

Illinois considers putting spaceport near Quad Cities

The Quad Cities International Airport in Moline, Ill., is conducting a study to determine if it can support a commercial spaceport.

Spaceports are critical for space exploration and commercial spaceflight. They could be used for launching rockets, landing spacecraft, satellite deployment, research, and tourism.

Space tourism is expected to grow in the 21st century. NPR Illinois reports that airport is considering a “horizontal launch” site, and only 10 such spaceports have been licensed by the FAA.

“With a limited number of certificates being issued for spaceports, we want to seize the opportunity while it exists,” reads a Quad Cities airport blog. It may sound a little silly, but [we] believe it’s short-sighted to think we’ve reached the peak of aviation.”

The envisioned spaceport would be roughly three and a half hours west of Chicago and four hours north of St. Louis, but it could be a vital resource for both metros. Some lawmakers say it could be an economic boost for not only the Quad Cities region, but the whole Midwest.

Nexstar affiliate WHBF reports the study to determine spaceport prospects is being funded through a \$283,500 grant, 90% from the Illinois Department of Transportation.

– fox2now.com



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The Peak Shenandoah Wine Region received a \$5,000 grant. Rappahannock Cellars of Huntly, Va., is one of the region’s partners.

States dole out cash for local development

States hand out funding to support hundreds of local economic development projects as well as established destinations that could benefit from a boost of cash, which could range from a few hundred dollars to many thousands. Here are some examples.

More than \$757,000 in matching grant funds will be awarded to 131 small businesses, destination marketing organizations, downtown business associations, and chambers of commerce as part of the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program.

The program is designed to leverage local marketing dollars with matching

state funds to increase visitation and traveler spending in the off-season. This funding cycle, local partners will commit more than \$1.1 million in private-public sector funds to match the VTC funding, providing more than \$1.9 million in new marketing activity focused on small businesses and off-season visitation.

“Virginia Tourism’s Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Program provides the tourism industry with the tools they need to succeed and thrive in an incredibly competitive landscape,” said Rita McClenny, President and CEO of VTC.

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Entertainment hub to be built in Kentucky

A \$33.8 million entertainment complex and hotel will be built along I-65 between Nashville, Tenn., and Bowling Green, Ky.

The 45,000-square-foot facility in Franklin, Ky., will include a bowling alley, an arcade, mini golf, axe throwing, and indoor and outdoor social game areas complete with ping pong, billiards, rentable event space

and a restaurant.

The Dine and Play Social House will create 163 jobs, 13 full-time and 150 part-time, said Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear.

A TIF district was approved for the complex, which is expected to open by 2026.

– wbko.com

States share funds to aid development

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Partners may consist of Virginia cities, towns, counties, convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, other local or regional destination marketing organizations, private businesses, museums, attractions, cultural events, and other tourism-related businesses. Local entities getting grant money include a mini-golf course (\$664), a surf shop (\$3,500), a partnership of four wineries (\$5,000), and a Main Street program (\$10,000).

— *shoredailynews.com*

In Kansas

Several local attractions in northeast Kansas will be getting a boost through dollars provided by the state in Attraction Development Grants.

More than \$500,000 will be distributed among 14 communities across the Sunflower State to help improve tourism attractions in Kansas, according to a press release from the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDC). The grants are meant to enhance travel experiences for those coming to Kansas, leading to a positive economic impact for local communities.

Local entities receiving state dollars for tourism projects include a historic farm site (\$3,920), a brewery (\$10,800), a marina (\$27,996), and a children's museum (\$28,435).

— *ksnt.com*

Iowa city launches bilingual campaign

The city of Marshalltown, Iowa, has launched a new tourism initiative in celebration of the city's diversity.

This new tourism identity— "Meet In Marshalltown" or "Nos Vemos en Marshalltown"— is a bilingual campaign, with materials in English and Spanish.

The goal of the campaign is to be inclusive of more Marshalltown residents and making sure Spanish speakers feel represented.

The Marshalltown Area Chamber of Commerce and other residents who worked on the re-brand hope all people feel seen and included by the campaign.

"I want to accurately tell the story of Marshalltown and often times, we've been reactive or allowed other people to say who we are," said Dylan Does, the tourism director for the Marshalltown Area Chamber of Commerce. "Often, I'd say 90% is inaccurate and 10% is exaggerated.



MEET IN
MARSHALLTOWN



NOS VEMOS EN
MARSHALLTOWN

Really, who we are is something quite unique."

The tourism identity includes a new website, social media channels, marketing efforts, along with other endeavors moving forward.

America Zaragoza is a long-time Marshalltown resident. Her parents are small business owners in the city, and she said she feels honored she was asked to help advise on this campaign. Does said Zaragoza was a crucial partner for the project.

"It's been an honor to see our culture represented and spoken about," Zaragoza said. "We always know it's there, but it's not always acknowledged and to see that we're now being acknowledged, it's an amazing feeling."

Marshalltown's tourism logo resembles a piñata or papel picado, traditional cut paper folk art found throughout Mexico.

— *weareiowa.com, timesrepublican.com*

Rome, Ga., seeks more film productions

The Rome and Floyd County (Georgia) Tourism Board of Directors recently voted to establish "Georgia's Rome Film and Entertainment Alliance."

In 2010, Rome was one of the first 13 communities in the state to be recognized as "Camera Ready." As the direct liaison with the Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment office (a division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development) the area

has welcomed many film productions.

The alliance falls under the umbrella of the Rome Office of Tourism, the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for Rome and Floyd County and will be governed by the Tourism Board of Directors, with the addition of Missy Kendrick, president, Rome/Floyd County Development Authority.

— *coosavalleynews.com*