife" and "fishing from bank." Visiting historical sites was ranked most highly in the western region (corresponding to the Panhandle tourism region), ranking 4th with 69.1 percent citing this as an activity they participated in. The Metro region ranked on the low end in terms of the popularity of visiting historical sites, ranking 9th with 53.9 percent citing this as an activity they participated in. While heritage tourism has great potential for all of Nebraska, these findings indicate that heritage tourism could be an especially effective strategy for Nebraska's rural regions, Although the more densely populated metro region can generate a large number of visitors even if the overall rate of interest is less.

Table 2: Popularity of Visiting Historical Sites by Region

	Region 1: Metro	Region 2: Southeast	Region 3: Northeast	Region 4: S. Central	Region 5: Southwest	Region 6: Western	Region 7: N. Central
Percentage	53.9%	53.6%	58.2%	55.3%	56.6%	69.1%	56.9%
Ranking	9 th	8 th	6 th	6 th	8 th	4 th	6 th

Source: 2011-2015 SCORP Survey conducted by UNL-BOSR in 2009

The SCORP study found that females were slightly more likely to be interested in visiting historical sites (58.8 percent of females vs. 56.5 percent of males). The study found that visitors with a graduate degree rank visiting a historic site higher than visitors with any other education level. 72.2 percent of people with a graduate degree expressing an interest in visiting historic places, as compared to 47.2 percent of those with only a high school diploma or a GED.

Table 3: Popularity of Visiting Historical Sites

Income Level	Ranking	Percentage
Less than \$5,000	—	—
\$5,000-9,999	6 th	57.9%
\$10,000-14,999	5 th	54.7%
\$15,00-19,999	9 th	35.8%
\$20,000-24,999	7 th	50.9%
\$25,000-29,999	7 th	56.4%
\$30,000-39,999	9 th	51.6%
\$40,000-49,999	5 th	59.8%
\$50,000-59,999	8 th	57.7%
\$60,000-74,999	6 th	65.5%
\$75,000-99,999	5 th	64.6%
More than \$100,000	7 th	61.8%

Source: 2011-2015 SCORP Survey conducted by UNL-BOSR in 2009

Those with higher incomes were more likely to be interested in historic sites, especially those with incomes of \$60,000 and above. Visiting historical sites ranked in the top ten activities for travelers age 45 and above (but did not rank in the top ten activities for travelers between the ages of 19-45). These findings are consistent with national studies of cultural and heritage travelers indicating that heritage travelers tend to be more well educated and better off financially than other travelers. The popularity of visiting historic sites *in addition to* interest in a range of other outdoor recreational activities is also consistent with national research findings that heritage travelers are interested in participating in a broad spectrum of different activities when they travel, with nature based attractions such as state and national parks ranking highly as complementary activities.

Funding for Tourism in Nebraska

While there is no dedicated funding program for heritage tourism in Nebraska, there are several existing programs that could be tapped for heritage tourism marketing and development efforts.

1) Nebraska Tourism Marketing Grant Program

In 2011-2012, \$125,000 will be available from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism through annual Tourism Marketing Grants. Nonprofit and for profit entities can apply for the grants, which can range from \$2,000 to \$10,000. Grantees must provide at least a 25% match for each grant with no more than 50% of the match being in-kind. State and federal entities are not eligible to apply for these grants. Tourism marketing grants are available in three categories: promotion of an event, promotion of a region, and general marketing. A sampling of heritage tourism grants awarded in 2011 includes:

- Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway: \$6,960 for magazine and internet advertising
- Willa Cather Foundation: \$4,620 for magazine advertising

- Heritage Nebraska: \$4,168 for magazine and newspaper advertising
- Bridges to Buttes Scenic Byway: \$3,750 for website development
- Lincoln County Historical Museum: \$3,500 for website development
- Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition: \$3,547 for map distribution and website development

2) Lodging Tax

In addition to the 1% state lodging tax that is used to “promote, encourage and attract visitors to Nebraska and enhance the use of travel and tourism facilities within Nebraska” (*Nebraska and Local Taxes on Lodging Information Guide, October 22, 2010*), counties may impose an additional lodging tax of up to 4% (up to 2% as a “County Visitors Promotion Fund” to provide funding for tourism marketing and another 2% as a “County Visitors Improvement Fund” to provide funding for tourism development). As of August 2011, 73 of Nebraska’s 93 counties have a county lodging tax in place, with 78% having a county lodging tax in place and more than half of Nebraska’s counties having more than a 2% county lodging tax. Forty-three counties have the full 4% lodging tax, 3 counties have a 3% tax and 27 counties have a 2% tax. Of the counties with a lodging tax in place, the majority have increased the lodging tax over time. Douglas County was the first county to authorize the full 4% county lodging tax rate in 1989, with another 42 counties following suit between 2004 and 2011. Collectively, county lodging taxes generated almost \$13.9 million in 2010 for tourism marketing and development, with funds distributed by an advisory board in each county.

3) Nebraska Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Nebraska’s CDBG Tourism Development grant program, administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Community and Rural Development Division, offers an opportunity for Nebraska counties and municipalities of under 50,000 in population to apply for funds for tourism development. Tourism attractions funded under this program can be public or private, non-profit or for profit, but must draw at least 2,500 visitors from 100+ miles away in order to be eligible. The grant guidelines specify that:

...historic restorations; scientific and educational interpretive educational sites and facilities such as museums; participatory sports facilities; convention centers; cultural and heritage recreational sites and facilities; and supporting activities that include removal of material and architectural barriers that restrict the mobility and accessibility to sites/facilities (for elderly and severely disabled persons) in support of eligible tourism attractions” are eligible for funding.

Examples of past CDBG projects that have helped to support heritage tourism efforts in Nebraska include:

- Renovating the 1927 World Theater in Kearney including adding handicapped accessible restrooms. (2010)
- Restoring of the historic Midwest Theater in Scottsbluff, including restoring the exterior marquee and the interior neon, extending the stage, adding handicapped access, dressing rooms and upgrading systems. (2000 & 2004)
- Constructing a Visitors Center and making improvements to the existing building for the Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles in Lexington. (1997)
- Restoring the Brownville Opera House in Brownville as a key component of a revitalization strategy for the historic downtown. (1997)
- Renovating a historic 1885 Opera House for use as a Visitors Center for the Willa Cather Historic Site and a performance venue (1997)

Four of the five are properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, recognizing the significant and authentic historic resources that have been funded, a key goal of heritage tourism.

4) Tourism Assessment Resource Growth Evaluation Team (TARGET) Assessments

The Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism has offered TARGET tourism assessment to rural communities to help them realize their tourism potential since 1991, and almost 50 assessments have been completed in the last 20 years. The TARGET program has recently expanded to offer assessments for tourism attractions as well as communities. The process includes a self assessment completed by a local committee of individuals representing lodging, dining and retail businesses, historians, civic leaders and others with an interest in tourism. A team reviews the self assessment, makes a site visit to the community, and prepares a report with detailed recommendations for tourism development and marketing strategies. There is no fee for the TARGET assessments, and after five years communities can request a new TARGET assessment as a follow up.

Federal Resource for Heritage Tourism

Nebraska has benefitted from the National Scenic Byways Program which has provided 32 federal grants to Nebraska byways totaling \$4.9 million between 1994 and 2011. This is especially impressive because none of Nebraska's nine byways have national byway designation, and byways with national designation receive preference for byway grant funding. Byway grants have funded marketing campaigns, interpretive programs, corridor management plans and other byway related efforts. While Nebraska has had great success in securing marketing grants up through 2009, changes in priorities have meant that very few byway marketing grants were awarded in 2010 and 2011. The future of federal byway grants will depend upon the reauthorization of the transportation act which is scheduled to be completed in 2011.

The National Park Service works with the 49 National Heritage Areas (NHAs) as well as working with areas seeking National Heritage Area designation. NHAs are regions that have been designated by Congress as "places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape." While Nebraska currently does not have any National Heritage Areas,

this is another potential source of federal funding for regional heritage tourism efforts. Unlike National Scenic Byways, every NHA is designated as an individual act of Congress. While there are no NHA grants, the NHA legislation typically includes language to authorize federal funding of up to \$1 million a year for a period of ten years, though most heritage areas currently receive appropriations of several hundred thousand dollars a year. It is possible to secure both National Scenic Byway and National Heritage Area designation for the same corridor or region. The Journey through Hallowed Ground in Virginia and the Lincoln Heritage Byway and Lincoln National Heritage Area in Kentucky are two examples of dual designation. Additional information about National Heritage Areas is available at <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/>.

Several other federally funded programs that support heritage tourism efforts have suffered due to federal budget cuts. The Save America's Treasures program, which designates official Save America's Treasures projects and provides federal grants for preservation and conservation efforts, does not currently have any grant funds available in current federal budget. For example, Florence Mill in Omaha and the Nebraska State Historical Society's Native American Collection are designated Save America's Treasures project.

Similarly, the Preserve America program which designates Preserve America communities and provides grants for a variety of heritage tourism related efforts does not have any funding in the current federal budget. Brownville, Lincoln and Plattsmouth are designated as Preserve America communities in Nebraska. If federal funding is restored to either of these federal programs in the future, they would remain valuable sources of federal funding for Nebraska's heritage tourism efforts.

Other Resources for Heritage Tourism

Additional information about the funding programs described above as well as other tourism development and marketing resources such as the Community Development Assistance Act , the Local Civic, Cultural, and Convention Center Financing Act or the Red Carpet hospitality training program coordinated by the University of Nebraska can be found in the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism's *Tourism Development and Marketing Resources Directory* available online at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/pdfs/DevMarRes1.pdf>.

Complementary Attractions

While the 220 heritage attractions included in the Survey of Heritage Attractions for this plan are a key component of Nebraska's heritage tourism industry, there are a number of complementary attractions that can be combined with these sites to develop compelling heritage tourism experiences. As noted earlier in this plan, heritage travelers like to participate in many different kinds of activities when they travel, and other niche markets such as nature based travel, outdoor recreation, ecotourism, agritourism and cultural tourism can all provide complementary experiences to enrich the visitor experience and encourage a longer length of stay. These complementary experiences could include outdoor recreation opportunities at state and national parks, farm and ranch experiences, as well as cultural experiences including the visual or performing arts.

In addition to the attractions included in the Survey of Heritage Attractions, there are many other historic sites in Nebraska that are accessible to the public and which could complement these museum experiences. For example, many of Nebraska's historic sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places fall into this category. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official inventory of properties deemed worthy of preservation. It recognizes places of local, state and national significance and is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect our historic, cultural and archeological resources. National Register listings can include single sites as individual listings as well as entire historic districts. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service. In Nebraska, the program is administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society and is part of its efforts to promote Nebraska history.

To date, over 1,000 listings are included in the National Register of Historic Places in Nebraska. These include archeological sites, residences, farmsteads, churches and even entire districts. Some are appropriate for visitation by the heritage tourist, since they are generally accessible to the public, used as museums or include interpretation that orients the visitor to a wide-range of Nebraska history and culture. In addition to the National Register listings, the Nebraska Historic Resources Survey and Inventory (NeHRSI) lists 72,000+ historic resources in Nebraska. While not all of these sites would be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, this provides a strong indication that there could be opportunities to expand the number of National Register listings over time, and other historic sites which could help to provide a richer historic context.

Historic Districts

The National Register includes entire historic districts, including "main street" commercial districts, residential neighborhoods and other places that have historical and architectural significance as a whole. These districts are often available to the tourist offering shopping opportunities, entertainment and activities that complement visits. Many communities have published walking tours of their historic districts or developed other interpretive ways to mark buildings with historical information, such as signs or plaques. Sometimes entire districts have been rehabilitated into vital areas of commercial activity, capitalizing on the uniqueness of its architecture and business offerings.

Publically Owned Buildings

Sometimes the finest architecture in Nebraska is found in places such as courthouses, post offices, libraries, auditoriums and city halls. These publically owned buildings are often the town center for local citizens, holding historic and architectural pride by the community. They are also generally accessible to travelers as they are open to the public. Some publically owned buildings that are no longer used for their original purpose have been converted into museums or visitor centers.

Cemeteries

While cemeteries are not normally considered for National Register listing, some may have special features that make them oriented to visitors such as the Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln, Nelson Cemetery in Nelson and West Lawn Mausoleum in Omaha. Heritage tourism opportunities for cemeteries include developing walking tours (either guided or self-guided) or exploring the potential for special events.

Parks

In addition to Nebraska's State Historical Parks, there are other historic parks that offer services, recreation and cultural offerings that can complement visitation by the heritage tourist. Examples of parks that could contribute to a heritage tourism experience include:

- Harmon Park (Kearney)
- David City Park and Auditorium (David City)
- Alliance Central Park (Alliance)
- Beatrice Chautauqua Park (Beatrice)
- Chautauqua Pavilion (Hastings)
- Garfield County Fairgrounds/Burwell Rodeo Grounds (Burwell)
- Stolley Park Historic District (Grand Island)
- Pioneers Park (Lincoln)
- Nine-Mile Prairie (near Lincoln)
- Riverside Park Dance Pavilion (near Central City)
- Legion Memorial Park (Auburn)
- Grant City Park (Grant)
- Saddle Club (Scottsbluff)
- Linoma Beach (near Ashland)
- Bessey Nursery (Halsey)
- Willa Cather Memorial Prairie (near Red Cloud)
- Plainview Bandshell (Plainview)

Visitor Centers

Several historic buildings have been rehabilitated as visitors' centers. They serve to orient the heritage tourist to the offerings of local areas and byways. Examples of historic buildings that have been adaptively reused as visitor centers include:

- Meisner Bank, Shelton (Lincoln Highway Visitors Center and museum)
- Sidney Carnegie Library (Chamber of Commerce)
- Fremont Post Office (Visitors Center and Chamber of Commerce)
- Spruce Street Station, Ogallala

Other Historic Sites

Some National Register properties are sites, historic trails and natural features, and many are accessible for travelers. The Nebraska State Historical Society's historical marker program also serves to interpret sites that are not generally accessible such as:

- The Tower (Old Baldy), near Lynch
- Townsley-Murdock Immigrant Trail, near Alda
- California Hill, Keith County
- Military Road, Omaha
- Spring Creek Trail Ruts, near Lincoln (Nature Center)
- Courthouse and Jail Rocks, near Bayard

Arts, Theaters and Performing Arts

The offerings of cultural organizations in the visual and performing arts are often operated in historic theaters, libraries and former public buildings. They offer complementary activities for the heritage tourist that contribute to the visitors' experience. Many traditional museums are open during working hours, and many performing arts venues offer the additional appeal of providing evening performances that offer an added incentive for travelers to stay in an area longer or spend the night. As the economic impact of tourism goes up dramatically with additional overnight stays, offering evening activities is highly desirable—and finding evening activities that appeal to travelers can often be especially challenging outside of metropolitan areas.

Businesses

Privately owned businesses operated in historic buildings or within historic commercial centers are often accessible to visitors, since they are most often open regularly. Businesses are proud to show their reuse of historic buildings. Many commercial business buildings have been rehabilitated by using certain incentives administered by the Nebraska State Historical Society. Bed-and-breakfast operations are often found in historic homes.

Schools and Colleges

While visitor access to some historic educational institutions may be restricted to visitors, most college campuses are seen as accessible. Examples of colleges with historic buildings that are accessible to the public include:

- McCormick Hall, Hastings College
- Fort Omaha Historic District (now Metro Community College), Omaha
- Chadron State College (Gymnasium, Crites Hall, Sparks Hall, Edna Work Hall), Chadron
- Old University Library (Architecture Hall), UNL, Lincoln
- Doane College Historic District, Crete

Churches

Churches display some of the most prominent of architectural examples found in communities, though public access may be restricted. Most would, however, be visible from the public right-of-way or by making arrangements with the church staff. Churches could be included in walking or driving tours highlighting the historic architecture of a community, and could also be included in special events such as an additional attraction. Some communities with large numbers of historically significant churches have offer special events focusing on religious buildings. For example, in Providence, RI the Providence Preservation Society collaborated with the Greater Providence Convention and Visitors Bureau to develop a four-color brochure featuring Providence's historic downtown churches. To celebrate the completion of this brochure and to draw attention to these historic churches, a holiday event called "Divine Providence" was offered featuring tours of historic churches along with choir and organ performances and opportunities. Rural regions can also capitalize on their religious heritage. For example, a Religious Heritage Trail was created in southern Tennessee to highlight many of the unique historic religious buildings in the region.

Private Residences

While many privately-owned residences can be enjoyed from the public right-of-way, it is important to remember that heritage tourism efforts must protect the privacy of owners. Potential heritage tourism experiences including private residences could include walking or driving tours that allow visitors to view the exteriors of historic homes, or tours offered at specific times of year when certain homes might be opened to the public for a special event with the permission of the homeowner. To be effective as a tourism strategy, the historic house tour must be offered on a regular basis at the same time of year (though different homes may be open each year).

Archeological Sites

Archeological sites can be subject to unauthorized trespass or looting, and in many cases the locations are restricted. However, some sites such as the Hudson-Meng Bison Kill Site near Crawford are accessible to visitors. Archeological sites should not be considered for interpretation unless careful consideration is given to how to effectively balance the need to protect the archeological artifacts with the desired interpretation of the site.

Farms and Ranches

While most of Nebraska's historic farms and ranches are not readily accessible to the public, there may be opportunities to collaborate with Nebraska's agritourism partners to explore ways to create visitor experiences around some of these resources. Assisting the owners of historic farms and ranches to develop potential agritourism opportunities can provide these farmer and ranchers with a way to diversify their sources of income and potentially keep their properties in agricultural use.

Bridges

Although many historic bridges are located on public right-of-way, most are in remote rural areas. For example, the following historic bridges are located in towns or along trafficked highways:

- Bryan Bridge (near Valentine)
- Meridian Highway Bridge (Yankton, SD)
- Brownville Bridge (Brownville)
- Plattsmouth Bridge (near Plattsmouth)
- Saddle Creek Underpass (Omaha)
- Tekamah City Bridge (Tekamah)
- Columbus Loup River Bridge (Columbus)

Historic bridges are yet another type of historic structure that could be included in a driving tour or other heritage tourism experience.

State Historical Markers

The Nebraska State Historical Society is responsible for commemorating significant events, people, places, sites, movements, and traditions in Nebraska history by coordinating the erection of historical markers. The state historic markers are cast aluminum signs featuring the state seal with silver letters against a blue background. There are currently over 500 state historical markers erected across the state. Although most are located on highways through the cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Roads, they can also be found in other highly visible locations. Markers interpret the following:

- Events, personalities, places, sites, movements, or traditions of local statewide or national significance.
- Localities of national, state, county, or community-wide significance
- Buildings and historic sites of significance.

Natural Attractions

Heritage attractions are shaped and influenced by a variety of factors including the natural environment around them. Providing heritage travelers opportunities to experience heritage attractions within the larger context of a cultural landscape offers a more meaningful experience. In addition, several national studies of heritage travelers have found that the audience for heritage attractions likes to experience a broad variety of attractions. In particular, state and national parks ranking high on the list of compatible experiences to pair with historic sites and museums. Nebraska offers a number of dramatic natural landscapes that can provide compatible experiences with heritage attractions. Tourism consultant Ted Eubanks of Fermata, Inc. underscored the connection between nature-based and heritage tourism in a February 2010 article appearing in the *Omaha World Herald*. In the article “Nebraska Tourism Potential Seen,” Eubanks advised tourism leaders to look closely at all the potential visitor amenities and attractions in their regions, including historical sites and natural vistas. Eubanks noted “Brands based on nature, culture and history are indelible. You can’t erase them. No one else can take them.”

IV. HERITAGE TOURISM RESEARCH FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Organizations Supporting Heritage Tourism in Nebraska

While there currently is no statewide entity or program dedicated to heritage tourism in Nebraska, a number of existing organizations (including virtually all of the organizations represented on the Project Committee) provide support for heritage tourism. Many of these statewide organizations have strategic plans which address heritage tourism goals. As Nebraska moves forward to create a statewide heritage tourism effort, it will be important to seek out opportunities to collaborate on the shared heritage tourism goals identified in these long range plans. In addition, these statewide organizations should be key partners working together to contribute to a statewide heritage tourism effort.

Heritage Nebraska

Heritage Nebraska (www.heritagenebraska.org) is “a statewide non-profit organization celebrating history through advocacy, education, outreach, preservation and stewardship.” Heritage Nebraska also serves as Nebraska’s statewide Main Street program, bringing the Main Street Four Point Approach™ of design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring to historic business districts in Nebraska. In addition to serving as additional heritage attractions, Nebraska’s Main Street business districts can also provide critical visitors services such as restaurants, shopping and lodging for travelers in a historic setting that contributes to the overall visitor experience.

National Park Service

In addition to having the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service in Omaha, there are several National Monuments in Nebraska operated by the National Park Service which include interpretive centers. This includes Scotts Bluff National Monument in Gering; Agate Fossil Beds National Monument near Harrison; and Homestead National Monument in Beatrice. The National Park Service also manages five National Historic Trails in Nebraska, which mark the historical importance and the interpretation of these historic trails in Nebraska.

Nebraska Community Improvement Program (NCIP)

The Nebraska Community Improvement Program provides assistance to communities with a population of 50,000 or less to help them build on their resources to address their challenges. NCIP is a collaboration between the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and natural gas and telephone companies. NCIP helps to coordinate an annual Governor’s Conference on Rural Development each November.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development

The Division of Travel and Tourism (www.visitnebraska.org) is responsible for marketing Nebraska’s tourism attractions at the state level. In addition, the division provides how-to assistance for the industry including conferences, tourism research, “how-to” information and technical assistance including tourism assessments. They sponsor an annual statewide Travel Conference each October, and a Governor’s conference on Agri-Tourism and Eco-Tourism in February.

The Nebraska Tourism Division offers marketing grants of between \$2-10,000 that can be used for events or promotional efforts as well as a Community Development Block Grant Program, which offers grants of \$50,000-300,000 to help develop attractions that are anticipated to attract more than 2,500 visitors traveling from at least 100 miles away.

The draft *2010-2015 Nebraska Tourism Industry Development Plan* cites several opportunities for heritage tourism including the observation that “more than ever before, there are entrepreneurial opportunities for attraction development targeting more restricted, or niche, markets. The Nebraska and U.S. traveling population is increasingly varied in its racial, ethnic, and cultural mix, and there is also a growing market of international travelers.”

Nebraska Department of Roads

The mission of the Nebraska Department of Roads is “to provide and maintain, in cooperation with public and private organizations, a safe, reliable, affordable, environmentally compatible and coordinated statewide transportation system for the movement of people and goods.” The 1995 Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan “Future Transportation in Nebraska: 1995-2015” includes several heritage tourism related recommendations including:

- increasing the emphasis on scenic and historic byways, historic sites, and hiking and biking trails
- promoting the development of tourism, historical and recreational facilities
- adding more directional signs and historical markers
- enhancing tourism and recreation
- recognizing and preserving historic, environmental and scenic resources

The Nebraska Byways Program within the Department of Roads currently includes nine designated scenic and historic byways, with one or more byways found in each of the state’s six travel regions. Every tourism region of the state has at least two byways, and all but one byway travel through two or more tourism regions. Nebraska’s byways serve as key travel routes to help travelers experience virtually all of the state.

Two of the nine state designated byways, Sandhills Journey and the Lincoln Highway Scenic & Historic Byway, have expressed interest in pursuing National Scenic Byway designation. The Lincoln Highway has already received National Scenic Byway designation in several other states such as Illinois. Pursuing national designation is highly recommended as nationally designated National Scenic Byways receive greater national recognition and preference for National Scenic Byways Program grant funding.

Nebraska’s byways include:

- *385-Gold Rush Byway* (US-385 from Nebraska/Colorado state line to Nebraska/South Dakota state line in the Panhandle Region)
- *Bridges to Buttes Byway* (US-20 from Valentine to Nebraska/Wyoming state line in the Panhandle and Sandhills Regions)

- *Heritage Highway* (US-136 from Brownville to Edison in the Frontier Trails and Pioneer Country Regions)
- *Lewis & Clark Scenic Byway* (US-75 from Omaha to South Sioux City in the Metro and Lewis & Clark Regions)
- *Lincoln Highway Scenic & Historic Byway* (US-30 from the Nebraska/Iowa state line to the Nebraska/Wyoming state line in the Metro, Lewis & Clark, Frontier Trails, Prairie Lakes and Panhandle Regions)
- *Loup Rivers Scenic Byway* (NE-11 and NE-91 from Wood River to Dunning in the Frontier Trails and Sandhills Regions)
- *Outlaw Trail Scenic Byway* (NE-12 from South Sioux City to Valentine in the Lewis & Clark and Sandhills Regions)
- *Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway* (NE-2 from Grand Island to Alliance in the Frontier Trails, Sandhills and Panhandle regions)
- *Western Trails Scenic & Historic Byway* (US-26 and NE-92 from Ogallala to Nebraska/Wyoming state line in the Prairie Lakes and Sandhills Regions)

Every byway has a committee to oversee marketing and development efforts, and each byway is charged with developing a corridor management plan. Nebraska's byways have been very successful in securing marketing grants from the National Scenic Byways Programs in the past, and the byways staff has worked closely with the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism. There is a statewide Nebraska Byways advisory committee that includes representatives from the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and Nebraska State Historical Society.

In addition, the Department of Roads oversees signing programs including guide signs on the State Highway system for museums and attractions (brown or green signs) as well as the blue Tourist Oriented Directional or "TODS" signs. The Museum and Attraction guide signs are made available at no cost to heritage attractions that meet the criteria outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual (Policy 238.4). TODS signs are available for heritage attractions that meet the TODS criteria for an annual fee. Fees for TODS signs are \$420 per year per sign (with a sign required for each direction of travel) as well as \$120 per year per trailblazer sign to provide directions from the roadway. Currently none of Nebraska's heritage attractions have opted to have a TODS sign, presumably because of the annual fees and the fact that qualifying museums can have a green or brown sign at no cost.

While a number of museums and attractions have the green or brown sign, there is no list available to identify or quantify the number of Nebraska heritage attractions with these signs. The policies and procedures for TODS signs as well as the green or brown museum and attraction signs are fairly similar, both requiring that the museum or attraction be within five miles of a state highway. To be eligible for a museum and attraction sign, museums must be approved by the Nebraska State Historical Society, have sufficient parking and public restrooms, be open at least 6 days a week for a minimum of 32 hours per week, and must have a sign with hours at the museum's main entrance. Seasonal museums may participate, but signs must be removed or covered during the off season.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission serves as the steward for Nebraska's fish, wildlife, park and outdoor recreation resources, balancing the needs of visitors and the resources. The Game and Parks Commission operates 85 state parks, including those designated as State Historical Parks and Fort Robinson, a state park with a full range of facilities, as well as a museum operated by the Nebraska State Historical Society:

- Arbor Lodge, Nebraska City
- Ash Hollow, near Lewellan
- Ashfall Fossil Beds, near Orchard
- Bowring Ranch, Merriman
- Buffalo Bill Ranch, also known as Scout's Rest Ranch, North Platte
- Champion Mill, Champion
- Fort Atkinson, Fort Calhoun
- Fort Hartsuff, near Burwell
- Fort Kearny, near Kearney
- Fort Robinson State Park, near Crawford
- Rock Creek Station, near Fairbury

Several of the State Historical Parks are connected to historic trails in Nebraska such as the Lewis and Clark Trail, the Oregon Trail, the California Trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail and the Pony Express National Historic Trail. For example, Rock Creek Station State Historical Park has connections to the California, Oregon and Pony Express Trails. Fort Kearny State Historical Park was built to protect travelers on the Overland Trail and also served as a stop on the Pony Express, and Ash Hollow State Historical Park was a stop on the Overland Trail. All five National Historic Trails are managed by the National Park Service. Many of the State Historical Parks also include properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The commission's operations also include other activities that interpret history or offer recreational opportunities, such as interpretive centers, living history performances and outdoor activities. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* (SCORP) includes information about interest in visiting historic sites as one of a number of potential outdoor recreation activities available in Nebraska's state parks.

Nebraska Humanities Council

The Nebraska Humanities Council (www.nebraskahumanities.org) provides three kinds of grants (mini grants, major grants and media grants), a "Humanities Resource Center" with traveling exhibits, a speakers bureau, and a Chautauqua program with scholars portraying historical characters. The "Museum on Main Street" program brings traveling exhibits from the Smithsonian to small rural neighborhood museums. The Nebraska Humanities Council is embarking on a strategic planning process that will include a cultural tourism component.

Nebraska Museums Association (www.nebraskamuseums.org)

The Nebraska Museums Association is an all volunteer non-profit organization created in 1990 to provide assistance to Nebraska's museums. There are more than 200 museums in Nebraska, and many operate from historic places. They are open to the public and most interpret local history and lifestyles of the past. Curators and volunteers at Nebraska's museums are a wealth of information about local history and places to visit.

Nebraska State Historical Society

The Nebraska State Historical Society (www.nebraskahistory.org) is the state entity charged with safeguarding and interpreting Nebraska's past. The Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) operates museums and historic sites statewide including its research and historic preservation programs at the NSHS headquarters, the Nebraska History Museum, the Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center, and historic sites. The Nebraska State Historical Society operates seven historic sites interpreted to recognize famous Nebraskans, western settlement and other areas of statewide or national importance. These sites include:

- Willa Cather State Historic Site, Red Cloud
- John G. Neihardt State Historic Site, Bancroft
- Neligh Mill State Historic Site, Neligh
- Chimney Rock National Historic Site, near Bayard
- Kennard House, Nebraska Statehood Memorial, Lincoln
- Fort Robinson Museum, near Crawford
- George Norris State Historic Site, McCook

NSHS also oversees the state highway's historical marker program which currently includes more than 500 markers statewide, most located on highways and administered cooperatively with the Nebraska Department of Roads.

Nebraska's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is a division of the NSHS. The SHPO administers the National Register of Historic Places program for Nebraska which currently includes over 1,000 listings and also conducts the Nebraska Historic Resources Survey & Inventory (NeHRSI) which has documented more than 72,000 historic resources in Nebraska to date.

The NSHS offers a variety of resources for teachers including the Nebraska Institute, a summer training program that helps teachers learn how to use primary source materials to teach Nebraska history. The Nebraska Institute is jointly sponsored by Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln Public Schools and the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The State Historic Preservation Plan for Nebraska, *Building on the Historic and Cultural Foundations of Nebraska: 2007-2011*, includes several heritage tourism recommendations, including demonstrating the economic impact of heritage tourism and establishing a heritage tourism program for Nebraska. The

plan identifies three strategies for Nebraska's heritage tourism program to increase and enhance visitation for Nebraska:

- 1) Develop a statewide heritage tourism marketing plan to promote significant historic sites and activities in Nebraska
- 2) Coordinate tourism councils and Nebraska Byways organizations to promote regional heritage tourism activities.
- 3) Utilize the Community Development Block Grant program for tourism development initiatives.

Other Potential Heritage Tourism Partners

Several of the major heritage attractions represented on the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee provide technical and professional development assistance to other historic sites. For example, the Durham Museum sponsors an annual Teacher's Night to share information about school programs at area museums with teachers. Professional museum staff at both the Durham and the Stuhr Museum offer informal mentoring and assistance to smaller museums and historic sites. The National Park Service staff at Scotts Bluff National Monument is actively involved with regional tourism entities in the Panhandle, and has also provided assistance in securing National Park Service grants for projects such as the "Fossil Freeway".

Heritage tourism partnerships can include a wide range of likely (and unlikely) entities. Main Street businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureaus, arts councils, community development entities, economic development agencies, elected officials and other civic leaders can be key partners. Especially in smaller rural areas, potential partners can include an even broader array of potential partners ranging from church groups to youth groups to local service organizations.

Current Status of Nebraska's Heritage Attractions

Methodology

The Bureau of Business Research surveyed managers at heritage facilities as well as travelers at selected heritage sites to gather input from different perspectives. Copies of the survey instruments used to collect information are included in the Appendix of this report. Research efforts conducted as part of this study included:

1) Survey of Heritage Attractions

The Bureau of Business Research worked with the Nebraska State Historical Society to complete an inventory of Nebraska's historic sites open to the public as heritage tourism attractions. The 220 sites identified through this inventory process were surveyed with the "Survey of Heritage Attractions." This survey was mailed to all 220 heritage attractions, with 103 responding to the survey for a 46.8 percent response rate. A complete list of the 220 heritage attractions in the inventory is also included in the Appendix to this report.

2) Follow-Up Visits and Phone Calls

To expand on the findings of the Survey of Heritage Attractions, more in-depth personal surveys were conducted at 34 of the 220 heritage attractions in the inventory. This included follow-up visits at 24 heritage attractions and follow up phone calls with an additional 10 sites. See Figure 1 for a map of these locations.

During these on-site and phone interviews, questions were asked regarding information from the “Survey of Heritage Attractions” in hopes of cultivating a deeper understanding of the issues that facilities face. The duration of this section, references ‘follow-up’ visits to describe information gathered through this process.

In person visits:

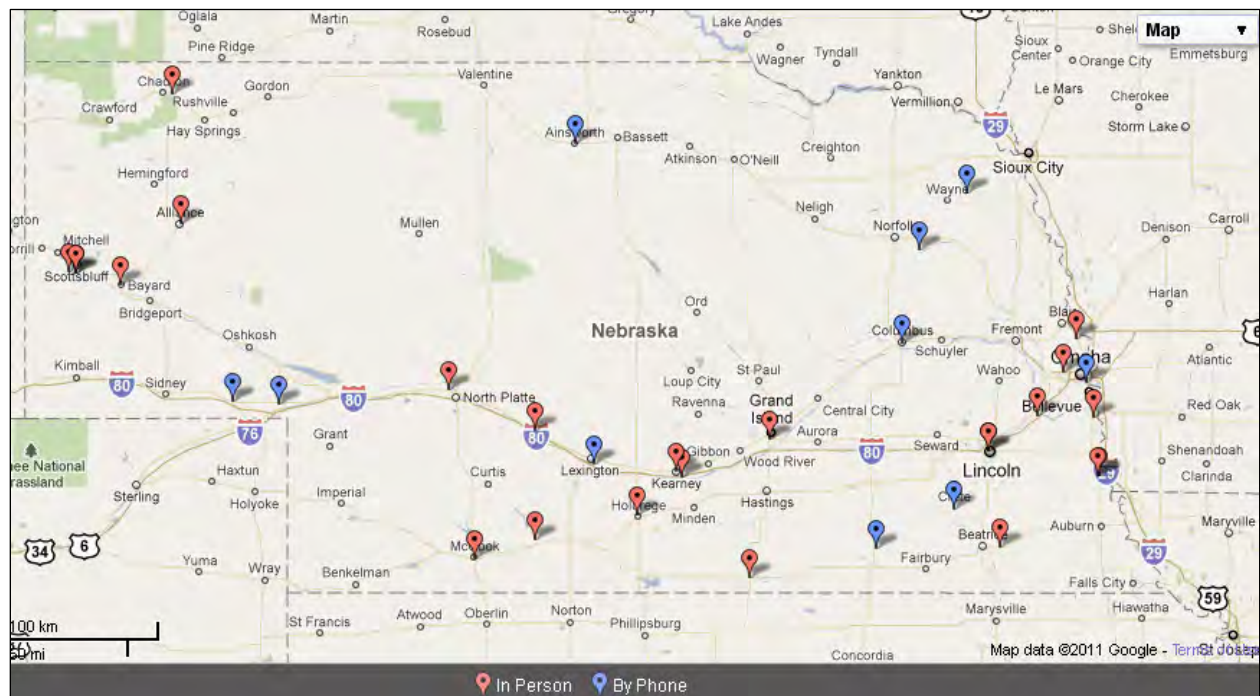
Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage
Trails & Rails Museum
Great Platte River Road Archway Monument
Plattsmouth Conservancy
Museum of the Fur Trade
Dawson County Historical Society
Girls and Boys Town Hall of History
Homestead National Monument of America
Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer
Nebraska History Museum
Nebraska State Museum, Morrill Hall
Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park
Chimney Rock Visitor Center
Nebraska City Museum Association
Nebraska Prairie Museum
High Plains Historical Society and Museum
Strategic Air & Space Museum
North Platte Valley Historical Association and Museum

Scotts Bluff National Monument
Farm and Ranch Museum
Fort Atkinson State Historical Park
Willa Cather State Historic Site
Civil War Veterans Museum
Cambridge Museum

Phone Calls:

Thayer County Historical Society and Museum
Wakefield Train Depot
Mexican American Historical Society of the Midlands
Dvoracek Library
Stanton Heritage Museum
Union Pacific Depot Museum
Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles
Sudman-Neumann Heritage House
Platte County Historical Society Museum
Brown County Historical Society

Figure 1: Follow-Up Visits and Phone Calls



3) Survey of Heritage Visitors

The Bureau also conducted the “Survey of Heritage Visitors”, taking the opinions of 330 visitors at twelve of the 220 historical attractions across Nebraska included in the inventory. These twelve attractions included:

- Boys Town , Omaha
- Great Platte River Road Archway, Kearney
- Stuhr Museum, Grand Island
- Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage, Alliance
- Museum of the Fur Trade, Chadron
- The Strategic Air and Space Museum, Ashland
- Homestead National Monument, Beatrice
- International Quilt Study Center and Museum, Lincoln
- Nebraska State Capitol (Office of the Capital Commission), Lincoln
- The Durham Museum, Omaha
- Nebraska History Museum, Lincoln
- Morrill Hall, Lincoln

Survey Findings

Responses to the “Survey of Heritage Visitors” at selected heritage attractions indicate a strong interest in Nebraska’s history (see Table 4). Just over 98 percent of visitors surveyed indicated that learning about the history or heritage of the area they are visiting is either very important (55.03%) or somewhat important (43.08%).

Table 4: Importance of Heritage Tourism to Visitors

How important is it to you to visit sites where you can learn about history/heritage of the area?	Percentage
Very Important	55.03%
Somewhat important	43.08%
Not at all important	1.89%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

Additionally, more than thirty percent (32.77 percent) of travelers indicated that the historical aspects of the facility were the reason the traveler was visiting that location. As one traveler indicated “the history behind this location piqued my interest” (Table 5).

Table 5: Visitor Motivation for Travel and Facility Grade

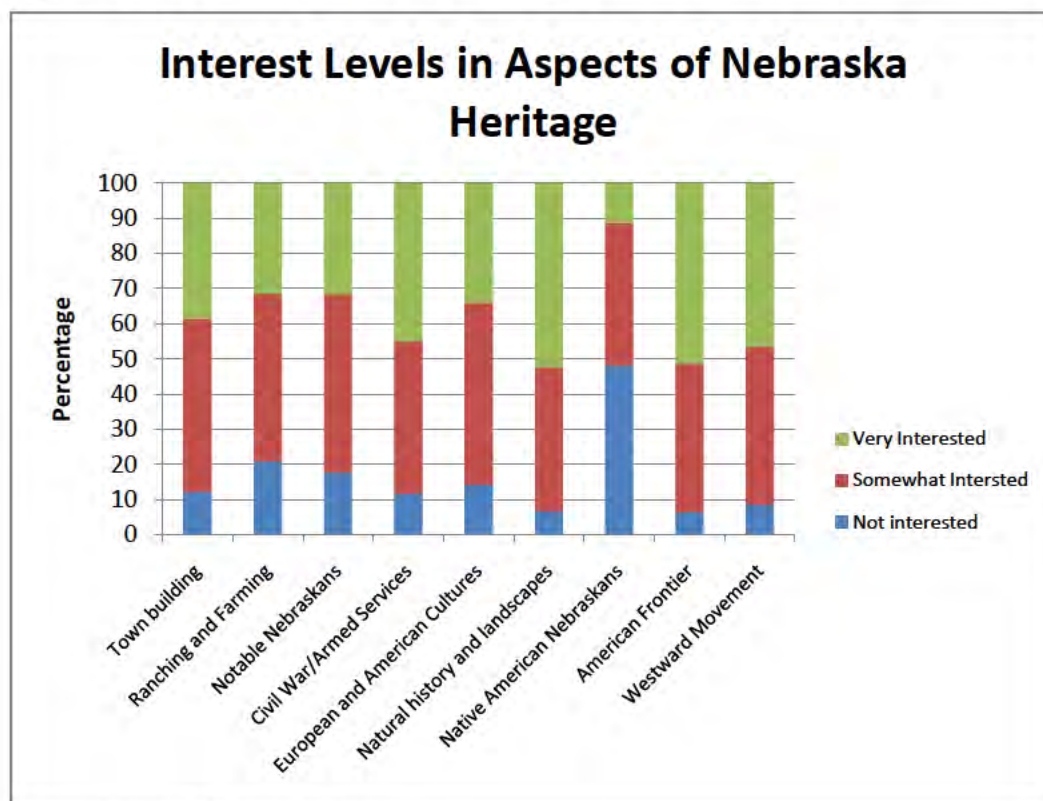
What interested you in visiting this location?	Percentage
In area of original visit	37.25%
History of location	32.77%
Other group member picked	5.6%
Other	24.37%
How would you grade this facility? (Grade A-F)	
A	76.5%
B	19.36%
C	2.86%
D	0.95%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

Close to 25 percent of visitors indicated an ‘other’ reason for visiting. These responses varied from wanting to attend a special event at a particular location, to having a personal interest in the museum’s contents. For example, several visitors to the Strategic Air & Space museum noted that they or their spouse were former pilots. Seventy-six percent were very satisfied with their experience, giving the facility an “A” (on a scale of A to F) to grade the facility based on their expectations.

The “Survey of Heritage Visitors” also sought to measure the interest level of visitors toward various historical subject areas. As shown in Figure 2, each of the nine subject areas showed visitors being “very interested” or “somewhat interested” at a rate above 50 percent. The development of historical themes has been included in this report (see Chapter V).

Figure 2: Visitor Interest in Nebraska's Heritage



Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

Current Visitors at Nebraska's Heritage attractions

The "Survey of Heritage Visitors" also gathered information about visitor travel patterns and group size (Table 6). Of the 330 visitors surveyed, over 25 percent traveled in groups of five or more people, with nearly 8 percent traveling in groups of 10 or more. Day trip visits to a historical site accounted for 62 percent of all visits.

Table 6: Visitor Travel Patterns (A) (Continued to next page)

Number of people in group	Percentage
1-4	73.16%
5-9	18.85%
10+	7.98%
Is the trip a day-trip or overnight?	
Day trip	62.46%
Overnight	37.54%
Of the overnight trips...	
1-3 nights	45.38%
4-7 nights	44.54%
8+ nights	10.08%

Distance willing to travel

<10 miles	1.35%
11-50 miles	26.9%
51-100 miles	21.97%
101-200 miles	24.21%
201+ miles	25.56%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

Of the nearly 38 percent whose trips included overnight stays, 54 percent were for four nights or more. The majority of visitors also indicated they had visited one or more heritage attractions within the last year. Finally, nearly 50 percent of visitors were willing to travel over 100 miles in order to visit a historical site and slightly more than a quarter were willing to travel more than 200 miles, a strong indication that visitors are willing to travel to experience Nebraska's historic sites.

Analysis of further travel patterns show that nearly 38 percent of visitors will travel to a heritage attraction more than two times a year. While summer accounted for the most popular season for historical travel (63.6 percent), nearly 20 percent of visitors did not have a preferred season. In fact, information from the "Survey of Heritage Attractions" showed that 53.6 percent of museums remain open all year. So, while summer remains the focus of many travelers, it is possible museums could find ways to attract offseason travelers.

Over 40 percent of respondents stated that their main travel motivation is recreation, but 7.63 percent stated that seeing a specific location or event was their main motivation for visiting a historic site.

Table 7: Visitor Travel Patterns (B)

How often do you visit heritage attractions within a year?	Percentage
1-2 times	61.92%
3-4 times	24.69%
5+ times	13.39%
What time of the year do you prefer to visit heritage attractions?	
Spring	8.46%
Summer	63.6%
Fall	8.09%
Winter	0%
Year round/doesn't matter	19.85%
When you travel, is it generally for...	
Business	5.9%
Recreation	42.36%
Time with family	30.56%
To see family	13.54%
To see a specific location/event	7.63%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

During follow-up interviews for the “Survey of Heritage Attractions,” Nebraska’s heritage facilities gave varied answers when asked whether they serve a local market or people outside the local market. Many responded that their visitors are a mixture from the region and from outside a 100-mile radius. The survey also showed that the Core 27 heritage attractions enjoyed visitation on average of above 50,000 a year (Table 8). Other heritage attractions averaged roughly 2,300 visitors a year, though a large standard deviation existed for both groups. While the survey shows that an individual site averaged just below 14,000 visitors a year, dividing the responding facilities into visitation ranges show that the majority experienced only 2,500 or fewer visitors per year. That said, over 20 percent saw visitation of 10,000 or greater. The high percentage (61.8 percent) of museums with visitation of less than 2,500/year is significant as these heritage attractions (as well as some of the heritage attractions in the 2,500-10,000 category) would not be eligible for CDBG funding due to the requirement that attractions receiving CDBG funds must attract 2,500 or more visitors a year who originate from 100+ miles from the site.

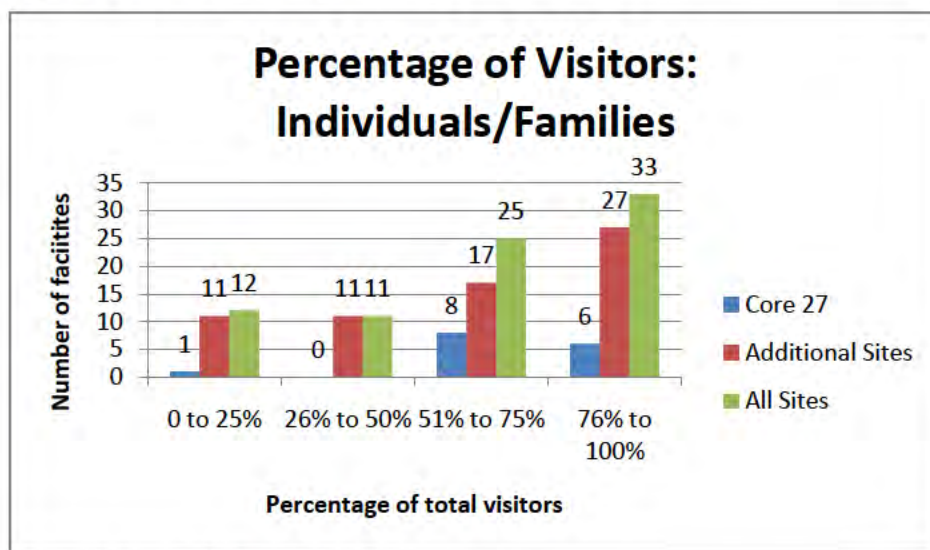
Table 8: Heritage Attraction Visitation

How many people visited your facility in 2010?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Average	51,882	2,361	13,863
Standard Deviation	46,438	5,724	30,423
Visitation by year	Facilities	Percentage	
> 2,500	55	61.8%	
2,500-10,000	16	18%	
10,000-50,000	10	11.2%	
50,000+	8	9%	

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

The “Survey of Heritage Attractions” asked heritage site managers to provide a breakdown of annual visitation by five categories: individual/families, group tours, school tours, special events, and other. As Figure 3 shows, individuals and families made up a significant proportion of visitors across all heritage attractions. In fact, families and individuals constituted 50 percent or more of the visitors at over half of the heritage attractions surveyed.

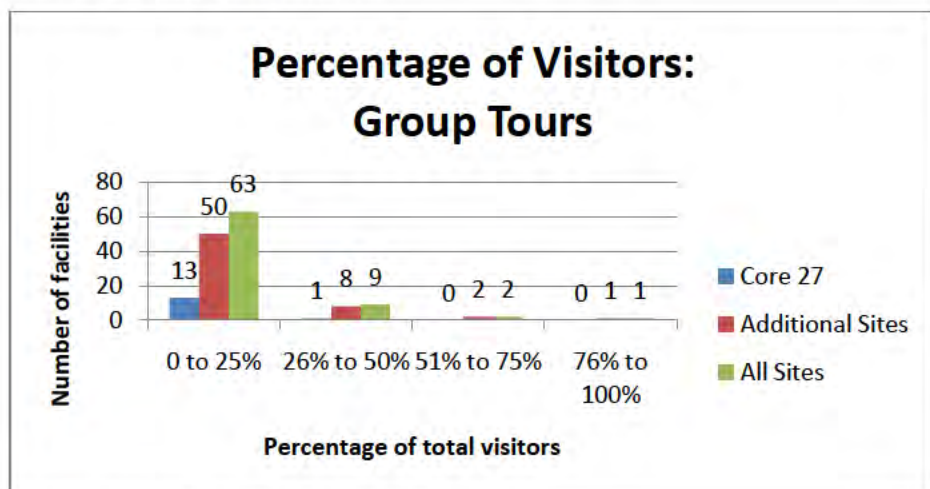
Figure 3: Individual/Family Travelers



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

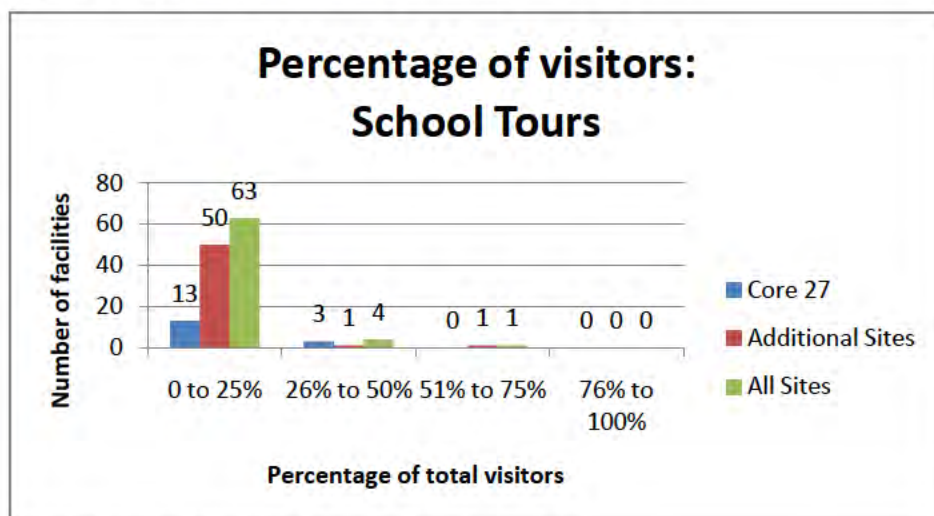
Group tours (Figure 4) and school tours (Figure 5) made up the next greatest representation of visitors, with each group making up between 0 and 25 percent of visitors for all heritage attractions. However, some facilities do enjoy a greater number of school and group tours, as the graphs display. Finally, “other” visitors make up a relatively small percentage of overall visitations for the majority of heritage attractions.

Figure 4: Group Tour Travelers



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

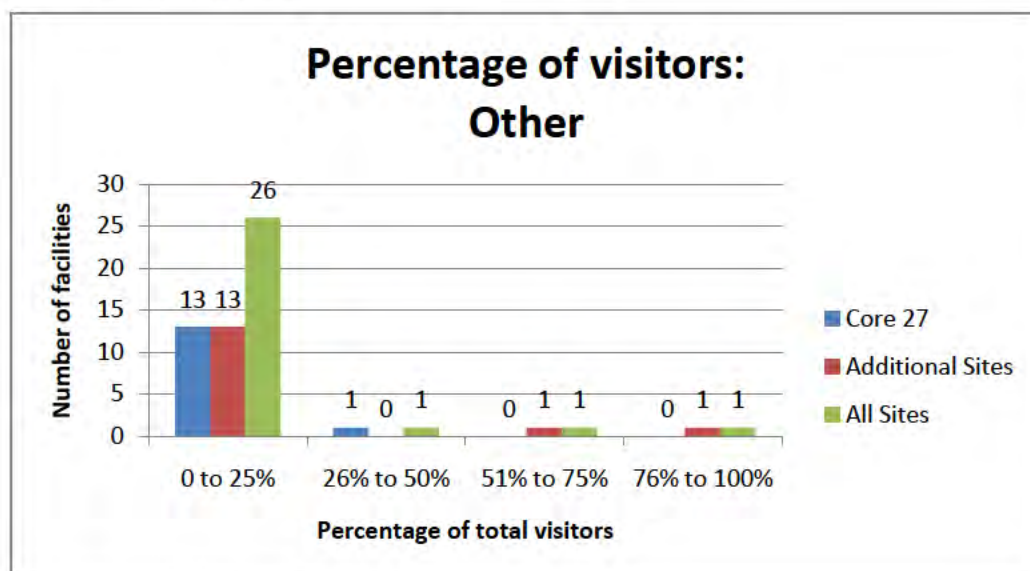
Figure 5: School Tour Travelers



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

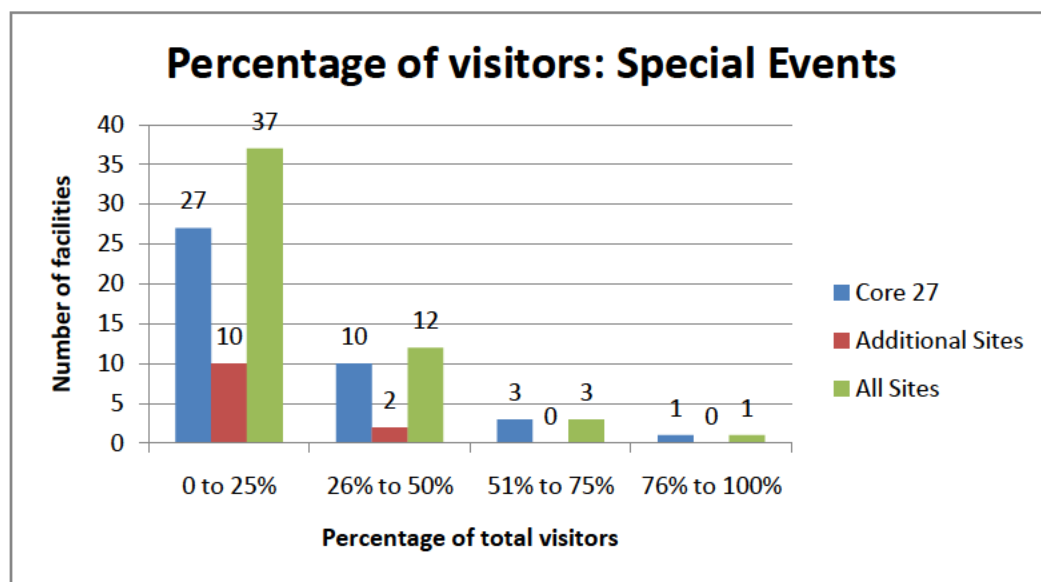
For the “other” category of visitors, heritage facilities that reported this number did not always specify exactly what constituted this type of visitor. For some heritage attractions, this figure represented research groups who conducted excavations on their grounds. For other heritage attractions with access to high traffic areas, it was people who were passing through and merely stopped to use the restroom facilities. While the number of facilities who reported this was statistically significant, a majority did not put this figure above 5 or 6 percent.

Figure 6: Other Travelers



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Figure 7: Special Event Travelers



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

While the majority of attractions reported that special events draw in between 0 and 25 percent of overall visitation, many other attractions see a greater percentage of their visitation come from such events. In fact, for those heritage attractions that host special events, visitors make up a significant share of their tourists (Figure 7). Attractions who claim special events comprised over 20 percent of their overall visitation are from special events include The Knights Museum of High Plains Heritage, the Dawson County Museum, the Nebraska Prairie Museum, Fort Atkinson, and the Willa Cather Historic State Historic Site.

Clearly, individuals and families are a strong target audience for Nebraska's heritage attractions. Although group tours currently make up a smaller percentage of overall visitations at heritage attractions, group tour experiences may provide a cost effective opportunity for smaller sites to provide a meaningful and compelling visitor experience to a target audience. For example, if smaller heritage attractions have the opportunity to plan ahead for a group tour, it could be possible to provide additional staff and enhanced programming geared towards a specific audience for a specific time. It also allows for the potential of "packaging" a variety of attractions for tours. For heritage attractions with the facilities and capacity to host special events, this can be another effective way to expand visitation and increase revenues.

The "Survey of Heritage Visitors" also asked for demographic data from respondents. As shown in Table 9, nearly 52 percent of the 330 visitors surveyed were female. While a significant percentage of respondents were born before 1970 (69.85), over 30 percent were 41 years old or younger. Finally, visitors indicated that over 44 percent had incomes of \$70,000 or greater, indicating that Nebraska's heritage travelers have a high income level.

Table 9: Visitor Demographics

Gender	Percentage
Male	48.03%
Female	51.97%
In what year were you born?	
1930-1940's	27.48%
1950-1960's	42.37%
1970-1980s	28.47%
1990s	1.7%
What is your income bracket?	
<\$20,000	6.7%
\$20,000-\$40,000	16.54%
\$40,000-\$70,000	32.67%
\$70,000-\$100,000	17.32%
>\$100,000	26.77%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

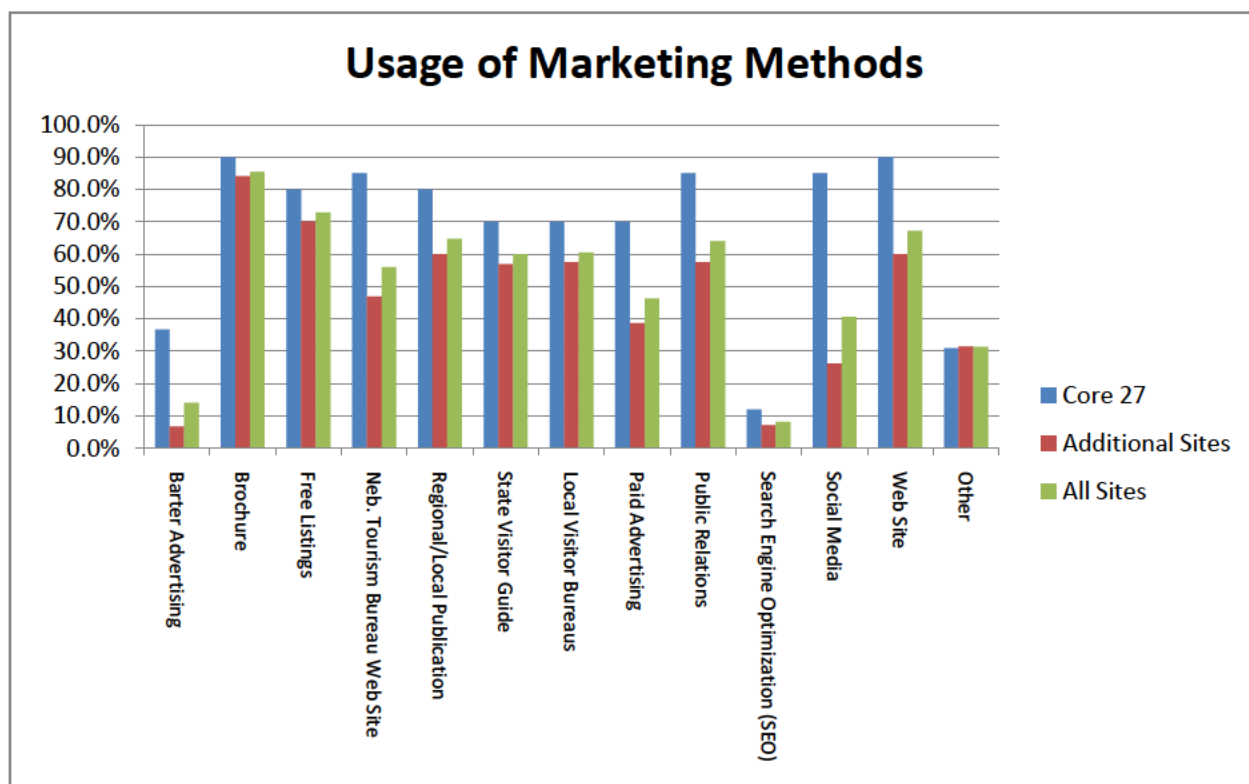
Current Marketing Efforts at Nebraska's Heritage Attractions

When asked whether they actively promote their sites, 100 percent of Core 27 heritage attraction respondents said "Yes," while just 78.6 percent of all other sites responded affirmatively. The ways these heritage attractions promote themselves differ between the Core 27 and other sites.

- 36.7 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions use Barter Advertising, while only 6.8 percent of other sites use it. Overall, 14.1 percent of all heritage attractions utilize barter advertising. Barter advertising is defined as ads that are paid for through a trade or barter rather than with cash.
- 80 percent of Core 27 sites use a Regional or Local Tourism Bureau Publication, while 70.1 percent of other sites use it. Overall, 72.9 percent of all heritage attractions utilize a regional or local tourism bureau publication.
- 70 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions use Paid Advertising, while just 38.7 percent of other sites use it. Overall, 46.3 percent of all heritage attractions use paid advertising.
- 85 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions use Social Media, while only 26.2 percent of other sites use it. Overall, 40.7 percent of all heritage attractions use social media.
- 90 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions have a web site, while 60 percent of other sites have one. Overall, 67.1 percent of all heritage attractions have a web site.

Responses from the heritage attractions as to whether they use various types of marketing channels indicate discrepancies across the board between marketing at the Core 27 heritage attractions and other heritage attractions (see Figure 8), with discrepancies being the greatest in areas such as barter advertising, paid advertising, social media and web sites. Other less expensive areas such as brochures and free listings showed the least amount of difference between the two groups. Websites were the most used tool for the Core 27 heritage attractions while brochures were the most used marketing tool for all other sites. Search engine optimization (SEO) was the least used marketing tool overall.

Figure 8: Marketing Methods



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

During the follow up visits, site directors were asked about several marketing topics. When asked to specify the local or regional tourism publications their heritage attractions are listed in, the Core 27 heritage attractions mentioned *Journey Magazine*, *Nebraska Life*, and *True West*. Those in the southeast region ranked the *Southeast Nebraska Visitor's Guide*. When asked where they place their paid advertising, non-Core 27 heritage attractions answered *Nebraska Life* most commonly, with others also listing their local or regional newspaper. When asked to specify about the types of social media they utilize, both the Core 27 heritage attractions and other sites mentioned Facebook the most, with one site (the Stuhr Museum) utilizing Twitter and Facebook.

When asked to specify their target market in the follow up visits, the Core 27 heritage attractions gave varied answers. Some heritage attractions indicated young families were their target market, while others targeted out-of-town visitors in addition to the local population. Only one site specified that their target market was just their local market. Of the heritage attractions outside the Core 27, roughly half the respondents answered that they did not have a target market, while those who did answer gave a wide variety of responses. Seven responders indicated the specific demographic they targeted, such as school groups, families or younger visitors. Another five gave a region or area they targeted such as their own county or those from outside their immediate vicinity. In total, it was an impression that target markets for sites were quite varied and ill-defined, and perhaps the information gathered on the "Survey of Heritage Visitors" on visitors could help museums better identify types of visitors to target.

When asked about their most effective means of marketing in the follow up visits, the Core 27 heritage attractions again gave varied answers. Two heritage attractions specified being in the Nebraska Travel Guide as a key marketing tool, while other answers from sites ranged from paid advertising, partnering with other sites, the Internet and social media, brochures on I-80 stops and being in local visitors' guide. Non-Core 27 heritage attractions most commonly answered newspaper advertising, word of mouth, websites, local TV or radio, and free listings as their best source of marketing.

When asked about other means of marketing that have been effective in the follow up visits, Core 27 heritage attractions pointed to free admission, speakers on historical topics, and partnerships with other organizations. Other heritage attractions most commonly mentioned word of mouth.

The "Survey of Heritage Visitors" asked how the respondents had heard about the historical location they were currently visiting (Table 10). As the table below shows, over 50 percent heard about the site through word of mouth, while road signs, the Nebraska Tourism Bureau Web Site, and news articles proved the next three most common references.

Table 10: Marketing Channels

	Percentage
Word of Mouth	51.54%
Road Sign	13.89%
Tourism Bureau Web Site	12.96%
News Article	11.11%
Advertisement	10.19%
Flyer	9.26%
Other	7.41%
TV Commercial	6.48%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

The "Survey of Heritage Attractions" also asked about the proximity of facilities to major roadways and their current signage (Table 11). Across all heritage attractions, the facilities are within an average of 6.3 miles from a major roadway, with a large majority, 81.1 percent, indicating that their museum was within five miles of a major roadway. Over 52 percent of all facilities have signage from the roadway directing visitors to their site, and over 93 percent possess signs to mark the entrance to their site.

The need for better signage was identified in survey after survey for the non-Core 27 heritage attractions. The findings show that a significant amount of these heritage attractions could meet the signage requirement for attractions to be located within 5 miles of a state highway (though it should be noted that the survey specified "major roadway" rather than "state highway"). Regardless, these signage programs (and especially the green and brown museum and attraction signs) are resources that could be researched and utilized by heritage attractions in need of the assistance.

Table 11: Heritage Attraction Access and Signage

How far (in miles) is your facility/site from the nearest major roadway?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Average	11.2	4.94	6.3
Miles from the nearest major roadway	Facilities	Percentage	
> 5	77	81.1%	
6-15	6	6.3%	
15+	12	12.6%	
Is there signage from the roadway to your facility/site?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Yes	80%	45.3%	52.6%
No	20%	54.7%	47.4%
Do you have a sign to mark the entrance of your facility/site?			
Yes	90%	93.4%	92.7%
No	10%	6.6%	7.3%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

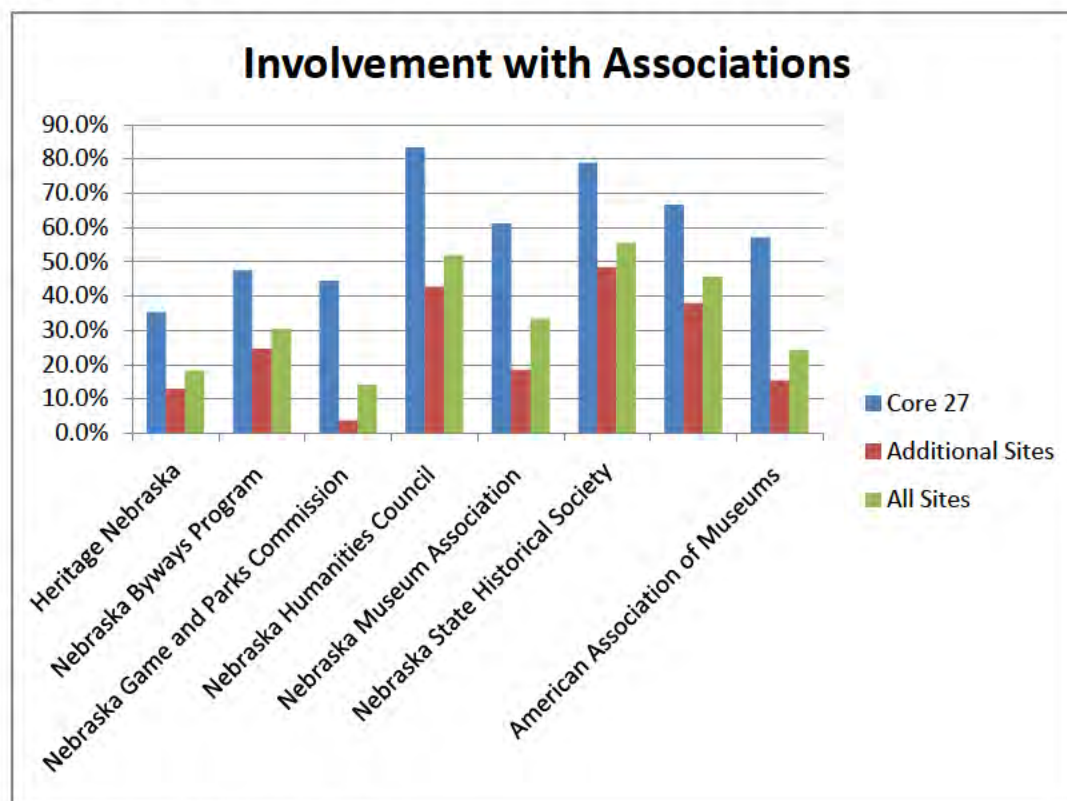
Current Involvement with Associations

Across all state and national associations listed in the Survey of Heritage Attractions, the Core 27 was affiliated with more associations on average than those outside the Core 27. On average, each of the Core 27 heritage attractions was affiliated with four of the associations, while a non-Core 27 site was, on average, affiliated with only one or two associations.

Specifically,

- Heritage attractions were most likely to be affiliated with the Nebraska Humanities Council, the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism.
- 78.9 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions had involvement with the Nebraska State Historical Society, while 48.4 percent of non-Core 27 heritage attractions were involved. Overall, 55.4 percent of all sites maintained involvement with the Nebraska State Historical Society.
- 66.6 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions had involvement with the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, while just 37.9 percent of non-Core 27 heritage attractions were involved. Overall, 45.6 percent of all heritage attractions cited involvement with the Division of Travel and Tourism.
- 61.1 percent of Core 27 heritage attractions had involvement with the Nebraska Museums Association, while only 18.5 percent of other sites were involved. Overall, 33.3 percent of all heritage attractions claimed involvement with the Nebraska Museums Association.

Figure 9: Association Involvement



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Greatest Needs at Heritage Attractions

The "Survey of Heritage Attractions" asked about the greatest need for the various sites. Not surprisingly, grants and financial aid stood out as the area where sites feel the most help can occur across all sites. As indicated in Table 12, marketing assistance and signage also stood out as top priority need for the facilities.

Table 12: Most Important Priority Needs for Communities

Which item would best serve the needs of your facility/site?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Technical Assistance/Training	0%	6.3%	4.8%
Marketing Assistance	13.3%	18.8%	17.5%
Grants/Financial Aid	73.3%	54.8%	58.7%
Signage to your facility/site	13.3%	12.5%	12.7%
Other	0%	8.3%	6.3%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Current Visitor Experience at Heritage Attractions

The “Survey of Heritage Attractions” showed that 72 percent of all sites had tour guides, while nearly 13 percent made use of virtual tour guides such as audio systems and podcasts. Answers to this question were not mutually exclusive, and heritage attractions were allowed to check more than one. In fact, as referenced from Table 13, many heritage attractions chose both tour guides and self-guided.

Information gathered across follow-up reports showed that the larger and better-funded facilities were more likely to have audio or virtual tour guides. Based upon responses from this question, it can be concluded that the majority of heritage attractions can be experienced with the help of a tour guide or through self-guided tours. Virtual tour guides that incorporate technology as part of the interpretive experience are used by less than a third (31.6 percent) of the Core 27 heritage attractions and only by 8.1 percent of all other sites.

Table 13: Tour Features of Heritage Attractions

Please check all that apply to your facility:	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Our facility has tour guides	78.9%	70%	72%
Our facility has virtual tour guides (i.e. audio, podcast)	31.6%	8.1%	12.9%
Our facility is self-guided (i.e. brochures, printed maps)	85%	60.8%	65.6%
Other	25%	21.5%	22.2%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

As Table 14 shows, over 45 percent of facilities had either built a new facility or renovated in the last 10 years. In fact, nearly half of the respondents had renovated two or more times in that time. Over 18 percent of these facilities had also undergone a renovation in the last year. The average cost of these renovations was an average \$978,502 across all sites. The large standard deviation of \$2,429,160 indicates that reported costs varied widely.

Table 14: Renovation of Heritage Attractions (Continued to next page)

Have you renovated or built a new facility within the last 10 years?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Yes	60%	41.3%	45.3%
No	40%	58.7%	54.7%
If yes, how many times? (Number of facilities)			
0	0	7	7
1	4	13	17
2	4	5	9
3+	4	3	7
When was the last renovation?			
In last year	33.3%	12%	18.9%
In last 3 years	25%	52%	43.2%
In last 5 years	41.7%	36%	37.9%

Approximately what did it cost?

Average	\$1,509,090	\$745,043	\$978,502
Standard Deviation	\$2,114,097	\$2,518,983	\$2,429,160

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Further, the “Survey of Heritage Attractions” showed that over 32 percent of facilities had added new exhibits by expanding their space. The majority of all heritage attractions also reported that between 0 and 25 percent of facility space is dedicated to rotating exhibits. Additionally, facilities across all classifications showed that nearly 87 percent had changed their exhibits within the last year. The average cost for such an exhibit change came at just almost \$29,700 for heritage attractions in the Core 27 and just over \$1,650 for non-Core 27 heritage attractions.

Table 15: Expansion of Heritage Attraction Facilities

Has your facility added new exhibits by expanding its space?	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
Yes	56.3%	27.1%	32.6%
No	43.7%	72.9%	67.4%
What percentage of your facility is dedicated to changing/rotating exhibits? (number of facilities)			
0 to 25%	13	51	64
26 to 50%	1	10	11
51 to 75%	1	1	2
76 to 100%	1	3	4
If you've changed your exhibits recently, when was the last change?			
In last year	93.8%	84.8%	86.7%
In last 3 years	0%	0%	0%
In last 5 years	6.3%	15.2%	13.3%
Approximately what did it cost?			
Average	\$29,682	\$1,666.32	\$9,087
Standard Deviation	\$69,825	\$4,110	\$38,151

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

The “Survey of Heritage Attractions” also gathered information about the curators and directors of these historical sites. As Table 16 shows, 80 percent of Core 27 directors and 68 percent of all site directors held a college degree or higher. Further, 95 percent of directors at Core 27 were paid, while only 54 percent of all site directors were paid. Across all Attractions, directors held an average of 16.1 years of work experience and had been at their facility for an average of 12.6 years. This information demonstrates that the curators and directors of Nebraska’s historical sites are generally well-educated and have extensive work experience.

Table 16: Demographic Data of Heritage Attraction Directors and Curators

	Core 27	Other Attractions	All Attractions
What is your highest level of education? (percentage)			
Graduate Degree	25%	24%	24%
College Degree	65%	38%	44%
High School Degree	10%	38%	32%
Less than high school	0%	0%	0%
Are you a paid worker or volunteer? (percentage)			
Paid	95%	39%	51%
Volunteer	5%	56%	45%
Other	0%	5%	4%
How many years of work experience do you have in this field?			
Average	18.1	15.5	16.1
Standard Deviation	10.5	12.8	12.3
How many years have you, the director/manager, been at this facility			
Average	10.5	13.3	12.6
Standard Deviation	5.8	10.4	9.7

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Regional focus on Heritage Attractions

For the purposes of this analysis, the state was divided into seven regions (based on the regions used by the Division of Travel and Tourism), with the Metro region further broken down into Lancaster and Douglas counties. As the next section will show, different regions experience different conditions in their visitation and needs. The “Survey of Heritage Attractions” went out to 220 sites, with 103 responding. As Table 17 shows, the overall response rate was 46.8 percent. By region, the highest response rate was in the Frontier Trails, Pioneer Country and Lewis and Clark regions. Lancaster County made up 66 percent of overall responses for the Metro region. Table 17 exhibits that no region responded at a rate below 40 percent, and that the rates largely fell between 40 and 50 percent, thus ensuring that heritage facilities across the state are well represented in this survey.

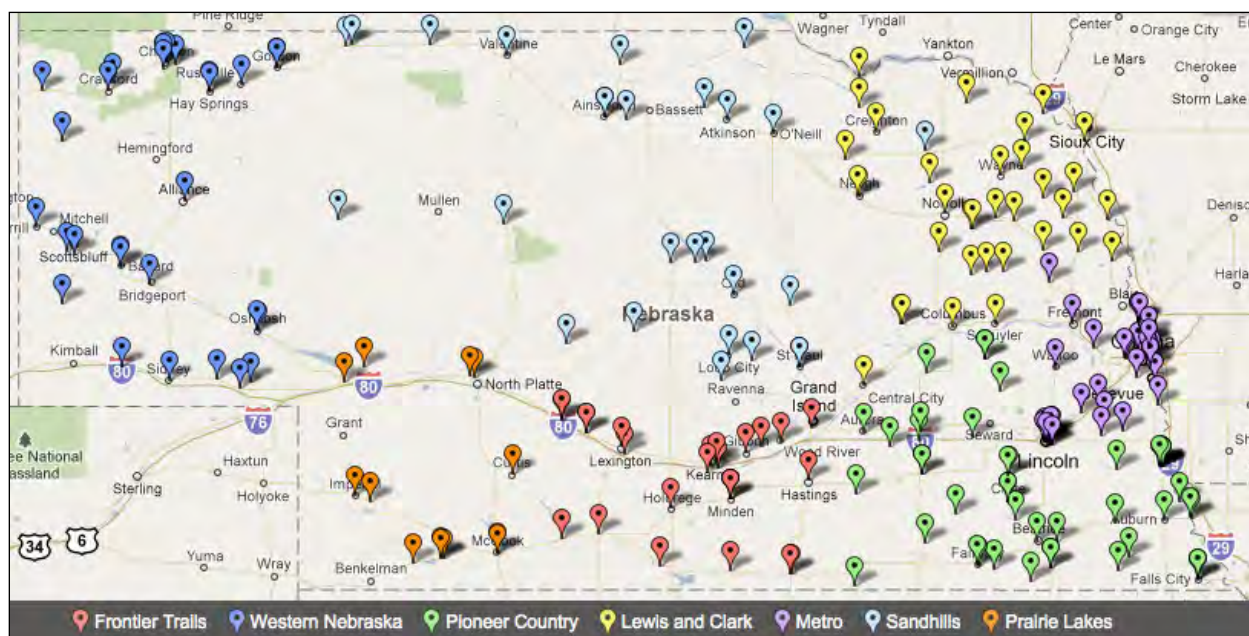
Table 17: Response Rate to Survey of Heritage Attractions Across Regions

Response Rate	Total Sites	Responses	Response Rate
Metro	44	20	45.5%
-Douglas County	17	5	29.4%
-Lancaster County	14	10	71.4%
-Attractions outside Douglas and Lancaster counties	13	5	38.5%
Pioneer Country	47	22	46.8%
Lewis and Clark	34	16	47.0%
Frontier Trails	25	14	56.0%
Sandhills	27	12	44.4%
Prairie Lakes	12	5	41.2%
Western Nebraska	31	14	45.1%
Total	220	103	46.8%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

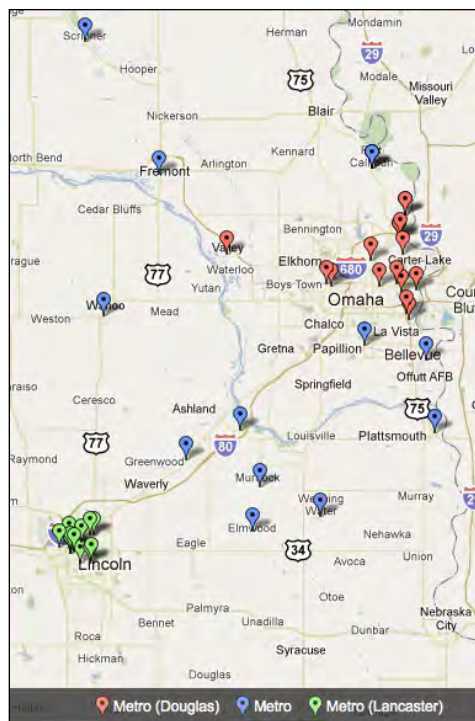
Figure 10 displays all 220 heritage attractions by region, with Figure 11 further breaking down the metro region into three divisions: those within Lancaster County, those within Douglas County and those located outside of the two counties.

Figure 10: Map of Heritage Attractions by Tourism Region



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Figure 11: Map of Heritage Attractions in the Metro Region



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

When asked about greatest needs, eight of the nine regional heritage attractions listed Grants and Financing as their greatest need. The sole exception was Lancaster County, where Grants and Financing tied with Marketing Assistance as the greatest need.

Table 18: Most Important Priority Needs for Heritage Attractions

Which item would best serve the needs of your facility/site?	Technical	Marketing	Grants/ Financing
Metro	0%	41.7%	50%
Pioneer Country	12.5%	6.3%	62.5%
Lewis and Clark	10%	30%	40%
Frontier Trails	16.7%	0%	83.3%
Sandhills	0%	20%	80%
Prairie Lakes	0%	0%	100%
Western Nebraska	0%	16.7%	50%
Lancaster County	0%	50%	50%
Douglas County	0%	0%	100%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

As shown in Table 19, each of the nine regions saw a majority of heritage attractions take part in actively promoting themselves.

Table 19: Marketing Promotion by Regions

Does your site actively promote itself?	Yes	No
Metro	88.9%	11.1%
Pioneer Country	71.4%	28.6%
Lewis and Clark	93.7%	6.3%
Frontier Trails	85.7%	14.3%
Sandhills	72.7%	27.3%
Prairie Lakes	80%	20%
Western Nebraska	90%	10%
Lancaster County	88.9%	11.1%
Douglas County	66.6%	33.3%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Visitation across the regions came out with different averages, as both Lancaster and Douglas exhibited the highest average visitation. Note, however, that the Western Nebraska and Frontier Trails showed high visitation, but also a high standard deviation. High visitation sites, such as Chimney Rock, were the reason for such a high deviation.

Table 20: Visitation by Region

How many people visited your facility in 2010?	Average	St. Deviation
Metro	38,745	47,814
Pioneer Country	6017	16,471
Lewis and Clark	991	902
Frontier Trails	18,305	24,594
Sandhills	820	1,046
Prairie Lakes	8,293	14,219
Western Nebraska	17,431	36,627
Lancaster County	25,999	32,509
Douglas County	76,500	75,500

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Finally, five of the seven regions showed that visitor growth was more common than decline. As shown in Table 20a on the following page, only in Western Nebraska and Lancaster County did more heritage attractions report a drop in attendance than those who displayed growth. Visitation was most commonly maintained in the Frontier Trails, Sandhills and Prairie Lakes regions. It is unclear why some regions experienced growth and others did not. For the majority of regions, however, growth did outpace decline.

Table 20a: Comparison of heritage attractions reporting growth and declining visitation
(Continued to following pages)

	Attractions reporting Growth	Attractions reporting Decline
Does your site actively promote itself?		
Yes	94.6%	80.8%
If yes, do you utilize the following methods:		
Barter Advertising	12.1%	13.0%
Brochure	88.9%	88.5%
Free Listings	80.6%	76.8%
Nebraska Tourism Bureau Web Site	54.3%	70.4%
Listed in a Regional or Local Tourism Publication	83.3%	61.5%
Listed with the State Visitor Guide	63.9%	69.2%
Local Visitor Bureau	58.3%	70.4%
Paid Advertising	55.6%	41.7%
Public Relations	66.7%	75%
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	3.2%	18.2%
Social Media	48.6%	45.8%
Web Site	71.4%	80.8%
Other	33.3%	22.2%

How many paid workers do you have at your facility? (avg)	9.6	4.7
How many volunteer workers do you have at your facility? (avg)	99.6	21.4

Average Total Expenditures	\$442,449	\$210,083
Average Expenditures – Payroll/Benefits	\$227,001	\$119,432
Average Expenditures – Marketing	\$11,860	\$10,647
Average Expenditures – Other	\$174,924	\$91,870

Average Total Revenue	\$373,979	\$177,589
Average Revenue – Admission	\$18,199	\$14,144
Average Revenue –Gift shop/Restaurant	\$10,989	\$9,419
Average Revenue – Private Donation	\$103,150	\$38,189
Average Revenue – Government Support	\$69,409	\$35,101
Average Revenue – Grants	\$2,955	\$3,972
Average Revenue – Endowed Funds	\$103,490	\$28,469
Average Revenue – Other	\$42,704	\$41,907

Average Admission Fee (Adult)	\$2.75	\$2.36
Average Admission Fee (Children)	\$1.11	\$0.39

Our Facility has Tour Guides	75%	87.5%
Our Facility has virtual tour guides (i.e. audio, podcast)	18.5%	29.2%
Our facility is self-guided (i.e. brochures, printed maps)	81.3%	83.3%
Other	39.3%	13.3%

Is there signage from the roadway to your facility/site?	100%	89.3%
How far (in miles) is your facility/site from the nearest major roadway? (average)	9.38	6.13

How many entities are is this facility involved with? (avg)	2.5	2.6
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What involvement, if any, does this facility have with the following entities: (percentage indicating involvement)

Heritage Nebraska	25%	22.7%
Nebraska Byways Program	43.3%	37.5%
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission	19.5%	19%
Nebraska Humanities Council	62.5%	62.5%
Nebraska Museum Association	41.4%	37.5%
Nebraska State Historical Society	56.3%	52%
Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism	50%	66.6%
American Association of Museums	25.9%	23.8%

Is there a strategic plan for this facility?

Yes	63.9%	44.0%
-----	-------	-------

Has your facility added new exhibits by expanding its space?

Yes	42.4%	20%
-----	-------	-----

Have you renovated your facility, or built a new facility within the last 10 years?

Yes	64.9%	28.6%
-----	-------	-------

What percentage of your facility is dedicated to changing/rotating exhibits? (avg # of facilities)

	14.6	20.1
--	------	------

Regional location of site

Metro	15.8%	32.1%
- Lancaster County	7.9%	17.8%
- Douglas County	2.6%	3.6%
- Outside Lancaster and Douglas Counties	5.3%	10.7%
Pioneer Country	28.9%	21.5%
Lewis And Clark	18.4%	7.1%
Frontier Trails	15.8%	7.1%
Sandhills	7.9%	10.7%
Prairie Lakes	2.6%	3.6%
Western Nebraska	10.6%	17.9%

While 94.6 percent of heritage attractions reporting growth said they actively promote, only 80 percent of heritage attractions with declining visitation said they do likewise. However, a look at the types of marketing done by the growing and declining visitation sites did not reveal major differences. While

growing visitation sites were more likely to be listed in a regional or local tourism publication (83.3 percent to 61.5 percent), the declining visitation sites were more commonly reporting that they utilize technology such as search engine optimization (80.8 percent to 71.4 percent) and a web site (80.8 percent to 71.4 percent).

A wide disparity existed between growing and declining visitation sites when it came to workers. Heritage attractions with growing visitation averaged 9.6 full time employees, while declining visitation sites averaged only 4.7 full time employees. Additionally, growing visitation sites averaged 99.6 volunteers to the other sites' 21.4 volunteers.

Heritage attractions with growing visitation reported expenditures and revenues that were on average twice as large as sites with declining visitation. Specifically, growing visitation sites saw a significant advantage in private donations and endowed funds on the revenue side. That said, heritage attractions reporting growth were not exclusive to larger museums and facilities. Smaller museums such as the District 13 Schoolhouse in Pilger, the Table Rock Historical Museums in Table Rock and the Cambridge Museum in Cambridge were also among the heritage attractions reporting growth.

Differences in admission fees between the two categories were not significant, with growing visitation sites reporting slightly higher average price for adults and children. In addition, heritage attractions with growing visitation reported a lower percentage of facilities with virtual tour guides. However, the higher percentage in the other category did include answers such as having cell phone tours, an introductory video and an interactive visitor center. So the lower percentage of growing visitation sites reporting the use of virtual tour guides does not necessarily indicate that technology is not being implemented at these sites.

Heritage attractions with growing visitation reported across the board (100 percent) that they held signage from the roadway, compared to only 89.3 percent of sites with declining visitation. In addition, growing sites reported being farther away from the nearest roadway (9.38 miles) than sites with declining visitation (6.13 miles).

When it came to involvement with associations, heritage attractions with declining visitation actually belonged to more associations on average than those with increasing visitation by a small mark (2.6 associations to 2.5). Across the eight organizations that survey questions asked about, sites with growing and declining visitation did not differ greatly with the exception of the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism.

Results showed that heritage attractions with growing visitation were more likely to have a strategic plan (63.9 percent to 44 percent). These sites were also more likely to have expanded their space (42.4 percent to 20 percent) as well as more likely to have renovated in the last 10 years (64.9 percent to 28.6 percent). Interestingly, sites with declining visitation reported a higher percentage of their facility was dedicated to rotating exhibits (20.1 percent to 14.6 percent).

Looking at the breakdown of regions, heritage attractions with increasing visitation were more likely to be in the Pioneer Country, Lewis and Clark and Frontier Trails regions. The greatest percentage of declining visitation sites was located in the metro region, and specifically in Lancaster County. Western Nebraska and Sandhills regions were also holding a higher percentage of declining visitation sites.

Table 21: Visitation Variance by Region

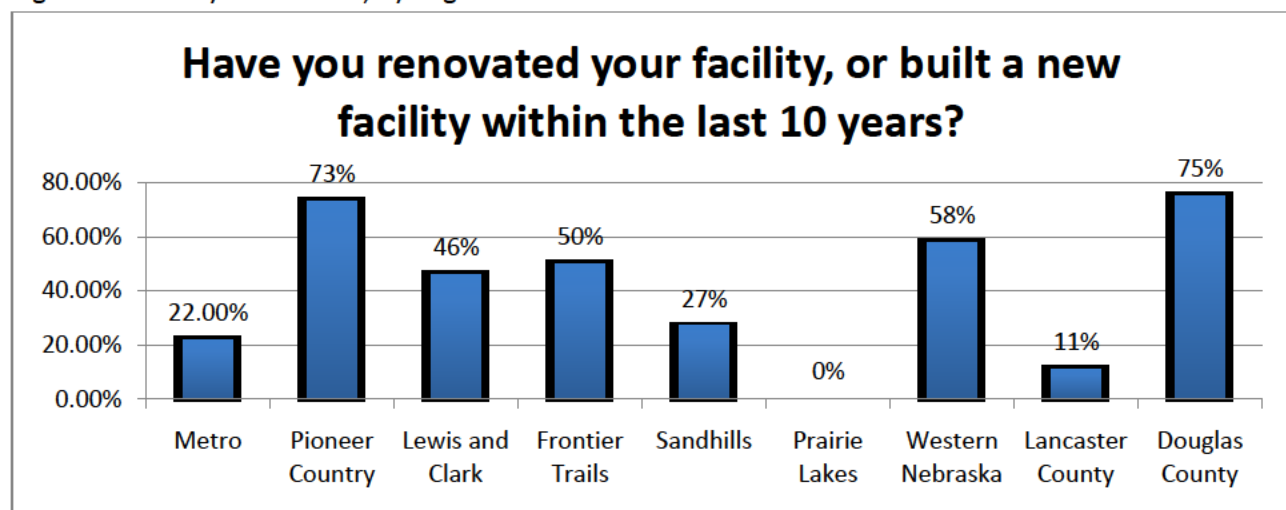
	Grown	Declined	Maintained
Metro	46.7%	33.3%	20%
Pioneer Country	52.4%	28.6%	19.0%
Lewis and Clark	43.8%	12.5%	42.8%
Frontier Trails	50%	25%	50%
Sandhills	27.3%	18.2%	54.5%
Prairie Lakes	25%	25%	50%
Western Nebraska	30%	60%	10%
Lancaster County	30%	50%	20%
Douglas County	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Additionally, Figure 12 shows that certain regions saw more facilities that undertook renovation projects in the last decade. Over 70 percent of respondents in Pioneer Country renovated, while 75 percent of museums in Douglas County had renovated as well. As Figure 13 displays, however, three regions showed that over 50 percent of respondents had expanded their space to make room for new exhibits.

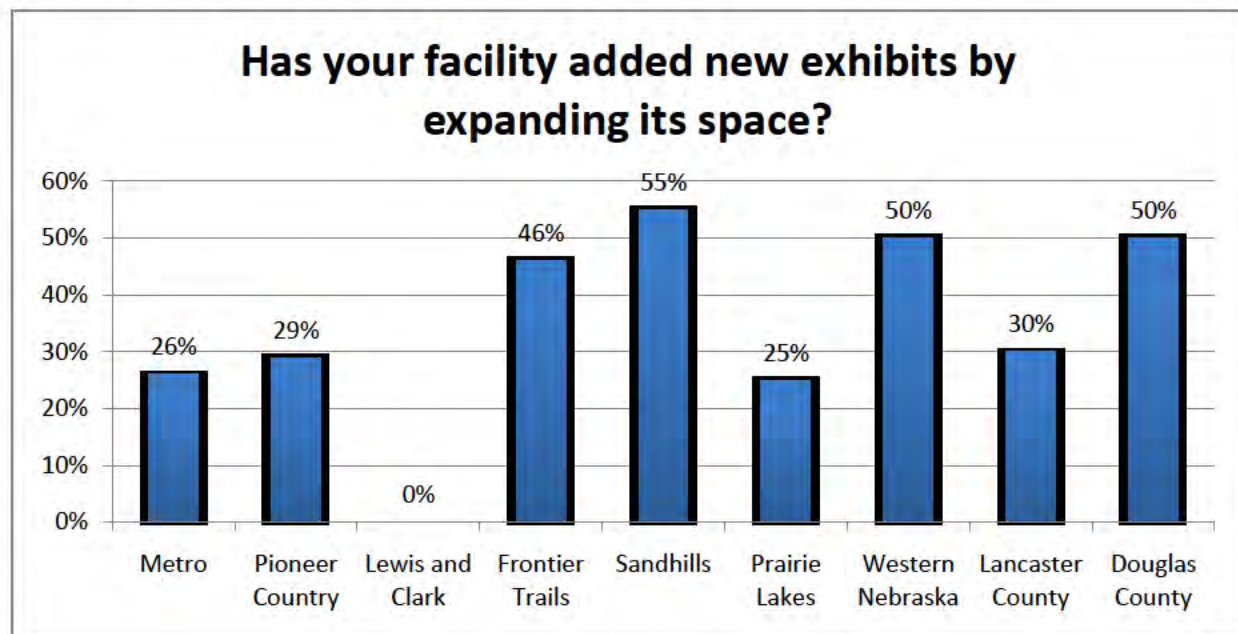
What is interesting is that visitation does not appear to be tied to the regions where renovations and expansions took place. While Pioneer Country saw half of its respondents exhibit positive visitation growth and a large share of renovations, the same could not be said of the Metro and Lewis and Clark regions despite also having over 40 percent of respondents experience growth. That said, it appears the metro region saw its renovation total weighed down by Lancaster County, where only 11 percent of facilities renovated.

Figure 12: Facility Renovation, by Region



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

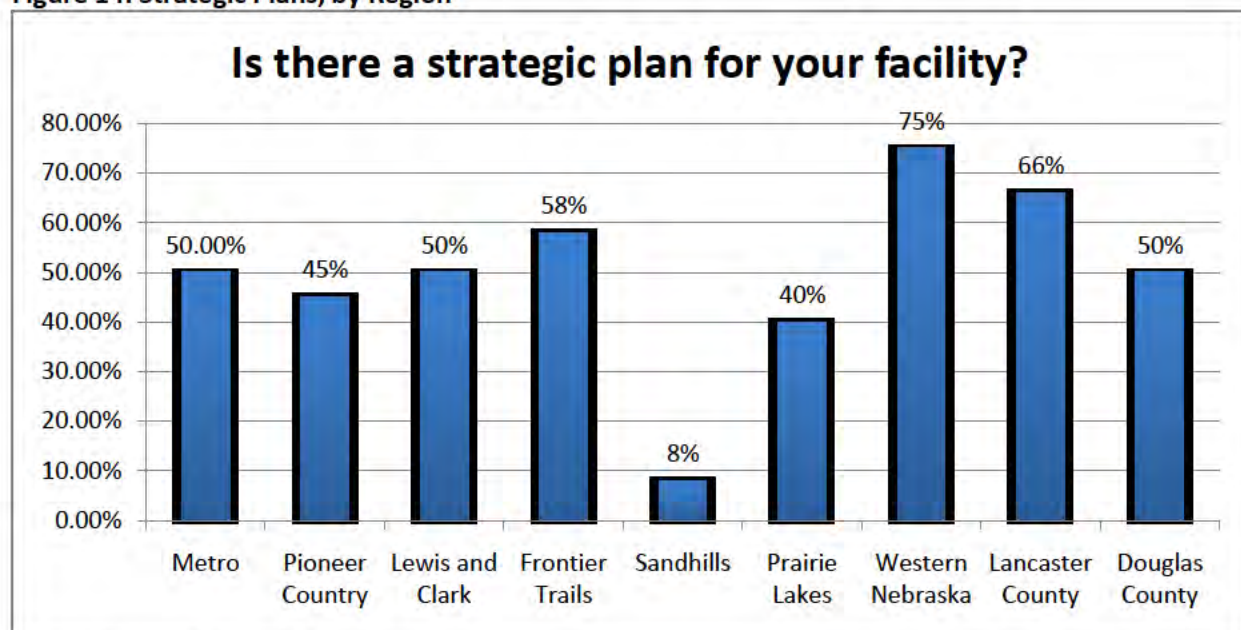
Figure 13: Facility Expansion, by Region



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Finally, Figure 14 shows that in six of the nine regional designations, 50 percent or more of respondents reported having strategic plans for their facilities. Whether a facility holds a strategic plan or not is significant as it shows the museum or society is making a concerted, organized effort to move the facility towards a particular goal or change.

Figure 14: Strategic Plans, by Region



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Current Opportunities and Challenges for Nebraska's Heritage Attractions

Nebraska's Heritage Tourism Opportunities

Heritage Tourism Project Committee members identified a variety of opportunities for heritage tourism in Nebraska. A number of Project Committee members cited existing technical assistance resources for heritage tourism that already exist within the state and at the national level, noting that the accompanying challenge is that these resources (many of which are noted in this report) are not always fully utilized.

The state's unique heritage resources came up as a strong opportunity. For example, at least one Project Committee member cited the "mystique of the Old West" as part of Nebraska's appeal, particularly for the eastern and European markets. Cultural diversity was also mentioned as an opportunity for Nebraska to build upon.

The large volume of east/west traffic on I-80, and to a lesser extent the north/south traffic on other routes was noted as an opportunity to capture travelers traveling through Nebraska. Nebraska's nine Byways also encourage visitors to get off the Interstate to explore, providing a statewide network of travel routes with potential for thematic development. Increased use of technology is making travel planning easier and more immediate, though Project Committee members noted that heritage attractions have not necessarily fully embraced technology at their heritage attractions.

Commemorative events such as the recently completed Lewis & Clark bicentennial, the current Civil War sesquicentennial, the upcoming centennial celebration for the Lincoln Highway in 2013 and the upcoming sesquicentennial of Nebraska's statehood were seen as opportunities for heightened visibility and additional focus on product development to enhance the visitor experience.

FOUR FREE WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR HERITAGE SITE

- 1) Take advantage of **FREE** tourism listings for your heritage site in tourism guidebooks and websites.
- 2) Create a brochure or convert an existing brochure to a screen optimized PDF and submit it to the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism to be included for **FREE** as a download from the www.VisitNebraska.gov website.
- 3) Create a collection of digital images of your site to show off what you have to offer. Include pictures that show visitors enjoying your site at all different times of the year. Don't forget that you can access professional images from every region of Nebraska for **FREE** courtesy of the Division of Travel and Tourism to promote your site.
- 4) Register your site with Dun & Bradstreet and InfoUSA to ensure that travelers using a GPS device can find your site. It's **FREE**, and the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism has easy step-by-step instructions on their website.

Find out more at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/>

An online "Nebraska Heritage Tourism Toolkit" could include how-to information such as this to help Nebraska's heritage sites take advantage of available resources.

While this study is focused primarily on heritage attractions including historic sites and museums throughout the state, Project Committee members noted that Nebraska has a variety of other historic places that could be used to help tell the story of Nebraska's history. The Nebraska State Historical Society's historic resources survey in Dawson County which includes a chapter on heritage tourism, included an inventory of museums, historic sites and byways was cited as a potential model for other counties in the state. Adding a heritage tourism component to the existing county surveys would capture more information about other historic sites and the extent to which they are (or are not) currently promoted.

This planning effort was seen by the Project Committee as an exciting opportunity to reinvigorate organizations and offer new ways of looking at heritage tourism. Coordinated heritage tourism efforts could offer the opportunity to put Nebraska on the national stage. Taking this opportunity to look at heritage tourism from a statewide perspective offers an opportunity to have Nebraska's heritage attractions be seen as a group rather than as remote places all working independently.

Site managers responding to the Survey of Heritage Attractions gave three major responses when asked about innovations they would like to see within the state. Most commonly, the museums sought to see more collaboration with other sites, as well as ideas to improve community engagement. Another common response was a desire to see increased awareness of heritage tourism in the state, even if that meant advertising outside of Nebraska. Finally, several heritage attractions saw investment in technology as the most important innovation for heritage tourism.

Nebraska's Heritage Tourism Challenges

Heritage Tourism Project Committee members noted a number of challenges for heritage tourism in Nebraska. Several Project Committee members cited the urban/rural split in the state, with a shrinking rural population in the west and a growing urban population in the eastern portion of the state. In many cases urban areas have access to expertise and sources of funding that are not available in the state's rural areas. Distance was cited numerous times as a major challenge, especially in the rural portions of the state. In addition to losing population, rural areas are also experiencing a deterioration of their historic resources as well as the loss of cultural traditions and collections. The State Historic Preservation Plan for Nebraska (2007-2011) confirms this, noting that *"rural population decline has affected the vitality of Nebraska's 532 communities, 499 of which are under 5,000 in population."*

Project Committee members noted credible economic impact figures to support the value of heritage tourism are critical to help build support amongst decision makers. Without this documentation, heritage tourism risks being perceived as a "nice extra" but not essential, thus difficult to find funding for, especially in challenging economic times. Economic impact statistics must be shared with potential tourism partners, including local marketers, local government officials because many are not aware of the potential for heritage tourism. Many Project Committee members spoke about the need to make the case for heritage tourism with key decision makers. Project Committee members stressed the need to make both the economic development and the quality of life argument for heritage tourism,

While Project Committee members acknowledged the opportunity to capture the large number of east/west Interstate travelers, they also noted that it can be challenging to get through travelers off the Interstate to explore and stay. For Nebraska heritage attractions that are not near a major roadway or an urban center, it can be even more challenging to attract visitors.

Project Committee members noted that there are a large number of very small, volunteer-run heritage attractions that are often overlooked. Many of these heritage attractions are run by volunteers, lacking new members. These volunteers are facing the challenge of finding a succession strategy to hand off these heritage attractions to the next generation.

The challenge of effectively reaching out to younger audiences was cited by several Project Committee members. Project Committee members offered ideas about the use of technology, school tours, packaging heritage attractions differently and finding ways to show the relevance of these sites to younger audiences. Still, Project Committee members were searching for more good ideas about how to keep younger audiences engaged while still appealing to existing audiences. Project Committee members noted that Nebraska's heritage attractions have been slow to adopt technology. This is in part because of fiscal restraints but also because many heritage attractions are run by older volunteers or staff less familiar with the use of technology.

Several Project Committee members noted that Nebraskans generally tend to be modest about what their communities have to offer, or sometimes lack awareness, which can result in a reluctance to enthusiastically promote what the state has to offer. Nebraska has a large amount of shared history with other states, creating the additional challenge of identifying the state's unique "hook" to encourage visitors to experience that history in Nebraska as opposed to experiencing it in a neighboring state.

V. CREATING STATEWIDE HERITAGE THEMES FOR NEBRASKA

Developing Statewide Themes for Nebraska

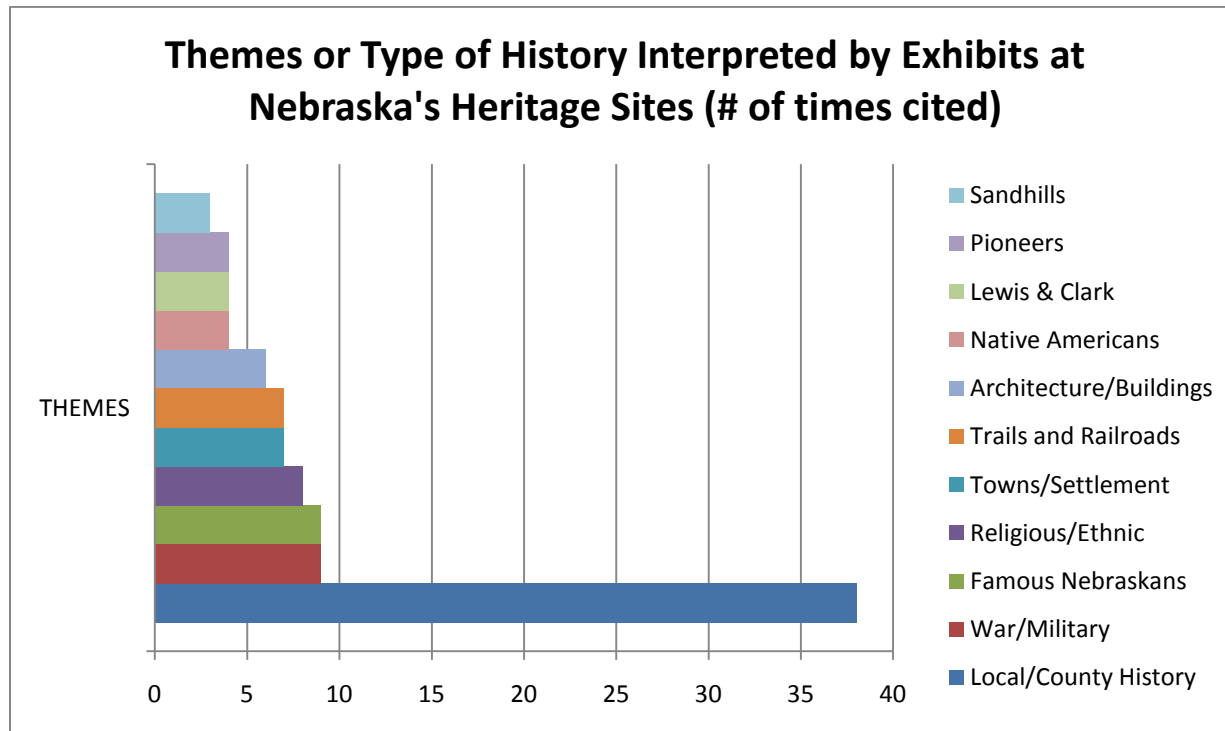
A multi-pronged approach was used to develop the statewide heritage themes for Nebraska. The themes attempt to group each of the 220 heritage attractions into similar categories for marketing, comparison and analysis opportunities. The final five themes include “Nebraska’s Land and Place”, the “Clash of Cultures,” “America Moves West,” “Living on the Great Plains,” and the “Faces of Nebraska.”

The National Association for Interpretation defines a theme as *“a central idea that links individual stories together.”*

Draft themes were developed by the Nebraska State Historical Society and vetted by the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee. After finalizing the themes, the Nebraska State Historical Society provided a narrative of each theme, as presented in the following pages.

Additional input was secured from the “Survey of Heritage Attractions” through a question about the types of history interpreted by exhibits at Nebraska’s heritage attractions. Responses were clustered into categories as shown in the chart below to provide an indication of the types of themes interpreted by local historic sites.

Figure 15: Themes Interpreted, by Exhibits



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

As shown in the following exhibits, there is considerable overlap between the themes identified by heritage attractions and potential statewide themes identified by the Heritage Tourism Project Committee. The emphasis on local and county history cited by heritage attractions stands out as a notable difference. As Nebraska works to develop a statewide heritage tourism program, it will be important for local heritage attractions to be able to show how their local or county history fits into the larger context of Nebraska's state history. Likewise it will be important for Nebraska to show how its history fits into the larger context of American history.

The "Survey of Heritage Visitors" provided additional insights into themes of interest to heritage travelers. When asked "*What aspects of Nebraska's history are you most interested in learning about when you travel?*" responses from travelers were fairly consistent. As shown in Table 22, sixty to seventy percent of travelers indicated an interest in the following potential themes or topics:

Table 22: Visitor Interest in Various Historical Topics	
Natural history	70%
Places that interpret land and landscape	67.3%
First Nebraskans/Ancient Nebraskans/America Expands West/Trails	67.3%
Settlement/Town Building/Industry/Ranching and Farming	65.5%
Native Americans, Europeans and American Cultures	64.5%
Cultural Diversity	64.5%
Civil War/Armed Services	64.5%
Notable Nebraskans	60.9%
Not interested in Nebraska's history	2.7%
Other	0%

Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

Nebraska's Statewide Heritage Themes

Based on a review of the Project Committee input as well as input from the "Surveys of Heritage Facilities and Heritage Visitors", five statewide themes were identified by the Heritage Tourism Project Committee. The Nebraska State Historical Society developed a theme statement (included on the following pages) to describe the key stories that accompany each of the five themes.

"Nebraska's Land and Place"

Theme Statement

Nebraska as a place includes a sweeping range of natural landscapes, environments, geography, and cultural landscapes. The place known today as the State of Nebraska extends from the Missouri River west across stream-bisected rolling prairies to the high plains of the nation's midsection, encompassing en route the unique Nebraska Sandhills. Along the way it conceals beneath its surface the Ogallala Aquifer whose water literally means life to much of the state.



Morrill Hall, Lincoln

Courtesy of Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Nebraska features a mix of flora and fauna that relates it to neighbors east or west and in some places, such as the lower Niobrara River Valley, presents a truly unique eastern and western ecological mix.

The first people in what we know today as Nebraska are thought to have arrived at least 12,000 years ago. The earliest peoples practiced a nomadic lifestyle by hunting and gathering wild plants as a way of subsistence. Those who followed developed a more sedentary life with permanent villages, dwellings and small-scale horticulture to supplement hunting and gathering. These people are recognized as what we know today as historic tribal groups of the Kiowa, Plains Apache, Ponca, Omaha, Oto-Missouria, and Pawnee. Several tribal groups from neighboring areas also ranged into Nebraska including Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Crow, Iowa, and Comanche. The Omaha, the Santee Sioux, the Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) and the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska are modern, federally-recognized tribes that maintain tribal cultures.

Nebraska has been a home for many peoples. Land, water, plants and animals found in this mid-continental climatic zone nurtured people, who found here resources for life. And the place has influenced its residents in a "dance of life" that we recognize as the history of Nebraska. This interaction of place and peoples continues to raise and demand answers to questions that will determine the futures of both Nebraska and its sentient and insentient residents.

Examples of heritage tourism attractions in Nebraska that interpret "Nebraska's Land and Place" include:

- Agate Fossil Beds National Monument (near Harrison)
- Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History (Hastings)
- University of Nebraska State Museum (Morrill Hall), (Lincoln)
- Hudson-Meng Bison Bonebed, (Chadron)
- Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park (near Royal)
- Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center (Chadron)

The “Clash of Cultures”

Theme Statement

In a clash of cultures, beginning as early as the 1700s, Native American societies were first confronted by European explorers and traders and, in time, by Euro-Americans in a complexity of relationships. Some coexisted peacefully, such as in the examples of those engaged in the fur trade. Others brought new technologies and a commitment to possessing the land itself for personal and economic gain. Clashes became inevitable as different interests competed for the use and control of the same resources. Wars on the Great Plains and government policy contributed to the dispossession of the Native Americans, moving them to reservations. This included the Winnebago Tribe and the Santee Sioux.



John N. Neihardt Center, Bancroft

Courtesy of Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Examples of heritage tourism attractions in Nebraska that interpret the “Clash of Cultures” include:

- General George Crook House Museum (Omaha)
- Fort Hartsuff State Historical Park (near Elyria)
- Fort Robinson State Historical Park (Crawford)
- Genoa U.S. Indian School Museum (Genoa)
- John G. Neihardt State Historic Site (Bancroft)
- Museum of the Fur Trade (Chadron)

"America Moves West"

Theme Statement

Lewis and Clark (1804) and Zebulon Pike (1806) passed through this area as they explored the western frontier of the United States both before and after fur traders traversed the region. The earliest frontier military outpost in the region was Fort Atkinson (1820).



Chimney Rock, Bayard

Courtesy of Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Nebraska became an American corridor of travel. And the Missouri River became a river corridor for trade and commerce. The wide and flat Platte river valley proved to be a natural highway, first traversed by fur traders who opened and highlighted what later became emigrant trails for those heading west on the California Trail, Oregon Trail, and Mormon Trail. The short-lived Pony Express followed the Platte River. The transcontinental railroad in the 1860s opened up new opportunities to travel to—and through—Nebraska. The great "Platte River Road" also became the corridor of the modern transportation era from the Lincoln Highway (1913) through the development of the current Interstate highway system.

Examples of heritage tourism attractions in Nebraska that interpret "America Moves West" include:

- Chimney Rock National Historic Site (near Bayard)
- Fort Atkinson State Historical Park (Fort Calhoun)
- Fort Kearny State Historical Park, (Kearney)
- Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters, (Omaha)
- Lewis and Clark Missouri River Basin Visitor Center (Nebraska City)
- Scotts Bluff National Monument (near Gering)
- Great Platte River Road Archway Monument (Kearney)
- Old Freighters Museum (Nebraska City)

"Living on the Great Plains"

Theme Statement

Nebraska became a territory in 1854, opening the area to settlement and establishing the system of government. In the second half of the nineteenth century, homesteaders began to settle in Nebraska, many attracted by the railroad and lands available under the Homestead Act. These resourceful settlers often built their homes of locally-available materials at hand, such as stone, log and sod.



Stuhr Museum, Grand Island
Courtesy of Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Cattle drovers ran herds of Texas cattle north to the state and connected to railroads that carried the animals to the east. After the native buffalo disappeared from the landscape, settlers brought in cattle to feed on the prairie grasses. Cattle became an important part of Nebraska's economy with many large ranches established, especially in the western Sandhills region.

Cattle ranching is not Nebraska's only agricultural industry. Although challenged by the state's variable climate and other adverse conditions such as drought, grasshopper plagues and blizzards, resourceful and ingenious farmers developed innovative dry land farming techniques to cope with the place, successfully growing crops ranging from corn in the eastern part of the state to wheat in the prairies. By 1900, extensive irrigation systems were developed, taking advantage of Nebraska's wealth of waterways and its underground water supply. Today's center-pivot irrigation systems make their contribution to modern agriculture.

Towns grew up almost overnight next to the railroad. And as railroads touted the opportunities of a new life in Nebraska, agricultural settlement was spurred. With settlement came the businesses, culture, educational and social institutions, industries and architecture that went hand-in-hand with the new and prosperous towns.

While Nebraska may not be thought of as an industrial state, many innovative ventures are associated with Nebraska. From the first attempts at industrial development to today's diverse manufacturing and industries the state has used its resources to add to its economy. From farming and ranching came stockyards, meat-processing plants and milling. Building on its strong agricultural base came sugar beet processing, milling and grain-handling. Agribusinesses produced, processed and distributed food and other products. Wholesaling and retailing spread manufactured goods from producers to consumers in both exporting Nebraska products and importing goods from other regions. Public power harnessed the state's wealth of water. Even small ventures in oil and gas production and the great potash boom industry during World War I have been tried. Today, Nebraska has many diversified industries; not all tied to agriculture.

“Living on the Great Plains” (con’t)

Examples of heritage tourism attractions in Nebraska that interpret “Living on the Great Plains” include:

- Arbor Lodge State Historical Park (Nebraska City)
- Neligh Mill State Historic Site (Neligh)
- Dowse Riverview Homestead & Dowse Sod House (near Comstock)
- Farm and Ranch Museum (Gering)
- Pioneer Village (Minden)
- Homestead National Monument (Beatrice)
- Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage (Alliance)
- Nebraska History Museum (Lincoln)
- The Durham Museum (Omaha)
- Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer (Grand Island)
- Wessels Living History Farm (near York)

The “Faces of Nebraska”

Theme Statement

Nebraskans such as politicians, military heroes, sports stars, and personalities in radio, television and the movies have earned their own place in history. In addition, although not necessarily achieving individual notoriety, many groups dominated the settlement of the state, bringing their native customs, traditions, and religion. Native Americans retain their identity and culture although faced with many challenges. Settlement, industry and agricultural prompted the influx of many different nationalities from around the world, seeking a better future. Settlers from the eastern U.S. as well as European immigrants arrived in Nebraska, bringing with them their own traditions and religious beliefs. Swedes, Czechs, Germans and the Polish were among the first immigrants who still celebrate the roots of their ancestors. Many others followed, such as Mexican-Americans. Today, Nebraskans share the rich diversity with the newly-arrived groups, such as Eastern Europeans, Central and South Americans, Vietnamese, Hmong, Somalis and other African nations, and those from Arabic nations. Nebraska celebrates its cultural diversity.



Willa Cather State Historic Site, Red Cloud
Courtesy of Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Examples of heritage tourism attractions in Nebraska that interpret the “Faces of Nebraska” include:

- Arbor Lodge State Historical Park (Nebraska City)
- Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park (North Platte)
- Civil War Veterans Museum (Nebraska City)
- El Museo Latino (Omaha)
- Fairview, William Jennings Bryan House (Lincoln)
- Nebraska State Capitol (Lincoln)
- Senator George Norris State Historic Site (McCook)
- Wilber Czech Museum (Wilber)
- Saunders County Museum (Wahoo)
- Willa Cather State Historic Site (Red Cloud)

Analysis of Themes

Based on data from the “Survey of Heritage Attractions”, the following figures represent responses from facilities that were coded with the five themes. One facility could be coded with more than one theme, in fact some ended up with three or more. For the basis of the analysis, the following figures are comprised of every respondent that was identified to hold one of the following themes.

Looking at the heritage attractions across themes, the majority of the 220 heritage attractions interpreted just one of the themes (70 percent), with the next largest portion interpreting 2 themes. It is interesting to note that the majority of Core 27 heritage attractions interpreted two themes, while other sites and all sites were more likely to interpret one theme. The Core 27 also had nearly equal representation of facilities deemed to interpret three or more themes (6 to 7) than the other 193 sites. For a complete list of heritage attractions by theme, see Appendix 5.

Table 23: Number of themes interpreted by heritage attractions						
	Core 27		Other Sites		All Sites	
	# of sites	% of sites	# of sites	% of sites	# of sites	% of sites
1 Theme	4	14.8%	150	77.7%	154	70%
2 Themes	17	62.9%	36	16.4%	53	24.1%
3 Themes	4	14.8%	4	2.1%	8	3.6%
4 Themes	1	3.7%	1	0.5%	2	1.0%
5 Themes	1	3.7%	2	1.0%	3	1.4%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

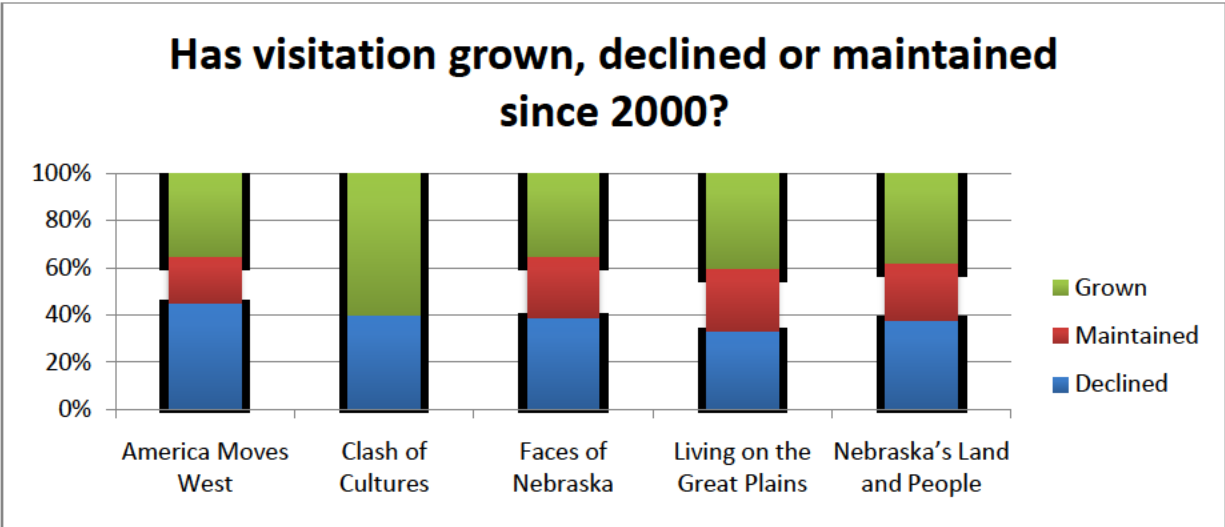
On Table 24, note that one heritage attraction could interpret more than one theme. While “Faces of Nebraska” was the most commonly interpreted theme across all heritage attractions and other sites, “Living on the Great Plains” was the most commonly interpreted for Core 27, all and other sites. For Core 27 heritage attractions, all five themes saw a greater representation than the average for all sites, since as the table before shows, Core 27 heritage attractions were more likely to interpret more than one theme.

Table 24: Number of sites per theme interpreted						
	Core 27		Other Sites		All Sites	
	# of sites	% of sites	# of sites	% of sites	# of sites	% of sites
“America Moves West”	13	21.7%	32	14.9%	45	16.4%
“Clash of Cultures”	5	8.3%	11	0.7%	16	5.8%
“Faces of Nebraska”	15	25.0%	40	18.6%	55	20.4%
“Living on the Great Plains”	16	26.7%	116	53.9%	132	47.6%
“Nebraska’s Land and People”	11	18.3%	16	7.4%	27	9.8%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

As Figure 16 shows, at least 30 percent of all facilities across the themes experienced declining visitation since 2000. The levels of maintained visitation remained fairly consistent throughout the themes with the exception of “Clash of Cultures.” It was this theme that showed the most facilities with growing visitation. The remaining four themes each saw between 30 and 40 percent of their museum’s exhibit growing visitation.

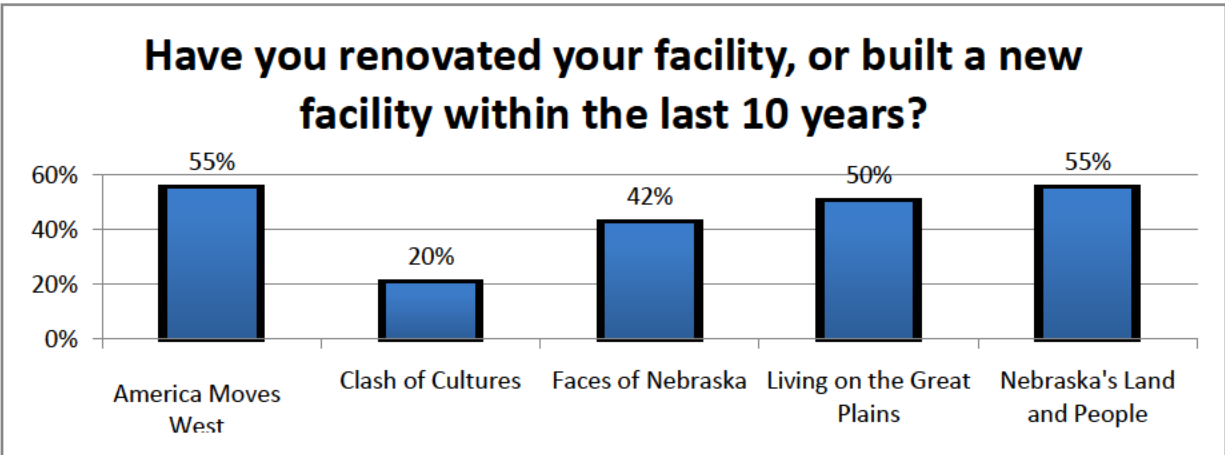
Figure 16: Visitation, by Theme



Source: Survey of Heritage Visitors

However, as Figure 17 shows, the high percentage of museums experiencing growing visitation in the “Clash of Cultures” theme did not necessarily mean that many facilities went through renovations. While the remaining four themes each saw more than 40 percent of museums renovate in the last 10 years, perhaps it was because the “Clash of Cultures” museums saw consistent growth that they did not feel the need to renovate.

Figure 17: Renovations, by Theme



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Visitation across themes varied significantly in only two of the five themes. “America Moves West,” “Clash of Cultures,” and “Nebraska’s Land and People” each averaged 30,000 or more visitors per year in 2010, while “Faces of Nebraska” and “Living on the Great Plains” saw the two lowest averages. That said, the standard deviations across all themes were quite high, signifying that the reported visitation varied widely across all facilities.

Table 25: Visitation by Theme

How many people visited your facility in 2010?	Average	St. Deviation
“America Moves West”	37,088	42,894
“Clash of Cultures”	37,567	25,197
“Faces of Nebraska”	14,808	29,828
“Living on the Great Plains”	9,674	26,421
“Nebraska’s Land and People”	30,741	38,038

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Across all five themes, Grants and Financing were indicated to be the area where museums have the greatest need. For the second-most important need, the “Faces of Nebraska” theme sites indicated marketing as their second-most important need, while the “Clash of Cultures” and “Nebraska’s Land and People” themes saw facilities indicate Marketing and Signage as equally important needs. Signage also was the second-greatest need for 25 percent of sites under the theme of “America Moves West.”

Table 26: Facility Needs at Heritage Attractions by Theme

	Technical	Marketing	Grants/ Financing	Signage
“America Moves West”	0%	8%	67%	25%
“Clash of Cultures”	0%	25%	50%	25%
“Faces of Nebraska”	0%	31%	56%	13%
“Living on the Great Plains”	6%	22%	69%	3%
“Nebraska’s Land and People”	0%	15.5%	69%	15.5%

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Comparing location of themes to the Historic Byways:

As an added analysis, heritage attractions across the five themes were mapped with an overlay of Nebraska’s Historic Byways. As illustrated by Figure 18, the majority of Nebraska’s heritage facilities are located on or near one of the existing nine byways. Collectively, the byways create a network throughout the state. Mapping the byways together with existing heritage attractions seems to indicate several locations where there is no byway to link together heritage attractions. For example, there may be an opportunity to create another north-south byway in the eastern portion of the state where there is a heavy concentration of heritage facilities. For example, the Highway 275 corridor has a high concentration of heritage facilities. Connecting one or more north-south byways in the eastern portion of the state would create additional loop byway tour opportunities.

In addition, the Heritage Highway appears to terminate abruptly at the western end, even though there are a number of heritage facilities along that east-west corridor that could enhance a byway experience if the byway was extended into the Prairie Lakes tourism region. The Lincoln Highway parallels one of Nebraska's most heavily traveled interstate (I-80), offering an opportunity for through travelers to continue to make progress toward their final destination while still taking a heritage detour for a short or a longer distance while en route.

Figure 18: All Heritage Attractions and Byways



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

When the themes are coupled with the Byways, additional trends begin to surface. The “America Moves West” theme sees a significant share of its museums appear along the Lincoln Highway. The Outlaw Trails also has a trio of sites in its path, as well as in the Heritage Highway. The Bridges to Buttes Byway is also well represented.

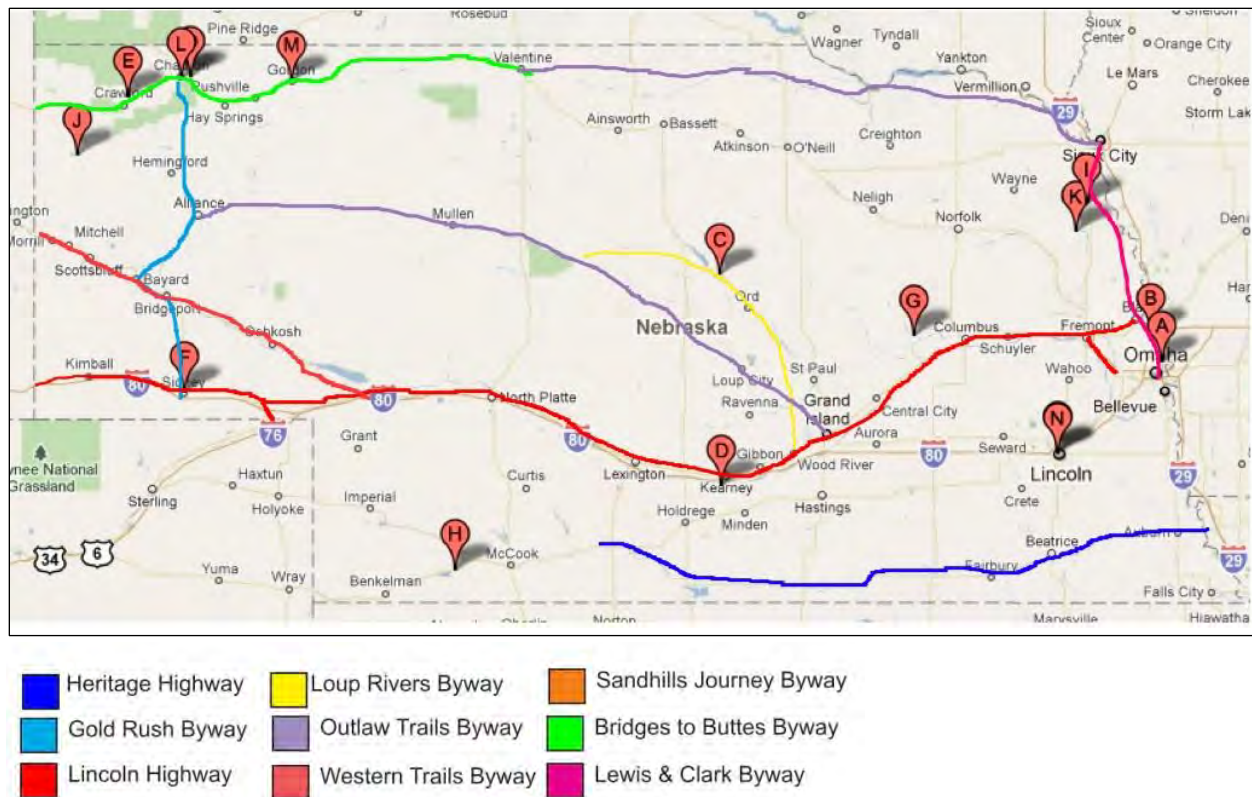
Figure 19: “America Moves West”



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

The “Clash of Cultures” theme sees a good representation of historic sites along the Bridges to Buttes Byway, while the Lewis and Clark Byway also holds several sites that are in or on the path.

Figure 20: “Clash of Cultures”



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

The “Faces of Nebraska” has fewer representations of total heritage attractions, but still sees numerous sites located along the Lincoln Highway and Bridges to Buttes Byway. The Heritage Highway also has a trio of sites in or near its path, while the Loup River Byway has two within its proximity.

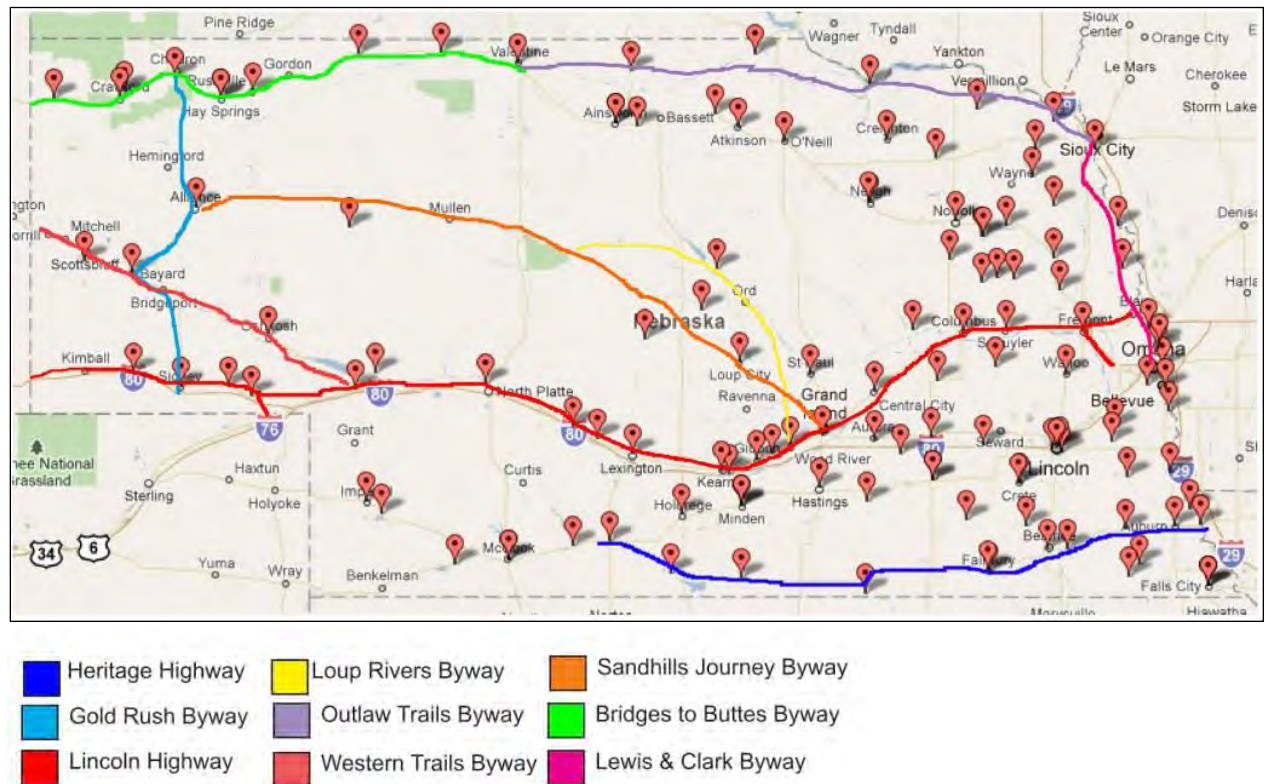
Figure 21: “Faces of Nebraska”



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

Analysis on the “Living on the Great Plain” map is a little more difficult, as nearly every byway has a large portion of historic sites along its path. The Lincoln Highway has a large representation of historic sites, as do the Bridges to Buttes, Western Trails and the Heritage Highway.

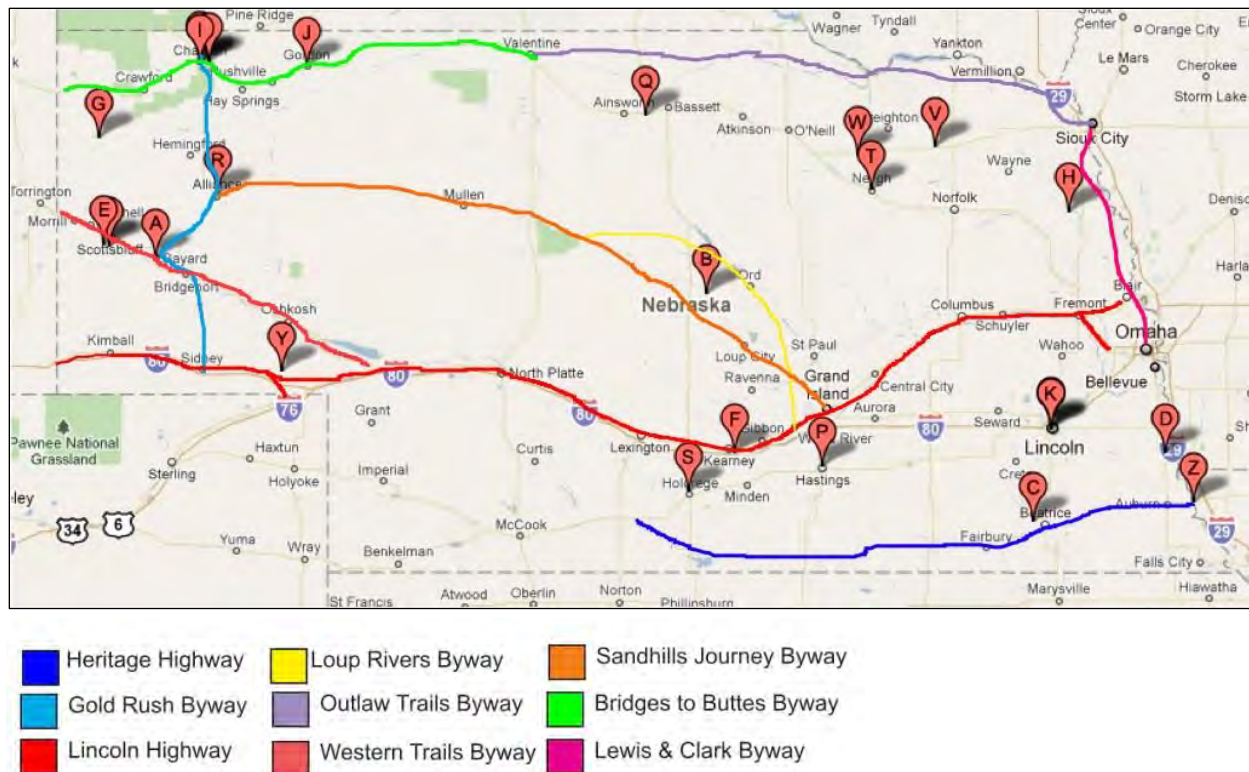
Figure 22: “Living on the Great Plains”



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

Finally, the “Nebraska Land and People” theme shows that several heritage attractions are on or near the Bridges to Buttes Byway, with a small number also in the vicinity of the Lincoln Highway.

Figure 23: “Nebraska’s Land and People”



Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions, Nebraska Byways

VI. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HERITAGE TOURISM IN NEBRASKA

Heritage tourism is a significant component of the tourism industry throughout the nation, including in the State of Nebraska. Growth of the industry requires a familiar set of conditions, including well-run and well supported attractions, coordination among attractions, and effective marketing and development activities at the local and state level.

The analysis below demonstrates the substantial contribution of a growing heritage tourism industry to the economy and labor market of Nebraska, both overall and by industry and region of the state. In doing so, the report also provides a glimpse of the additional contribution that a growing tourism could make to Nebraska and its regions.

The next section of this chapter examines the economic impact methodology utilized in this report. The third section considers the statewide economic impact of the heritage tourism industry. The fourth section considers the distribution of that economic impact over 9 regions of Nebraska. After breaking out Douglas and Lancaster counties, these regions correspond to the tourism regions of Nebraska developed by the Division of Travel and Tourism of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The research team felt it was appropriate to adhere to this regional definition given the importance of heritage tourism to the overall tourism industry.

Methodology

The Bureau of Business Research team utilized a series of survey data and secondary data sources in estimating the economic impact of the heritage tourism industry in Nebraska. The approach was to determine the direct, new expenditures which occur each year in the state of Nebraska due to heritage tourism. To do so, the research team utilized a Survey of Heritage Attractions, their visitors, Nebraska residents, and the results of a national survey of tourist spending and destinations. Once the direct expenditure was estimated, an additional multiplier impact was calculated. The multiplier impact is the additional economic activity that occurs in the state as money brought to the state by heritage visitors circulates further within the state economy. The total economic impact is the sum of the direct effect and the multiplier impact.

The Bureau research team began by gathering estimates of annual visitors to Nebraska heritage attractions and museums from the Travelscope data base, which is developed by the firm D.K. Shifflet and Associates. This Travelscope data base is based on a national survey of households to inquire about the number of tourist trips (trips of 50 miles or more), and the destination of those trips taken each year. The research team then confirmed these destination and spending data utilizing the results of a survey of visitors to Nebraska heritage attractions and museums conducted by Bureau of Business Research and a survey of Nebraska households conducted by the UNL Bureau of Sociological Research (NASIS). The NASIS survey found that the average Nebraska household visited 1.65 historic sites in the last 12 months and that 45.5 percent indicated that their most recent trip was an overnight trip. A full discussion of NASIS survey results is presented in Appendix 6.

A survey of Nebraska heritage attractions and museums also was taken to obtain data on their annual expenditures. The expenditures of sites and museums on their own operations were added to visitor spending in order to estimate the total annual expenditures in the state of Nebraska due to heritage tourism.

Beyond this direct economic effect, there is also an additional “multiplier” impact that occurs as new spending attracted or retained in Nebraska due to heritage tourism circulates further within the Nebraska economy. These multiplier impacts occur at businesses throughout the economy as: 1) businesses that serve heritage tourists purchase goods and services required for operation, and 2) their employees purchase goods and services of all kinds as part of household spending. To provide some concrete examples, the multiplier impact includes heritage site purchases of display cases or accounting services, as well as hospitality business purchases of food for preparation, or of utilities and insurance. The multiplier impact also includes employee spending on housing, food, retail items, travel, insurance, and utilities. Importantly, these types of multiplier impacts occur at businesses throughout the Nebraska economy, not just at businesses and organizations that directly serve heritage tourists. In other words, the multiplier impacts capture how the entire economy benefits from heritage tourism.

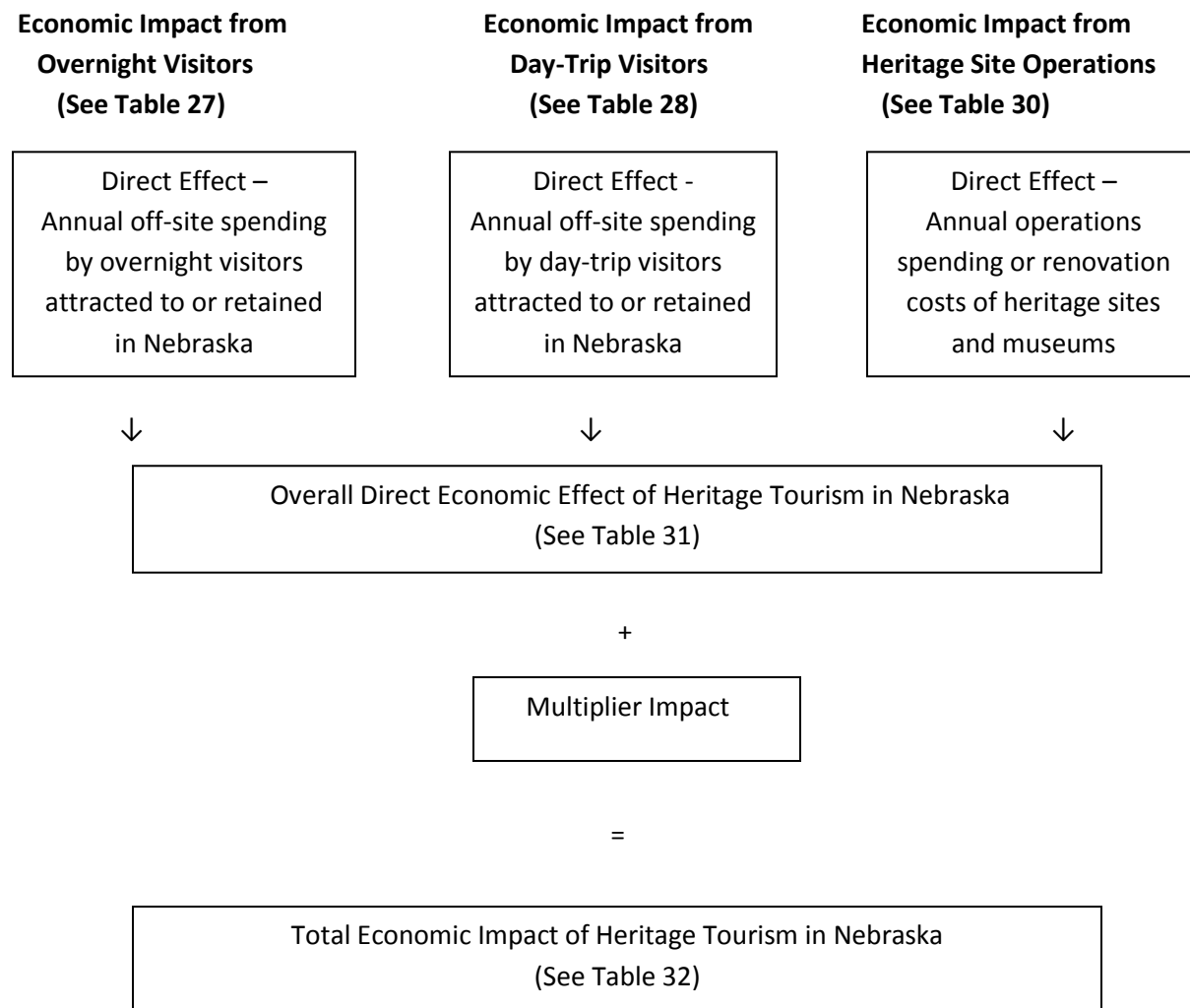
To document this impact, the research team calculates economic multipliers for heritage attractions and museums, and for hospitality businesses that provide services to heritage visitors. Economic multipliers show the ratio of this effect to the direct economic effect from expenditures. For example, an economic multiplier of 1.5 would indicate that for each \$1 of direct spending, the multiplier impact is \$0.50 in additional spending. The total economic impact is the direct effect from expenditure plus the multiplier impact, or \$1.50.

Economic multipliers can be estimated for any state, county, or combination of states and counties utilizing the IMPLAN software. The IMPLAN software is used by economists and analysts throughout the country as part of economic impact analysis. The Bureau of Business Research has used the IMPLAN package as part of several dozen economic impact studies, many of which examined the economic impact of tourism. The software not only can be utilized to calculate economic impacts for states and counties, it can also be used to calculate economic impacts for approximately 400 individual industries. The IMPLAN model as a result is ideal for calculating economic multipliers for the variety of industries where heritage visitors spend their money such as restaurants, gasoline stations, retail stores, and hotels. The IMPLAN model also can be used to calculate an economic multiplier for the operations expenditures of museums and historic sites. The study estimates the total value of these multiplier impacts both in aggregate and for each sector of the economy. This will allow the study to point out how businesses in industries throughout the economy gain from heritage tourism.

Figure 24 on the next page summarizes the methodology for calculating the economic impact. The direct economic effect flows from three sources: 1) overnight visitors to heritage attractions and museums, 2) day-trip visitors to heritage attractions and museums, and 3) the annual operating expenditures of heritage attractions and museums. The direct economic effect from all three sources is then summed to

calculate the total direct economic effect. Economic multipliers are then calculated for each relevant type of spending including operations of museums and historic sites, renovation expenditures, and tourist spending at hospitality businesses. The multiplier impact is added to the effect impact to yield total economic impact.

Figure 24: Approach for calculating the Annual Economic Impact of Heritage Tourism in Nebraska



Economic Impact of Heritage Tourism

The heritage tourism industry impacts the Nebraska economy by attracting and retaining visitors in the state, and through operating and directly employing staff at heritage tourism attractions. This section explores each of these components of the industry impact. The direct expenditures of heritage visitors are measured by multiplying estimates of the number of visitors by the length of their stay and a measure of spending per visitor-day. In these estimates, care is taken to isolate the new visitors brought to Nebraska, or retained within Nebraska, by heritage tourism sites and museums. The heritage visitor is defined as someone visiting a heritage site or museum during their trip. The study further examines the total expenditures, including the payroll and benefits, of museums and historic sites within Nebraska. Measures are made utilizing a list of several hundred sites, the same sites that were surveyed to gather information for the strategic marketing plan for heritage tourism in Nebraska.

Visitor spending and spending by heritage attractions and museums create the direct economic impact of the heritage tourism industry. Such direct effects include the total economic activity, that is, the total expenditures of heritage attractions and museums and the total sales of Nebraska hospitality businesses to heritage visitors. This total economic activity also supports direct employment and wages, salaries and benefits for heritage site workers (or hospitality industry workers at businesses that sell to heritage visitors). Such direct effects, however, are only part of the total impact on the Nebraska economy. There also are “multiplier” impacts, as discussed in the previous section. The direct economic effect is added to the “multiplier” impact to estimate the total annual economic impact of the heritage tourism industry on Nebraska.

Such economic impact estimates provide insight into the structure and operation of the Nebraska economy. This is an important task in a state such as Nebraska with a diverse economy and geography. The structure of the economy varies significantly between the population centers of southeast Nebraska to the “micropolitan” and rural areas of the state. The research team estimates the contribution of 9 Nebraska regions to the statewide economic impact.

This analysis will begin with a direct estimate of the additional tourism activity in Nebraska due to heritage visitors. This is estimated in the section that follows.

Direct Heritage Tourist Expenditures

The first step in estimating heritage tourism spending is to determine the annual number of heritage visitors to the State of Nebraska. DK Shifflet reports that there were over 20 million person-trips to destinations in the state of Nebraska during 2009 and that approximately 43 percent of person-trips were overnight trips with the remainder being day-trips. Person-trips were defined to include trips of 50 miles (one way) or greater by residents of Nebraska or other states to a destination within Nebraska. DK Shifflet also reports that 6 percent of these person-trips included a visit to a heritage site or museum. Trips that included such a visit were considered a heritage trip in this study. Based on these estimates, the research team was able to estimate the number of day-trip and overnight heritage person-trips to Nebraska during 2009. There were an estimated 539,000 overnight person-trips and 701,000 day-trips

to heritage attractions and museums during the year. As will be seen below (Tables 27 and 28), the total spending of overnight and day-trip heritage visitors was approximately \$310 million dollars in 2009. This is the equivalent of 13 percent of the \$2.3 in total 2008 travel spending in Nebraska identified in the report *Nebraska Travel Impacts, 2003-2008*, by Dean Runyan and Associates. Therefore, heritage trips account for approximately 6 percent of all person-trips and 13 percent of traveler spending. This result is consistent with the findings of the 2007 study *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Nebraska* that heritage travelers spend about twice as much for person-trip as other travelers.¹

DK Shifflet was not able to provide 2009 estimates of the per-person spending by overnight visitors and day visitors to Nebraska heritage attractions within the project budget. However, the earlier study, which covered the year 2005, reported \$436 in spending per overnight person-trip. That same data source reported \$69 in per person spending for each day-trip. This study updated these spending estimates from 2005 to 2009 using the increase in the consumer price index during the 4-year period. For 2009, the estimated spending of \$477 for each overnight person-trip and \$75 per day-trip was calculated.

Table 27 provides the estimate for the direct visitor spending that can be attributed to overnight heritage trips. Results suggest a substantial annual economic impact in Nebraska due to heritage tourism. The 539,000 overnight person-trips are multiplied by \$477 in spending to yield an annual estimate of \$257,103,000 in annual spending by overnight heritage visitors.

A significant portion of this \$257,103,000 in annual spending represents new spending for the Nebraska economy either by bringing money into the state from out-of-state visitor or retaining the spending of Nebraskan's within the state. Panels C through D in Table 27 calculate the share of out-of-state visitor expenditures that can be credited to heritage tourism. Panel E calculates that share for visitors who live in the state of Nebraska. Panel F shows the annual overnight visitor spending that can be credited to heritage tourism.

¹ This report was produced by Rutgers University, in cooperation with the UNL Bureau of Business Research, for the Nebraska State Historical Society.

Table 27: Expenditures by Overnight Travelers in Nebraska Credited to Heritage Tourism

Description of Step	Estimate
A. Total Annual Expenditure of Overnight Travelers Who Participate in Heritage Tourism	
Annual heritage overnight person-trips (2009)	539,000
Annual spending per overnight heritage person-trip	<u>x \$477</u>
Annual expenditure of overnight heritage person-trips	\$257,103,000
B. Annual Expenditure By Overnight Heritage Travelers From Outside of Nebraska	
Annual expenditure of overnight heritage person-trips	\$257,103,000
Share from out-of-state	<u>x 82%</u>
Annual expenditure by overnight heritage travelers from outside of Nebraska	\$210,834,000
C. Expenditure from Out-of-State Overnight Person-Trips to be Fully Credited to Heritage Tourism	
Annual expenditure by overnight heritage travelers from outside of Nebraska	\$210,834,000
Share in Nebraska for leisure travel, but not to visit friends or family	<u>x 46%</u>
Expenditure from overnight person-trips to be fully credited to heritage tourism	\$96,979,000
D. Expenditure from Extension of Out-of-State Overnight Person-Trips Credited to Heritage Tourism	
Annual expenditure by overnight heritage travelers from outside of Nebraska	\$210,834,000
Share in Nebraska for business travel, or to visit friends or family	<u>x 54%</u>
Share of expenditure resulting from extension of person-trips	<u>x 10%</u>
Expenditure from extension of overnight person-trips credited to heritage tourism	\$11,385,000
E. Expenditure from In-State Overnight Person-Trips to be Fully Credited to Heritage Tourism	
Annual expenditure of overnight heritage person-trips	\$257,103,000
Share from in-state	<u>x 18%</u>
Share of trips retained in the state versus a trip out of state	<u>x 22%</u>
Retained spending from in-state overnight heritage person-trips	\$10,181,000
F. Total Annual Expenditure Credited to Heritage Tourism (C+D+E)	\$118,545,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate using data from DK Shifflet.

Panel B estimates the total spending by out-of-state overnight tourists. The earlier study utilizing Travelscope data from 2005 indicated that the vast majority, 82%, of overnight heritage travelers were from outside of the State of Nebraska.

This 82% rate was applied to the 2009 data, yielding an estimate of \$210,834,000 in spending by out-of-state overnight heritage tourists during 2009. These heritage tourists visited at least one heritage site or museum during their trip. These trips, however, may have had multiple purposes. For example, some visitors travel for business rather than leisure. Further, some leisure travelers come to Nebraska primarily to visit friends and family, rather than to visit a particular tourist attraction. Spending by these leisure travelers, or by businesses travelers, could not be primarily attributed to heritage tourism. At the same time, spending by leisure travelers who did not travel to visit friends and family, and who visited a heritage site or museum, could be attributed to heritage tourism, as is done in Panel C. The 2005 Travelscope data also indicated that 46% of overnight heritage travelers were leisure travelers who did not travel to Nebraska to visit friends or family. This same percentage was also applied to the 2009 data in Panel C. After making this adjustment, \$96,979,000 in overnight visitor spending can be attributed to heritage tourism.

The remaining 54% are not credited to heritage tourism, since these visitors clearly had other motivations for traveling to Nebraska. However, such visitors may have extended their stay in Nebraska due to heritage tourism opportunities in the state. National data gathered as part of the Travel Industry Association (TIA) study *The Historic/Cultural Traveler* indicated that 40% of history/cultural visitors extended their stay to engage in heritage or cultural tourism. Those 40% would extend their visit by an average of 1.25 days. These figures suggest that the average heritage visitor would have extended their stay by 0.5 days. That same report indicated that the average heritage traveler has a 5.1 day trip, so approximately 10% of expenditure resulted from heritage visitors extending their stay. This 10% figure is applied in Panel D, yielding an additional \$11,385,000 in heritage visitor expenditure which can be credited to heritage tourism sites and museums in Nebraska.

Panel E estimates the retained spending of Nebraska residents who travel overnight to visit a heritage tourism site or museum. The total expenditures of overnight heritage visitors is multiplied by 18%, the share of these visitors found to reside in Nebraska based on that 2005 Travelscope data. These expenditures also were multiplied by 22%. This 22% figure is the share of respondents to the NASIS survey who visit Nebraska heritage attractions and who also indicated that they would instead spend money in another state if there no museums and historic sites to visit in Nebraska (the NASIS survey only surveyed Nebraska households). In other words, the tourism spending of this 22% of Nebraska visitors is retained in the state by Nebraska museums and heritage attractions. A copy of the NASIS questions related to heritage tourism is provided in Appendix 2. Based on the analysis in Panel E, there was \$10,181,000 in retained spending from Nebraska overnight heritage tourists during 2009.

The total new and retained spending in Nebraska due to heritage tourism is the sum of Panels C, D and E. As seen in Panel F, total annual expenditures from overnight heritage visitors is \$118,545,000. In other words, the estimated annual expenditure credited to overnight heritage travel opportunities in

Nebraska should be \$118,545,000 rather than the original figure of \$257,103,000 (the total annual expenditure by overnight heritage visitors). These adjustments should not be seen as diminishing the impact of heritage tourism, however. Similar adjustments would need to be made for analysis of other tourism attractions in Nebraska, and have been made in Bureau of Business Research reports on a variety of attractions including the Omaha Zoo, the University of Nebraska Athletic Department, the annual Sandhill crane migration, and the Nebraska winery industry.

The estimated 2009 expenditures of \$118,545,000 also does not include the expenditures of day-trip visitors. This direct economic impact is calculated in Table 28. Panel A of Table 28 provides an estimate of total spending by heritage day-trip visitors. As was shown above, the estimated number of heritage day visitors was 701,000 and the average spending per heritage day-trip visit was \$75. The total annual spending by heritage day visitors therefore was estimated to be \$52,575,000 in 2009.

Travelscope data from 2005 indicated that 27% of day-trip visitors were from outside of the State of Nebraska. This percentage is utilized for the year 2009. As seen in Panel B, the annual spending of day-trip heritage visitors from out of state was \$14,195,000 for 2009. Travelscope data for 2005 found that 44% of heritage day-trip visitors were leisure travelers who did not travel to Nebraska to visit friends or family. The spending of these day-trip visitors can fairly be attributed to heritage tourism. This percentage is applied to the 2009 data in Panel C. After making this adjustment, \$6,246,000 in day-trip spending by out-of-state visitors can be attributed to heritage tourism.

By definition, heritage day-trip visits last only for one day, or a portion of one day. Therefore, there was no need to estimate any marginal increase in the length of day-trips due to heritage tourism opportunities, though longer day trips may have occurred in some cases. The research team, however, did consider the retained spending of heritage day-trip visitors from Nebraska, as is seen in Panel D.

Table 28: Expenditures by Day-Visitors in Nebraska Credited to Heritage Tourism
(Continued onto next page)

Description of Step	Estimate
A. Total Annual Expenditure of Day-Visitors Who Participate in Heritage Tourism	
Annual heritage day-visit person-trips (2009)	701,000
Annual spending per heritage day-visit person-trip	<u>x \$75</u>
Annual expenditure of heritage day-visit person-trips	\$52,575,000
B. Annual Expenditure By Day-Trip Heritage Travelers From Outside of Nebraska	
Annual expenditure of heritage day-trip person-trips	\$52,575,000
Share from out-of-state	<u>x 27%</u>
Annual expenditure by day-trip heritage travelers from outside of Nebraska	\$14,195,000

C. Expenditure from Out-of-State Day-Trips to be Fully Credited to Heritage Tourism

Annual expenditure by day-trip heritage travelers from outside of Nebraska	\$14,195,000
Share in Nebraska for leisure travel, but not to visit friends or family	<u>x 44%</u>
Expenditure from day-trips to be fully credited to heritage tourism	\$6,246,000

D. Expenditure from In-State Day-Trips to be Fully Credited to Heritage Tourism

Annual expenditure of heritage day-trips	\$52,575,000
Share from in-state	<u>x 73%</u>
Share of trips retained in the state versus a trip out of state	<u>x 22%</u>
Retained spending from in-state heritage day-trips	\$8,444,000

E. Total Annual Expenditure Credited to Heritage Tourism (C+D) \$14,690,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate using data from DK Shifflet.

The total expenditures of day-trip heritage visitors is multiplied by 73%, the share of these visitors from in-state. These expenditures also were multiplied by 22%, the same percentage utilized above for overnight heritage visitors. As seen in Panel D, there was \$8,444,000 in retained spending from Nebraska day-trip heritage visitors during 2009.

The total expenditures of day-trip visitors which can be credited to heritage tourism in 2009 is \$14,690,000, as seen in Panel E. This is the sum of the new annual spending in Nebraska by day-trip heritage visitors from out-of-state (Panel C) and the retained spending of Nebraska day-trip heritage visitors (Panel D).

Table 29 shows the total 2009 expenditures that can be attributed to heritage tourism in Nebraska. This total is the sum of the overnight and day-trip heritage tourism expenditures in Tables 27 and 28. The estimated total for 2009 is \$133,235,000.

Table 29: Estimated Tourist Expenditures to Be Credited to Heritage Tourism

Description	Estimate
Annual expenditures by overnight heritage tourists (2009)	\$118,545,000
Annual expenditures by day-trip heritage tourists (2009)	<u>+ \$14,690,000</u>
Total expenditures by heritage tourists (2009)	\$133,235,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate.

Such expenditures account for a significant share of the economic contribution of heritage tourism. The other part of the direct effect is the annual operations expenditures of Nebraska heritage attractions and museums. These expenditures were estimated based on another Bureau of Business Research survey of 220 Nebraska heritage facilities. The survey instrument is listed in Appendix 3. The list of 220 heritage facilities was developed over time in coordination with the Nebraska State Historical Society

and the names of the heritage attractions and museums are listed in Appendix 4. The list was as comprehensive as possible, including almost all heritage facilities in Nebraska. These heritage attractions and museums were surveyed to gather detailed information about the annual expenditures and revenue of each heritage attraction, as well as information about paid employment and wages, salaries, and benefits. The survey response rate was 46.8%, given that 103 of the 220 surveys were returned. Two methods were used to estimate the expenditures of non-respondents. First, the Guidestar website was used to look up a recent tax return for non-respondents. Guidestar tracks the tax returns of non-profit organizations. That tax return would provide information about revenues, expenditures, wages, salaries, and benefits, and employment for heritage attractions and museums for a recent year. Guidestar information was available for another 25 heritage attractions and museums. If no information is available from Guidestar, the expenditures of similar responding organizations were used to create an estimate. Finally, a data base maintained by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development was consulted to estimate missing attendance data. That data base provides estimates of annual attendance from three recent years, 2005 to 2007. Researchers utilized an average of attendance in those three years to estimate annual attendance.

Table 30 shows the estimate for total expenditures, paid employment, and wages, salaries and benefits for all Nebraska heritage attractions and museums, along with a count of annual visitors. The total annual expenditures is the direct economic effect of museum and heritage site operations during 2010, as that fiscal year is defined by respondents. The figure also includes expenditures for renovation investments in 2010, though more than 95% of the total is operations expenditures. Results in Table 30 show that approximately half of those expenditures are for wages, salaries, and benefits paid to workers. Total estimated employment is 877. The average annual wage of roughly \$18,200 reflects that heritage attractions and museums create a significant number of part-time as well as full-time jobs. Total annual visitation was estimated to be 2.4 million. This is roughly double the estimate of overnight or day-trip visitors identified in the Travelscope data, which focused only on visitors who had traveled 50 miles or further. The difference reflects the significant share of local visitors to Nebraska heritage attractions and museums.

Table 30: Annual Expenditures, Employment, and Wages, Salaries and Benefits of Heritage Site Operations and Investments

Measure	Estimate
Total Annual Expenditure	\$32,904,000
Paid Employment	877
Wages, salaries, and benefits	\$15,958,000
Annual Visitors	2,429,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate.

The total expenditures due to heritage tourism in Nebraska is the sum of these museum and site expenditures (Table 30) and the visitor expenditures that can be attributed to heritage tourism (Table 29). Total expenditures are \$166,135,000, as is seen in Table 31 below. Table 31 also shows the direct effect. Direct effect is typically the same as expenditures. However, in the case of tourism spending at

gasoline service stations, grocery stores, or retail stores, only the mark-up portion of sale price is a direct effect on the Nebraska economy. This is because the gasoline, food or retail items that are sold could have been manufactured in other states. Nearly half of tourist purchases are of retail items. As seen in Table 31, including only the mark-up portion of these retail sales yields a total annual direct effect of \$115,300,000.

The next step is to estimate the multiplier effect from these direct expenditures. This is accomplished in the next section.

Table 31: Annual Direct Effect of Heritage Tourists and Site Expenditures

Measure	Estimate	Direct Effect
Expenditures by heritage tourists	\$133,235,000	\$82,400,000
Expenditures and investments by heritage museums and sites	\$32,900,000	\$32,900,000
Total annual heritage tourists and site expenditures	\$166,135,000	\$115,300,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate

Multiplier Impact and Total Economic Impact

The IMPLAN model was utilized to calculate economic multipliers for the direct effects listed in Table 31. As was noted in the methodology section, the multipliers reveal the ratio of multiplier impact for each dollar of direct economic effect. When this multiplier is applied to the direct effect of \$115,300,000 the total annual economic impact is estimated to be \$196,119,000. Economic multipliers also can be used to estimate the total employment impact and the total wage, salary, and benefit impact associated with the \$115,300,000 direct effect. Table 32 shows the total annual impact on wage, salary, and benefit income is \$72,026,000. This annual wage, salary, and benefit impact is a component of the total economic impact. There were 3,010 jobs associated with these wages, salaries, and benefits.

Table 32: Multiplier Impact and Total Economic Impact of Heritage Tourism

Measure	Direct Effect	Multiplier Impact	Total Impact
Output	\$115,300,000	\$80,819,000	\$196,119,000
Wage, Salary, Benefits	\$45,677,000	\$26,349,000	\$72,026,000
Employment	2,330	680	3,010

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research estimate

Table 33a shows the annual effect impact, multiplier impact, and total economic impact by industry. The impact on wages, salaries, and benefits by industry is reported later in Table 33b, and employment by industry is reported in Table 33c.

As seen in Table 33a, the largest direct economic effect (measured by output), at \$59,423,000, is in the hospitality industry, the industry that includes both lodging and restaurants. These industries are major recipients of spending by heritage visitors. The second largest direct effect, at \$40,902,000 per year, is in the recreation and amusement industry. This result was also expected since museums and historic sites

are part of the recreation and amusement industry, and because a portion of tourist spending also would occur at other types of recreation and amusement businesses. There is also a \$13,246,000 direct annual effect on the retail trade industry, also due to visitor spending. Finally, there is a direct effect on the construction industry due to renovation spending. The largest multiplier impacts, by contrast, are in the financial services industry, at \$22,132,000 and the business services industry, at \$12,353,000. The third largest multiplier impact is in the education and health care industry, while the fourth largest multiplier impact is in the other services industry, which primarily includes personal services. Business in most other industries received from \$3 million to \$4.5 million in multiplier impacts. Thus, it can be seen there is a multiplier impact from heritage tourism at businesses throughout the economy.

Table 33a: Annual Economic Impact (Output) of Heritage Tourism by Industry

Industry	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Agriculture	\$0	\$450,000	\$450,000
Mining	\$0	\$33,000	\$33,000
Utilities	\$0	\$1,477,000	\$1,477,000
Construction	\$1,728,000	\$981,000	\$2,710,000
Manufacturing	\$0	\$3,983,000	\$3,983,000
Wholesale Trade	\$0	\$3,710,000	\$3,710,000
Retail Trade	\$13,246,000	\$4,396,000	\$17,642,000
Transportation & Warehousing	\$0	\$2,727,000	\$2,727,000
Information	\$0	\$6,229,000	\$6,229,000
Financial Services	\$0	\$22,132,000	\$22,132,000
Business Services	\$0	\$12,353,000	\$12,353,000
Education and Health Care	\$0	\$8,406,000	\$8,406,000
Recreation and Amusement	\$40,902,000	\$799,000	\$41,702,000
Hospitality	\$59,423,000	\$3,576,000	\$62,999,000
Other Services	\$0	\$3,034,000	\$3,034,000
Government	\$0	\$6,532,000	\$6,532,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research Estimate

A similar pattern emerges for the wages, salaries, and benefits component of annual economic impact, as seen in Table 33b. The largest direct effect is in the recreation and amusement industry, followed by the hospitality industry. The largest multiplier impacts are for the businesses services industry, followed by the education and health care industry and the financial services industries. For example, workers or proprietors in the businesses services industry earn a \$5,869,000 wages, salary, and benefit impact in Nebraska each year due to the multiplier effect from the heritage tourism industry. Workers and proprietors throughout the economy gain from the multiplier impact, with seven additional industries earning at least a \$1 million multiplier impact in terms of wages, salaries and benefits.

Table 33b: Annual Wage, Salary and Benefit Impact of Heritage Tourism by Industry

Industry	Direct	Multiplier	Total
Agriculture	\$0	\$97,000	\$97,000
Mining	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000
Utilities	\$0	\$176,000	\$176,000
Construction	\$769,000	\$422,000	\$1,191,000
Manufacturing	\$0	\$649,000	\$649,000
Wholesale Trade	\$0	\$1,510,000	\$1,510,000
Retail Trade	\$7,012,000	\$2,352,000	\$9,364,000
Transportation & Warehousing	\$0	\$1,080,000	\$1,080,000
Information	\$0	\$1,564,000	\$1,564,000
Financial Services	\$0	\$3,307,000	\$3,307,000
Business Services	\$0	\$5,869,000	\$5,869,000
Education and Health Care	\$0	\$4,215,000	\$4,215,000
Recreation and Amusement	\$19,773,000	\$282,000	\$20,056,000
Hospitality	\$18,122,000	\$1,186,000	\$19,308,000
Other Services	\$0	\$1,627,000	\$1,627,000
Government	\$0	\$2,005,000	\$2,005,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research Estimate

There is substantial employment associated with these wage, salary, and benefit impacts, as is seen in Table 33c. The largest direct economic effect is in the entertainment and recreation industry, where 1,080 jobs are present due to the heritage tourism industry, including the estimated 880 jobs at museums or heritage attractions. There is also a large direct employment effect in the hospitality industry. The multiplier impact is felt throughout the economy with dozens of jobs created in most industries. The largest multiplier jobs impact, at 130, is in business services, followed by financial services, education and health care and retail trade.

Table 33c: Employment Impact of Heritage Tourism by Industry

Industry	Output	Wage, Salary & Benefit	Employment
Agriculture	0	2	2
Mining	0	0	0
Utilities	0	1	1
Construction	16	9	25
Manufacturing	0	11	11
Wholesale Trade	0	22	22
Retail Trade	272	90	362
Transportation & Warehousing	0	24	24
Information	0	28	28
Financial Services	0	108	108
Business Services	0	130	130
Education and Health Care	0	94	94

Recreation and Amusement	1,079	20	1100
Hospitality	959	68	1028
Other Services	0	51	51
Government	0	24	24

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research Estimate

These economics impacts in terms of output, wages, and salaries also generate a tax revenue impact. Output is much like gross receipts or sales, so there are state and local sales tax impacts associated with the output impact. There is also a lodging tax associated with the output impact in the lodging industry and also gasoline taxes. Wages and salaries generate an income tax revenue for the State of Nebraska and also support spending on housing which generates property tax revenue for local jurisdictions throughout the state. These annual tax revenue impacts are estimated in Table 34 below.

Table 34 shows local sales, property, and lodging tax revenue estimates and state income, sales, lodging, and gasoline tax revenue. The sales tax base is due to sales by food stores, retail stores, entertainment and recreation businesses, food services businesses or lodging establishments to heritage visitors. The total taxable sales from this source were \$103,167,000 per year. The estimate local sales tax rate is 1.13%, which is three-quarters of the maximum allowable local sales tax rate of 1.5% in Nebraska. This estimated was based on a review of local sales tax rates in Nebraska, during which the research team observed that while local rates varied throughout the state, most larger communities charged the 1.5% rate. The estimated local sales tax impact for 2010 was \$1,161,000.

The local property tax impact was calculated by estimating the taxable property supported by heritage tourism and the multiplying that taxable property by the state average property tax rate, which was 1.94% in 2010. To calculate the property tax base, the research team multiplied the wages and salary income impact of heritage tourism by the statewide ratio of taxable property to state income in 2010. This ratio shows how much taxable property is supported by income each year, since a substantial share of household income directly or indirectly supports property. The ratio was 2.13 in taxable property per dollar of income. Multiplying the \$72,026,000 wages, salary and benefit income impact by this ratio yields a property tax base estimate of \$153,540,000 due to the economic impact of heritage tourism in Nebraska. Multiplying this tax base by the 1.94% statewide effective tax rate yields n estimate of \$2,982,000 in local property tax generated in 2010 due to heritage tourism. The lodging tax was estimated by multiplying the total annual lodging expenditure of heritage tourists (\$25,483,000) by the average statewide lodging tax rate of 3.00% to yield a local lodging tax impact of \$765,000. The 3.00% average rate was used because it was three-quarters of the maximum local rate in Nebraska of 4.00%. The total local tax revenue impact in Nebraska due to the 2010 economic impact of heritage tourism was \$4,907,000 million.

For state taxes, state tax rates were applied to the sales tax base and lodging tax base. The state sales tax rate is 5.5% and the state lodging tax rate is 1.0%. This calculation yielded an annual state sales tax impact of \$5,674,000 and a state lodging tax revenue impact of \$255,000. The income tax impact was based on the annual wage, salary, and benefit impact of \$72,026,000. This wage, salary, and benefit

impact is the tax base for the income tax. A 2.41% effective income tax rate was applied to that income tax base. The 2.41% effective rate was calculated by dividing Nebraska state income tax revenue by the total state income, and shows the share of Nebraska income that goes towards state tax revenue. Data was taken from 2008, the most recent year available, but the rate was applied to income impact data. Using this approach, the state income tax revenue impact of heritage tourism was \$1,737,000.

Gasoline tax was the last state tax impact considered. Gasoline is taxed on a per gallon basis. The state gasoline tax was approximately \$0.27 per gallon in 2010 and the average price of a gallon of gasoline was \$2.82. Given these figures, 9.56% of the price of a gallon of gasoline in 2010 was due to the gasoline tax. This rate is utilized in Table 34 and applied to the estimated \$40,392,000 in gasoline purchases of Nebraska heritage visitors to yield an estimated \$3,861,000 gasoline tax impact. The total annual state tax impact from income, sales, lodging, and gasoline taxes is \$11,527,000 million. The total annual state and local tax revenue impact from heritage tourism was \$16,434,000.

Table 34: State and Local Tax Revenue Impacts

Tax	Tax Base (Millions of \$)	Effective Tax Rate	Tax Revenue (Millions of \$)
Local Taxes			
Sales Tax	\$103,167	1.13%	\$1.161
Property Tax	\$153,540	1.94%	\$2.982
Lodging Tax	\$25,483	3.00%	\$0.765
Total Local Taxes			\$4.907
States Taxes			
Income Taxes	\$72,026	2.41%	\$1.737
Sales Taxes	\$103.167	5.50%	\$5.674
Lodging Taxes	\$25.483	1.00%	\$0.255
Gasoline Taxes	\$40.392	9.56%	\$3.861
Total State Taxes			\$11.527
Total State and Local Taxes			\$16,434

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Economic Impact of Heritage Tourism by Region of Nebraska

The economic impact of the heritage tourism industry also has a geographic component, much like it has an industry component. The economic impact in a particular region of the state results from: 1) the operations spending of heritage attractions and museums in that region, and 2) the annual visits to heritage attractions and museums in that region. This section examines the geographic distribution of the heritage tourism impact within the state of Nebraska. The analysis utilizes the tourism regions of the state designated by the Division of Travel and Tourism, Nebraska Department of Economic Development in its 2010-2015 *Nebraska Tourism Industry Development Plan*. This regional definition was deemed most appropriate given the growing importance of heritage tourism within the Nebraska travel and tourism industry, and the importance of coordinating heritage tourism promotion efforts with other tourism promotion efforts of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Figure 25 shows a map of Nebraska counties and the seven tourism regions of Nebraska. Note that one region, known as the Metro region, contains Lancaster and Douglas counties as well as a group of suburban counties. The Metro region is divided into Douglas County, Lancaster County, and the Other Metro counties.

Figure 25: The Seven Tourism Regions of Nebraska.

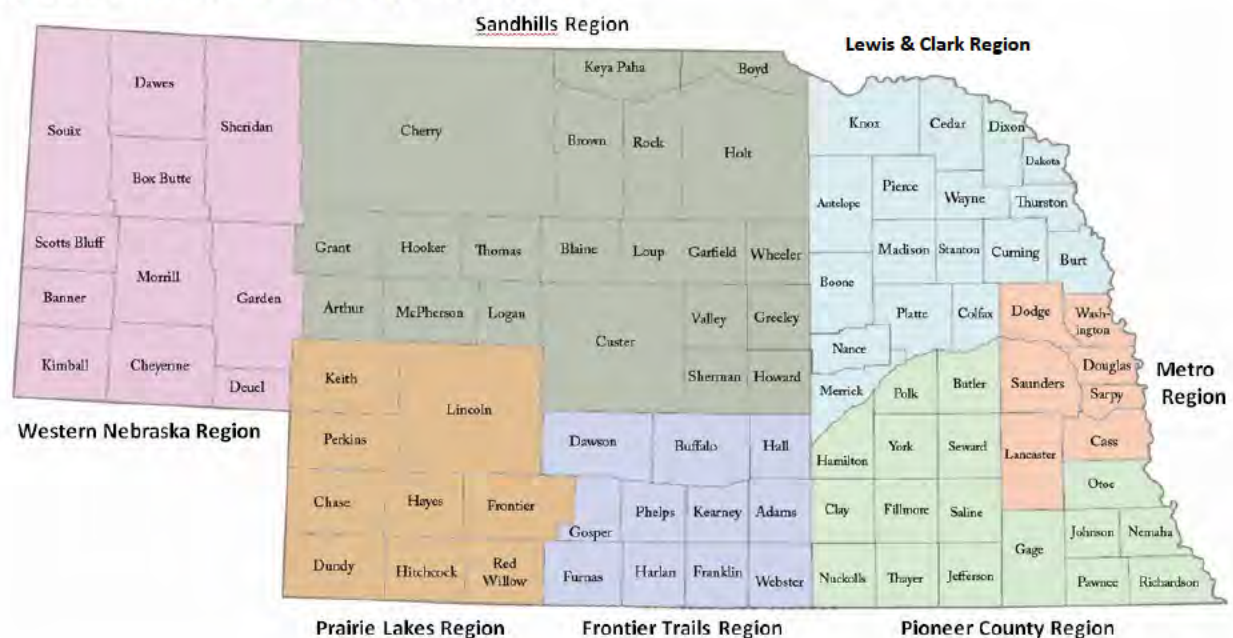


Table 35 contains the estimated expenditures of heritage attractions and museums located in each region as well as an estimate of annual visitors to those sites and museums over the course of a year. As expected, the largest region in terms of both expenditure and visits is Douglas County. Lancaster County and the “Other Metro” region also have substantial expenditures and visits. These are the population centers of Nebraska and also contain major museums and sites. Douglas County is home to the Durham Museum while the Strategic Air and Space Museum and the Fort Atkinson State Historical Park are located in this region. Lancaster County is home to Morrill Hall and the Nebraska History Museum..

Table 35: Annual Heritage Site Expenditures and Visitors by Region

Region	Expenditure	Visitor
Pioneer County	\$4,042,000	222,000
Lewis & Clark	\$798,000	37,000
Frontier Trails	\$8,334,000	429,000
Sandhills	\$452,000	64,000
Prairie Lakes	\$228,000	54,000
Western Nebraska	\$3,665,000	593,000
Other Metro	\$3,201,000	198,000
Douglas	\$6,543,000	597,000
Lancaster	\$5,641,000	237,000

Source: Survey of Heritage Attractions

Among the remaining 6 regions, the largest concentrations of visitors and heritage site and museum expenditures are in the “Frontier Trails” and “Western Nebraska” regions. The “Frontier Trails” region contains major institutions such as the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, and the Willa Cather State Historic Site. The “Western Nebraska” region is home to Scotts Bluff National Monument and Fort Robinson.

The “Pioneer County” region is home to Homestead National Monument. Both the “Sandhills” region and the “Lewis & Clark” region are home to dozens of individual heritage attractions and museums. The “Prairie Lakes” region is home to the Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park and the High Plains Historical Society and Museum. Generally speaking, heritage site and museum expenditures and visitors tend to rise and fall together from region to region. The “Western Nebraska” region and the “Prairie Lakes” regions, however, do relatively well in terms of attendance relative to expenditure.

Both expenditure and visitor spending are crucial determinants of economic impact. Table 36 shows how the statewide economic impact is distributed among the 9 regions. The table breaks out the economic impact by geographical region much like Tables 33a through 33c broke out the economic impact by specific industry. However, Table 36 focuses on total annual impacts. Note that the regional contributions to economic impact sum to the statewide economic impact.

Table 36: Contribution of Each Region to Statewide Economic Impact

Industry	Output	Wage, Salary & Benefit	Employment
Pioneer County	\$19,987,000	\$7,838,000	318
Lewis & Clark	\$3,348,000	\$1,062,000	68
Frontier Trails	\$38,662,000	\$14,049,000	649
Sandhills	\$4,352,000	\$1,435,000	74
Prairie Lakes	\$3,516,000	\$1,284,000	58
Western Nebraska	\$40,107,000	\$14,144,000	563
Other Metro	\$16,780,000	\$6,044,000	252
Douglas	\$44,949,000	\$15,570,000	626
Lancaster	\$24,416,000	\$10,600,000	401

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research calculations

The largest contribution to the economic impact of heritage tourism in Nebraska comes from Douglas County. The annual economic impact is \$44,949,000, or 23% of the statewide total. The heritage tourism industry, however, has areas of concentration outside of metropolitan Nebraska. For instance, the second largest contribution to economic impact comes from the “Western Nebraska” region. The annual economic impact is \$40,107,000, including \$14,144,000 in wages, salaries and benefits spread over approximately 560 jobs. This large impact in the “Western Nebraska” region results from both high visitor attendance (see Table 35) and substantial heritage site and museum spending. A similar size contribution is made by another non-metropolitan area, the “Frontier Trails” region. The annual economic impact is \$38,662,000, including \$14,049,000 in wages, salaries, and benefits earned in approximately than 650 jobs. The Lancaster County region, “Pioneer County” and the “Other Metro” region make the fourth, fifth and sixth largest contributions to the statewide economic impact of heritage tourism. The remaining three regions also make a substantial economic contribution. In other words, the economic impact of heritage tourism comes from throughout the state of Nebraska.

These regional contributions are substantial; however, it should be noted that these regional contributions to the statewide economic impact would vary from the economic impact of heritage tourism **on each region**. Those economic impacts **on each region** would tend to be smaller given that the multiplier impact would be muted in these smaller economic regions. However, the regional economic impact would tend to be larger given that more of the visitors to each region would be external visitors, bringing new money to the economy. In other words, Nebraskan’s from another part of the state would still be from outside of these regions, and therefore, contribute more to local economic impact. Unfortunately, data is not available on the share of visitors to each region from other parts of Nebraska, so calculation cannot be done for the economic impact of heritage tourism **on each region**. However, the regional contributions to statewide impact presented in Table 36 provide a reasonable proxy, especially of the relative rankings of the regional impacts.

Summary

This chapter examined the economic impact of the heritage tourism industry in Nebraska. There were three components to that economic impact: 1) the impact from overnight heritage visitors, 2) the impact from day-trip heritage visitors, and 3) the economic impact from the operations of heritage attractions and museums. The research team identified the direct spending of heritage visitors and heritage attractions and museums through a series of surveys and by utilizing Travelscope data on the visitation trends of tourists. Travel that included a visit to a heritage site or museum was found to account for 6% of person-trips in Nebraska and an estimated 13% of tourism spending in the state.

The research team then calculated the direct economic effect associated with this spending and also the multiplier impact. Overall, the economic multiplier was found to be 1.7, indicating that there was a \$0.70 multiplier impact for each \$1 of direct economic effect. Such a multiplier is within the reasonable range of 1.2 to 1.8 found for most non-manufacturing industries.

The direct effect from heritage tourist spending and expenditures and investments by heritage museums and sites was \$115,300,000 per year, as is seen in Table 37. The multiplier impact was an additional \$80,819,000 per year. The total annual economic impact of the heritage tourism industry was the sum of the direct effect and multiplier impact, or \$196,119,000. This figure applies to a recent economic year, and the estimate was made utilizing annual data from either 2009 or 2010. Part of this economic impact was realized in terms of worker earnings. Specifically, the total annual impact on wage, salary, and benefit income is \$72,026,000. This worker income was spread over 3,010 jobs. The annual state and local tax revenue impact was \$16,434,000.

Table 37: Direct Effect, Multiplier Impact and Total Impact of Heritage Tourism

Measure	Amount
Direct Effect	
Overnight and day-trip heritage tourists	\$82,400,000
Heritage museums and sites	\$32,900,000
Total	\$115,300,000
Multiplier Impact	\$80,819,000
Total Economic Impact	\$196,119,000
Wages, Salaries, Benefits	\$72,026,000
Employment	3,010
State and Local Tax Revenue	\$16,434,000

Source: UNL Bureau of Business Research Calculations

Much of this economic impact occurs for businesses and workers within industries that directly serve heritage tourists. However, due to the multiplier effect, businesses throughout the economy gain from the economic impact of heritage tourism. The largest economic impacts occur on the hospitality (lodging and restaurants), arts and recreation, and retail trade industries. However, there are also substantial economic impacts on the business services, financial services, and education and health care industries, among others.

The economic impact also is spread throughout the state of Nebraska. As is true with most industries, a substantial share of the heritage tourism industry is concentrated in Omaha, Lincoln, and surrounding metropolitan counties. However, more than most industries, the heritage tourism industry is also noteworthy in non-metropolitan regions of Nebraska. In particular a large contribution to economic impact occurs in the “Frontier Trails” tourism region, which includes the tri-cities area of Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney. There is also a very substantial contribution to economic impact from the “Western Nebraska” region.

These results show that the current heritage tourism industry in the state of Nebraska has a substantial economic impact, both overall and within individual industries and geographic regions of the state. That economic impact will only grow as the heritage tourism industry continues to expand. Further, opportunities for expansion are present for the industry. These opportunities are discussed in the balance of this heritage tourism marketing plan.

VII. HERITAGE TOURISM PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the surveys and interviews of Project Committee members, heritage site managers, and heritage visitors the following recommendations have been created for consideration by the Project Committee.

1. Promote heritage attractions geographically and thematically based on Nebraska’s statewide themes.
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Position the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism to collaborate with other statewide and local partners on strategic heritage tourism marketing efforts.

- A. **Nebraska Travel Guide.** Ensure that the Nebraska Travel Guide clearly conveys the five statewide heritage themes for Nebraska to set the stage for meaningful heritage travel experiences.
- B. **Nebraska Welcome Centers.** Seek out opportunities to share the five statewide heritage themes with visitors such as providing interpretive exhibits at the Welcome Centers about Nebraska’s history and including information about nearby heritage attractions where travelers can experience Nebraska’s history first hand. Keep in mind that Nebraska’s landscape helped to shape the state’s history, thus it is important to emphasize the strong connection between the natural landscape and the built environment.
- C. **Visit Nebraska Website.** Look at opportunities to provide visitors with the ability to create customized online itineraries using the heritage site information and coordinates gathered through this research study. Integrate the listings for these heritage attractions with electronic information about Nebraska’s 500+ historic markers to allow travelers to create customized maps of heritage attractions and historic markers along their intended travel route. In addition, provide access to visitor information about these heritage attractions that has been gathered as part of the inventory process for this study.
- D. **Interstate 80.** Given the large concentration of heritage attractions close to I-80 (the major east-west travel route across the state) consider developing an “I-80 Adventures” travel promotion, telling travelers about heritage attractions that can be found off of each I-80 exit. For the purposes of this promotion, heritage attractions will be listed under each Interstate exit with information about the distance and travel time required to reach each attraction from that exit. The promotion could also include suggested “exit to exit” detours offering Nebraska heritage adventures as a break from Interstate travel.

The Lincoln Highway parallels I-80 across Nebraska, offering opportunities to create byway detours of any desired length that still allow through travelers to make progress towards

their final destination. (see recommendation below for the “Nebraska Passport” as another opportunity for the Lincoln Highway).

- E. Nebraska Passport.** Continue current efforts to promote in-state travel by Nebraskans by continuing to offer the Nebraska Passport program. Consider outreach to expand the number of heritage attractions included in the passport as well as special opportunities, such as the upcoming 2013 anniversary of the Lincoln Highway, to promote specific aspects of Nebraska’s history. For example, during the upcoming Lincoln Highway anniversary, consider offering a special premium or prize related to the Lincoln Highway for individuals visiting a minimum number of heritage attractions along the Lincoln Highway.

Virginia TimeTravelers Celebrates Anniversary

To celebrate the bicentennial of George Washington’s death in 1999, the Virginia Association of Museums expanded their TimeTravelers passport program to offer a special prize for travelers visiting a certain number of Virginia sites related to George Washington.

In addition to the timely opportunity offered by the 2013 anniversary, the Lincoln Highway’s location paralleling I-80 offers tremendous opportunities to offer a scenic alternative to the interstate for short or long stretches across Nebraska. Additionally, the state of Nebraska will celebrate its sesquicentennial in 2017, offering another prime opportunity for to celebrate the state’s history and heritage through the Passport program.

2. Provide funding and technical assistance in heritage tourism development to help Nebraska’s heritage attractions realize their full potential.

Ensure that Nebraska’s heritage attractions are aware of existing tourism development resources, and develop new resources to complement what is already available. Assist heritage attractions in building the capacity and leadership required to become sustainable for the long term.

- A. Identify heritage tourism a funding priority in existing grant programs.** Identify strategic focus areas where Nebraska’s heritage attractions could improve their visitor experience and their marketing efforts. Work with existing grant programs in Nebraska to place a higher emphasis on projects that will support the implementation of recommendations in this plan. Encourage heritage facilities to take advantage of funding opportunities such as the CDBG block grants, and continue to seek additional sources of funding for heritage facilities.

For example, survey efforts completed as part of this report indicated that Nebraska’s heritage attractions have not fully embraced technology. Identify funding sources to help launch a statewide “**Technology in Nebraska’s Museums**” initiative to provide training and technical assistance to Nebraska’s heritage attractions. This could include promotional

opportunities (websites, social media, email outreach, etc.) as well as interpretive opportunities (podcasts, interactive exhibits, etc.).

- B. Tap into the county lodging tax as a funding source for heritage tourism.** Track the success of efforts funded through the existing county lodging tax, and use those success stories to encourage other Nebraska counties to take advantage of this existing funding mechanism for tourism promotion and development. Work with county commissioners to ensure that the initial 2% tax for tourism marketing and the second 2% tax for tourism development (up to a maximum 4% county lodging tax) helps support heritage tourism marketing and development efforts in each county.
- C. Utilize the TARGET Tourism Assessments to provide guidance and capacity building for communities and individual attractions.** Expand the assessment team expertise provided through the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism's TARGET assessments by expanding the assessment teams to include assistance from other organizations such as the Nebraska State Historical Society, the Nebraska Museums Association and other organizations with experience related to heritage tourism. As teams for community and attraction assessments are created, keep in mind the expertise offered by organizations such as those on the Project Committee.

Take full advantage of the new attraction assessment as an emerging opportunity to help heritage attractions realize their potential and achieve sustainability.

- D. Use the Nebraska Historic Resources Survey & Inventory to provide guidance and planning assistance at the county level.** Use the heritage tourism assessment included in the Nebraska State Historical Society's Dawson County Nebraska Historic Resources Survey & Inventory (NeHRSI) as a model for other counties to follow.
 - 1. Complete NeHRSI Heritage Tourism Assessments for all Nebraska counties.** These could include a process to inventory heritage attractions and address thematic opportunities. Ensure that all NeHRSI county assessments include a heritage tourism assessment, including recommendations for heritage tourism marketing and development. Use the NeHRSI assessments as a tool to identify additional historic sites to help illustrate the five statewide heritage themes, especially those that may be underrepresented in Nebraska's current collection of heritage site museums. Use the outreach through the NeHRSI inventories to identify communities and heritage attractions that could benefit from assistance such as the TARGET tourism assessments, and encourage those communities and attractions to participate in these assessments.

E. Strengthen the Nebraska Museums Association’s ability to build leadership and capacity for Nebraska’s museums. Work with the Nebraska Museums Association (NMA) to increase this organization’s capacity. Steps that could be taken to strengthen NMA include:

1. **Hire paid staff.** Identify funding and create a paid staff position for the Nebraska Museums Association. Encourage new NMA staff to help build stronger partnerships between historic sites and tourism entities.
2. **Create a Museum Mentor Program.** Support the Association’s efforts to create a Nebraska Museum Mentor Program. The mentor program will pair experienced curators and museum staff from large museums with staff or volunteers from smaller museums needing experience or advice. While some larger museums like the Stuhr and the Durham already offer informal mentoring services to museums near them, this statewide mentor program would help the staff and volunteers from smaller local history organizations in rural parts of Nebraska by providing a centralized clearinghouse to connect individuals with appropriate areas of expertise.

Mentoring assistance could range from advice provided by phone, to “shadowing” opportunities for volunteers or staff to spend a day or several days with an experienced professional, to a site visit to provide technical assistance. The Survey of Heritage Attractions indicated that curators and directors at Nebraska’s heritage facilities are generally very well-educated with many years of work experience. Creating peer-to-peer networking opportunities will benefit all facilities, especially those in rural areas that may have fewer opportunities for interaction with other heritage facilities on a day-to-day basis.

3. **Take advantage of existing national museum assessment programs and other museum-related programs.**
 - a. **AASLH StEPs Program** Encourage Nebraska’s smaller history museums to participate in AASLH’s Standards for Excellence Program (StEPs) for History Museum. The Nebraska Museums Association should provide technical assistance to complement the self-assessment components of this excellent and cost effective assessment program.
 - b. **American Association of Museum’s Museum Assessment Program.** Encourage larger museums to participate in AAM’s Museum Assessment (MAP) program.

- c. **Encourage participation in the Mountains Plains Museum Association**, a 10-state regional museum association. Among other services, this organization offers an annual conference.
- F. **Sponsor an annual conference for heritage attractions.** Hold a museum/heritage attraction **conference** in conjunction with one of the annual statewide tourism conferences (such as the Agri-Eco Tourism Conference) in order to encourage interaction and collaboration between Nebraska’s heritage attractions and the tourism industry.

Create an online Nebraska Heritage Tourism Toolkit. Create an online Nebraska Heritage Tourism Toolkit to promote existing and new tourism resources, including heritage tourism best practices. Include links in this central online source to existing resources as well as additional how-to resources created specifically for the toolkit. Consider the Utah Heritage Tourism Toolkit on the Utah State History website at http://history.utah.gov/heritage_tourism_toolkit/ as a potential model.

Recognizing that Nebraska’s heritage tourism stakeholders will come from a variety of fields with different perspectives as well as different interests, needs and concerns, it will be important to create sections of the toolkit geared for different constituencies. For example, a section for historic sites and organizations might highlight resources to help build capacity, such as the AASLH StEPs program, encourage heritage attractions to affiliate with the Nebraska Museums Association as a networking opportunity, and provide advice to help historic sites reach out to other heritage tourism entities such as chambers of commerce, convention and visitor bureaus, public agencies and county commissions. A separate section for the tourism industry might help convention and visitor bureaus and others understand the potential of heritage tourism as well as helping tourism organizations make better connections between the tourism industry (such as lodging and restaurant businesses) and heritage attractions. Other sections of the toolkit might be geared towards civic leaders and government entities. Each section will include resources tailored to the needs and interests of each constituent group as well as links to shared heritage tourism resources of interest to several or all constituent groups. Creating multiple “portals” to the online toolkit for different constituent groups will enable users to quickly find relevant information while encouraging greater collaboration between different constituent groups.

Existing resources for the online toolkit could include:

- how-to information such as the *Nebraska Tourism Development and Marketing Resources Directory* available at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/pdfs/DevMarRes1.pdf>
- *Nebraska Tourism 101: A Guide to Your Tourism Questions* at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/pdfs/industry/Tourism101Guide.pdf>

- “So you want a Sign? A Guide to Highway Signs” available at <http://www.dor.state.ne.us/traffeng/docs/hwysign.pdf>
- Policies and Procedures Manual (Policy 238.4) for Museums and Attractions from the Nebraska Department of Roads
- The availability of free TARGET tourism evaluations from the Nebraska Tourism Division to help rural communities and attractions develop and market their tourism potential. Local stakeholders work together to complete an evaluation form. When the evaluation form is completed, a site visit is scheduled and a detailed report with tourism marketing and development strategies and with a list of funding and technical assistance resources is provided to local stakeholders. More information about the Tourism Assessment Program can be found at <http://industry.visitnebraska.org/pdfs/CommunityEvaluationForm.pdf>.

Additional resources that could be added to the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Toolkit:

- Searchable database of best practices (including Nebraska and national examples)
- Sources of funding for heritage tourism
- How-to assistance to show how lodging taxes can be used to support heritage tourism
- Statistics to help historic sites make the case for the importance of heritage tourism
- Tips about cost effective ways to market heritage attractions, with a special focus on using technology and social media.
- Directory of heritage attraction contacts (for networking)
- Links to other online heritage tourism resources

3. Foster thematic and geographic collaborative efforts to link Nebraska’s heritage attractions into larger visitor experiences.

Partnership efforts can take place between heritage attractions, or can be between heritage attractions and other partners such as tourism entities, chambers of commerce or local businesses.

A. Nebraska Byways. Expand Nebraska’s collection of byways to ensure that all clusters of heritage facilities are served by a byway corridor.

1. **Add new state byways.** While Nebraska’s nine byways currently connect heritage travelers with many of Nebraska’s heritage facilities, there may be opportunities to add new state byways. For example, expand the Heritage Highway (or expand the byway) in the Prairie Lakes region to connect the Heritage Highway and the Lincoln Highway/Western Trails Scenic & Historic Byway. Explore options to create one or

more new north-south byways in the eastern portion of the state to connect heritage attractions in the eastern portion of the state and create additional byway loop opportunities.

2. **National Scenic Byway Designation.** Seek National Scenic Byway designation for byways that can qualify, and monitor the National Scenic Byways Program to seek grants that match up with current federal priorities as well as local needs.

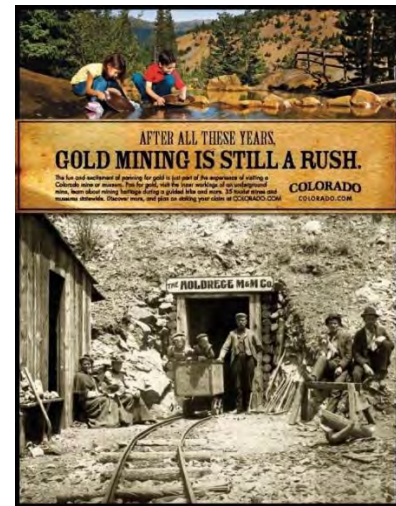
B. Other Regional Heritage Tourism Partnerships

1. **Nebraska's National Historic Trails** can serve as additional connector routes to link heritage attractions to complement the existing collection of byways.
2. **Thematic Heritage Trails and Corridors.** Seek opportunities to create new regional thematic corridors or trails such as the Shannon Trail or the Fossil Freeway described in the "Best Practices" section of this report. Thematic heritage corridors could build on existing byways or historic trails, or might consist of other suggested itineraries to help travelers experience Nebraska's history. Create print and online collateral materials for heritage trails and corridors.
3. **Designate Key Heritage Attractions as "Gateways" for Regional Heritage Experiences.** Position Nebraska's heritage facilities as gateways to thematic and/or geographically connected heritage experiences near each facility, drawing on the 1,000+ sites in the National Register of Historic Places, the 500+ state historic markers, the 72,000+ historic resources documented through the NeHRSI inventory as well as any additional resources that may not yet be documented. Just as Nebraska's byways provide heritage tourism travel corridors, Nebraska's heritage facilities have an opportunity to provide experiences that go beyond their own collections and exhibits. To help Nebraska's heritage facilities become gateways to the history of each region, offer assistance to help heritage facilities develop driving and walking tour materials to enable travelers to have a richer travel experience.

Where possible, help heritage facilities tap create regional heritage tour experiences that take advantage of appropriate cutting-edge technology including geocaching, podcasts, and smart phone apps. In addition, identify opportunities to include historic resources (including historic Main Street business districts as well as other specific types of historic resources) in innovative and interactive programming, special events and heritage-related business ventures. Explore opportunities to collaborate with the Nebraska Humanities Council to build on the success of the Chautauqua program to incorporate living history into heritage experiences.

When creating heritage tour materials, be sure to clearly differentiate between historic sites operated as museums, historic sites that have more limited access, and other things to see and do along the way such as state historic markers. For example, providing product development support to encourage local museums to develop guidebooks, self-guided driving tours, or audio tours using the NeHSI heritage tourism survey results, or supporting the efforts of Main Street organizations to preserve and celebrate the cultural diversity of their community through events or developing businesses that celebrate each community's unique cultural diversity. Consider funding from the county lodging tax as one potential revenue source to help fund the development of regional heritage experiences.

4. **Thematic Marketing Alliances.** Look at potential opportunities to collectively market Nebraska's heritage tourism experiences using a thematic focus. Create a marketing alliance within each of the five themes which includes heritage facilities as well as a lead statewide partner to coordinate promotional efforts for each theme. Consider options such as subsidized coop advertising to provide enhanced visibility for thematically related heritage attractions at an affordable price point.



As one example of how another state has created a marketing campaign around heritage themes, the Colorado Tourism Office created a heritage based advertising campaign to promote different aspects of the state's history including this recent ad which focuses on the state's mining heritage.

5. **National Heritage Area Designation.** Consider seeking National Heritage Area designation for appropriate regions (possibly in addition to National Scenic Byway designation) to expand opportunities for federal support and recognition.

4. Provide additional visibility for Nebraska's heritage attractions through better signage and wayfinding tools.

- A. **Signage for Heritage Facilities.** Work with the Nebraska Department of Roads to investigate opportunities to expand the number of brown Museums and Attractions signs statewide for qualifying heritage attractions by building on the research in this study to systematically identify heritage attractions that meet the criteria for the Museum & Attraction signs but do

not yet have a sign. Provide assistance to museums to help them work with the Nebraska Department of Roads to secure signage.

Consider creative models such as the New Jersey example included in the best practices chapter of this report to make TODS signs more affordable and accessible for Nebraska's heritage attractions.

- B. Technology and Wayfinding.** To complement signage, explore opportunities to use technology as a wayfinding tool by ensuring that all of Nebraska's heritage attractions are registered so they will appear when travelers use GPS devices in their cars, and also explore opportunities to web based wayfinding programs to highlight heritage attractions and offer online assistance with directions and maps.

5. Build pride in Nebraska's history to turn Nebraskans into better ambassadors for their own state.

Several stakeholders commented that Nebraskans are more modest by nature, thus may be less likely to tout the state's accomplishments when friends and family come to visit. The VFR (visiting friends and relatives) market is one of the largest visitor segments for most states. Indeed, the Nebraska Travel Impacts study by Dean Runyan notes that "Visitors that stayed overnight in unpaid accommodations (primarily private homes of friends or relatives) accounted for 24 percent." Recommendations in this section include ways to expand and improve school programs and heritage attractions to cultivate the next generation of heritage travelers.

- A. Nebraska Heritage Attractions School Program Directory.** Create a *Nebraska Heritage attractions School Program Directory* for Nebraska teachers, listing school programs offered as heritage attractions across Nebraska as a collaborative effort of the Durham Museum and the Nebraska State Historical Society. Distribute the *School Program Directory* to teachers at the Durham Teacher's Night each October and at the Nebraska Institute, as well as posting an electronic copy on the Durham Museum and Nebraska Historical Society's website (and other websites as appropriate).
- B. Nebraska Institute.** Seek out opportunities to expand the Nebraska Institute summer training program to history teachers from across the state. This program currently serves teachers from Omaha and Lincoln's schools.

6. Reach out to staff and volunteers at Nebraska's heritage attractions to make them aware of existing and new heritage tourism resources, including this report.

- A. Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee.** Extend the role of the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee to help oversee the implementation of recommendations in this plan.
- B. Tourism Conferences.** Identify prominent statewide conferences as opportunities to announce the completion of the plan and promote opportunities in heritage tourism for Nebraska. Opportunities could include:
1. **2011 Nebraska Travel Conference.** Announce the completion of the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Plan during a prominent general session at the 2011 Nebraska Travel Conference scheduled for October 18-20, 2011 in Omaha. The announcement should be jointly made by the director of the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism and the director of the Nebraska State Historical Society. Distribute copies of the Executive Summary of this report.
 2. **2012 Governor's Agri-Eco-Tourism Workshop.** Dedicate a session at the 2012 Governor's Agri-Eco-Tourism Workshop to heritage tourism. This conference will be held January 31-February 1, 2012 in North Platte. Expand the conference to include Heritage Tourism in future years.
 3. **2012 Nebraska Travel Conference.** Make heritage tourism a major focus of the 2012 Nebraska Travel Conference. Planning for this conference will begin in early spring 2012 and will be completed by mid to late summer. Identify opportunities for other statewide entities to offer joint conference sessions to encourage broader participation by representatives from Nebraska's heritage attractions, possibly hosting a day-long pre-conference meeting(s) along with joint sessions during the Travel Conference. Explore opportunities for collaboration with the Nebraska Museums Association, Nebraska Byways, Nebraska Main Street/Heritage Nebraska and/or other statewide organizations to expand the audience and foster greater collaboration.
- C. Other State Conferences.** Identify other existing state conferences (such as statewide conferences of members of the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee) as well as regional and local conferences where it may be appropriate to include a session or workshop on heritage tourism based on the results of the economic impact study and the heritage tourism plan to reach out to different audiences statewide. For example, consider developing a session on marketing your historic downtown to tourists for a meeting of the Heritage/Nebraska Main Street program.

- D. Heritage Tourism Workshops.** Sponsor regional heritage tourism workshops to share the information in the heritage tourism economic impact study as well as the information and recommendations included in this report across the state. Identify leaders in each region of the state to host workshops. Seek out opportunities for outreach the Nebraska Byways programs.
- E. Heritage Tourism Fact Sheet.** In addition to an executive summary, create a brochure and/or a one-page fact sheet which includes a brief overview of the state and national research on the economic impact of heritage tourism for broad distribution across the state. Include both quantitative data as well as qualitative information from both the state and national level about the enhanced quality of life that heritage tourism can offer.
- F. Press Releases.** Create a press release about the completion of these heritage tourism reports to distribute to the media and to national, statewide, regional and local organizations. Host a press conference to announce the completion of the reports. Encourage organizations to include information about this study and a link to the online version in newsletters.
- G. Post Report Online.** Post electronic copies of this report and the statewide heritage tourism economic analysis report (or alternatively a link to these reports) on appropriate websites.
- H. Peer to Peer Outreach.** Identify members of the Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee to personally reach out to individual members of the Nebraska Travel and Tourism Division Advisory Committee to make them aware of Nebraska's heritage tourism potential. Consider opportunities to investigate funding opportunities for heritage tourism through this group. Seek to have representation by the Nebraska State Historical Society on the Nebraska Travel and Tourism Advisory Committee.
- I. Legislative Bill 684.** Incorporate a strong heritage tourism component in the coming legislative study on tourism in Nebraska, authorized by Legislative Bill 684.
- J. Familiarization Tours.** Work with regional tourism organizations and with destination marketing organizations (DMOs) such as convention and visitor bureaus to sponsor familiarization tours in different regions of the state, inviting potential heritage tourism partners in each region to participate. The familiarization tour should include "red carpet" experiences at historic sites in the region, ending with a reception to encourage networking and collaboration. Build on key findings from this plan to make the case for the importance of heritage tourism for that region.

Encourage each region to offer ongoing informal networking opportunities to bring together the many different kinds of entities and organizations that need to be working together to create a successful heritage tourism program to supplement formal learning opportunities through conferences, workshops and online resources.

7. Create a statewide Heritage Tourism Program for Nebraska.

OPTION A: Implement selected recommendations in this report using existing staff and resources.

While a staffed statewide heritage tourism program is the preferred alternative to effectively implement the full spectrum of recommendations in this report (see “Option B”), it may be possible to selectively implement some recommendations by working with existing organizations and resources.

- A.** Position the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism as the lead agency for heritage tourism marketing, and the Nebraska State Historical Society as the lead agency for heritage tourism development efforts at the state level. The Division of Travel and Tourism will work to incorporate marketing recommendations into their overall tourism marketing strategies for the state. The Nebraska State Historical Society will collaborate with the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism on heritage tourism development strategies, working with other statewide organizations as appropriate.
- B.** The role of the Ad Hoc Project Steering Committee formed to oversee this report will be extended to include the dissemination of information in the report.
- C.** Individual Project Committee members step up to take a leadership role to implement selected recommendations in this report.

“Option A” is an appropriate intermediary step as Nebraska works towards “Option B.” In addition, “Option A” could support the successful implementation of selected recommendations within this report. **However, note that securing additional funding and establishing a staffed program to support heritage tourism (as outlined below in “Option B”) is essential in order to realize Nebraska’s full heritage tourism potential.**

OPTION B: Create a staffed statewide heritage tourism program with sufficient funding to coordinate the implementation of recommendations in this report. Implementing the recommendations in this plan will require creating greater capacity at the state level for heritage tourism. The lead organization or entity will bring together partners to collaborate strategically on specific heritage tourism efforts. As a successful heritage tourism program depends both on developing and maintaining a strong heritage tourism product as well as having a focus on heritage tourism marketing, a strong partnership between the Nebraska State Historical Society and the

Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism will provide strong leadership in both heritage tourism development and heritage tourism marketing.

- A.** Research additional funding opportunities for heritage tourism at the local, regional and state level. State level funding would include funds for staff as well as program implementation. Consider funding sources from the Community Development Block Grant or Historic Preservation Fund as well as additional sources to assist with heritage tourism efforts.
- B.** Create a dedicated heritage tourism staff position. This person will report jointly to the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism to work on outreach, partnership building and advocacy. This staff person would serve as the liaison between different state agencies as well as coordinating the delivery of assistance to heritage attractions. A key component of this job would be to provide guidance to heritage attractions, cultivate heritage tourism partnerships across the state, building on successful models of byways, heritage trails and other collaborative efforts.
- C.** Create an ongoing Heritage Tourism Steering Committee for Nebraska which includes statewide organizations with a shared interest in heritage tourism. The Steering Committee will provide guidance in the creation of the annual work plan for the heritage tourism program.

VIII. HERITAGE TOURISM BEST PRACTICES

The Nebraska Heritage Tourism Project Committee members and Nebraska's heritage attractions were both asked about recommendations for best practices. The Heritage Tourism Project Committee identified several high priorities for best practices including:

- Successful examples of heritage attractions appealing to the younger generation
- Successful examples of using technology, both to promote sites and to tell the story
- Successful examples of engaging the local community
- Best practices for all-volunteer heritage attractions
- Succession strategies for sites staffed by long-time older volunteers or staff
- Successful collaboration, especially where there may be considerable distance between sites
- Successful collaboration with non-traditional partners
- Examples of compelling ways to tell stories
- Examples of ways to interpret sites that are not open to the public
- Successful examples of ways to support the efforts of very small museums
- Successful examples of communities that have been able to capture a greater share of the through traffic on the Interstate to boost their local tourism efforts.
- Ways to deal with the budget crisis and a general lack of funds

The responses from heritage attractions were quite varied, through many museums did state they felt the care and attention they paid to their displays was a point of pride and indeed a best practice. Several museums indicated specific best practices. Because the best practices were varied, the results from those best practices were as well. Likewise, those that listed specific best practices were able to list tangible results from those practices, whereas many sites simply stated that visitation or awareness or another form of general positive response has been due to their particular best practice.

Find Ways to Collaborate

Almost every facility listed several partners they collaborate with, though many simply worked with similar museums in order to help one another increase their traffic. The Nebraska Prairie Museum gave one example of how it looked after other, smaller museums in the area and took on another museum's items when the other facility needed assistance. Others, such as the Homestead National Monument and Kearney Archway, listed partnerships with universities and Indian tribes as key to the creation of new events at their facilities that have helped drive traffic to their sites.

Take Advantage of Technology

Technology also emerged as a strong area of interest for best practices for heritage facility managers. The facilities commonly mentioned their websites, audio-visual equipment and security systems as ways they have invested in technology. Others had interesting recent developments with technology, such as the Homestead National Monument's addition of a distance learning cart, or the Trails and Rails museum's acquisition of seven donated laptops from the Firestone tire company. Nearly every site listed technology as a need, with the exception of the Kearney Archway, whose exhibits were designed by the Disney Corporation.

Engage Younger Audiences

School groups were the most common response to how facility managers have engaged younger audiences, though many also recognized that bringing in younger visitors outside of school groups is an issue. Several sites (such as the Nebraska City Museums Association and Stuhr Museum) recruit younger people as volunteers for their living history events. The Trails and Rails museum has attracted more young visitors by allowing a paranormal investigator's group to explore their grounds once a month. The curator was delighted because of how profitable that event has turned out to be, but it led to the question of whether other museums would find that activity to reflect the site's authentic heritage.

The "wish list" of best practices outlined above fits well with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's five guiding principles for successful and sustainable heritage tourism. Best practices are listed below organized by these five principles. Examples have been selected to illustrate the issues raised by the Heritage Tourism Project Committee and the heritage facility managers.

In addition to the best practices shared below, heritage tourism success stories can be found at <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/stories.htm>.

In 2010, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Heritage Tourism Program also developed a Cultural Heritage Tourism Survival Toolkit with 100+ survival stories from across the country illustrating creative ways that heritage attractions have found to combat the impacts of the economic downturn (see www.preservationnation.org/survival-toolkit).

www.culturalheritagetourism.org

Learn more about the guiding five principles for successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism; the four steps for getting started or taking your program to the next level; success stories from across the country; directories of state and national resources, toolkits and current cultural heritage tourism news at this how-to website. This website is managed by the Heritage Tourism Program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation on behalf of Partners in Tourism.

PRINCIPLE #1: Collaborate

NEBRASKA

EXAMPLES

Fossil Freeway Links Attractions in Nebraska and South Dakota	Described on the Fossil Freeway website (www.fossilfreeway.net) as “...a one-of-a-kind highway corridor between Nebraska's Panhandle and The Black Hills in South Dakota where one will experience the wonders of our rich fossil history,” this program links seven thematically related sites in western Nebraska and South Dakota. The website includes maps, information about each site and other museums and attractions in the area as well as links to tourism information about places to stay and eat. This collaborative project, which includes both the website and a rack card, was funded by a National Park Service grant.
Shannon Trail Connects Visitors to the Lewis & Clark Story	Sixteen communities and two Native American tribes in Northeast Nebraska came together in 2001 to create the 240-mile long Shannon Trail to help make the Lewis & Clark story come alive for heritage travelers. Private George Shannon, the youngest member of the Lewis & Clark expedition, was lost in this area for sixteen days during the expedition. The trail includes 16 interpretive signs created by the National Park Service, chainsaw statues of Private Shannon, a website at www.shannontrail.com , geocaching and other contest opportunities.
Lake McConaughy Water Center Tourism Development	An innovative public private partnership helped to turn plans for a \$300,000 headquarters building into a state-of-the-art \$2.5 million Lake McConaughy Visitor/Water Interpretive Center . The Friends of the Big Mac Committee leveraged the initial investment by the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission with a \$154,000 CDBG grant that was matched with local funds, a \$300,000 interactive exhibit about water issues and water use funded by the Nebraska Public Power District, a \$230,000 aquarium provided by Cabela's of Sidney as well as other donations. Learn more at http://www.neded.org/community-success-ogallala-intrepretive-center .
Platte Valley Attractions (PVA)	Partnerships don't always have to be formal. Ken Mabery, superintendent of Scotts Bluff National Monument, sings the praises of the Platte Valley Attractions (PVA) coalition, which brings together state recreation areas, national monuments, museums, a greenhouse raising heirloom plants, an arts guild and a local B&B. The coalition is not limited to non-profits, and those that want to join can simply sign the coalition's charter. The group meets informally to brainstorm, share best practices, and network with each other. PVA has produced a map of the attractions in the valley and a free activity book for the region. PVA even created a life size plywood version of Hiram Scott, a fur trapper who died at the base of Scotts Bluff. The plywood version of Scott travels to different attractions, and visitors who find all of his locations can win a prize. Mabery comments “we all enjoy each other's

company, and we come together around our shared interest in this region. Because there isn't a fee to be part of PVA, organizations can choose to be more involved or less involved depending upon what else might be going on."

Stuhr Museum Partners to Create Package	The Grand Island Hall County Convention and Visitors Bureau offers a variety of hotel packages on their website at www.visitgrandisland.com including a package that includes an overnight stay at a local hotel and admission to the Stuhr Museum.
Nebraska City Alliance Offers Forum for Networking	Similar to the Platte Valley Attractions coalition, the Nebraska City Alliance was formed as an informal organization with representatives from local attractions, tourism, commerce and the media. The group meets monthly to talk about what they are doing, look at opportunities to collaborate and coordinate calendars.
Nebraska City Museum Association (NCMA) Provides Support to Volunteer-Run Museums	The Nebraska City Museum Association (NCMA) started in 2001 with 6 museums in Nebraska City (mostly run by individual boards) who needed some additional help. A "community curator" position was created to work with all six museums to provide assistance in non-profit management and other areas ranging from fundraising to exhibit design to strategic planning. NCMA has grown to provide consulting, coordination assistance and nonprofit management to 11 museums in Nebraska City and Otoe County. The goal of NCMA is to help these mostly volunteer-run museums become more self sufficient. The cost of the program is shared by the city and four generous local foundations. Each participating museum pays \$1,000/year in dues, though NCMA usually helps them raise at least ten times that amount annually. Brian Volkmer, director of the Nebraska City Museum Association notes <i>"having a museum professional who can be a resource for these museums is very beneficial. I'm not in charge of any of these museums, I work with their boards. These small museums are still in control, and that was important to them."</i>
Neirhardt Center's Public/Private Partnership	The John G. Neihardt Center in Bancroft is a great example of a successful public/private museum partnership. The property is owned by the Nebraska State Historical Society and operated by a private foundation with a board of directors, a membership program, and a modest annual subsidy from the state. The property, where the poet and writer John Neihardt (author of <i>Black Elk Speaks</i>) lived and worked during the early years of the 20 th century, includes Neihardt's mini-studio for writing and the John G. Neihardt Center building constructed in 1976 for exhibits and a library. The museum's clear focus on a major American literary figure contributes to the success of this heritage site.

Joint Memberships Benefit Both Museums	The Stuhr Museum and the Hastings Museum offer a joint membership program where members who join one museum have reciprocal privileges at the other museum. Joe Black, executive director of the Stuhr Museum reports that this value added partnership works well and helps sell membership because memberships at the two museums are comparably priced, yet they serve different geographic markets and different audiences.
Nebraska Chautauqua	The Nebraska Chautauqua offers a way for the Nebraska Humanities Council to work in partnership with local museums. Having the clout and assistance of the state humanities council can help the local community with their fundraising efforts. Every summer the Nebraska Chautauqua is hosted by a different community. During the event, historical figures come to life along with a week of educational entertainment under the Chautauqua tent.
Highway 281	The Stuhr Museum and the Hastings Museum joined forces with the convention and visitors bureau in their respective communities to jointly apply for a Travel and Tourism grant for the Highway 281 corridor, with the grant funds coming to the convention and visitors bureaus in both locations.

NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Texas Heritage Trails Develops How-To Guidebook	The Texas Historical Commission has created ten heritage trails across the state, each of which has their own organization to work on tourism development and marketing for the region. The Trails program was launched in 1997, building on a series of scenic drives designated by the Department of Transportation in 1968. One component of this award-winning program was the development of a how-to heritage tourism guidebook available at http://www.thc.state.tx.us/publications/booklets/HTGuidebook.pdf . While created for Texas, many elements of the guidebook could be used by heritage attractions in any state. The guidebook includes how-to information about the National Trust for Historic Preservation's four steps for starting a heritage tourism program or taking an existing program to the next level including tips for working effectively with volunteers, success stories and self-help worksheets.
Passport to North Dakota History	Passport to North Dakota History , a public-private partnership program begun in 2003 between the State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, Tesoro Corporation and the Cass-Clay Creamery. Pocket-size passports featuring more than 70 sites across the state are printed and distributed at state historic sites and Tesoro gas stations across North Dakota. Twenty-five thousand passports were printed in 2010, and passports include space for visitors to document the date a site was visited as well as record their own comments about the experience.

Missouri Time Travelers Program	<p>Bringing in new members can be a challenge for any organization, but the Missouri History Museum has figured out a creative way to sweeten the deal for their own members—as well as members at several hundred historical institutions—by creating a reciprocal benefits program. Historical institutions across the country have the opportunity to opt into this free program which requires that they provide benefits to the members of participating Time Traveler institutions. Benefits can include free or discounted admission, free or discounted gifts, free parking, a restaurant discount, a special event offer or a free or discounted tour. Learn more at http://timetravelers.mohistory.org</p>
Wyoming Site Stewards	<p>The Wyoming Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails (SPHST) operates a number of historic sites in Wyoming, and with staff and resources stretched thin it can be difficult to ensure that every site has all the staff it needs. Todd Thibodeau, planning and grants manager at SPHST, notes, <i>"With the downturn in the economy we've had to look elsewhere to pay for things that were previously part of our budget. We've had to look for more grants, and we're also making greater use of volunteers."</i> In 2008, a creative partnership effort between SPHST, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office resulted in a new site stewards program. Participating sites are owned and managed by the SPHST, and they have created an RV site with water, electricity and sewer at each of the facilities. Volunteer stewards are recruited and placed at sites by SPHST and the State Historic Preservation Office. Stewards stay at the site in their RV or fifth wheel trailer to provide added security as well as taking on other volunteer responsibilities.</p>
Utah's Heritage Tourism Toolkit	<p>Since 1989, Utah State History in the Department of Community and Culture has maintained a special section of their website as an online Heritage Tourism Toolkit. This collaborative project includes links to resources for funding, development and management, partnerships, promotion/marketing, education & interpretation, and protection & conservation—including best practices. To learn more, go to http://history.utah.gov/heritage_tourism_toolkit/index.html.</p>
Colorado Heritage Tourism Program Creates Partnerships at the State Level	<p>To encourage better collaboration at the state level, the Colorado Historical Society has provided seed funding for a full time Colorado Heritage Tourism Manager housed in the Colorado Tourism Office. A statewide Colorado Heritage Tourism Committee including representatives from many of the statewide organizations with a shared interest in heritage tourism was created to oversee the ongoing activities of this program.</p>

PRINCIPLE #2: Find the Fit Between the Community and Tourism

NEBRASKA

EXAMPLES

Stuhr Museum uses
Extended Learning
Classes to Reach out to
the Local Community

The **Stuhr Museum** worked with a local college to offer classes on topics such as blacksmithing, heritage gardening and traditional cooking. The classes are promoted through the extended learning program and serve the local community. Joe Black, executive director of the Stuhr Museum observes *“these programs are a way for us to reach out beyond our membership. We can reach people in the community who may not know that we offer these kinds of experiences.”*

NATIONAL

EXAMPLES

Cheyenne’s Frontier
Days Benefits the Local
Community in
Wyoming

Cheyenne, Wyoming (population 50,000) involves just about everyone in town to make the annual week-long **Frontier Days** event a success. With over a century of experience under their belts, the Frontier Days organizers have worked out many creative strategies to keep the event running smoothly. They have also found ways to generate profits from Frontier Days to fund a year-round museum in Cheyenne as well as providing funds for recreational amenities to improve the quality of life for residents such as tennis courts that benefit the entire community.

PRINCIPLE #3: Make Sites and Programs Come Alive

NEBRASKA

EXAMPLES

Nebraska's Byways Tap into Technology

Nebraska's nine Byways cover a good portion of the state, offering travelers opportunities to get off the Interstate and explore. The program is administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads and the Division of Travel and Tourism, and funding is available through National Scenic Byways Program grants. Through this partnership, the byways have received several national grants to market Nebraska's byways, including funds to create a *Highways of History* booklet, podcasts for each byway, and offer a Nebraska Byway Passport Program. The Passport program proved to be so successful in 2010 that the state tourism office continued the passport program in 2011 with 33 sites statewide. Byway podcasts can be downloaded from the Nebraska tourism website at <http://www.visitnebraska.gov/scenic-byways> to an MP3 player for travelers to take with them on the road. Podcasts can also be accessed directly from Nebraska's Official Travel Guide using a Smartphone to scan each byway's QR code. The podcasts are also available on YouTube. The program's Project Committee includes representatives of the Nebraska State Historical Society and Nebraska Game and parks Commission.

Heartland Museum Provides a Hands-On Experience

The highly specialized collection of World War II and later motorized military vehicles at the **Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles in Lexington** benefits from the dedicated commitment of volunteers coupled with the expertise of the museum staff to ensure that the collection vehicles are operational. Visitors are invited to touch and even sit in restored vehicles to add to the appeal of this hands-on museum. The museum benefits from strong community involvement as well as a convenient location on I-80.

Building Success at the Strategic Air and Space Museum

A \$33 million-dollar grassroots fundraising campaign launched in 1996 made it possible for the **Strategic Air and Space Museum in Ashland** to construct a new massive museum building adjacent to Interstate Highway 80 to house the collection once presented at the less accessible Offutt Air Force Base at Bellevue. Involving youth in the museum's many special programs and exhibitions (including overnight visits for boy and girl scouts, summer camps and even a "Top Gun" weekend) helps build the museum's appeal for younger visitors. The museum offers many events and special exhibits to increase the museum's appeal for new and returning visitors, and an active membership program encourages members to join at a higher level with targeted benefit packages tied to specific membership levels.

River City History Tours Bring Omaha's History to Life	The Durham Museum has had great success with their River City History Tours , which treats the city of Omaha as a museum without walls. Visitors explore the city with guides from the Durham Museum for tours including the "The Gritty City," "Millionaires and Mansions," "The Magic City," and "From Expositions to Jazz Musicians" in north Omaha. Executive director Christi Janssen describes these tour offerings as a great way to get young people involved. She has been pleased to find that companies have been using these tours as perks for their senior management teams, or as part of an orientation to help new employees learn about the city. Janssen notes that <i>"even though we have exhibits about some of these topics in the museum, these tours bring Omaha to life in a new way for visitors, which helps us expand our audience."</i>
Durham Teacher's Night	School programs are a great way to reach a spectrum of younger visitors. To ensure that teacher's are well aware of the options available to them, the Durham Museum has taken a cue from the Smithsonian Teacher's Night program and now offers the Durham Teacher's Night each October with support from a local foundation. Smithsonian scholars come in for the event, which attracts an estimated 1,000 teachers. Teachers receive a canvas bag, food, drinks and entertainment along with opportunities to attend lectures and network with their peers. Between 60 and 70 non profits (primarily heritage attractions within an hour's drive) set up vendor desks.
WWII POW Camp Comes Alive at Nebraska Prairie Museum	The Nebraska Prairie Museum in Holdrege tells a comprehensive story of the county and the people. The museum offers a POW Interpretive Center with excellent exhibits on the World War II Prisoner of War camp located at Atlanta in Phelps County which includes a wonderful collection of art done by one of the prisoners. Presenting significant artifacts, letters and photographs in the context of the region and the place helps to make this story come alive.
Helping Educators Connect with History at the Nebraska Institute	The Nebraska Institute , a partnership between the Nebraska State Historical Society, Nebraska Wesleyan University and the Lincoln Public Schools to offer an intensive training program for teachers in the Omaha and Lincoln schools every summer. Teachers learn how to use primary source materials including historic documents, photographs, artifacts, places and oral histories to teach local history. Lynne Ireland, deputy director for the Nebraska State Historical Society, observes <i>"If we can get teachers to do a better job teaching Nebraska history, we build students who grow up to become citizens who realize that history is more than just a recitation of names and dates. As they go on to have their own families, they will become part of our heritage tourism audience."</i> Studies conducted by the Lincoln schools have shown that this program is working: students of teachers who have gone through this program have increased their knowledge of history and score higher on tests, especially minority and Native American students. For more information about the Nebraska Institute, go to http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/index.htm

Living History Makes
Fort Atkinson Come
Alive for Visitors

Dedicated groups of living history volunteers help make the experience at **Fort Atkinson State Historical Park** come to life for visitors. Park superintendent John Slader credits the success of this program to Fort Atkinson's location near a large population base as well as the appeal of the reconstructed 1820s fort for volunteer interpreters. *"The Fort interprets an interesting time frame with the fur trade and early military efforts just after the War of 1812,"* explains Slader. *"Also, we've also been able to incorporate amenities for our volunteers such as restrooms, showers, a kitchen and even living quarters into the reconstructed buildings."* Volunteers of all ages are accepted, though volunteers under age 19 need to have a designated guardian on site at all times. Currently, volunteers range in age from an 18 month old to a volunteer in his 80s. Volunteers come from all over Nebraska as well as surrounding states for the living history weekends. Just as volunteer interpreters escape into life in the past, they help visitors experience life in the past on these living history weekends.

The program was started in the 1980s and has expanded over the years to include between 70 and 100 volunteer interpreters. In the 1990s, a candlelight tour was added as a fundraiser. This limited capacity event sells out on a regular basis with revenues helping to cover costs for a newsletter, clothing and supplies for the living history volunteers. New volunteers are provided with training materials and required to take a test. New volunteers then work closely with a new member coordinator to ensure that they have historically accurate clothing and any other training and information they need to provide a high quality interpretive experience. An optional workshop weekend is offered each spring with an intense program of speakers, demonstrations and learning experiences. To learn more about the Friends of Fort Atkinson, visit www.fortatkinsononline.org.

Bayard

In 2002, the future looked grim for the **city of Bayard** (population 1,247). A fire downtown destroyed one business and damaged another, leaving the city without its grocery store and downtown diner. At the same time, a major employer in Bayard shut down their business. As part of their recovery efforts, Bayard worked with the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism to complete a TARGET tourism assessment to look at ways to use tourism as an economic revitalization strategy. Building from the recommendations in the assessment, several new gift shops and restaurants have opened downtown, including a restaurant that specializes in German food to showcase the area's German heritage. Two of the new retail stores, the Nebraska Gallery and the Home Grown Cellar, offer Nebraska made crafts and products. Learn more at <http://www.neded.org/community-success-bayard-tourism>.

NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Twilight Tours in Hays,
Kansas to Capture
Interstate Travelers

Hays, Kansas (population 20,000) gets many through travelers driving the Interstate on their way to the Rocky Mountains. To capture a greater share of these visitors for their hotels and motels, the Convention and Visitors Bureau started to offer a variety of free twilight tours. These tours keep visitors in Hays at that crucial hour when decisions about where to spend the night are being made, and the tours became so popular that travelers frequently plan their return trip through Hays to coincide with one of other twilight tour offerings. Nebraska's communities along the Interstate (such as North Platte) might be able to capture a greater share of Interstate travelers with a program such as this one in Hays.

Conner Prairie Lets
Visitors "Do, Not Just
View" in Indiana

At a time when many museums across the country are struggling to retain members and increase visitation, **Conner Prairie Interactive History Park** in Fishers, Indiana is seeing increases in both areas, thanks to an innovative planning strategy that began in 2000. Today, guests – as they are now called, instead of visitors – are engaged in an interactive experience from the moment they arrive, enjoying everything from seeing farm animals up close, learning 19th-century crafts, visiting a Discovery Station where children dress in costume and enter a kid-sized town, trying a taste of the past from historic cookbooks and even riding in a helium-filled balloon. The process to remake Conner Prairie began by asking what visitors were learning and how they were learning when they visited the museum—even taping entire conversations to gather insights on the visitor experience. Museum staff also conducted visitor intercept surveys and distributed comment cards. The results were clear: Visitors wanted to "do," not just "view."

North Dakota's
German-Russian
Heritage Initiative

North Dakota's German-Russian Heritage Initiative has brought the state historical society, state tourism office, ND Extension Service, ND State University and other partners together with communities in the heart of German-Russian country. Working initially with a 3-county region, these agencies have provided guidance and financial assistance to local partners to help celebrate the cuisine, language and culture of the area's residents who are Germans who came to the US after living in Russia. Plans are underway to develop infrastructure to support heritage tourism opportunities.

Boston based Audissey
Tours

One of the best ways to develop heritage tours that will appeal to the 20-something age group is to find someone in their 20s to develop the tour. That's exactly what happened with **Audissey Tours**, a Boston-based tour company that has developed non-traditional podcast tours to appeal to the younger generation. For the company's inaugural tour of Boston, traditional historical stories were woven in with more contemporary stories of Boston's mafia busts and JFK's proposal to Jackie O at a local Boston restaurant. Local Bostonians provide the narration for different sections along with sound effects and excitement (at one point, the narrator urges the tourgoer to hurry down an alley to escape to the safety of one of Boston's Underground

Railroad sites). The podcast format allows visitors to mix and match the tour based on their time and interests instead of locking them in to a set sequence and narrative. Audissey Tours is just one of many companies specializing in cutting edge interpretive media.

Pennsylvania's Historic
Markers Serve as
Teaching Tools

Pennsylvania's historic marker program is coordinated by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission and was established in 1946. PHMC was able to create a new online resource at <http://explorepahistory.com> which builds on the state's 2,000+ historic markers to help teach state history. The website includes stories from Pennsylvania history, tourism information, and lesson plans for teachers of Pennsylvania and American history at the elementary, middle and high school level. The Nebraska Historical Society already has a county-by-county inventory of the state's 500+ historic markers at <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/markers/texts/index.shtml> that allows users to download the text from Nebraska's historic markers.

Kansas Sampler

In rural areas, it can be challenging to create a critical mass of tourism attractions to attract and keep visitors. The **Kansas Sampler Foundation**, a 501c3 nonprofit foundation working to "*preserve, sustain, and grow rural culture by educating Kansans about Kansas and by networking and supporting rural communities,*" is expanding the traditional definition of a tourism attraction by helping rural communities look at what they have to offer in a new way. The Foundation works to helping rural residents realize they live in special places that could appeal to tourists, helping communities identify what they have to offer in eight Rural Cultural Elements - architecture, art, commerce, cuisine, customs, geography, history and people. Kansas Sampler has developed a *Kansas Sampler Guidebook for Explorers*, an annual Kansas Sampler Festival that attracts up to 8,000 visitors each year, and a Kansas Explorers Club newsletter that is received by close to 2,000 members. Learn more about the Kansas Sampler Foundation at www.kansassampler.org.

North Dakota's Dakota
Date Book

Dakota Date Book is a partnership effort started in 2007 between the North Dakota Humanities Council, Prairie Public Broadcasting and the State Historical Society of North Dakota. Every day of the year, North Dakota's public radio airs a one-to-three minute spot about what happened on this day in history in North Dakota. "*Efforts like this that raise the awareness of the importance of our local history pay off in the long run when we need to approach the state legislature or other potential funders,*" comments Claudia Berg of the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Silos and Smokestacks
National Heritage Area
Bus Grants in Iowa

The most exciting and innovative school programs don't mean a thing if schools don't have the budget to pay for the buses to transport students. When the **Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area** realized that school budget cuts for bus transportation were preventing classes from participating in school programs throughout the Silos & Smokestacks region, they set up a "bus grant" program to allow teachers apply for funds to cover the cost of bus transportation using a simple and easy to fill out application form. Bus grants are one of four grant programs offered by Silos & Smokestacks. To learn

more, visit <http://www.silosandsmokestacks.org/home/CMS/Grants.php>. Here in Nebraska, the Nebraska Historical Society is already including funds for bus transportation to help students visit a Civil Rights exhibit.

Celebrate NJ! Assists Historic Sites with Wayfinding

Celebrate NJ! is a non-profit organization created in 2006 to “promote the best of New Jersey— her diversity, her beauty, her innovation and creativity— for generations to come.” Recognizing that you can’t make sites come alive if visitors can’t find your site, wayfinding has been a major focus for this new nonprofit. In addition to looking at ways of providing online wayfinding information, Celebrate NJ! has also worked with the New Jersey Department of Transportation on the guidelines for TODS signs to loosen the restrictions that kept heritage attractions from participating. Nonprofits now pay a lower annual fee for TODS signs, and they have also explored the possibility of offering matching grants for historic sites to offset the cost of TODS signage.

PRINCIPLE #4: Focus on Authenticity and Quality

NEBRASKA

EXAMPLES

Red Carpet Service	High quality customer service can make all the difference in creating a positive visitor experience. The University of Nebraska offers a hospitality training program, “ Red Carpet Service Hospitality Training ,” in an online format at http://redcarpetonline.unl.edu/programDetails.shtml , making training available for front line personnel 24/7—or alternatively, trainers from the UNL faculty can offer on-site training for a sponsoring organization.
Hospitality Training	
Knight Museum and Sandhills Center Provides a Quality Experience	Working with museum professionals to design, fabricate and install the permanent exhibition at the Knight Museum and Sandhills Center in Alliance has resulted in a high quality exhibits that offer a regional perspective on the history of the area. Even the design of the building itself reflects the geology of the Sandhills with concrete walls and exposed local aggregates. The museum’s Heritage Room offers a helpful staff and a well organized library of historical and genealogical information.
Nebraska’s Museums on Main Street	The Smithsonian Institution’s Traveling Exhibition Service’s “ Museum on Main Street ” program combines the expertise and talents of the Smithsonian Institution, the Nebraska Humanities Council and local museums to offer traveling exhibits that are on display over an 18 month period in several locations. Past traveling exhibits have included Barn Again! (2001), Yesterday’s Tomorrow (2003), Key Ingredients (2005), and Between Fences (2007). These exhibits offer an opportunity to bring high quality exhibits to a half dozen or so museums, small and large, across the state. Kristi Hayek, program officer with the Nebraska Humanities Council adds “ <i>We’re hoping that by bringing these exhibits to these small rural neighborhood museums that we will encourage people to come back to visit those museums again.</i> ”

NATIONAL

EXAMPLES

A Pig Pickin’ in Virginia	In Virginia, the organizers of a hospitality training program were frustrated because the only people who came to their training sessions were the ones who already did a good job. To increase the appeal of the training, they advertised it as a Pig Pickin’ and included a hog roast and other fun activities along with the training—and now they have no problem attracting a crowd.
Colorado’s Grassroots Training Program	The scenic byways program in Colorado has developed a Grassroots Training Program that includes a board game called the <i>Byway Road Trip</i> . As players move their cars around the board, they have to correctly answer questions that visitors might ask about Colorado’s scenic byways in order to move forward. The game was designed to be given to front line employees to be played (with the blessing of the boss!) on breaks and during slow shifts.

Adding food or a game component to Nebraska's existing hospitality training could be another way to encourage more front line employees to participate.

AASLH's Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs)

The American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) developed a self-study **Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs)** program geared for small and mid-sized history organizations. Organizations can work up a ladder of "Basic," "Good" and "Better" performance indicators to earn Bronze, Silver or Gold certificates. The StEPs program has six focus areas including Mission/vision/governance, Audience, Interpretation, Stewardship of Collections, Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes, and Management. StEPs is a voluntary program that provides lots of flexibility for participating organizations. The assessment program has been designed to complement, rather than compete with other assessment programs such as the American Association of Museum's Museum Assessment Program (MAP) and Accreditation Program. Participating organizations pay a modest one-time fee and then can complete the assessment in whatever time period works for the organization. Funding to help develop the StEPs program was provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. For more information about StEPs, go to www.aaslh.org/steps.htm.

PRINCIPLE #5: Preserve and Protect Irreplaceable Resources

NEBRASKA

EXAMPLES

Genoa Indian School	Community Development Block Grant funds helped with the restoration of the historic Genoa Indian School . Funds raised for the restoration were leveraged with the in-kind labor more than 45 volunteers who contributed over 2,300 hours to the project. The Genoa Indian School was one of 16 boarding schools for Indians established by the federal government, operating from 1884 until 1934. Today, the building serves as a museum offering Indian cultural and research programs. Learn more at http://www.neded.org/community-success-genoa-us-indian-school-museum .
Omaha's Old Market District	Heritage tourism can be an economic revitalization tool that helps to make historic properties and districts economically viable. For example, Omaha's investment in revitalizing the historic Old Market District has paid off, turning this former warehouse district into one of Omaha's top attractions.
Broken Arrow Wilderness	The city of Fullerton (population 1,400) secured a CDBG grant to help a private owner restore the historic Broken Arrow Wilderness as a year-round camp. This 120-acre site was one of the last homes for the Pawnee Tribe before they were relocated to Oklahoma, the site of a Civilian Conservation Camp during the Great Depression, and for 30 years in the early twentieth century it was the setting for an annual summer Chautauqua celebration. This additional investment has allowed the owners to restore and rebuild historic guest cabins and other buildings, restore trails and improve the infrastructure. The events which are now hosted at the camp help to support the local economy, creating three new jobs and over \$100,000 in income for local businesses including caterers, convenience stores, motels, floral shops and other businesses. Learn more at http://www.neded.org/community-success-fullerton-tourism .
Midwest Theater	The fear of losing the 1946 Midwest Theater inspired local citizens to create the Friends of the Midwest Theater in 1998 to raise money for this Scottsbluff landmark. Two CDBG grants in 2000 and 2004 helped with restoration efforts, along with other grants and fundraisers such as the Midwest Film Festival. Today, much of the restoration effort has been completed and the theater now offers movies as well as other live performances. Learn more at http://www.neded.org/community-success-scottsbluff-historic-midwest-theater .

Historic Sites Adaptively Reused as Performing Arts Centers	Many historic buildings across Nebraska have found new life as a visual or performing arts center . Kearney’s historic 1911 Renaissance Revival U.S. Post Office now serves as the Museum of Nebraska Art. The 1929 Fox Theater in North Platte, the 1946 Midwest Theater in Scottsbluff and the 1885 Opera House in Red Cloud have all been adaptively reused as performing arts centers.
Brownville, Nebraska	Brownville, Nebraska was incorporated in 1856 during Nebraska’s territorial period along the banks of the Missouri River. This small town (population 146) boasts an extensive historic district and an active arts community. The community has capitalized on its history by positioning the town a heritage tourism destination offering early architecture and several museums. Recognizing that heritage travelers enjoy a well-rounded visitor experience, Brownville offers a vibrant arts scene with performances by the Brownville Village Theater as well as a seasonal concert series. Visitors have the opportunity stay in historic bed & breakfasts and enjoy unique shopping and dining in the historic downtown. In recognition of their achievements in heritage tourism, Brownville has been designated a Preserve America community, one of three in Nebraska at the present time.
Visitor Centers	A number of Nebraska’s visitor centers are housed in historic buildings, providing public access to these historic sites as an alternative to the traditional historic site museum. Examples include the former 1893 Richardsonian Romanesque style Post Office in Fremont, the former First Commercial Bank in Odell (c. 1885), the 1920 Spruce Street Station (a former Standard Oil Company gas station) in Ogallala and a visitor center in Shelton specifically aimed at travelers seeking out the historic Lincoln Highway. The latter is housed in an historic building, shared with the local museum.
Joslyn Castle, Omaha	The State of Nebraska has owned the expansive 1903 Joslyn Castle in Omaha for more than 20 years. To help restore this grand home’s original features, the Joslyn Castle Trust was created to “...generate awareness, foster appreciation and attract financial support to preserve and restore the buildings and grounds.”The Trust currently offers tours of the castle, coordinates rentals of the facility for special events, hosts several annual fundraising events, solicits donations and offers a membership program.
Friends of Arbor Lodge Foundation	Budgets are often tight at historic sites, and Arbor Lodge in Nebraska City is no exception. To help fund projects that are outside of the site’s budget with Nebraska Game and Parks, an organization called the Friends of Arbor Lodge Foundation was formed in 2001. The organization’s tax exempt 501c3 status makes it possible to receive grant funds, and in the last decade around a million dollars in funding has been secured for projects ranging from replacing roofs to installing a handicapped accessible walkway in the garden, to purchasing a 7-acre farm field to expand the size of the park. Master plans for the garden as well as a list of needs for the property help guide the efforts of the Friends, who work in close coordination with the staff at Arbor Lodge as

well as the Nebraska Historical Society to ensure that work meets preservation standards. Park superintendent Randy Fox explains *“The Friends group gave us a vehicle to get funding for the park. We’re fortunate to have several generous foundations here in Nebraska City as well as local volunteers who were very interested in helping with the Friends group.”*

Tammy Partsch, president of the Arbor Lodge Friends Foundation, adds that the friends’s group also helps *“...keep the site visible, even if the financial gain is minimal. For example, each fall the Friends Foundation hosts an ‘Enchanted Garden’ event for local school kids...last year we had over 150 kids and made about \$200 on the event. That \$200 is not a lot, but that’s not the point. We are getting our name out there and if a child hears ‘Arbor Lodge’ they think of the great time they had and they want to come back. Doing community events like the Enchanted Garden shows that you care about the community.”* The Friends of Arbor Lodge Foundation currently has about 100 dues paying members, ranging from individual members who pay an annual \$40 membership fee to lifetime members who have paid a one-time \$2,000 fee. Membership benefits include passes to the mansion, a quarterly newsletter, and discounts for programs or special events.

Nebraska 2010
Connecting to
Collections Survey
Project Report

The first step in preserving collections is to create an inventory and assess needs. The **Nebraska 2010 Connecting to Collections Survey Project Report** funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services surveyed 741 museums, archives and libraries in Nebraska to find out more about the historical and cultural records in their care. Participating in the survey has increased awareness about preservation needs, highlighting best practices as well as noting areas where many institutions need improvement, such as completing long range preservation plans and disaster plans for their collections.

NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Succession Strategy
for Colorado’s Fowler
Historical Museum

People can be one of the most valuable resources for a local history museum, and one of the hardest to replace. The **Fowler Historical Museum** in Fowler, Colorado (population 1,087) was built up over a period of years thanks in large part to the efforts of a single dedicated volunteer. Over the years it became more difficult for this volunteer to manage the museum, and the principal of the local high school stepped in to provide help. Working with high school history students, a dedicated team of students, high school principal and the museum’s founder worked through the museum’s collection to transfer information about the museum’s collection to PastPerfect, a museum software program designed for collection management. The students and principal brought a knowledge of technology and fresh enthusiasm, and the founding volunteer brought her vast knowledge of the museum’s extensive collection. Together, they are working to bring this small rural museum on Colorado’s eastern plains into the 21st century and plan for the future.

Authentic Lancaster
County, PA

The **Lancaster County Planning Commission** developed the Lancaster County Heritage Program in 1994 to show their commitment to authenticity and sharing the “real” stories that make their county unique. The program allows heritage attractions, services, products, routes, events, tours, landscapes and even living treasures to apply for designation. Once officially designated, applicants can use the “Authentic Lancaster County, PA” certification seal. The seal is also included with tourism listings the “good housekeeping seal of approval” to show their authenticity, and each designee gets a full page web site listing. Designees are also included in special events promoting Lancaster County’s heritage resources. To learn more about the Lancaster County Heritage Program, visit:

<http://www.co.lancaster.pa.us/lancheritage/site/default.asp?lancheritageNav=1>

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APPENDIX 1: SURVEY OF HERITAGE VISITORS

1. What interested you in visiting this location?
_____ It was in the area we were already visiting.
_____ The history behind this location piqued my interest.
_____ It wasn't up to me/a different member of the group decided on this location.
_____ Other: _____
2. How would you grade this location/facility based on your expectations? (Circle one) A B C D F
a. Anything you would commend?

b. Anything you'd like to see improved?

3. How many people are in your group? _____
4. On the following lines, please estimate the "off-site" spending by everyone in your group for today only. Do not include spending that occurred at this or any other heritage site. Please report spending on the following items.
 - a. Food \$ _____
 - b. Shopping \$ _____
 - c. Gasoline \$ _____
 - d. Other Entertainment / Recreation \$ _____
 - e. Lodging \$ _____
 - f. Other, please specify: _____ \$ _____
5. Is your trip a day-trip or an overnight trip? _____
 - a. If it is an overnight trip, how many days will it last? _____
6. When you travel, how important is it to you to visit sites where you can learn about the history or heritage of that area? (Please circle the most appropriate answer) Very Important Somewhat Important Not Important
7. When planning a trip, how to you typically find out about heritage attractions that you might want to visit while traveling? (For example: recommendations from friends/family, state or local tourism website, travel guides, etc.)

8. How did you hear about this location?

_____ Word of Mouth

_____ TV Commercial

_____ News Article

_____ Advertisement

_____ Flyer

_____ Road Sign

_____ Tourism Bureau Web Site

9. What other historic sites/museums have you visited in the past year? _____

10. How far will you typically travel to see sites such as this one? _____

11. How interested are you in the different aspects of Nebraska's history? (Please circle the most appropriate answer.)

a. Not interested in Nebraska's history	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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b. Settlement/Town Building	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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c. Ranching and Farming	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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d. Notable Nebraskans	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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e. Civil War/Armed Services	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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f. European and American Cultures	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
-----------------------------------	-----------------	---------------------	----------------

g. Natural history and landscapes	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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h. Native American Nebraskans	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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i. American Frontier	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
----------------------	-----------------	---------------------	----------------

j. Westward Movement (Trails and Transport)	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
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k. Have we forgotten one? Please tell us:	_____		
---	-------	--	--

12. If Nebraska did not have any historical sites to visit, how would you have most likely spent your time? (Select only one – the most likely option.)

_____ I would have visited an historical site in another state

_____ I would have visited another type of attraction in Nebraska

_____ I would have visited another type of attraction in another state

_____ I would have stayed home

_____ Other (please specific) _____

13. How often do you visit heritage sites within a year? _____

14. During what times of the year do you visit heritage sites? _____

15. When you travel, it is generally for (please circle only one):

Business

Recreation

Time with family

To see family

To see a specific location/event

Demographic Questions

1. What is the zip code of your home residence? _____
2. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female
3. In what year were you born? _____
4. Which of the following categories best describes your total annual household income in 2010, before taxes? (Check only one)
____ Under \$20,000 ____ \$20,000 to \$29,999 ____ \$30,000 to \$39,999 ____ \$40,000 to \$49,999
____ \$50,000 to \$69,999 ____ \$70,000 to \$99,999 ____ \$100,000 or more
5. What is your highest level of education? _____

APPENDIX 2: HERITAGE TOURISM QUESTIONS ON NASIS SURVEY

VACATION & TRAVEL					
16. How many times in the last 12 months did you visit an historic site or museum in Nebraska?					
<input type="text"/>		If your answer is "0," skip to # 20.			
17. If there were no historic sites or museums to visit in Nebraska, what would you most likely do instead? (choose only one response)					
<input type="radio"/> Visit another type of attraction in Nebraska <input type="radio"/> Spend the money on something else in Nebraska <input type="radio"/> Visit an historic site or museum in another state <input type="radio"/> Visit another type of attraction in another state <input type="radio"/> Spend the money on something else in another state <input type="radio"/> Save the money <input type="radio"/> Other, please specify:					
<input type="text"/>					
18. How many times in the last 12 months did you visit an historic site or museum in Nebraska as part of a trip where you travelled 50 or more miles, one way, away from home?					
<input type="text"/>		If your answer is "0," skip to # 20.			
19. For your 3 most recent trips of at least 50 miles to an historic site or museum in Nebraska, please answer the following questions:					
	a. How many people traveled with you?	b. How many people from your household traveled with you?	c. Was this an overnight trip or a day trip?	d. What was the primary purpose of this trip? (Please choose only one.)	e. About how much did the trip cost FOR YOU ONLY?
Most recent trip	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> Overnight trip <input type="radio"/> Day trip	<input type="radio"/> Convention, training/seminar, or other group meeting <input type="radio"/> Other business <input type="radio"/> Visit friends or relatives <input type="radio"/> Getaway weekend <input type="radio"/> General vacation <input type="radio"/> Other leisure	\$ _____.00
2nd most recent trip	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> Overnight trip <input type="radio"/> Day trip	<input type="radio"/> Convention, training/seminar, or other group meeting <input type="radio"/> Other business <input type="radio"/> Visit friends or relatives <input type="radio"/> Getaway weekend <input type="radio"/> General vacation <input type="radio"/> Other leisure	\$ _____.00
3rd most recent trip	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> Overnight trip <input type="radio"/> Day trip	<input type="radio"/> Convention, training/seminar, or other group meeting <input type="radio"/> Other business <input type="radio"/> Visit friends or relatives <input type="radio"/> Getaway weekend <input type="radio"/> General vacation <input type="radio"/> Other leisure	\$ _____.00

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY OF HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

To Facility/Site Director or Manager:

The Nebraska State Historical Society, in cooperation with the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, is collaborating with UNL's Bureau of Business Research on a study of both the economic impacts and the marketing of historic sites and museums in Nebraska.

Of vital importance to the accuracy of this study is your response to the attached questionnaire regarding specific information for your facility/site.

We ask that the facility director/manager (or similar position) of your facility complete this survey and mail their response no later than April 29th, 2011. If additional sites fall under the same management, please photocopy this survey and complete a separate survey for each site.

After receiving your responses, we may contact you for follow-up information or to get additional detail regarding your facility/site.

Thank you for your time and assistance in completing this questionnaire for your facility/site.

Sincerely,

Nebraska State Historical Society

Survey of Heritage Attractions

Instructions

We ask that the director/manager (or similar position) complete this questionnaire for your facility/site. We would appreciate your response no later than April 29th, 2011. If additional sites fall under the same management, please photocopy this survey and complete a separate survey for each site. If additional space is needed, please feel free to attach additional pages to the end of the questionnaire and continue your answer. **NOTE: Please be sure to include the question number for which you are providing additional information. This will ensure we associate your response with the correct question.**

After receiving your responses, we may contact you for follow-up information or to get additional detail regarding your facility/site.

There are seven (7) sections to this questionnaire: Contact Information; Facility/Site Information; Visitation, Staff, and Budget Information; Marketing Efforts; Organizational Development and Future Plans; Needs Assessment; and Director/Manager Demographic Information.

The information contained in these sections will help us measure the economic impact of Heritage Tourism in Nebraska as well as develop a statewide strategy for promoting these sites.

We appreciate your time and look forward to your response.

Contact Information

Facility/Site Name: _____

Director/Manager Name/Title: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Facility/Site Information

- 1) Please state the physical address of the facility/site (if different from mailing address):

Physical Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

- 2) During what months does this facility operate? _____

- 3) What are your hours of operation? _____

- 4) Please check all that apply to your facility:

_____ Our facility has tour guides

_____ Our facility has virtual tour guides (i.e. audio, podcast) specify: _____

_____ Our facility is self-guided (i.e. brochures, printed maps) specify: _____

_____ Other (please specify) _____

- 5) What are the major themes or type of history that your exhibit(s) interpret?

- 6) Please describe the features, collections, and exhibits offered by your facility/site (additional space on back of page):

- 7) Have you renovated your facility, or built a new facility within the last 10 years? ____ Yes ____ No

a. If yes, how many times? ____ when was the last renovation? _____ and approximately what did it cost? \$ _____

- 8) Do you create your own collections/exhibits or host visiting collections/exhibits? _____

- 9) What percentage of your facility is dedicated to changing exhibits? _____

- 10) How frequently do you change your exhibits? _____

a. When was the last change? _____ and approximately what did it cost? \$ _____

Visitation, Staff, and Budget Information

- 11) How many people visited your facility in 2010? _____ How has visitation changed since 2000? _____
a. If visitation has changed, to what do you attribute this? _____
- 12) How many **volunteer** workers do you have at your facility (include yourself, if appropriate)? _____
- 13) How many **paid** workers do you have at your facility (including yourself, if appropriate)? _____
a. What does this convert to in full time equivalent workers? _____
- 14) What were the expenditures of your facility/site during the last fiscal year for the following categories:
- a. Payroll and benefits for all of the paid workers? _____
 - b. Operations (maintenance, heat/air-conditioning, insurance, etc.)? _____
 - c. Marketing budget? _____
 - d. Other expenditures? Specify: _____
 - e. Total Expenditures? _____
- 15) What was the revenue of your facility/site during the last fiscal year from the following sources:
- a. Admissions? _____
 - b. Gift shop, restaurant? _____
 - c. Private donations? _____
 - d. Government support? _____
 - e. Grants? _____
 - f. Endowed funds? _____
 - g. Other sources? Specify: _____
 - h. Total revenue? _____
- 16) Please indicate what percentage of the following demographics make up your visitor population:
- a. Percentage of visitors are individuals/families: _____
 - b. Percentage of visitors are group tours: _____
 - c. Percentage of visitors are school tours: _____
 - d. Percentage of visitors attend for a specific/special event: _____
 - e. Percentage of other visitors: _____

Please attach any information you have on your visitor demographics to your survey response (i.e. marketing reports, annual reports, demographic reports, visitation/attendance records). This will help us develop a statewide strategy for promoting Heritage Tourism for facilities/sites like yours.

Marketing Efforts

17) What does your facility charge for admission for the following categories?

- a. Adults? _____
- b. Seniors? _____
- c. Students? _____
- d. Children? _____

18) Do you actively promote your facility/exhibits? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, answer the following questions:

a. How do you promote your facility/exhibit?

_____ Barter Advertising

_____ Brochure

_____ Free Listings

_____ Included on the Nebraska Tourism Bureau Web Site

_____ Listed in a Regional or Local Tourism Publication Specify: _____

_____ Listed with the State Visitor Guide

_____ Local Visitor Bureaus

_____ Paid Advertising (i.e. magazines, event sponsorships, etc) Specify: _____

_____ Public Relations

_____ Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

_____ Social Media If so, which site(s): _____

_____ Web Site

_____ Other Specify: _____

b. Do you have a target market for you paid advertising/listings? If so, please state who:

c. Which promotional effort do you feel has been ***most*** effective?

19) How far (in miles) is your facility/site from the nearest major roadway? _____

20) Is there signage from the roadway to your facility/site? _____

21) Do you have a sign to mark the entrance of your facility/site? _____

Organizational Development and Future Plans

22) What involvement, if any, does this facility have with the following entities:

- ____ Heritage Nebraska Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska Byways Program Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska Humanities Council Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska Museum Association Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska State Historical Society Specify: _____
- ____ Nebraska State Tourism Office Specify: _____

23) Is there a strategic plan for your facility? ____ Yes ____ No

a. If yes, when was it completed and what, if anything, is in the plan for future development?

Needs Assessment

24) Please rank the following items in the order that you would find most useful to your facility/site:

- ____ Technical Assistance/Training (i.e. assistance on using computers, social media, web sites, etc)
- ____ Marketing Assistance (i.e. ad placement, ad design, target market research, public relations, etc)
- ____ Grants/Financial Aid
- ____ Signage to your facility/site
- ____ Other Specify: _____

Director/Manager Demographic Information

25) What is your highest level of education?

____ Graduate Degree ____ College Degree ____ High School Degree ____ Less than High School

a. If college or graduate degree, what area is your degree in? _____

26) Are you a paid worker or volunteer?

____ paid ____ volunteer ____ other (specify: _____)

27) How many years of work experience do you have in this field?

28) How many years have you been at this facility?

End of Survey. Thank You.

APPENDIX 4: LIST OF SURVEYED NEBRASKA HERITAGE SITES AND MUSEUMS

<u>Name</u>	<u>City</u>
100th Meridian Museum	Cozad
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	Harrison
Anna Bemis Palmer Museum	York
Antelope County Pioneer Jail Museum	Neligh
Arbor Lodge State Historical Park	Nebraska City
Armstrong House Museum	Rushville
Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park	Royal
Bank of Florence	Omaha
Bayard Depot Museum	Bayard
Bell-Jenne House	Falls City
Benne Memorial Museum	Crete
Bess Streeeter Aldrich Museum	Elmwood
Brownville Historical Museum	Brownville
Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park	North Platte
Burt County Museum (E.C. Houston House)	Tekamah
Butler County Historical Museum	David City
Butte Community Historical Center & Museum	Butte
Cambridge Museum	Cambridge
Cass County Historical Museum	Plattsmouth
Cedar County Historical Museum	Hartington
Centennial Hall	Valentine
Champion Mill State Historical Park	Enders
Chase County Historical Museum	Imperial
Chimney Rock National Historic Site	Bayard
Civil War Veterans Museum	Nebraska City
Clarkson Historical Museum	Clarkson
Clay County Historical Museum	Clay Center
Coleman House Museum	Ainsworth
Colfax County Museum	Schuyler
Crawford Historical Museum	Crawford
Creighton Historical Center	Creighton
Crook House Museum	Omaha
Cuming County Museum Complex	West Point
Custer County Historical Museum	Broken Bow
Czech Heritage Room, Dvoracek Memorial Library	Wilber
Dawes County Historical Museum	Chadron
Dawson County Historical Museum	Lexington
Decatur Museum	Decatur
DeWitt Historical Museum	DeWitt
Dixon County Historical Museum	Allen

Doane College Boswell Observatory Museum
 Dowse Riverview Homestead (William R. Dowse Sod House)
 El Museo Latino
 Eleanor Barbour Cook Museum of Geology*
 Elkhorn Valley Historical Society Museum and Research Center
 Eve Bowring Visitor Center, Bowring Ranch State Historic Park
 Fairbury City Museum
 Fairbury Rock Island Depot Museum/Diller Museum
 Fairview, William Jennings Bryan Home
 Farm and Ranch Museum
 Fillmore County Historical Museum
 Florence Depot
 Fort Atkinson State Historical Park
 Fort Hartsuff State Historical Park
 Fort Kearny State Historical Park
 Fort Robinson Museum
 Fort Sidney Complex
 Frahm House Museum
 Frank H. Woods Telephone Historical Museum
 Franklin County Historical Museum
 Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad Depot
 Furnas-Gosper Historical Museum
 Gage County Historical Museum
 Garfield County Historical Museum
 Genoa Historical Museum
 Genoa U.S. Indian School Museum
 George A. Joslyn House, Joslyn Castle Carriage House
 Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center
 Gibbon Heritage Center
 Girls and Boys Town Hall of History
 Gothenburg Historical Museum
 Grant County Courthouse
 Grave Library Museum
 Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center
 Greenwood Historical Depot Museum
 Hansen Memorial Museum
 Harlan County Historical Museum
 Harold Warp Pioneer Village
 Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History
 Hay Springs Heritage Center #1 (Church)
 Hay Springs Heritage Center #2
 Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles
 Henderson Heritage Park
 Heritage House Museum

Crete
 Comstock
 Omaha
 Chadron
 Norfolk
 Merriman
 Fairbury
 Fairbury
 Lincoln
 Gering
 Fairmont
 Omaha
 Fort Calhoun
 Burwell
 Kearney
 Crawford
 Sidney
 Fort Calhoun
 Lincoln
 Franklin
 Dwight
 Arapahoe
 Beatrice
 Burwell
 Genoa
 Genoa
 Omaha
 Omaha
 Gibbon
 Boys Town
 Gothenburg
 Hyannis
 Wakefield
 Wymore
 Greenwood
 Curtis
 Orleans
 Minden
 Hastings
 Hay Springs
 Hay Springs
 Lexington
 Henderson
 Long Pine

Heritage Museum of Thurston County	Pender
High Plains Historical Museum	McCook
Historic Florence Mill	Omaha
Historical Evangelical United Brethren Church	Stanton
Hitchcock County Historical Museum Complex	Trenton
Holt County Historical Museum	O'Neill
Homestead National Monument	Beatrice
House of Yesteryear	Leigh
Howard County Historical Village	St Paul
Howells Congregational Church Historical Museum	Howells
Hudson-Meng Bison Bonebed	Crawford
International Quilt Study Center Museum	Lincoln
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site	Bancroft
John Sautter House, Portal School	Papillion
Johnson County Historical Museum	Tecumseh
Kearney County Historical Museum	Minden
Keya Paha County Historical Museum	Springview
Keystone Little Church Museum	Keystone
Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage	Alliance
Lincoln County Historical Museum	North Platte
Lincoln Highway Interpretive Center	Shelton
Lodgepole Depot Museum	Lodgepole
Louis E. May Museum	Fremont
Madison County Museum	Madison
Mansion on the Hill	Ogallala
Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center	Chadron
Mari Sandoz Room Museum	Gordon
Massacre Canyon Monument and Visitor Center	Trenton
Mayhew Cabin	Nebraska City
Merrick County Historical Museum	Central City
Mexican American Historical Society of the Midlands	Omaha
Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center	Nebraska City
Mormon Pioneer Cemetery, Mormon Trail Center at Winter Quarters	Omaha
Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters	Omaha
Murdock Historical Museum	Murdock
Musbach Museum of Scribner	Scribner
Museum of American Speed - Smith Collection	Lincoln
Museum of Major League Baseball	St. Paul
Museum of Missouri River History, Meriwether Lewis Dredge, Captain	
Meriwether Lewis Foundation	Brownville
Museum of Nebraska History	Lincoln
Museum of the Fur Trade	Chadron
National Museum of Roller Skating	Lincoln
Nebraska National Guard Historical Society Museum	Lincoln

Nebraska Prairie Museum
 Neligh Mill State Historic Site
 Nemaha Valley Museum, Inc.
 Nenzel Community Heritage Center
 Niobrara Historical Museum
 North Platte Valley Museum
 Nuckolls County Museum
 O'Connor House Museum
 Office of the Capitol Commission
 Old Freighter Museum
 Otoe County Museum of Memories
 Pawnee City Living History Museum
 Peru Historical Museum
 Pilger Museum
 Pioneer Trails Museum
 Pioneer Village Foundation
 Plains Historical Museum
 Plainsman Museum
 Platte County Museum
 Polish Heritage Center
 Polk County Historical Museum
 Ponca Historical Museum/Blacksmith Shop
 Pony Express Museum
 Potter Historical Museum
 Richardson County Courthouse
 Richardson County Historical Museum
 Robert Henri Museum
 Rock County Historical Museum
 Rock Creek Station State Historical Park
 Rock School Museum
 Saline County Historical Museum
 Sarpy County Historical Museum
 Saunders County Historical Museum
 Scotts Bluff National Monument
 Sellors Barton Museum
 Senator George Norris State Historic Site
 Seward County Historical Museum
 Shelton Historical Interpretive Centre
 Sherman County Historical Museum
 Sioux County Historical Museum
 Sokol South Omaha Czechoslovak Museum
 Southeast Nebraska Old West Trails and Transportation Center
 Stanton County Heritage Museum
 Strang Museum

Holdrege
 Neligh
 Auburn
 Nenzel
 Niobrara
 Gering
 Superior
 Dakota City
 Lincoln
 Nebraska City
 Syracuse
 Pawnee City
 Peru
 Pilger
 Bridgeport
 Minden
 Kimball
 Aurora
 Columbus
 Ashton
 Osceola
 Ponca
 Gothenburg
 Potter
 Falls City
 Falls City
 Cozad
 Bassett
 Fairbury
 Oshkosh
 Tobias
 Bellevue
 Wahoo
 Gering
 Ainsworth
 McCook
 Goehner, NE
 Wood River
 Loup City
 Harrison
 Omaha
 Odell
 Stanton
 Geneva

Strategic Air & Space Museum
 Stuart White Horse Museum
 Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer
 Sturdevant-McKee Museum
 Sudman-Neumann Heritage House
 Susan LaFlesche Picotte Center
 Swedish Heritage Center
 Table Rock Historical Museum
 Taylor-Wessel-Bickel House
 Thayer County Historical Museum
 The Durham Museum
 The Frank House
 The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument
 The Nebraska City Museum of Firefighting
 The Pierce Museum
 Thomas County Historical Museum
 Thomas P. Kennard House
 Thorpe Opera House Foundation
 Trails and Rails Museum
 Union Pacific Depot Museum
 University of Nebraska State Museum, Morrill Hall
 Valley Community Historical Museum
 Valley County Historical Museum
 Verdigre Heritage Museum Complex
 Village Museum of Morrill
 Washington County Museum
 Wayne County Historical Museum
 Webster County Historical Museum
 Weeping Water Heritage House Museum Complex
 Wessels Living History Farm
 Wilber Czech Museum
 Wildwood Center and Period House
 Willa Cather State Historic Site
 Wisner Heritage Museum

Ashland
 Stuart
 Grand Island
 Atkinson
 Chappell
 Walthill
 Oakland
 Table Rock
 Nebraska City
 Belvidere
 Omaha
 Kearney
 Kearney
 Nebraska City
 Pierce
 Thedford
 Lincoln
 David City
 Kearney
 Chappell
 Lincoln
 Valley
 Ord
 Verdigre
 Morrill
 Fort Calhoun
 Wayne
 Red Cloud
 Weeping Water
 York, NE
 Wilber
 Nebraska City
 Red Cloud
 Wisner

APPENDIX 5: LIST OF HISTORIC SITES BY THEME

AMERICA MOVES WEST

Arbor Lodge State Historical Park	Nebraska City
Bank of Florence	Omaha
Bayard Depot Museum	Bayard
Brownville Historical Museum	Brownville
Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park	North Platte
Cass County Historical Museum	Plattsmouth
Dawson County Historical Museum	Lexington
Fairbury Rock Island Depot Museum/Diller Museum	Fairbury
Florence Depot	Omaha
Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad Depot	Dwight
Greenwood Historical Depot Museum	Greenwood
Historic Florence Mill	Omaha
Lincoln Highway Interpretive Center	Shelton
Lodgepole Depot Museum	Lodgepole
Mayhew Cabin	Nebraska City
Mormon Pioneer Cemetery, Mormon Trail Center at Winter Quarters	Omaha
Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters	Omaha
Murdock Historical Museum	Murdock
Musbach Museum of Scribner	Scribner
Museum of Missouri River History, Meriwether Lewis Dredge, Captain	
Meriwether Lewis Foundation	Brownville
O'Connor House Museum	Dakota City
Old Freightier Museum	Nebraska City
Pioneer Trails Museum	Bridgeport
Pioneer Village Foundation	Minden
Pony Express Museum	Gothenburg
Rock Creek Station State Historical Park	Fairbury
Southeast Nebraska Old West Trails and Transportation Center	Odell
Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer	Grand Island
Taylor-Wessel-Bickel House	Nebraska City
The Durham Museum	Omaha
Trails and Rails Museum	Kearney
Wildwood Center and Period House	Nebraska City
Fort Atkinson State Historical Park	Fort Calhoun
Fort Kearny State Historical Park	Kearney
Chimney Rock National Historic Site	Bayard
Dowse Riverview Homestead (William R. Dowse Sod House)	Comstock

Homestead National Monument	Beatrice
Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center	Nebraska City
Scotts Bluff National Monument	Gering
The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument	Kearney
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site	Bancroft
Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center	Chadron
Mari Sandoz Room Museum	Gordon
Museum of Nebraska History	Lincoln
Museum of the Fur Trade	Chadron

CLASH OF CULTURES

Crook House Museum	Omaha
Fort Atkinson State Historical Park	Fort Calhoun
Fort Hartsuff State Historical Park	Burwell
Fort Kearny State Historical Park	Kearney
Fort Robinson Museum	Crawford
Fort Sidney Complex	Sidney
Genoa U.S. Indian School Museum	Genoa
Massacre Canyon Monument and Visitor Center	Trenton
Susan LaFlesche Picotte Center	Walthill
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	Harrison
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site	Bancroft
Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center	Chadron
Mari Sandoz Room Museum	Gordon
Museum of Nebraska History	Lincoln
Museum of the Fur Trade	Chadron
University of Nebraska State Museum, Morrill Hall	Lincoln

FACES OF NEBRASKA

Civil War Veterans Museum	Nebraska City
Czech Heritage Room, Dvoracek Memorial Library	Wilber
El Museo Latino	Omaha
Fairview, William Jennings Bryan Home	Lincoln
George A. Joslyn House, Joslyn Castle Carriage House	Omaha
Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center	Omaha
Girls and Boys Town Hall of History	Boys Town
Great Plains Welsh Heritage Center	Wymore
Hansen Memorial Museum	Curtis
Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles	Lexington
Museum of Major League Baseball	St. Paul
Nebraska National Guard Historical Society Museum	Lincoln

Polish Heritage Center	Ashton
Robert Henri Museum	Cozad
Sokol South Omaha Czechoslovak Museum	Omaha
Strategic Air & Space Museum	Ashland
Swedish Heritage Center	Oakland
The Nebraska City Museum of Firefighting	Nebraska City
Wilber Czech Museum	Wilber
Buffalo Bill Ranch State Historical Park	North Platte
Mayhew Cabin	Nebraska City
Mormon Trail Center at Historic Winter Quarters	Omaha
Old Freighter Museum	Nebraska City
Rock Creek Station State Historical Park	Fairbury
Crook House Museum	Omaha
Genoa U.S. Indian School Museum	Genoa
Susan LaFlesche Picotte Center	Walthill
Bess Streeter Aldrich Museum	Elmwood
Clarkson Historical Museum	Clarkson
Creighton Historical Center	Creighton
Elkhorn Valley Historical Society Museum and Research Center	Norfolk
Eve Bowring Visitor Center, Bowring Ranch State Historic Park	Merriman
Henderson Heritage Park	Henderson
Heritage Museum of Thurston County	Pender
High Plains Historical Museum	McCook
Saunders County Historical Museum	Wahoo
Senator George Norris State Historic Site	McCook
Thomas P. Kennard House	Lincoln
Verdigre Heritage Museum Complex	Verdigre
Weeping Water Heritage House Museum Complex	Weeping Water
Willa Cather State Historic Site	Red Cloud
Hudson-Meng Bison Bonebed	Crawford
Office of the Capitol Commission	Lincoln
Arbor Lodge State Historical Park	Nebraska City
O'Connor House Museum	Dakota City
Pioneer Village Foundation	Minden
Fort Robinson Museum	Crawford
Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History	Hastings
Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage	Alliance
Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center	Chadron
Mari Sandoz Room Museum	Gordon
Museum of Nebraska History	Lincoln

LIVING ON THE GREAT PLAINS

100th Meridian Museum	Cozad
Anna Bemis Palmer Museum	York
Antelope County Pioneer Jail Museum	Neligh
Armstrong House Museum	Rushville
Bell-Jenne House	Falls City
Benne Memorial Museum	Crete
Bess Streeter Aldrich Museum	Elmwood
Burt County Museum (E.C. Houston House)	Tekamah
Butler County Historical Museum	David City
Butte Community Historical Center & Museum	Butte
Cambridge Museum	Cambridge
Cedar County Historical Museum	Hartington
Centennial Hall	Valentine
Champion Mill State Historical Park	Enders
Chase County Historical Museum	Imperial
Clarkson Historical Museum	Clarkson
Clay County Historical Museum	Clay Center
Coleman House Museum	Ainsworth
Colfax County Museum	Schuyler
Crawford Historical Museum	Crawford
Creighton Historical Center	Creighton
Cuming County Museum Complex	West Point
Custer County Historical Museum	Broken Bow
Dawes County Historical Museum	Chadron
Decatur Museum	Decatur
DeWitt Historical Museum	DeWitt
Dixon County Historical Museum	Allen
Doane College Boswell Observatory Museum	Crete
Elkhorn Valley Historical Society Museum and Research Center	Norfolk
Eve Bowring Visitor Center, Bowring Ranch State Historic Park	Merriman
Fairbury City Museum	Fairbury
Fillmore County Historical Museum	Fairmont
Frahm House Museum	Fort Calhoun
Frank H. Woods Telephone Historical Museum	Lincoln
Franklin County Historical Museum	Franklin
Furnas-Gosper Historical Museum	Arapahoe
Gage County Historical Museum	Beatrice
Garfield County Historical Museum	Burwell
Genoa Historical Museum	Genoa
Gibbon Heritage Center	Gibbon

Gothenburg Historical Museum	Gothenburg
Grant County Courthouse	Hyannis
Grave Library Museum	Wakefield
Harlan County Historical Museum	Orleans
Harold Warp Pioneer Village	Minden
Hay Springs Heritage Center #1 (Church)	Hay Springs
Hay Springs Heritage Center #2	Hay Springs
Henderson Heritage Park	Henderson
Heritage Museum of Thurston County	Pender
High Plains Historical Museum	McCook
Historical Evangelical United Brethren Church	Stanton
Hitchcock County Historical Museum Complex	Trenton
Holt County Historical Museum	O'Neill
House of Yesteryear	Leigh
Howard County Historical Village	St Paul
Howells Congregational Church Historical Museum	Howells
International Quilt Study Center Museum	Lincoln
John Sautter House, Portal School	Papillion
Johnson County Historical Museum	Tecumseh
Kearney County Historical Museum	Minden
Keya Paha County Historical Museum	Springview
Keystone Little Church Museum	Keystone
Lincoln County Historical Museum	North Platte
Louis E. May Museum	Fremont
Madison County Museum	Madison
Mansion on the Hill	Ogallala
Merrick County Historical Museum	Central City
Museum of American Speed - Smith Collection	Lincoln
National Museum of Roller Skating	Lincoln
Nemaha Valley Museum, Inc.	Auburn
Nenzel Community Heritage Center	Nenzel
Niobrara Historical Museum	Niobrara
Nuckolls County Museum	Superior
Otoe County Museum of Memories	Syracuse
Pawnee City Living History Museum	Pawnee City
Peru Historical Museum	Peru
Pilger Museum	Pilger
Plains Historical Museum	Kimball
Plainsman Museum	Aurora
Platte County Museum	Columbus
Polk County Historical Museum	Osceola

Ponca Historical Museum/Blacksmith Shop	Ponca
Potter Historical Museum	Potter
Richardson County Courthouse	Falls City
Richardson County Historical Museum	Falls City
Rock School Museum	Oshkosh
Saline County Historical Museum	Tobias
Sarpy County Historical Museum	Bellevue
Saunders County Historical Museum	Wahoo
Sellers Barton Museum	Ainsworth
Senator George Norris State Historic Site	McCook
Seward County Historical Museum	Goehner
Shelton Historical Interpretive Centre	Wood River
Sherman County Historical Museum	Loup City
Sioux County Historical Museum	Harrison
Stanton County Heritage Museum	Stanton
Strang Museum	Geneva
Stuart White Horse Museum	Stuart
Sturdevant-McKee Museum	Atkinson
Sudman-Neumann Heritage House	Chappell
Table Rock Historical Museum	Table rock
Arbor Lodge State Historical Park	Nebraska City
Bank of Florence	Omaha
Bayard Depot Museum	Bayard
Brownville Historical Museum	Brownville
Cass County Historical Museum	Plattsmouth
Dawson County Historical Museum	Lexington
Fairbury Rock Island Depot Museum/Diller Museum	Fairbury
Historic Florence Mill	Omaha
Lincoln Highway Interpretive Center	Shelton
Lodgepole Depot Museum	Lodgepole
Murdock Historical Museum	Murdock
Musbach Museum of Scribner	Scribner
O'Connor House Museum	Dakota City
Pioneer Village Foundation	Minden
Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer	Grand Island
The Durham Museum	Omaha
Trails and Rails Museum	Kearney
Fort Robinson Museum	Crawford
Fort Sidney Complex	Sidney
Farm and Ranch Museum	Gering
Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History	Hastings

Heritage House Museum	Long Pine
Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage	Alliance
Nebraska Prairie Museum	Holdrege
Neligh Mill State Historic Site	Neligh
North Platte Valley Museum	Gering
Rock County Historical Museum	Bassett
Dowse Riverview Homestead (William R. Dowse Sod House)	Comstock
Homestead National Monument	Beatrice
The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument	Kearney

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Chimney Rock National Historic Site	Bayard
Dowse Riverview Homestead (William R. Dowse Sod House)	Comstock
Homestead National Monument	Beatrice
Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center	Nebraska City
Scotts Bluff National Monument	Gering
The Great Platte River Road Archway Monument	Kearney
Agate Fossil Beds National Monument	Harrison
John G. Neihardt State Historic Site	Bancroft
Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center	Chadron
Mari Sandoz Room Museum	Gordon
Museum of Nebraska History	Lincoln
Museum of the Fur Trade	Chadron
University of Nebraska State Museum, Morrill Hall	Lincoln
Hudson-Meng Bison Bonebed	Crawford
Office of the Capitol Commission	Lincoln
Farm and Ranch Museum	Gering
Hastings Museum of Natural and Cultural History	Hastings
Heritage House Museum	Long Pine
Knight Museum of High Plains Heritage	Alliance
Nebraska Prairie Museum	Holdrege
Neligh Mill State Historic Site	Neligh
North Platte Valley Museum	Gering
Rock County Historical Museum	Bassett
Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park	Royal
Eleanor Barbour Cook Museum of Geology*	Chadron
Union Pacific Depot Museum	Chappell
Museum of Missouri River History, Meriwether Lewis Dredge, Captain Meriwether Lewis Foundation	Brownville

APPENDIX 6: RESULTS OF THE NEBRASKA ANNUAL SOCIAL INDICATORS SURVEY (NASIS)

As table A-1 shows, the average respondent to the NASIS survey had visited 1.65 historic sites or museums in the last 12 months. In addition, respondents had traveled to an average of 1.08 historic sites as part of a trip of over 50 miles.

If no historic sites existed in Nebraska, 13 percent of respondents said they would visit a historic site in another state. Another 12 percent said they would save their money, indicating at least 25 percent of visitors were intent on spending their money on heritage travel.

Respondents were asked about their three most recent trips of over 50 miles to visit a historic sites. For the most recent trip, visitors traveled on average in a group of 4.34 people, with 45 percent going on an overnight trip. Over 50 percent went on the trip as general vacation or other leisure, and the average respondent spent \$128.20 on that trip.

For their second-most recent trip, the average respondent had traveled with 3.96 people, with 35.7% going on an overnight trip. Again, over 50 percent said the purpose of their trip was general vacation or other leisure. Respondents also spent an average of \$163.76 on that trip.

For their third-most recent trip, respondents traveled with an average of 2.79 people, with 43 percent going on an overnight trip. Over 48 percent used the trip for general vacation or other leisure, and visitors spent an average of \$113.93 on that trip.

Table A-1: Results of Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey (NASIS) Analysis				
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
16) How many times in the last 12 months did you visit an historic site or museum in Nebraska?	1.65	2.7	0	20
17) If there were no historic sites or museums to visit in Nebraska, what would you most likely do instead?	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
Visit another type of attraction in Nebraska:	40.10%	N/A	0	1
Spend the money on something else in Nebraska:	22.30%	N/A	0	1
Visit an historic site or museum in another state:	13.10%	N/A	0	1
Visit another type of attraction in another state:	6.10%	N/A	0	1
Spend the money on something else in another state:	3.10%	N/A	0	1
Save the money:	12.20%	N/A	0	1
Other:	2.10%	N/A	0	1

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
18) How many times in the last 12 months did you visit an historic site or museum in Nebraska as part of a trip where you travelled 50 or more miles, one way, away from home?	1.08	1.91	0	20
19) For your 3 most recent trips of at least 50 miles to an historic site or museum in Nebraska, please answer the following questions:				
<u>For your most recent trip</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
a) How many people traveled with you?	4.34	8.28	0	60
b) How many people from your household traveled with you?	1.85	1.47	0	6
c) Was this an overnight trip or a day trip?				
Overnight trip:	45.50%	46.75	0	1
Day trip	54.50%	46.75	0	1
d) What was the primary purpose of this trip?				
Convention, training/seminar or other group meeting:	7.00%	N/A	0	1
Other business:	5.90%	N/A	0	1
Visit friends and relatives	18.80%	N/A	0	1
Getaway weekend:	17.20%	N/A	0	1
General vacation:	18.30%	N/A	0	1
Other leisure:	32.80%	N/A	0	1
e) About how much did the trip cost for you only?	\$128.20	156.16	0	800
<u>For your second-most recent trip</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
a) How many people traveled with you?	3.96	9.65	0	90
b) How many people from your household traveled with you?	1.7	1.44	0	6
c) Was this an overnight trip or a day trip?				
Overnight trip:	35.70%	28	0	1
Day trip	64.30%	28	0	1
d) What was the primary purpose of this trip?				
Convention, training/seminar or other group meeting:	3.50%	N/A	0	1
Other business:	8.00%	N/A	0	1
Visit friends and relatives	19.50%	N/A	0	1
Getaway weekend:	17.70%	N/A	0	1
General vacation:	13.30%	N/A	0	1
Other leisure:	38.10%	N/A	0	1

e) About how much did the trip cost for you only?	\$163.76	312.6	0	2000
<u>For your third-most recent trip</u>	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max
a) How many people traveled with you?	2.79	3.96	0	30
b) How many people from your household traveled with you?	1.87	1.51	0	7
c) Was this an overnight trip or a day trip?				
Overnight trip:	43.90%	16.5	0	1
Day trip	56.10%	16.5	0	1
d) What was the primary purpose of this trip?				
Convention, training/seminar or other group meeting:	2.90%	N/A	0	1
Other business:	15.90%	N/A	0	1
Visit friends and relatives	15.90%	N/A	0	1
Getaway weekend:	15.90%	N/A	0	1
General vacation:	14.50%	N/A	0	1
Other leisure:	34.80%	N/A	0	1
e) About how much did the trip cost for you only?	\$113.93	122.27	0	600
Source: Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey				