



---

# THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

---

**3rd Quarter 2024 Update Report & Next Steps**

**Prepared by Mr. Bill Thomas  
Chairman, Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership  
October 8, 2024**

## **Overview**

The following is a brief overview of the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership's activity from July 1 through September 30, 2024.

We believe letting everyone know what the Road Ahead is doing is important. As you read this report, we hope you gain a better sense of what the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership is and what we are working to achieve.

We welcome and encourage feedback and questions regarding the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership in general and this Expanded Update Report in particular. Please feel free to forward your thoughts, questions, ideas, and suggestions to: [rt66theroadahead@gmail.org](mailto:rt66theroadahead@gmail.org).

Finally, as you read this Expanded Update Report, we hope you are motivated to be even more involved in the work that awaits us on the road ahead.

Onward and upward...

Bill Thomas, Chairman  
Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership

**Report on Work Undertaken on the Goals of the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership  
During July 1 through September 30, 2024, along with Next Steps Planned for the 2024**

Our organization's goals are designed to achieve a set of desired outcomes based on our mission.

The mission of the Route 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 9/30/24, along with next steps for 2024. You'll note that the current update report is highlighted in BLUE text, while past updates are in black text.

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.		
BOARD OF DIRECTORS - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & CHAIRMAN'S REPORT		
GOAL	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 1.1 – Establish one professionally – led, representative body with a Board of Directors focused on achieving our organization’s set of desired outcomes designed, ultimately to accomplish our mission.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership Board of Directors held its 3rd QTR meeting on 8/9/24. Reports from the Partnership's Working Groups were presented, along with updates on the organizations Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant and Black Experiences Grant Programs. Information regarding the most recent programs, activities, projects, and events approved by the Route 66 Centennial Commission was shared, and a brief discussion held regarding when to schedule the Partnership's 2025 Annual Meeting. The Board also voted to engage Samantha Extance to facilitate a blended [i.e. online &amp; in person] strategic planning process for the Partnership. More details are available via minutes of the 8/9/24 Board Meeting, found in the Resource section of the Road Ahead website.</b></p> <p>Update Report – The Route 66 Road Ahead Board of Directors did not meet during 2nd QTR. One item was discussed and action on it taken via an email vote. The item involved entering into a Partnership Agreement with Road Runner Motorcycle Touring &amp; Travel, to help it promote upcoming Centennial related rides and to promote the Road Ahead's new Route 66 Preservation and Economic Development Grant Program.</p>	<p><b>Initiate the strategic planning process approved by the Board at its 8/9/24 meeting.</b></p>

	<p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The Route 66 Road Ahead Board of Directors met for its annual meeting on 4/4/24 in Claremont, CA. The focus of the meeting was on a strategic review of the organization's image, values, mission statement, desired outcomes, and organizational structure. As a result of discussions held, the "Road Ahead will initiate a strategic planning process designed to review and update the Road Ahead's overall strategic position.</p>	
--	--	--

**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.

STATE ASSOCIATIONS ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP UPDATE

GOAL	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 1.1 – Discuss and identify Route 66 needs/concerns and communicate them to the Road Ahead Board of Directors. Come up with potential solutions.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – IL Fairgrounds Experience opening went well, high attendance and good earned media. Working to raise the final \$175k needed by the end of April. Signage refresh and stencil deployment is going well. Working to get state funds designated for State Centennial Commission funds allocated and Scenic Byway designated as lead organization. Launching Roadside Attraction project similar to Oklahoma’s and update to Nat’l Register period of significance. MO now has ownership of Gasconade Bridge, working on securing the site. OK Revolving Fund approved by Governor, working on final grant timeline so applications can be submitted. Lt Gov no longer on that commission or Tourism, State has stopped printing booklet and passport. Meramec Caverns engaged for repair of Chandler barn mural. Ribbon Road meeting positive (not milling out asphalt) but still no firm course of action defined for preservation. Edward Keating Photo exhibit coming up at University of Tulsa and pending Motor Tour with Texas. TX has high enrollment for tour and McLean Phillips Station refresh almost completed. Alanreed Super Station is next project. Glenrio Smoke Shop about to open, no work on rest of buildings. NM neon replacement going well, lots of earned media. Russell’s Travel Stop bought by TA, museum will remain for five years. AZ had first all-community meeting in August. Route 66 Motel in Kingman sold to Catholic charities NAU hosting of teachers for “Radicalized Spaces” exhibit was well-attended. CA working on restoring Bono’s Historical Orange. Annual work party at Roadrunner planned for October. First Ave bridge in Barstow slated for demolition, new crossing to Harvey House almost complete. Improvements made at Victorville Museum.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – IL Report: Gemini Giant permanent location set, may have to redo park layout and road alignment. American Giants Museum Opening a great success (600 ppl over</p>	<p>The Associations would like to work on some kind of cross-country collateral that celebrates the Centennial and provides information for travelers.</p>

	<p>weekend.) MO Report: no updates. KS awarded Dean Walker Lifetime Achievement Award with representation from MO/KS/OK/TX. KS Report: Cars on the Route reopened and State Assoc. working on signage improvements. Rainbow Bridge repainting ongoing. OK Report: Pony Bridge re-opening successful, over 350 classic cars. Association sending representation to Prague for European Festival. Neon Grant submitted for office. Revitalization Grant denied, working on a retooled application. Centennial Event Series approved. Hall of Fame selection for July ongoing. TX Report: Bug Ranch relocated to Amarillo. NM Report: still working through Board dispute. Both sides wish to expand Roadside Attraction signage program and Explorer’s Club into NM. AZ Report: had 830 cars at Fun Run, meeting with Youth Summit folks from National Trust. Osterman Station rebuild ongoing. CA had a great time at IPW, big Route 66 focus. Some Centennial Commission representation was there.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – IL confirmed Chain of Rocks will still be accessible on occasion. Gemini Giant saved due to Joliet Museum and City of Wilmington. McLean water tower saved. Another \$4m received for RT66 grants. MO official license plate hit minimum and launched. MO Centennial Commission “just talking” and has about \$900k. Working on Nat’l Register Nom for Gasconade Bridge. KS building drive-thru shield. OK awaiting state grant awards, Ribbon Road preservation effort ongoing, new office for OK Assn. TX organizing cleanup at Alanreed, Jericho. Amarillo festival growing. NM Association in conflict, motor tour canceled. AZ working on Centennial events and activities with possible monies coming back to Association. New website soon! CA Amboy re-opened from Kelbaker Rd, other bridges still out. Centennial Logos created in IL, OK, TX, NM.</p>	
<p><b>Goal 1.2 – Discuss and identify areas of common interest and opportunities to work together on projects/activities/challenges to be solved.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – Interested in some kind of eight state visitor’s guide. General concern that Road Ahead’s main mission from Anaheim launch, to assist the eight states, has been side-tracked.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – John Paget discussed Main Street of America film project and focus. Associations agreed to help promote the virtual screening and recommended it be made totally free to boost viewership. ASSN would still like to pursue a route-wide map collateral that all Associations could use. Initial quote for map art (just the map bit) is \$4,800 (14-18 insets).</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – General agreement to share Centennial opportunities (i.e. puzzle requests, merchandise offers, etc.) to better navigate the coming influx. Also desired a rolling Centennial kickoff schedule.</p>	<p><b>Continue meeting monthly to identify needs and cross-Association working opportunities.</b></p>
<p><b>Goal 1.3 – Assist the Board of Directors in communicating its work with the greater Route 66 community.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – Grant information sent out via Association channels</b></p> <p>6/30/24 – No Update Report</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – Endorsed Centennial Communication plan, Endorsed PED Grant</p> <p>12/31/23 Update Report – No update to report</p>	<p><b>Continue monitoring legislative activity and other Road Ahead initiatives for engagement opportunities</b></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	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 2.1 - Ensure each Route 66 State establishes a state-level Route 66 100th Anniversary Commission</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – The Federal Route 66 Centennial Commission approved the Route 66 Centennial Public-Facing Communications plan, originally submitted to the Commission this past February. Work continues designing/developing one of the key elements of this plan: the Centennial Website. A goal of launching the site by 1/1/25 has been set.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – The Public-Facing Communications Plan, submitted to the Route 66 Centennial Commission last February, was on the Agenda for discussion/action at the Commission's May meeting, but tabled because the Commission did not have enough time to get to it. It was then placed on the June Agenda, but again not discussed, because there were no representatives in attendance at the June meeting from the Commission's Promotion Working Group to present it.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The "industry-facing" website designed by the Route 66 Centennial Commission has been launched and is now being used by individuals and organizations to submit potential project ideas for the Centennial. Ideas submitted are forwarded for review to one of four National Working Groups established by the Centennial Commission [Events &amp; Celebrations; Promotion; Infrastructure; Commemoratives &amp; Publications]. Working Groups review submissions and then decide whether to send projects to the full Commission for its discussion/action. If approved by the full Commission, projects are then recommended to Congress as "Official Projects of the Route 66 Centennial".</p>	<p><b>Launch the Route 66 Centennial website by or before 1/1/25.</b></p>
<p><b>Goal 2.2 - Work to identify contacts in each state that can be connected with to help influence National Route 66 Centennial Commission appointments.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – Mr. Charles Riley was appointed to the U.S. Route 66 Centennial Commission during 3rd Quarter. His is the final appointment, now giving the Commission a total of 14 members. He represents the U.S. Department of Transportation.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – One seat remains unfilled on the Federal Route 66 Centennial Commission.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – One seat remains unfilled on the Federal Route 66 Centennial Commission.</p>	<p><b>Identify key personnel in each governor's office that the Route 66 Road Ahead group can reach out to help influence national appointments.</b></p>

<p><b>Goal 2.3 - Discuss ways to expand Oklahoma's AAA Route 66 Road Fest to all Route 66 states.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – No progress in reengaging with AAA. The next step will be to leverage the new Route 66 Centennial Website to move this forward.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 – Update Report – The Road Ahead has reengaged with AAA and is working to help expand the Road Fest to other Route 66 states, beyond its homebase in Oklahoma.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The AAA RoadFest has been approved an Official Route 66 Centennial Project.</p> <p>12/31/23 Update Report – The Road Ahead’s proposal to make the AAA Route 66 RoadFest one of the Federal Commission’s officially recommended programs will be discussed and acted upon at the Commission’s 1/25/24 meeting.</p>	<p><b>Reengage AAA to work with each state individually to expand Road Fest, and in the process create an experience that best supports each state's interests.</b></p>
---	--	---

**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.

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>2024 STATUS</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS FOR 2024</b>
<p><b>Goal 3.1 – Collaboratively share best practices and ideas between such groups as State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) and State Departments of Transportation (DOTs).</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – David Bricker, Chair of the Preservation Work Group is temporarily serving as the Road Ahead's Historic Resources Specialist (HRS) – Following is his update on Project Participation (Section 106 compliance)</b></p> <p><b><u>TX Dept. of Transportation:</u> Chicago, Rock Island, and Gulf Railroad/Route 66 Bridge Replacement Project, near Shamrock, Wheeler County.</b></p> <p><b>Initial Section 106 meeting with consulting parties is pending.</b></p> <p><b><u>CA Dept. of Transportation &amp; County of San Bernardino:</u> National Trails Highway/Route 66, 10 Bridges Replacement Project between Daggett and Mountain Springs Road, San Bernardino County.</b></p> <p><b>Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between CA Dept. of Transportation and CA State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) executed 10/10/2023; stipulates measures to address project’s adverse effect.</b></p> <p><b>Compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) signed 5/1/2024.</b></p> <p><b>HRS will participate until completion of the project.</b></p> <p><b><u>CA Dept. of Transportation &amp; County of San Bernardino:</u> National Trails Highway/Route 66, 19 Bridges Replacement Project in San Bernardino County.</b></p>	<p><b>The Preservation Working Group will continue to be available to assist NPS with Section 106 consultations, while work is done to bring in a new Historic Resources Specialist.</b></p>

	<p><b>Preliminary Environmental Study Form approved 7/22/2024.</b>  <b>Initial Section 106 meeting with consulting parties is pending.</b></p> <p><b>CA Dept. of Transportation &amp; City of Fontana: Foothill Blvd./Malaga Bridge Improvement Project, Foothill Blvd. between Hemlock Ave. and Almeria Ave., Fontana, San Bernardino County.</b></p> <p><b>Section 106 documents (identification and evaluation of historic properties; project effect on historic properties) submitted for consultation with CA SHPO in 7/2024. SHPO had comments; documents require revision.</b>  <b>HRS will submit comments to CA Dept. of Transportation prior to resubmittal of documents to SHPO.</b></p> <p><b>Historic Resources Specialist (HRS) – New Duty Statement</b></p> <p><b>Working Group to discuss at meeting scheduled on 9/24/2024. Meeting may need to be rescheduled since I still have Jury Duty.</b></p> <p>Preservation  6/30/24 Update Report – The Working Group will review the current Duty Statement on file for the Historic Resources Specialist position and discuss appropriate revisions in anticipation of it becoming a paid position. Subsequently, the WG will prepare a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a press release.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – An idea was discussed during the Road Ahead Annual Meeting in Claremont, CA for the organization to make its Historic Resource Specialist a paid position. The Board of Directors approved this idea, and efforts are now under way to identify sources of funding to underwrite this position.</p>	
--	--	--

<p><b>Goal 3.2 – Share info about the meaning &amp; benefits of preservation &amp; the tools, techniques, &amp; incentives for preservation outcomes.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – This Goal has now been completed.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – This Goal has now been completed.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The Preservation Working Group completed and submitted to the Road Ahead Chair its "Quick Reference guide for Financial Incentives" designed to assist individuals and groups involved in preservation projects with a resource to help them identify potential funding sources.</p>	<p><b>Post the Guide on the RAP Resources page in early 2024.</b></p>
---	--	---



<p><b>Goal 3.3 – Share information with the Board of Directors about Section 106 and the preservation of historic properties.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – No update to report.</p>	<p><b>Post the link on the RAP Resources page in early 2024.</b></p>
<p><b>Goal 3.4 – Utilize social media to share information on preservation resources and the Section 106 process, currently available on the Road Ahead Partnership website.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The Preservation Working Group submitted a draft Social Media Proposal to the Road Ahead Chair.</p>	<p><b>Working Group will prepare a draft proposal for discussion with RAP Executive Committee in early 2024.</b></p>
<p><b>Goal 3.5 – Develop an online “Historic Preservation Toolkit for Route 66 Communities and Property Owners”</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – This goal has been completed.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – This goal has been completed.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The goal of creating a Route 66 Historic Preservation Toolkit has been completed by the Preservation Working Group.</p>	<p><b>The Road Ahead will be available to assist users with the Toolkit as needed.</b></p>

**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	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 4.1 – Restructure the Economic Development Working Group’s focus to three distinct goals: new strategic focus – Audience, Communication Channels &amp; Resources.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – Contact has been made with all previous members of the working group and all wish to stay on the committee; new committee members have been approached and so far, one has joined the existing group. Still working to add at least two more NEW members.</p> <p>Working DRAFT of Tool Kit was developed in late 2023; and shared with current group. Group was informed that the DRAFT will be used to move forward with a Tool Kit. The group was also made aware that efforts going forward will center around electronic dissemination and that the Tool Kit,</p>	<p><b>Once monthly meetings begin, the group will focus on executing the DRAFT and work to get content on the website.</b></p>

	once completed, will be housed on the Centennial website monitored by the Road Ahead Partnership.	
<b>Goal 4.2 – Begin bi-monthly meetings starting in February</b>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – No update to report.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – No Update</p> <p>12/31/23 Update Report – Bi-monthly meetings will begin in February or March of 2024, depending on availability of members.</p>	<b>Schedule February meeting by or before end of January.</b>

**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 to enhance and encourage greater connection to, and understanding of, the Mother Road.

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>2024 STATUS</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS FOR 2024</b>
<b>Goal 5.1 – Establish a national Research/Education Working Group to support professional and amateur educators and researchers in their efforts to inspire and renew public understanding of Route 66.</b>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report –</b></p> <p>6/30/24 – Update Report – The group we have established has been expanded with new and engaged members and will meet next in July 2024.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The Research and Education Working Group added for new members: Kari Kussman and Katrina Parks, who have added lesson plans to the group's webpage. Melva Felchin of the Autry Museum [retired] and Michael Hirsch, President of the Landscaper Architecture Society also joined the Research and Education Working Group.</p>	
<b>Goal 5.2 – Assist educational institutions at all levels in presenting Route 66 research to students, travelers, tourists, and the general public.</b>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – David Dunaway, Working Group Chair, reported that the Research &amp; Education Working Group membership had been updated with members well-suited to the group's purpose. It was also reported that the NEH grant application submitted in support of a second round of the Route 66 curriculum development project was not funded.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – We have now added the Native on Route 66 curriculum to the TRA Education website, as prepared by Kari Kussmann and Katrina Parks, with some oral history interviews from David Dunaway's extensive oral history collection (still seeking an institutional home.) We are waiting to see if the NEH grant we applied for in 2025 to carry forward the teacher training project on 66 at Northern Arizona University will be funded. Developing a curriculum is our current priority, to be discussed further at our next meeting.</p>	

	<p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The 2025 Teacher’s workshop proposal has now been submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities, for July 2025, after much work by R &amp; E Working Group members Gretchen Macalister and some by David Dunaway. If this is successful, it will be repeated for 2026. The focus is on the role of women of color along Route 66. Distribution continues of the Research Route 66 bibliography by members Steve Mandrogoc and David Dunaway.</p> <p>Two new projects are pending: a proposed Meeting of Experts to set forth a national research agenda for Route 66, in association with the next meeting of TRA and Researching Route 66. In addition, Dr. Dunaway is attempting to raise funds from the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program and the National Historic Trust to remaster and re-release the longest documentary on the Old Road, his Across the Tracks: A Route 66 Story for July 4 and November 2026. A distributor has been lined up, but funds are needed. The goal is to reach a million public radio listeners.</p>	
<p><b>Goal 5.3 – Establish a Route 66 National Center</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – Chairman Thomas reported that efforts to raise funds for the proposed Route 66 National Research Center have begun in earnest, following onsite meetings with officials from UNM, the Lobo Development Group, and the UNM Foundation.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – Chairman Thomas and Jodi Sweeney, the RAP fundraising consultant, have met with members of Lobo Development Corporation to arrange details for an initial meeting with representatives from the University of New Mexico Foundation. The desired outcome is to enter a partnership to work together on fundraising for the proposed National Route 66 Research Center. Initial meetings will be via Zoom, followed by in-person meetings at UNM.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – An encouraging update on the proposed Route 66 National Research Center was presented at the Road Ahead's Annual Meeting by Audra Bellmore, UNM, and Dave Campbell, Lobo Development Group-UNM. Interest in the Center continues to grow at UNM. In addition, the Route 66 Centennial Commission voted to make the Route 66 National Research Center an Official Route 66 Centennial Project.</p>	<p><b>Advance the proposed Route 66 National Center through collaboration with UNM Foundation and others.</b></p>

**National Historic Trail Designation Task Force Report**

GOAL	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 1 – Establish a National Historic Trail Designation Task Force to secure Federal designation of Route 66 as a National Historic Trail.</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – Progress appears to be made, as movement continues in the direction of positioning the Trail Bill as part of a major, end-of-year Land Package piece of legislation.</b></p> <p>6/30/24 Update Report – The goal remains to work designation of Route 66 as a National Historic Trail into an end of year bill introduced in Congress.</p> <p>3/31/24 - Update Report – It is now anticipated that language to designate Route 66 will be included in year-end legislation.</p>	<p><b>Work with staff to introduce a bill in the Senate that complements the House bill.</b></p>

**Financial Sustainment Task Force Report**

GOAL	2024 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2024
<p><b>Goal 1 – Implement a Strategic Financial Sustainment Plan for the Road Ahead</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – During 3rd QTR, the Route 66 Centennial Commission voted to make each of the following Official Route 66 Centennial Projects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Google Arts and Culture Route 66 Hub Project</b></li> <li>• <b>Route 66 Pathways Project</b></li> <li>• <b>I Am Route 66 Project</b></li> </ul> <p>6/30/24 Update Report - During 2nd QTR, the Route 66 Centennial Commission voted to make each of the following Official Route 66 Centennial Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route 66 Centennial Caravan Project</li> <li>• Route 66 Light Capsules Project</li> <li>• Route 66 Centennial Certification Program</li> <li>• Route 66 Centennial Preservation and Economic Development Program</li> <li>• Oklahoma Route 66 "Bridgeport" Bridge Restoration Project</li> </ul> <p>Each of the above, except for the Bridgeport Project, were proposed by the Road Ahead.</p> <p>The Commission chose not to approve the proposed Route 66 Musical Road Project. Note: The Road Ahead plans to modify this project and resubmit it for consideration during 3rd QTR in the hope it can be designated an Official Route 66 Centennial project.</p>	<p><b>Ensure the specific activities, events, projects, and programs submitted by the Road Ahead to the U.S. Route 66 Centennial Commission are designated official Commission recommendations to Congress.</b></p>

	<p>3/31/24 - Update Report – The Route 66 Centennial Commission voted to make each of the following Official Route 66 Centennial Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route 66 National Research Center</li> <li>• AAA Route 66 RoadFest</li> <li>• Route 66 Centennial National Kick-off Event</li> <li>• Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program</li> <li>• Route 66 Orchestral Suite</li> <li>• Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program</li> <li>• Designation of Route 66 as an Historic Civil Engineering Landmark</li> </ul> <p>12/31/23 Update Report – The Road Ahead has a set of 7 different proposals it has submitted to the Route 66 Centennial Commission for consideration/action to make them official Centennial activities. These include: Route 66 Research Center, AAA Route 66 RoadFest, Route 66 Centennial National Kick-off Event, Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program, Route 66 Orchestral Suite, Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program, and the designation of Route 66 as an Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Each of these proposals is on the Agenda for the Commission’s 1/24/24 meeting for discussion/action.</p> <p>9/30/23 Update Report – Processes are now nearly completed for the U.S. Route 66 Centennial Commission to begin receiving direct input from State-based Route 66 Centennial Commissions and other Route 66 stakeholder groups regarding proposed activities, events, projects, and programs the Commission will officially recommend to Congress. Once this process is finalized, the Road Ahead will use it to begin submitting several specific activities, projects, events, and programs – for which we have been making plans for over two years. This process being used by the U.S. Route 66 Centennial Commission is the key for how the Road Ahead will move forward with its fundraising efforts.</p>	
<p><b>Goal 2 – Launch the Route 66 Extraordinary Women Initiative</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – The final round of the 2024</b> Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program was completed during the 3rd QTR, with the following grant awards made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Andrea Parson-Briley, Carterville, MO - Trolley Renovations and Route 66 Mural at Supertam on 66 Project - Provide extra seating small Route 66 Ice Cream Palor and Superman Museum and add an outdoor mural to enhance the shop's exterior.</b></li> <li>• <b>Tansu Philip, San Bernardino, CA - Viva La Boba Espresso Machine and/or Outdoor Misters Project - Enhance the community's access to high quality coffee by purchasing a new espresso machine and address the challenge of high heat by installing outdoor misters.</b></li> <li>• <b>Carol Singer, Marshfield, MO - Singer Auto Parts Employee Safety Project - Purchase rubber pads to cushion concrete floor, designed to decrease employee fatigue and lower chances of injury to front-line staff.</b></li> <li>• <b>Shawna Gentry, Victorville, CA - Emma Jean's Holland Burger Project - Repair/restore exterior façade and restore and enhance the planters that frame the buildings entrance.</b></li> <li>• <b>Karla Claus, Newberry Springs, CA - Enjoy Route 66 Tours Enhancement Project - Increase the profile of this tour business through new signage and folding chairs/pop-up tent for use by customers.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Continue fundraising for the EW Initiative in the hope of administering another round during 2025.</b></p>

- **Rotchana & Tami Sussman, Arcadia, CA - Website Redesign Project - Update the online presence of White Springs Cafe, a small Route 66 family restaurant by redesigning its website.**
- **Angela Kirkman, Santa Fe, NM - 1st Sunday Market at Tumbleroot Brewing LLC Project - Support and expand this outdoor market on Route 66 through investments in marketing and promotion materials and adding music and entertainment elements to the market.**
- **Nayomie Mendoza, Los Angeles, CA - Cuernavaca's Grill Renovation Project - Assist in the purchase of new exterior signage and a new grill for the kitchen of this second-generation restaurant.**
- **Meghan Matinez, Albuquerque, NM - Manuel's Food Market Sign Reconstruction Project - Reconstruct the front façade of this historic store and upgrade its façade signage**
- **Lucy Haro, Los Angeles, CA - Qusqo Bakery Community Visibility & Accessibility Project - Enhance outdoor signage, improve lighting, and increase ADA accessibility at this neighborhood bakery.**

6/30/24 – The next round of the Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program will be launched the early part of 3rd Quarter. Grant awards for this second and final round of the program this year, will be announced on September 16th.

3/31/24 - Update Report – The first of two rounds of the Route 66 Extraordinary Women Micro-Grant Program was conducted during 1st Quarter 2024. The following recipients were awarded grants:

- Vida Pazarin, Victorville, CA - HD Family Events - Friday Night Route 66 Market - Purchase equipment and supplies to host a series of night markets every Friday from 5pm-9pm, starting on March 1, 2024 and ending March 7, 2025. The market will be set up on a vacant lot that is on Route 66 in Victorville
- Sarah Ann Lesslie, Flagstaff, AZ - Cocolita Chocolate Cafe - Solve the problems caused by our used 2-door fridge which, because of its unreliability, often causes us to lose a lot of our chocolate product. two single-door fridges for our chocolate shop, Cocolita Chocolate Café, in Flagstaff, AZ
- Amy Stephens, Edmond, OK - Edmond History Museum - The Edmond History Museum has an identity problem: people aren't sure what's inside our large, historic armory made of stone. The museum is marked with a logo sign above the front door, which faces a street of traffic. The other three sides, which face restaurants and a park, have no signage. The recently remodeled park now has significant foot traffic, and this funding will help the museum put logo signs on the sides of the building where the most people are walking around. This should end the "I always wondered what was in that big building" musings so that they will then come inside for a visit!
- Cindy Miller, Amarillo, TX - Alley Katz Unique Emporium - Replace the current, wooden ramp used at our business, Alley Katz, which is heavy, not permanently installed, and a tripping hazard. It must be moved into place each time it is needed. Replace this ramp with a new one, with an appropriate slope in a semi-circle -thus removing the trip hazard while insuring access.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jenalyn Lorilla, Seligman, AZ - Nomadic Coffee Project - Build a new custom mobile Coffee Wagon designed to propel my coffee roasting business forward by marketing my product through working events along Route 66 and its communities.</li> <li>• Allieasia Arnold, Seligman, AZ - Stagecoach Motel - Upgrade the property at our Stagecoach Motel by replacing the gravel in our driveway and parking lot, as well as purchasing new outdoor furniture. The new gravel will improve safety, accessibility, and overall functionality for all visitors. The new outdoor furniture will provide comfortable and functional seating for individuals to enjoy recreational activities, socialize, and connect with nature.</li> <li>• Heather Arnold, Albuquerque, NM - Routes Rentals &amp; Tours - Enhance guest experiences and accessibility at Routes Rentals &amp; Tours, Inc by installing new rental/rate menu boards in both English and Spanish, along with a new digital menu board that will cycle through all our tour offerings.</li> <li>• Flora May Cordova, Tucumcari, NM - route 66 Welcome Center &amp; Gift Shop - Restore the neon sign atop the column outside our Route 66 Welcome Center and Gift Shop here in Tucumcari.</li> <li>• Becki Colon, Holbrook, AZ - Colonel Mustard Hot Dogs - Complete needed outdoor repairs to our hotdog stand, including repairing our illuminate "Colonel Mustard" sign, flazing and sealing windows, repairing the building's rain scuppers.</li> <li>• Noelle Sosaya, Albuquerque, NM - Rat House Vintage Shop - Enhance my shop by building a new counter for my register, constructing new apparel racks/shelving, and painting a new exterior sign.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Goal 2 – Launch the Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program</b></p>	<p><b>9/30/24 Update Report – The 2024 round of the Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program was completed during the 3rd QTR, with the following grant awards made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Choctaw Freedman Citizenship Footprints, Inc., in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, will use its research/information grant to promote the organization's new "Black Experiences on Route 66" project by updating its website and supporting marketing of the organization and its projects to local churches and other organizations.</b></li> <li>• <b>In Bloomington, Illinois, the <i>Black Business Alliance</i> will purchase new and update existing computer operating systems to assist their local Black-owned businesses.</b></li> <li>• <b>Phase II of the <i>Threatt Family Farm &amp; Filling Station</i> Restoration Project, in Luther, Oklahoma, will apply its grant money to the development of a Visitors Welcome &amp; Interpretive Center at the site. The Threatt Family Farm &amp; Filling Station is believed to be the only Black owned/operated gas station on Route 66 during the Jim Crow period.</b></li> <li>• <b>Jack Dunham owns the <i>J &amp; F Auto Detailing</i> shop along Route 66 in Winslow, Arizona. He plans to replace doors, upgrade lighting, and make roof repairs to what has been an auto garage for more than 50 years.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Conduct the 2025 round of the Route 66 Black Experiences Grant Program</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Also in Winslow, Arizona, the grant awarded to Mary Hayes will provide new signage, replace out-of-date equipment, and purchase products used at her small <i>Dare 2B Different</i> beauty salon.</li> <li>• Dezzarae Henderson, Wine Now, LLC, will apply her grant to replacing the air conditioning unit at the <i>Wine Now</i> wine tasting room, store, and lounge in Rancho Cucamonga, California.</li> <li>• California Girls Legacy LLC will assist in the revitalization of downtown San Bernardino, California, by enhancing marketing efforts, expanding inventory, and organizing/hosting community events at <i>Three Little Blue Birds</i>, a recently opened retail boutique along Route 66, which held its Grand Opening the first week of September.</li> <li>• <i>Destined Joy Kreations</i>' mission is to inspire and support youth in Chicago, Illinois, by helping them learn basic culinary skills. This grant award will be used to purchase supplies and food safety materials.</li> <li>• Ebony Wilson's <i>Jus' Jump Around, LLC</i> is a neighborhood initiative to fund the use of inflatables as a way of helping parents on the west-end of Springfield, Illinois. Grant funds will be used to purchase storage for the inflatable units and trailers to transport them. Every rental unit will include fun fact material about where the company originated and local Route 66 attractions customers can visit with their families.</li> </ul>	
--	---	--

**Conclusion**

The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership will continue to focus on national, “whole road” issues throughout 2024. Primary attention will be on securing National Historic Trail status, planning for the newly enacted national Route 66 Centennial Commission, and each of the other goals identified above.

We have successfully established our new organization and planned our work. Now comes the challenging task of implementing *our plan*. This is not easy, and 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 - Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership