



THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

2017 1st Quarter Update Report & Next Steps

**Prepared by Mr. Bill Thomas
Chairman, Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership
April 9, 2017**

Overview

The Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership accomplished much during 2016, and is now off to a good start in 2017.

The primary purpose of The Road Ahead Partnership is to create a collaborative organization that represents and speaks with one voice for all Rt. 66 organizations and stakeholders.

Towards that end, those involved in, and impacted by, the mission and goals our organization is striving to accomplish must be kept informed. The 2017 1st Quarter Update Report is designed for that purpose. It provides specific updates on what has been done thus far this year per our organization's mission and each of its stated goals.

As you read this report, we hope you gain a sense of what our Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership is and what we are working to achieve.

We welcome and encourage feedback and questions regarding the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership in general, and this 2017 1st Quarter Update Report in particular. Please feel free to forward your thoughts, questions, ideas, and suggestions to:

rt66theroadahead@gmail.com.

Finally, as you read this 2017 1st Quarter Update Report, we hope you are motivated to become even more involved in the work that awaits us on the road ahead.

Onward and upward...

Bill Thomas, Chairman
Rt. 66 The Road Ahead Partnership

**Report on Work Undertaken on the Goals of the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership
During January, February, and March of 2017, along with Next Steps Planned for the Remainder of 2017**

The goals of our organization are designed to achieve a set of desired outcomes, which in turn, are based on our mission.

The mission of the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership is:

To revitalize and sustain Route 66 as a national icon and international destination, for the benefit of all Route 66 communities, travelers, and businesses/attractions, through collaborative partnerships focused on promotion, preservation, research/education, and economic development.

Following is a list of the outcomes we are working to achieve, along with the goals designed to help us achieve those outcomes. Presented below is an update on the status of each goal as of the end of the 1st Quarter of 2017, along with next steps for the rest of this year.

Outcome 1 – Increased Collaboration: We want to improve communication and participation among and between sectors (tourism, preservation, associations, transportation, economic and community development) to leverage their work for the benefit of the entire road.

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1.1 – Establish one professionally – led, representative body with a board initially appointed by the Route 66: The Road Ahead Initiative Steering Committee, to deliver on strategic outcomes/goals, convene meetings, act as a central resource, and represent the whole road.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The first meeting of the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership Board of Directors was held February 16-18 in Albuquerque, NM. Highlights from the meeting include:</p> <p>Officers of the Board were elected: Bill Thomas, Chairman [Illinois], David Bricker, Vice Chairman [California], Renee Charles, Secretary [Kansas], Bill Kelly, Treasurer [Illinois]. There terms are for one year. The Board formally reaffirmed the Road Ahead’s mission, outcomes, & organizational structure previously developed by the Steering Committee per input it had received via the series of Rt. 66 Collaboration Workshop meetings attended by approximately 400 Rt. 66 stakeholders in June 2015. Finalized & adopted bylaws for the Road Ahead. Determined that Annual Meetings of the Board will be open to the public. Heard update reports from each of the Road Ahead’s five Working Groups. Heard an update report from John Conoboy, Chairman of the Road Ahead’s National Historic Trail Task Force, and welcomed Amy Webb and Grant Stevens, with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, who were on hand to discuss opportunities for the Road Ahead and the Trust to work together to ensure Rt. 66 is designated a National Historic Trail. Discussed strategic opportunities presented by the introduction in Congress of HB66, a bill that would establish a national Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commission. Heard an update report from Emerson Vallo, Chairman of the Road Ahead’s Tribal Advisory Group [TAG], regarding way the TAG and the Road Ahead could collaborate. Board members attending the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Bricker - Chair of the Preservation Working Group • Melissa Beasley - New Mexico Rt. 66 Association • Renee Charles - Kansas Historic Rt. 66 Association/Rt. 66 Association of Kansas • Larry Clonts - Texas Old Rt. 66 Association • David Dunaway - Chair of the Research & Education Working Group • Sharlene Fouser - Arizona Rt. 66 Scenic Byway Program • Jeff Fulgenzi - Chair of the Economic Development Working Group • Bill Kelly - Chair of the Promotion Working Group • John Miller - Illinois Rt. 66 Association • Brad Nickson - Oklahoma Route 66 Association • Tommy Pike – Rt. 66 Association of Missouri • Scott Piotrowski - California Historic Rt. 66 Association • Bill Thomas - Chairman of the Board of Directors 	<p>Initiate regular quarterly meetings of the Board</p> <p>Discuss and adopt a Board policy regarding public communications by/from the Board</p> <p>Discuss and adopt a Board policy establishing a process for selecting the site of future Board meetings</p>

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GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1.2 – Establish a State Route 66 Associations Advocacy Working Group to help achieve the outcome of “Increased Collaboration” noted above.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The State Route 66 Associations Advocacy Working Group met twice via conference call on January 17, 2017, and on March 14, 2017.</p> <p>During the first call, the WG discussed the topic of growing and attracting membership to the state associations. The conversation revealed that most associations have stable or declining membership because many members are older. All associations are looking at ways to increase membership, especially younger members. Membership levels varied between states as did incentives (events, newsletters, stickers, hardcopy vs. online meeting notices). The group discussed that it was important not to look at membership as a competition between the states, but rather to learn from each other and leverage each other’s efforts because of the benefit to the whole road.</p> <p>A topic introduced by Bill Thomas was developing Route 66 Centennial Commission legislation in each of the states, which has already been done in Illinois. The idea is to create both state level commissions and a national commission to lay the groundwork for effectively coordinating the effort to celebrate the road's 100th birthday. Since that time, Missouri has identified legislative representatives interested in drafting commission legislation for the state.</p> <p>During the second meeting, a report of the first Route 66 Road Ahead board meeting was given. Dora Meroney, president of the Old Route 66 Association of Texas, was appointed as the new Chair of the WG. A discussion on the name of the working group was held, and the decision was made to keep the name as it is. Meeting format was also discussed, and it was agreed that the format which includes time-sensitive and group-identified priority topics, along with updates from the Associations was working.</p>	<p>Dora Meroney will initiate the next WG meeting, and will facilitate a discussion on the internal structure of associations and healthy boards. The Associations will also consider establishing centennial commissions in their respective states.</p>

Outcome 2 – Effective Promotion: We want to promote the road and increase the number of visitors, both domestic and international, coming to Route 66, with the specific aim of increasing their length of stay and the amount of money they spend along Route 66.

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 2.1 – Establish a Promotion Working Group to collaboratively market, both domestically and internationally, all of Route 66.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: In January, legislation was introduced in Congress to establish a national Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commission, charged with planning for the 100th anniversary of Rt. 66 in 2026. The Road Ahead is working to identify and recruit co-sponsors for this legislation.</p> <p>In February, legislation was introduced in Congress to designate Rt. 66 as a National Historic Trail. The Road Ahead is working to identify and recruit co-sponsors for this legislation.</p> <p>In January, the Illinois State General Assembly passed – 115 to 0 – a bill to establish an Illinois Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commission. The bill is now awaiting introduction in the Illinois Senate.</p> <p>In March, steps were taken to work with Lyndall Fraker, state representative in Missouri, to begin the process of introducing legislation to establish a Missouri Rt. 66 100th Anniversary commission.</p> <p>In March, steps were taken to work with California Assembly member Chris Holden to begin the process of introducing legislation to establish a California Rt. 66 100th Anniversary commission.</p> <p>Members of the Road Ahead’s State Association Advocacy WG and Board of Directors have been asked to identify state legislators in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico to introduce legislation in their respective states to establish Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commissions.</p>	<p>Continue to identify and recruit co-sponsors for the two pieces of federal legislation</p> <p>Establish state-level Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commissions in each state through which Rt. 66 runs</p>
<p>Goal 2.2 – Develop a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy to promote the road that leverages social media, and provides a cohesive website and a clearinghouse for information.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: In February a new Rt. 66 Road Ahead Facebook page was created. Jim Hinckley and Bill Thomas are working to post information, with Jim providing the bulk of the news.</p> <p>A new draft website for the Road Ahead was completed the end of March. It is now being proofed and readied for public release in April.</p>	<p>Finalize and release publicly the new Road Ahead website</p>

<p>Goal 2.3 – Educate the public, tour operators, communities, entrepreneurs, governments, and the next generation about the history, cultural importance, economic value, attractions, and business opportunities along Route 66.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: No progress to report this 1st QTR on this goal.</p>	<p>Specific steps/tasks associated with achieving this goal need to be identified and carried out in 2017, along with the specific means and metrics to measure achievement of this goal.</p>
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Outcome 3 – Purposeful Preservation: We want to purposefully preserve the historic resources (i.e. buildings, structures, sites, districts, objects, and landscapes), traditions, and experiences that give Route 66 its idiosyncratic character.

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 3.1 – Establish a Preservation Working Group to collaboratively share best practices and ideas between such groups as State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) and Departments of Transportation, focused on the preservation of Route 66 related bridges, buildings, structures, districts, sites, objects, and landscapes.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: No update to report.</p>	<p>Identify an individual(s) who can assist our organization when it becomes involved in Section 106 consultations & reviews.</p>

<p>Goal 3.2 – Share information with Route 66 stakeholders about the meaning and benefits of preservation and the tools, techniques, and incentives for appropriate preservation outcomes.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The “Quick Reference Guide” designed to provide Rt. 66 stakeholders with historic preservation basic information, including available resources, is included in the new Rt. 66 Road Ahead website.</p>	<p>Publicly launch the new Rt. 66 Road Ahead website in April.</p>
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Outcome 4 – Increased Economic Vitality: We want to act as a catalyst for community and economic development by helping sustain and strengthen existing Route 66 businesses and attractions, and by helping new ones develop.

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 4.1 – Develop a local economic development toolkit to be used by local officials and tourism agencies to take greater advantage of Route 66 assets within their area.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: Pontiac, IL was chosen as the initial case study community to use in creating a local economic development toolkit. Discussions are underway with the University of Illinois – Chicago to leverage graduate student capstone projects as a way to develop a robust case study and analysis. Decision made to pursue the Fall 2017 semester capstone project for maximum preparedness.</p>	<p>Submit application for subject of UIC capstone course for Fall 2017 semester</p>
<p>Goal 4.2 – Create a central resource/information website for Route 66 travelers. This would serve as a central hub for all travel information and a resource for attractions & assets along Route 66.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: Work is ongoing to create one central site that is universally recognized for its utility by travelers, not unlike Kayak.com.</p>	<p>Compile inventory of sites & resources Explore opportunities for domains & smartphone, tablet applications Investigate whether an existing site would be best suited to host such a resource</p>
<p>Goal 4.3 Reach out to State agencies conducting traveler/visitor surveys and coordinate deeper-dive questions surrounding Route 66 and heritage travel.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: Achievement of this goal is a way to garner additional information on Route 66 travelers using existing survey efforts. Illinois Office of Tourism Director Cory Jobe sent a letter to the other agency heads along the corridor seeking their support in gathering information. Several have responded agreeing to assist (AZ, TX, KS, MO); the remainder has yet to respond (CA, NM, OK). Dr. Listokin is following up as this falls within the scope of his work with the NPS.</p>	<p>An organizer needs to be identified for the conference A new date needs to be identified in either late 2017 or in 2018. Outreach to be made to Miles of Possibilities conference organizers.</p>
<p>Goal 4.4 – – Seek support for creation of reports and studies.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The Working Group recognizes the need for the creation and publication of reports and studies that will provide data to the Road Ahead Initiative, the Economic Development Working Group, and users along the corridor. In addition to the prospective relationship with UIC, the Working Group plans to form strategic partnerships and pursue grant opportunities to be able to fund professional reports/studies. Chairman Fulgenzi’s participation in the annual Board of Directors meeting reinforced the need for this repository of knowledge. A visit to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque provided an excellent showcase of this concept as specifically related to Route 66 in New Mexico.</p>	<p>Research grant opportunities Identify a research facility partner in each state. (The University of New Mexico is a good example of an existing research/Route 66 relationship.</p>

Outcome 5 – Quality Research and Education: We want to ensure that the history and stories associated with Route 66 are both accurate and accessible to the public, to researchers, and to educational institutions in order to enhance and encourage greater connection to, and understanding of, the Mother Road.

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 5.1 – Establish a national Research/Education Working Group to collaboratively support professional and amateur educators and researchers in their efforts to inspire and renew public understanding of Route 66.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: This goal has been completed, as the Working Group has been established and members recruited. The group is still seeking more elementary level educators interested in Route 66 for representation. In addition, members have been requested to seek out educators who might assist individually and to located educational materials. We are attempting to work out a better schedule for our meetings to accommodate teachers who are less available to meet during the day most weeks.</p>	<p>Recruit additional elementary school teachers to join the Working Group</p> <p>Devise meeting scheduled that accommodates teachers’ schedules</p>
<p>Goal 5.2 – Assist educational institutions at all levels in presenting Route 66 research to students, travelers, tourists, and the general public.</p>	<p>3/31/17: Update Report: The Working Group has reached out to state and international associations to identify educators teaching on Route 66, and to begin collecting their syllabi for a clearinghouse of material for educators interested in teaching about Route 66.</p> <p>Our goal for our next teleconference meeting in June 2017 will be to being to construct two “toolkits” on education or research on Route 66. Members have been informed of this topic and asked to think about core elements for these toolkits. Dr. Dunaway continues to supervise a dissertation with Donatella Davanzo at the University of New Mexico concerning Route 66 architecture in New Mexico.</p>	<p>Construct toolkits on education or research on Rt. 66</p>
<p>Goal 5.3 – Support the research and preparation of comprehensive and accurate Route 66 information and its distribution in multiple forms, including: netcasting, broadcasting, print, social media, and curriculum.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The Working Group will respond to requests for information, but we do not yet have enough educational material to assist people wanting help with Route 66 syllabi. However, this group and the Route 66 Oral History office is prepared to answer concerning the resources we do have.</p>	

Financial Sustainment Task Force Report

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1 – Establish a Financial Sustainment Task Force charged with devising and implementing plans to ensure The Route 66: The Road Ahead Initiative is financially able to carry out its work.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The Sustainment Task Force is targeting three national corporations as potential “Founding Members” of the Road Ahead, from whom financial support is being sought.</p> <p>The Task Force continues to seek a personal contact with someone at corporate Harley-Davidson, to whom to pitch the Founding Member idea.</p> <p>Phillips 66 corporation decline the offer to become a Founding Member.</p> <p>State Farm Insurance Company remains interested in discussing options for becoming a Founding Member. A number of different options for ways to support the Road Ahead State Farm were presented to State Farm. State Farm has now requested the Road Ahead to flesh out a more concrete example of a Road Ahead project that will present it with branding/marketing opportunities.</p> <p>The Task Force has initiated discussions/planning with the Academy for Digital Entertainment at Breda University in The Netherlands, to develop an augmented reality-based gaming/marketing app that would provide a concrete branding opportunity for State Farm.</p> <p>In addition the Task Force has also initiated discussions/planning with the Arts Technology Program at Illinois State University to develop an augmented reality-based directional/gaming app that would also provide branding opportunities for State Farm. Each of these initiatives will involve graduate students working on these ideas starting the 2017 Fall semester.</p>	<p>Finalize plans with Breda University to involve graduate students in the development of an augmented reality-based gaming/marketing app that would begin with the 2017 fall semester.</p> <p>Finalize plans with IL State University to involve graduate students in the development of an augmented reality-based directional/gaming app that would begin with the 2017 fall semester.</p>

National Historic Trail Designation Task Force Report

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1 – Establish a National Historic Trail Designation Task Force to secure Federal designation of Route 66 as a National Historic Trail.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: The NHT Task Force held two teleconference meetings during the 1st Quarter of 2017. The following sub-goals were worked on by the Task Force:</p> <p>1.1 - Educate key groups/individuals in the Rt. 66 states: A teleconference was held on March 30th with members of the National Historic Trail task force, local champions, and the State Advocacy Working Group. In light of the introduction in Congress (see section 1.4 below) of a bill to designate Route 66 as a National Historic Trail and a bill to create a Route 66 Centennial Commission, we discussed an interim change in strategy. At the request of Congressional office staff, we are asking the task force and working group to make efforts to encourage members of the House of Representatives to sign onto both bills as cosponsors.</p> <p>A list of all U.S. House members with Route 66 in their district, and sample letters/email text to be used to encourage them to become bill co-sponsors was sent to members of the task force and working group. While getting cosponsors from House members who have Route 66 in their district is a primary goal, there is no requirement that other members of the House cannot be cosponsors.</p> <p>1.2 Solicit and collect tangible evidence of support for NHT status for Rt. 66 from key groups in each Rt. 66 state</p> <p>This process is being temporarily put on hold, although we will be continuing to get some letters of support based on earlier actions by the group.</p> <p>1.3 Apply for National Treasure designation to secure assistance from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in seeking National Historic Trail designation.</p> <p>The National Trust has conditionally approved Route 66 as a National Treasure. This will, in part, depend on the availability of funding. Amy Webb and other National Trust staff are exploring some possible corporate sponsorships. If successful, the National Trust will be able to provide their expertise and experience toward gaining the popular and congressional support needed to pass the trail legislation.</p> <p>1.4 Introduce a bill in Congress to designate Route 66 as a National Historic Trail and support the bill in Congress to establish a Rt. 66 100th Anniversary Commission.</p>	<p>Continue to work with Congressman LaHood's and Congressman Davis's staff to advance their respective bills through Congress.</p> <p>Conduct a 2nd quarter teleconference with the Task Force, local champions and Working Group to evaluate efforts toward increasing congressional cosponsors for both trail legislation and the centennial commission..</p> <p>Ongoing: Improve the information available on the website and explore, with the National Trust, ways to create an online site where support for trail designation can be gathered.</p>

	<p>On February 1, 2017 Congressman Darin LaHood (R-IL-18) introduced HR 801 The Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act. The act amends the National Trails System Act to designate Route 66 as a National Historic Trail to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior acting through the National Park Service. There are currently 11 cosponsors on this bill from both political parties.</p> <p>On January 3, 2017 Congressman Rodney Davis (R-IL-13) introduced HR 66, the Route 66 Centennial Commission Act. The act establishes the Commission and directs the Secretary of Transportation to prepare a plan on the preservation needs of Route 66. There are currently 14 cosponsors on this bill from both political parties.</p> <p>While these are separate bills, they are being jointly promoted by the Congressmen. See https://congress.gov/ for up-to-date status of this legislation.</p>	
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Report on Establishment of Advisory Groups - International Advisory Group		
GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1 – Establish an International Advisory Group to help ensure active collaboration with as many Route 66 stakeholders as possible.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: Dries Bessell of The Netherlands has agreed to serve as Chairman of the International Advisory Group.</p>	<p>Identify and recruit members of the International Advisory Group</p>

Report on Establishment of Advisory Groups - American Indian Tribal Advisory Group		
GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1 – Establish an American Indian Tribal Advisory Group to help ensure active collaboration with as many Route 66 stakeholders as possible.</p>	<p>3/31/17 Update Report: Emerson Vallo, member of the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico, agreed to serve as Chairman of the Tribal Advisory Group [TAG]. Emerson attended the February meeting of the Road Ahead Board of Directors. He then conducted the first teleconference meeting of the TAG, during which goals for the group were discussed. Members of the TAG include:</p> <p>Vincent Romero – Vincent lives in Chicago and works at the Chicago American Indian Center James Surveyor – James lives in Arizona and is the Operations Manager for the Moenkopi Developers Corporation Julia Bogany – Julia lives in California and serves on the Tribal Council and as a Cultural Consultant for the Gaglielano-Tongva Tribe</p>	<p>Refine and finalize goals of the Tribal Advisory Group</p>

Conclusion

2017 will be an important year for the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership.

This year we will see the rubber hit the road in terms of our organization achieving concrete results in a collaborative fashion for the betterment of all of Route 66. Doing so will require hard work, frequent and effective communication, and a purposeful focus on our organization's mission and goals.

Our journey together has begun – and it's time to rely on our windshield, looking at what lies in front of us, not peering at the past in our rearview mirror.

It will be a long journey, but traveling it together will bring us to the destination we seek on the road ahead.

Onward and upward...

Bill Thomas, Chairman
Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership