



THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

2017 3rd Quarter Update Report & Next Steps

**Prepared by Mr. Bill Thomas
Chairman, Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership
October 12, 2017**

Overview

During the 3rd quarter of 2017, the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership continued to work to achieve the outcomes and goals it has set for itself. Good progress was made in several areas, but much remains to be done.

The Board of Directors held its third meeting of the year in September, during which it decided to schedule the organization's annual, face-to-face Board meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma during the 1st quarter of 2018. In conjunction with the Board meeting, an "Annual Stakeholders Meeting" will also be held in Tulsa. This will be an opportunity for any and all Rt. 66 stakeholders to attend an informational reception where they can meet Board members and be updated on the work being done by the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership.

3rd quarter highlights include: Additional co-sponsors came forward to support HR801, the federal legislation designed to designate Rt. 66 a National Historic Trail and HR66, which will establish a federal-level 100th Anniversary Commission to celebrate the centennial of Rt. 66 in 2026. The Financial Sustainment Task Force initiated communications with Charity Charge, a public benefit corporation dedicated to helping not-for-profit organizations enhance their ability to financially sustain themselves, by offering a 1% rebate from a credit card.

The Preservation Working Group, having completed the majority of its original goals, identified new ones. The Education & Research Working Group devised a new communications process for itself, designed to enhance the group's ability to collaborate on achieving its goals. The Rt. 66 State Associations Working Group continued to consider how best to coordinate the scheduling and location of national Rt. 66 festivals. The Economic Development Working Group initiated a new goal focused on creating an economic development-focused conference for local officials and businesses to attend. The Promotion Working Group met with faculty and students from Breda Technical University and from the Arts Technology program at Illinois State University to develop a Rt. 66 navigational app and to move forward with several projects designed to promote Rt. 66 and increase brand awareness of it among millennials.

This 2017 3rd Quarter Update Report presents details regarding the work mentioned above, along with updates from our organization's Financial Sustainment Task Force, our Advisory Groups, and our National Historic Trail Task Force.

We believe it is important to let everyone know what the Road Ahead is doing. Towards that end, this 2017 3rd Quarter Update Report 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 better sense of the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership 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 3rd 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 3rd QTR 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
Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership

**Report on Work Undertaken on the Goals of the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership
During July, August, and September 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 3rd 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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership Board of Directors held its 2017 3rd Quarter meeting on September 19, via teleconference. All Board members, except two, participated in the meeting, along with the Chairs of the organization’s five Working Groups, with the exception of Bill Kelly (Promotions WG). The Board voted to hold its 2018 annual, face-to-face meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma during the 1st quarter of the new year. In conjunction with the Board meeting, an Annual Stakeholder’s meeting will also be scheduled, designed to provide Rt. 66 stakeholders the opportunity to meet with Road Ahead Board members and receive an update on the organization’s work.</p>	<p>Schedule an Executive Committee meeting during 4th quarter 2017.</p> <p>Secure meeting and hotel space in Tulsa for the 2018 Annual Board meeting and Annual Stakeholders meeting.</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	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
<p>Goal 1.2 – Assist with recruiting a state representative from each Rt. 66 state to co-sponsor HR 801 and HR 66, as well as co-sponsors from any other states.</p>	<p>10/10/17 Update Report: Thanks to the efforts of Eric Miller, Larry Clonts, Dora Meroney and members of the Old Rt. 66 Association of Texas, Congressman Mac Thornberry [TX-R], in late September, signed on as a co-sponsor of HR 801, the federal legislation designed to designate Rt. 66 as a National Historic Trail. HR 801 now has co-sponsors from each of the eight states through which Route 66 runs. HR 66 currently has co-sponsors from each state through which Rt. 66 runs, except Texas.</p>	<p>Ensure co-sponsors HR 66 and HR 801 from each Rt. 66 state.</p> <p>Establish centennial commissions in each of the Rt. 66 states.</p>

<p>Goal 1.3 – Attempt to help coordinate conferences and International festivals across the eight Rt. 66 states.</p>	<p>The State Route 66 Associations Advocacy Working Group met via conference call on July 25. Groups and individuals who had helped put on festivals in the past were invited to participate in this meeting, with the hope of gaining insight into past successes and problems they encountered. During this meeting an Event Purpose was identified for potential future international festivals, and it was decided that a separate Road Ahead Committee should be created for the task of considering a process for determining where US international festivals would be held and to offer help to festival communities with planning, direction, and possibly – as some point – financing. A follow-up teleconference was held September 11, at which a reversal in thinking occurred. Only a small number of the Rt. 66 states were able to participate in this discussion, so it was decided the Road Ahead was not ready to form a committee to schedule or help with US international festivals. Further discussion, including input from the Road Ahead Board of Directors, resulted in the Associations Working Group deciding to revisit the discussion when all or the majority of the Rt. 66 states could participate in a meeting.</p>	<p>Initiate a collaborative discussion regarding:</p> <p>A. Should the Road Ahead become actively involved in trying to create a process for locating/scheduling international Rt. 66 festivals in the US?</p> <p>B. If so, what is the best process for the Road Ahead to put in place for helping coordinate International Rt. 66 Festivals?</p>
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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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Promotion Working, like the State Associations Working Group, also worked to help keep people informed regarding the progress of HR801 [National Historic Trail legislation] and HR66 [100th Anniversary Commission legislation], specifically to identify additional legislative co-sponsors. Outreach was also made to encourage the establishment of 100th Anniversary Commissions. In Illinois, Bill Kelly reached out to officials in Will and Madison Counties, as well as the Springfield and Bloomington/Normal CVBs, to encourage them to establish 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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Promotion Working Group continued to work with Jim Hinckley to make posts and place announcements regarding Rt. 66 related activities from across the country on the Road Ahead’s FaceBook page.</p>	<p>Continue to post news & announcements on the Road Ahead’s FaceBook page.</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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Promotion Working Group continued to move three projects forward, each of which is designed to attract more visitors to Rt. 66:</p> <p><u>Rt. 66 Navigation App Project</u> – In August, the Road Ahead officially began working in partnership with the Arts-Technology Program at Illinois State University [ATP-ISU]. Together, the goal is to design/develop a GIS-based Rt. 66 navigational app that will help address one of the most sited problems of Rt. 66 travelers, i.e. difficulty locating and knowing they are indeed traveling on Rt. 66. Towards this end, the Promotion Working Group met with faculty and graduate students to identify the basic goals and desired outcomes of the project. A working prototype will be developed by or before 12/31/17, with the goal of presenting it to officials at State Farm Insurance as a corporate sponsorship opportunity. To assist with its work, the ATP group made a formal request to the National Park Service for access to the Rt. 66 road alignment GIS data it has put together. The request was granted.</p> <p><u>The Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality Gaming Project</u> – This project is designed to create a pilot VR Experience, designed to introduce young people to Rt. 66 and increase brand awareness among this group. Filming of the VR project was completed in August. Dan Bruce, a member of the Illinois Rt. 66 Scenic Byway Board, who has an extensive background in advertising/video, generously donated a great deal of his time to direct and coordinate the filming. The VR project is also an opportunity to create a platform on which AR gaming and other augmented reality elements can be added, further expanding its usefulness & appeal, as well as offering corporate sponsorship opportunities. During 3rd quarter, the Promotion Working Group conducted Skype meetings with faculty and graduate students at Breda Technical University in the Netherlands to discuss the AR game.</p> <p><u>Rt. 66 Business Case Project</u> - In addition to the VR and AR projects noted above, Breda University Faculty offered the Road Ahead the opportunity to work with other Breda graduate students on a Rt. 66 Business Case Project. The purpose of the project is to conduct market research, analyze the research, then use the results to develop a “pitch” to corporations regarding why it make business sense for them to potentially sponsor the VR or the AR projects. An initial Skype meeting was held with the Breda students and their faculty advisor to clarify project goals and desired outcomes.</p> <p>The Promotion Working Group also decided it might be helpful to introduce the teams working at Breda University and Illinois State University to each other in order to leverage any potential synergies. These groups are now in direct communication, via Skype, with each other.</p>	<p>Complete a working prototype of the Rt. 66 Navigation App by or before 12/31/17.</p> <p>Finish the VR project prototype project in a way that positions it to be used as a platform for an eventual AR game.</p> <p>Assist the Business Case Project team with requests for research or other information.</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>10/10/17 Update Report: One of the key aspects of the Road Ahead working with State Historic Preservation Offices and Departments of Transportation, relates to our organization’s involvement in what are referred to as Section 106 Reviews. In order to better position our organization to become involved with Section 106 Reviews, the Preservation Working Group will obtain input from the National Park Service/Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program on its participation regarding Section 106 consultations and reviews.</p>	<p>Prepare a job description/duty statement for the proposed Road Ahead point of contact regarding Section 106 consultations and 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>10/10/17 Update Report:: No update to present on Goal 3.2.</p>	<p>Prepare a Fact Sheet on the Section 106 process and prepare a “Quick Reference Guide” on the economic incentives of historic preservation.</p>
<p>Goal 3.3 – Share information with the Board of Directors about Section 106 and the preservation of historic properties.</p>	<p>10/10/17 Update Report: Goal 3.3 is a newly identified goal, so there is no update to present at this time.</p>	<p>Prepare topics for presentations/workshops at Board meetings.</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	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>10/10/17 Update Report: No update to report. This goal is currently on hold.</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>10/10/17 Update Report: No update to report. This goal is currently on hold.</p>	<p>Compile inventory of sites & resources.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for domains & smartphone, tablet applications.</p> <p>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>10/10/17 Update Report: Dr. Listokin is continuing his coordination with Illinois Office of Tourism Director, Cory Jobe. Efforts, however, have not moved forward substantially at this time. Jeff Fulgenzi and Dr. Listokin will attempt to get momentum with Illinois and parlay across other Route states.</p>	<p>Inventory existing survey efforts and sponsoring agencies.</p> <p>Create a series of questions to be integrated into various surveys.</p>
<p>Goal 4.4 – Create an economic development-focused conference for local officials and businesses to attend, at which best practices and successful case studies are shared with local decision makers.</p>	<p>10/10/17 Update Report: Online content (videos) are being generated to provide value proposition to attract attendance at a future economic development summit/conference. Jim Hinckley is working to identify partners in each state who could reach out to attendees individually to boost attendance. Jeff Fulgenzi and Jess Weitzel also looking to identify funding sources for an event.</p>	<p>Identify an organizer for the conference and calendar a date in 2018 for a conference.</p> <p>Create online content.</p> <p>Find funding and identify promotional partners.</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>10/10/17 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, however. In addition, members have been asked to seek out educators who might assist individually and to locate educational materials.</p> <p>The Working Group has had issues organizing meetings, due to timing difficulties with members spread out across four time zones. In response, the Working Group has set up a closed Facebook group and will be holding a Skype meeting in November after Dr. Dunaway returns from a lecture and research trip to Europe.</p>	<p>Schedule November Skype meeting.</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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Working Group has reached out to state and international associations to identify educators teaching on Rt. 66, and have collected numerous syllabi to add to a growing clearinghouse of material for educators interested in teaching about 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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Working Group will respond to requests for information, but it does 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>10/10/17 Update Report: The Sustainment Task Force, in its continuing effort to target national corporations as potential “Founding Members” of the Road Ahead, held yet another teleconference meeting with the Director of Advertising at State Farm Insurance Corporation in September. During the meeting a specific proposal was presented to State Farm, offering it the opportunity to sponsor one or more episodes – or even a full season – of the PBS series Travels With Darley. If State Farm agrees to sponsor the show, the Road Ahead will secure a 2% donation from the sponsorship package for bringing State Farm and Travels with Darley together. A proposal was also submitted to State Farm asking it for ongoing annual financial support of The Road Ahead organization over the next three years. State Farm has indicated it now has the information it needs to make decisions regarding both sponsorship of the Travels With Darley program and general financial support of The Road Ahead. State Farm is supposed to respond per each proposal the beginning of the 4th quarter of 2017.</p> <p>As noted above, the Task Force also entered into a partnership with the Arts Technology Program at Illinois State University to develop a GIS-based navigational app, designed to address the problem of inadequate road signage along Rt. 66. The Arts Technology Program is on schedule to develop a prototype product that not only meets basic navigational needs of Rt. 66 travelers, but also serves as a platform for an augmented reality-based game, which could provide branding/marketing opportunities for potential corporate sponsors.</p> <p>In addition to the VR and AR projects noted above, the Road Ahead is also working with Breda University Faculty and graduate students on a Rt. 66 Business Case Project, designed to conduct market research, analyze the research, then use the results to develop a “pitch” to corporations regarding why it make business sense for them to potentially sponsor the VR or the AR projects. An initial Skype meeting was held with the Breda students and their faculty advisor to clarify project goals and desired outcomes.</p> <p>In August the Financial Sustainment Task Force initiated communications with Charity Charge, a public benefit corporation dedicated to helping not-for-profit organizations enhance their ability to financially sustain themselves, by offering a 1% rebate from a customized credit card. Efforts are now underway to secure final approval from Charity Charge to create a Road Ahead Rt. 66 credit card. Doing so is dependent upon our organization’s ability to demonstrate it has put together a substantial set of marketing channels through which folks can be introduced to the card and encouraged to sign up for one.</p>	<p>Secure State Farm sponsorship of one or more episodes of “Travels with Darley”.</p> <p>Secure ongoing, annual financial support from State Farm for the next three years.</p> <p>Complete a prototype of the GIS-based navigational app by or before 12/31/17, then pitch it to State Farm as a branding & marketing opportunity.</p> <p>Finalize the VR experience prototype.</p> <p>Finalize a business case for development of a Rt. 66 based AR game, then pitch the concept to State Farm as a branding & marketing opportunity.</p> <p>Secure approval from Charity Charge to establish a Road Ahead Rt. 66 credit card.</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>10/10/17 Update Report: During 3rd quarter, the NHT Task Force held a series of teleconference meetings, which included: Task Force Chairman, John Conoboy; state-based Local Champions; Amy Webb, Senior Field Director with the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Pam Bowman, Director of Government Relations and Policy with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Task Force is primarily focused on identifying and recruiting additional co-sponsors for both HR801 and HR66. At the end of the 3rd quarter, HR801 had 19 co-sponsors [11 Democrats and 8 Republicans]. HR66 had 18 co-sponsors [8 Democrats and 10 Republicans].</p> <p>During the first part of 4th quarter, Pam Bowman will conduct a series of meetings in D.C., targeting Republican Congressmen/women, who represent Districts through which Rt. 66 runs, but who have not yet signed on as co-sponsors for either HR801 or HR66. Meetings with Reps. Vicky Hartzler (MO), Jim Bridenstine (OK), Markwayne Mullin (OK), Steve Russell (OK), and Steve Pearce (NM) have already been scheduled. She will then focus on Congressmen/women who have only co-sponsored one of the two bills. Members of the Task Force will follow-up, as needed, with contacts to these same congressional offices based upon meeting reports from Pam.</p>	<p>Continue to work with Congressman LaHood's and Congressman Davis's staff to identify and recruit additional co-sponsors for both HR801 and HR66.</p> <p>Initiate follow-up contacts with congressional staff, following meeting reports from Pam Bowman.</p>

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>10/10/17 Update Report: Dries Bessell of The Netherlands, Chairman of the International Advisory Group, wrote a draft survey questionnaire that he sent to all European travellers he could currently identify. The questionnaire was also sent to a number of people like Jim Hinckley, Kevin & Nancy Mueller, Renee Charles, Ian Arthur Charles Bowen, Ramona Lehman, Dennis Purschwitz, Larry Clonts, and Melba Rigg to be printed locally and handed to travellers. Initial survey results collected by Dries were shared with the Rt. 66 Road Ahead Board of Directors during its 3rd QTR meeting.</p> <p>Dries reported that there will be Rt. 66 tour groups from Germany, Norway, and The Netherlands traveling Rt. 66 in 2018 at essentially the same time. He requested assistance from The Road Ahead in making sure stakeholders across the Road were aware of this “International Tour of Rt. 66”, and encouraged to welcome them.</p> <p>Dries has been informed that the Road Ahead Annual Board meeting will be held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with the hope his schedule will allow him to attend.</p>	<p>Using the draft questionnaire as a foundation, create an online version of the survey, designed to allow for more extensive access by Rt. 66 international travelers.</p> <p>Work with the Road Ahead to communicate about, and help with coordination of, the 2018 International Rt. 66 Tour.</p>

Report on Establishment of Advisory Groups - Tribal Advisory Group

GOAL	2017 STATUS	NEXT STEPS FOR 2017
Goal 1 – Establish an American Indian Tribal Advisory Group to help ensure active collaboration with as many Route 66 stakeholders as possible.	10/10/17 Update Report: No 3rd Quarter Update Report was submitted.	Refine and finalize goals of the Tribal Advisory Group.

Conclusion

The Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership continues to focus on national, “whole-road” issues the organization was originally founded to address. Overall, progress has been made through the 3rd quarter of 2017 on meeting the organization’s desired outcomes and goals, but there are some areas that are moving forward at a slower pace than others.

As noted before: We have succeeded in setting up our new organization. We have planned out our work. Now comes the challenging task of working 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
Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership