

Tourism Commission Reactivated
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The City of Cameron plans to re-activate its Tourism Commission which has remained dormant for several years and asks area citizens who are interested in promoting tourism to apply.

The five-member Commission was established in 2000 to promote, develop, market and fund area tourism-related activities working closely with the Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Division of Tourism and other agencies. Its goal was to establish Cameron as a central clearinghouse for events and activities within 30 miles, using Cameron as the hub for food, lodging, fuel and shopping. For several years, the Commission operated the Tourist Information Center, a caboose located at McDonald's. Some 2,100 visitors per month stopped by the Center with 200 reporting that they stayed overnight in Cameron. State funding for the caboose ran out and voters turned down a lodging tax proposal to keep it going.

Now, the City would like to give the Commission a fresh start, appoint new members, and let them determine what direction Cameron's tourism efforts should take. City officials emphasize that there is no special agenda or tax proposal underlying the effort to revive the Tourism Commission. Cameron offers a number of historic, military, recreational, musical and entertainment attractions—even ghosts, according to the Cameron Historic Society, yet the Volunteer Capital lacks an organized marketing effort. Officials feel that the community deserves a positive, informative outreach program targeted to travelers, area residents, and local citizens promoting events, attractions and image. The City encourages representatives from hospitality, restaurants, C-stores, retail and other citizens to apply to serve on the Commission. Members do not need to be residents of Cameron; in fact, regional applicants are encouraged to apply.

New means of promoting Cameron are now available including an updated web site and the new U.S. 36 Alliance which will feature famous figures tied to U.S. Highway 36 including Mark Twain, Walt Disney, J.C. Penny and John J. Pershing. The remaining 52-mile segment of U.S. 36 will become four-lane this summer increasing traffic along the former Pikes Peak Ocean-to-Ocean Highway. The Ocean to Ocean Café was one of Cameron's landmark restaurants a few decades ago and the renewed Tourism Commission could capitalize on that history. The Alliance and the Missouri Department of Transportation have produced an audio CD depicting U.S. 36 history and attractions which will be available to the public this summer. Strong and established tourism programs in St. Joseph, Chillicothe, Marceline and Hannibal will provide additional resources.

Those interested in serving on the Cameron Tourism Commission are asked to contact Shellby Hendee, Development Director at Cameron City Hall, 816-632-2177 or by email to developer@cameronmo.com.