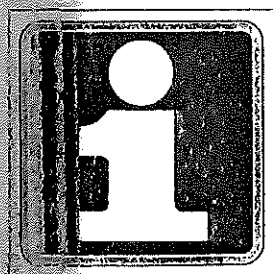


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**LONG RANGE PLAN**  
for  
**IOWA WELCOME CENTERS**  
Volume One of Two Volumes

**A LONG RANGE PLAN  
FOR  
IOWA WELCOME CENTERS**

*Volume One of Two*

Submitted by  
**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STATE OF IOWA  
200 EAST GRAND AVENUE  
DES MOINES, IOWA**

**515/281-3100**

**JANUARY 1988**

## **COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Nancy Landess	Iowa Department of Economic Development
Bill Creger	Iowa Department of Transportation
Arnie Sohn	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Steve Ohrn	Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
Kevin Kelly	Iowa Travel Council
John McKlveen	American Institute of Architects
Randy Lueth	American Society of Landscape Architects

## **CONSULTANT**

### **THE DeBORD-DUNBAR PARTNERSHIP**

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism is Iowa's third largest industry, employing over 52,000 residents. Tourism has direct expenditures of nearly \$2 billion and generates over \$85 million in state tax revenue. While this in itself is significant, the potential economic impact of this industry has only recently been recognized on a broad scale.

The Recreation, Tourism and Leisure (RTL) Committee formed in 1985 studied Welcome Center systems and their role in providing tourism information to the traveler. Their findings prompted the Legislature to enact House File 540, 1987 Iowa Acts (see Appendix B of this document), establishing state and privately sponsored pilot project welcome centers in the categories of interstate, primary highway, and communities with populations of 5,000 or under. To accomplish HF 540, \$2 million was allocated. At least \$60,000 of that amount was dedicated to the establishment of centers in communities with populations of 5,000 or less. The maximum amount available for match in that category was \$20,000.

The first phase included the identification of a series of Pilot Projects for which \$2 million of assistance on a matching basis was allocated. Solicitation of proposals began in July of 1987. Applications for funding were due on September 1, 1987. Of the 47 applications reviewed and rated individually as well as collectively by the committee, ten were selected for assistance. The ten Pilot Projects are identified by category of selection: Interstate Highway; Primary Highway; and Rural.

### CATEGORY: Interstate

### Location

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. The City of LeClaire   | LeClaire   |
| 2. The City of Sioux City | Sioux City |

### CATEGORY: Primary

- |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 3. Amana Society                     | Amana      |
| 4. The City of Burlington            | Burlington |
| 5. Clayton County Conservation Board | Elkader    |

### CATEGORY: Rural

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 6. Davis County Tourism Corporation                      | Bloomfield |
| 7. Dows Community Betterment/<br>Dows Historical Society | Dows       |
| 8. Danish Windmill Corporation                           | Elk Horn   |

- |     |  |            |
|-----|--|------------|
| 9.  | Emmetsburg Chamber of Commerce<br>& Economic Development | Emmetsburg |
| 10. | Harrison County Conservation Board                       | Woodbine   |

The second phase of HF 540 calls for the preparation of a long range plan for Iowa Welcome Centers that would coordinate the existing centers with the pilot projects and make recommendations for the future. The long range plan is based on a review of the existing welcome center system, other welcome center systems, the tourism resource base including recreational, cultural, historic, and natural resources, input from users, the tourism industry, and legislators. The recommended system would provide for the following levels of centers:

**INTERSTATE WELCOME CENTERS** should be located along the interstate system at two existing reststops and four sites adjacent to major interchanges. Two of the four proposed Interstate Welcome Centers are pilot projects, at LeClair and Sioux City. It is proposed that the other two be located in the vicinity of Council Bluffs and Des Moines.

**RESOURCE BASED WELCOME CENTERS** should be located in areas with the highest range of tourism resources and support facilities. Two of the Pilot Projects, Burlington and Clayton County, supply this type of center.

**ATTRACTION BASED WELCOME CENTERS** occur in coordination with attractions having high visitation. Two Pilot Projects, the Amanas and the Danish Windmill, fit this designation.

**ATTRACTION/SUPPORT FACILITY BASED INFORMATION MODULES** are simply high quality information racks which can be placed at attractions or at support facilities such as convention centers, hotels, and restaurants. This system provides a passive, inexpensive means of supplying information.

The types of services recommended for the Welcome Centers include:

## **INFORMATION**

**Educational** Multi-media presentations and displays depicting past, present, and future of Iowa, its people, industry and natural resources including previews of each of the three regions.

Computer        A system that provides access to an inventory of attractions and support services.

Reservations    A system linked up to lodging, transportation, and event opportunities throughout the state.

Traditional       Brochures, maps, and other promotional information related to particular events, festivals, recreational facilities, cultural opportunities and other attractions throughout the state. Take away and basic information about bordering states.

## COMMERCIAL

Iowa Store        Iowa products for sale. This would provide an outlet for the introduction and demonstration of all Iowa products.

Gift Shop        Souvenirs and basic travel needs.

Book Shop        Provide for the sale of books, maps, videos, and other printed material.

Snack Shop        Small food service highlighting Iowa food products.

## PERSONAL

Provide restroom facilities, basic first aid, and lounge area.

## EXTERIOR

Provide parking, RV dump station, picnic area, and pet walking area.



**THE RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES FOR THE WELCOME CENTER  
SYSTEM ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

1. Complete the Pilot Projects with openings on the following schedule:

Emmetsburg	Winter 1988
Davis County	Winter 1988
Danish Windmill Corp	Spring 1988
Burlington	Spring 1988
Dows	Autumn 1988
LeClaire	Autumn 1988
Harrison County	Autumn 1988
Clayton County	Winter 1988
Amana	Autumn 1988
Sioux City	Autumn 1989

2. Coordinate signage with the Department of Transportation for existing centers and Pilot Projects.
3. Evaluate existing Welcome Centers and Pilot Projects.
4. Develop Welcome Center Certification Program.
5. Develop implementation process for expansion of existing centers and provision of recommended centers.

# PARTICIPATION

## **PARTICIPATION**

HF 540 mandates and logic dictates that participation in the long range planning process be representative of those individuals and groups responsible for the provision and management of Iowa's tourism resource base. An outline of the process from the beginning of the Pilot Project stage through submission of the Long Range Plan is included in this document as Appendix A.

### **PILOT PROJECTS**

Over 1,000 letters were sent to public and private groups and individuals alerting each to the availability of the Project Application Packet for the Pilot Projects.

In July 1987, 92 individuals attended a Pre-Application Conference. By September 1, 1987, 47 applications totaling over \$9 million and representing 44 different groups or individuals were received. Of these, ten Pilot Projects were recommended by the Review Committee and approved by the Iowa Department of Economic Development Board on September 10, 1987.

Pilot Project Applications were rated and selected based upon project cost and budget, economic impact of the project, project feasibility, and project image/quality. Ten projects were selected. Two Pilot Projects (LeClaire and Sioux City) were in the Interstate Highway Category; three (Amana, Burlington, and Clayton County) were in the Primary Highway Category; and five (Davis County, Dows, Danish Windmill, Emmetsburg, and Harrison County) were in the Rural Category. Descriptions of these are included in Appendix C.

### **LONG RANGE PLAN**

Prior to the selection of the Pilot Projects, basic inventory and literature search processes began as a basis for the Long Range Plan. More than 700 individuals participated in a series of surveys and workshops oriented toward the definition, inventory, and analysis of what welcome centers are and should be. Participants included agency representatives,

welcome center staff, tourism industry representatives, county tourism representatives, legislators, and welcome center users.

The committee responsible for coordinating the process included representatives from the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. The committee also included representatives from the Iowa Travel Council, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Society of Landscape Architects.

**RECOMMENDED  
IOWA WELCOME CENTER  
SYSTEM**

## **RECOMMENDED IOWA WELCOME CENTER SYSTEM**

The Survey and Analysis in Volume Two of this document investigated several topics pertaining to welcome centers located both in Iowa and outside the state. These topics included welcome center programs and facilities, the existing Iowa welcome center system, and an analysis of Iowa tourism and support resources.

An inventory was also conducted of tourism, cultural, recreational, lodging, and related resources in Iowa. (Refer to pages 4-1 through 4-120 of Volume Two of this document.)

Public surveys were undertaken for input. These included surveys of the traveling public, welcome center managers, tourism industry representatives, and legislators. (Refer to pages 5-1 through 5-110 of Volume Two.)

The above considerations formed the basis of the following recommendations pertaining to the types of welcome centers to be established. These are:

**INTERSTATE WELCOME CENTERS** are located along the interstate highway system. Two are existing reststop centers. Four are new centers, located at sites adjacent to major interchanges, including two selected Pilot Projects--LeClaire and Sioux City--and two additional locations, Council Bluffs and Des Moines. Information, commercial, and personal services would be provided. The primary role of the Interstate Welcome Centers is to entice travelers to leave the interstate, to extend their stay in Iowa, or to return to the state at a later date. (Refer to figures 3-57 through 3-59, and pages 3-29 and 3-34, all in Volume Two.)

**RESOURCE BASED WELCOME CENTERS** should be in areas with the highest range of tourism resources and support facilities. Information, commercial and personal services would be provided at a somewhat reduced level. Two of the Pilot Projects, Burlington and Clayton County, supply this type of center. Additional centers of this type should only be added after monitoring and evaluating the Pilot Projects. The purpose of providing information and services to the traveling public in an area that currently has a high concentration of resources is aimed at extending the travelers stay there. (Refer to pages 3-41 through 3-44 of Volume Two.)

**ATTRACTION BASED WELCOME CENTERS** occur in coordination with attractions having high visitation. Information services would be provided

with commercial and personal services being provided by the attraction. Two of the Pilot Projects, The Amanas and the Danish Windmill, fit this designation. These centers are located to take advantage of a high concentration of travelers at specific locations. (Refer to pages 3-45 through 3-47, and 3-50 through 3-52 of Volume Two.)

**ATTRACTION/SUPPORT FACILITY BASED INFORMATION MODULES** are simply high quality information racks which can be placed at attractions or at support facilities such as convention centers, hotels and restaurants. This system provides a passive, inexpensive means of supplying information.

Each level of welcome center would provide varying services. The following table show the services recommended for each of the welcome center types proposed. (Refer also to pages 3-9, 3-25, 3-26, 3-28, and 3-34 of Volume Two.)

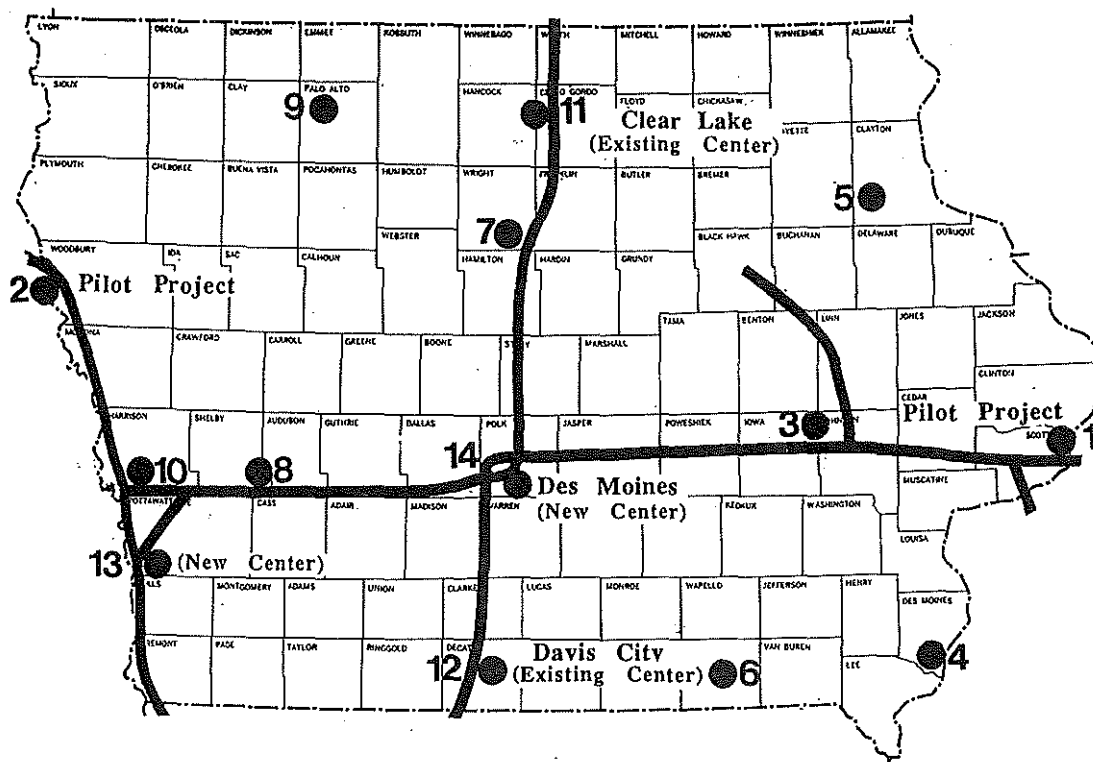
WELCOME CENTER TYPES					
SERVICES	Expanded/existing Welcome Centers	Interstate-based Welcome Centers	Resource-based Welcome Centers	Attraction-based Welcome Centers	Attraction/support facility-based Welcome Centers
Management/ Operation	State	State/ Private	State/ Private	Private	Private
Educational	.	.	.	.	
Computer	.	.	.	.	
Reservations	.	.	.		
Traditional	.	.	.	.	.
Iowa Products	. 1	.	.	Optional	
Gift Shop		.	Optional	Optional	
Book Shop		.	Optional	Optional	
Snack Shop		.	Optional	Optional	
Restroom Facilities	.	.	.	.	
Basic First Aid	.	.			
Lounge Area	.	.	.		
Parking	.	.	.	.	
RV Dump Station	.	.			
Picnic Area	.	.	.		
Pet Walking Area	.	.	.		

1. Display and mail order forms only.

Table 1. Services Offered at each type of Welcome Center.

## INTERSTATE WELCOME CENTERS

The recommended Interstate Welcome Center system includes a combination of two existing centers, two approved Pilot Projects, and two new centers. The main purpose of these centers is to concentrate on attracting an existing audience--interstate travelers--to provide services in such a way as to cause them to leave the interstate to visit an attraction, to extend a trip through Iowa underway, or to return to Iowa at a later date. Figure 1, below, locates the centers which comprise the recommended Interstate Welcome Center system.



- |                      |                             |                |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 1 - Le Claire I      | 8 - Danish Windmill Corp. A | I = Interstate |
| 2 - Sioux City I     | 9 - Emmetsburg              | A = Attraction |
| 3 - Amana A          | 10 - Harrison County A      | R = Resource   |
| 4 - Burlington R     | 11 - Clear Lake I           |                |
| 5 - Clayton County R | 12 - Davis City I           |                |
| 6 - Davis County     | 13 - Council Bluffs I       |                |
| 7 - Dows A           | 14 - Des Moines I           |                |

Figure 1. Recommended Interstate Welcome Centers



## **INTERSTATE WELCOME CENTERS**

### **EXISTING REST STOPS**

As a part of the recommended interstate system, the Clear Lake Rest Stop Welcome Center and the Davis City Rest Stop Welcome Center should remain active at their current locations. These two centers are currently providing a level of service which is appropriate to their location. They do offer potential for expanded information services and facilities at logical locations for travelers entering the state from the north or south. Studies are recommended to identify those expanded services. These studies can provide information to assist in evaluating the other existing centers. (Refer to pages 3-23 through 3-34 of Volume Two.)

### **PILOT PROJECT**

Two interstate based welcome centers were selected to receive grants for pilot projects. These centers, LeClaire and Sioux City, are located at major entrances to the state on I-80 and I-29 respectively. They are both entry point locations with high traffic counts.

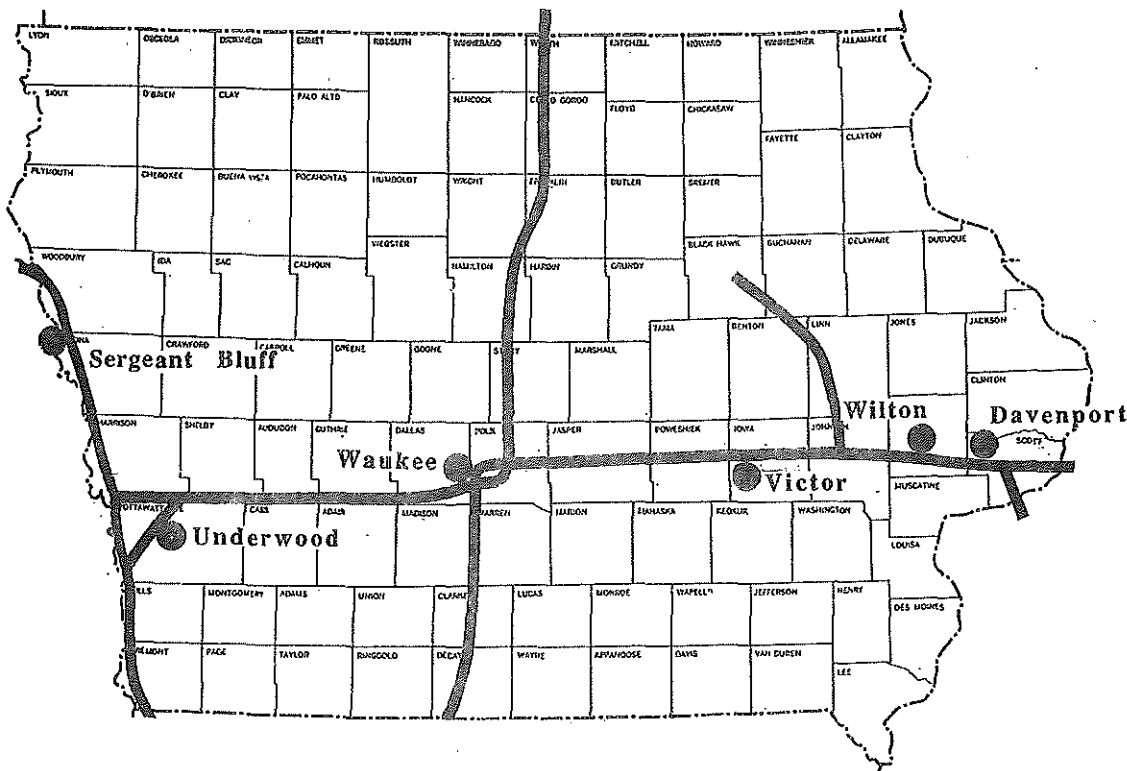
### **NEW CENTERS**

Two additional centers are recommended to complete the interstate welcome center system. A location in or near Des Moines along I-35/I-80 and a location in or near Council Bluffs along I-29/I-80 are proposed.

A distinction must be made between the existing rest stop welcome centers and the other interstate centers. Because of their location at the rest stops, federal regulations allow only minimal commercial activity at the existing centers (vending services can be provided by the Iowa Commission for the Blind). The pilot project centers and the proposed new centers, on the other hand, will not be located within the interstate rights-of-way and can thus incorporate commercial activity in their programs.

## EXISTING REST STOP WELCOME CENTERS TO BE EVALUATED

The recommended interstate welcome center system includes, upon completion, evaluation of six of the existing eight centers (figure 2). These centers will remain open for the 1988 season. As the Pilot Projects open and are evaluated, determination should be made as to whether or not the continued operation and function of these six centers is warranted. It may be decided that the services currently being provided by these six centers would better be provided at new, more appropriately located centers. The closing of these centers can only be contemplated when the new centers are complete and when sufficient evaluation has been accomplished.



**Figure 2. Existing Centers to be Evaluated.**

## FUTURE WELCOME CENTERS

Future additional welcome centers should be based upon the evaluation of the Pilot Projects. Areas of the state which have the highest concentration of tourism resources and no existing or proposed center, shown in figure 3, should be considered priority areas. (Refer to pages 3-41 through 3-44 of Volume Two.)

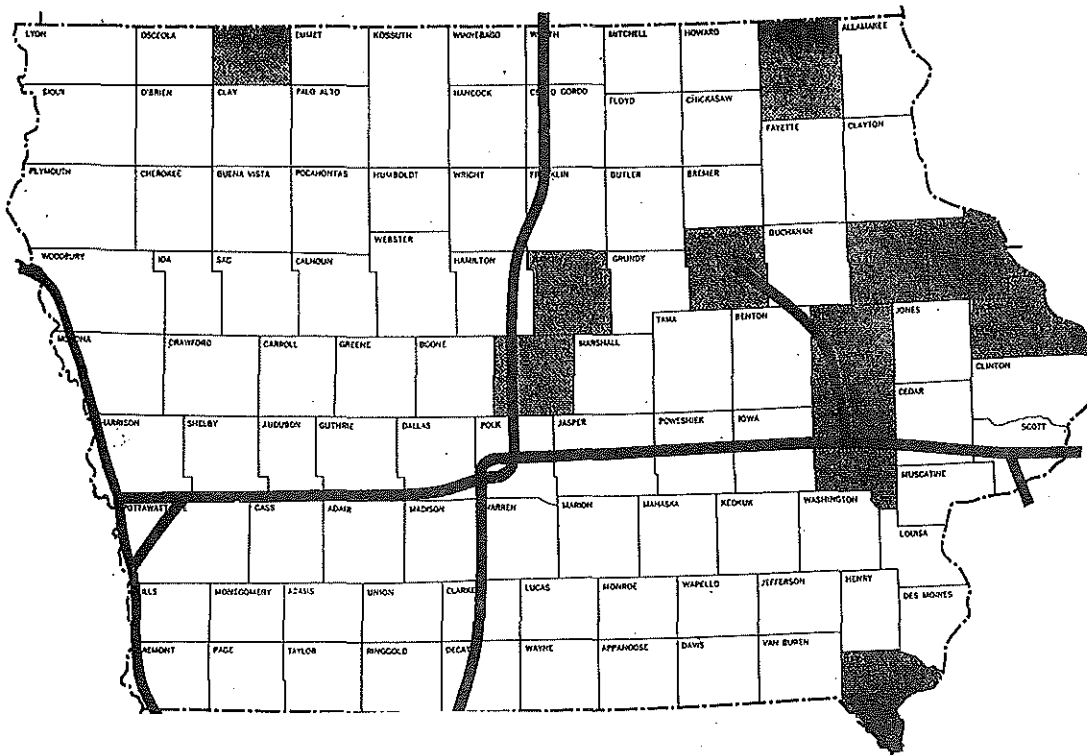


Figure 3. Areas of Highest Tourism Range Without Pilot Project or Proposed Welcome Center

## **GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to specific centers and areas of need, the following recommendations cover a range of topics related to management and enhancement of the overall system.

### **CERTIFIED IOWA WELCOME CENTER**

A program to review centers annually and designate them as IOWA CERTIFIED WELCOME CENTERS. Certification would provide a means of expanding the information network through privately owned centers with the assurance that quality guidelines would be met. As in other certification processes, fees could be charged to cover program costs, including administrative expenses. The Iowa Department of Economic Development would manage the program.

### **CERTIFIED HOSPITALITY CONSULTANTS**

The continuation and expansion of the existing program of education and certification for hospitality industry personnel is recommended. Familiarization tours to increase welcome center staff awareness of Iowa's resources are currently conducted with the cooperation of the tourism industry and the state. The expanded program would provide continuing education and certification much the same as other current professional certification programs. The premise is that well informed, enthusiastic Iowans are better equipped to deal with the traveling public and will present a more positive image. Certified Hospitality Consultants will leave the traveler with a better feeling for individual Iowans and for the state as a whole. Administrative costs could be covered by fees charged. The Iowa Department of Economic Development would manage the program.

### **IOWA TOURISM DATA BASE-COMPUTER BASE**

A computerized data base which lists cultural attractions, recreational attractions and support facilities. This data base should initially be constructed based upon the information necessary to serve and educate the traveling public. Hardware should be based upon this information and the best means to supply that information to the user. A system for annual update is essential. The inventory

section in Volume Two of this document provides a beginning for such a data base. Iowa Department of Economic Development should manage the inventory completion and system selection. (Refer to figure 3-10 of Volume Two.)

## **IOWA PUBLICATIONS**

Continue to provide and expand the publications and documents about Iowa, its attractions, natural resources, cultural facilities, and people. Informational material such as visitors' guides and events calendars is essential to the continued growth of the tourism industry in Iowa. (Refer to pages 3-25 through 3-28 and 3-34 of Volume Two.)

## **AGENCY INFORMATION**

Work with various state agencies to improve and expand information of value to the traveling public. These agencies include the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Cultural Affairs. Immediate needs include individual state park brochures, historical site brochures, cultural events information, and additional quantities of state highway maps. This should be referred to the Task Force for Tourism, Recreation and Leisure for further study

## **IOWA RESERVATION SYSTEM**

Provide a reservation system for lodging and event ticket sales in coordination with the tourism industry in the state. Refer to figure 3-11 and page 3-25 of Volume Two.)

## **MARKETING**

The state already plays a major role in marketing tourism in Iowa. Marketing should be expanded to include the Welcome Centers. Research has shown that a concentrated effort is required within the state, at the entrances to the state, and in adjoining states. (Refer to figure 3-53 and pages 3-27, 3-36, and 3-37, all in Volume Two.)

## EVALUATION/MONITORING

Essential to the success of the welcome center system is the ability to know user patterns, requirements, and user concerns related to programs and services, and to be able to determine how well the system responds to these. The on-going evaluation program should be expanded and managed by the Iowa Department of Economic Development to provide a basis for altering the long range plan. Refer to figure 3-13 of Volume Two.)

## EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

A series of audio/visual presentations for use in the various centers needs to be prepared. The direct purpose of these videos is to provide information at such a level and to such an extent that travelers are presented with a sample and enticed to take a bigger taste.

### The Iowa Video

A 10-15 minute video which showcases the history, culture, natural resources, industry, and people of Iowa.

### Regional Videos

Three 10-15 minute videos which preview the specific history, culture, natural resources, industry, specific attractions and people of the Western, Central, and Eastern Tourism Regions

## STATE TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

Initiate the formation of a program within the State Travel Information Centers Directors Association (STICDA) for the purpose of developing joint marketing and information dissemination among member states.

## SIGNAGE

Work with the Iowa Department of Transportation to establish an interstate and state highway signage system for Iowa Welcome Centers. The system should provide consistent signage throughout the Welcome Center network, from the interstate locations to the

individual information modules. A proposed signage system follows. (Refer to figure 3-39 of Volume Two.)

#### IOWA WELCOME CENTER SIGN

The Iowa Welcome Center sign is shown in figure 7. The sign includes the text to identify a center, the Iowa symbol (used only for state certified centers), and the "i" to signify the center as a source of information. The signage system would be used to direct travelers as they leave the interstate, on state and local highways, and through communities. The signs would also act as identifiers at the individual centers. The Iowa Welcome Center sign could be used by itself, or in conjunction with a series of symbols to identify services available at the center.



Figure 7. Iowa Welcome Center Sign

#### FUTURE AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

While the basic colors of the Iowa Welcome Center sign are determined by federal highway regulations, the individual symbols used to denote the availability of services could have a greater range of color. The suggested color scheme for those ancillary signs would consist of white figures on red or blue backgrounds.

While not a direct responsibility of the State of Iowa, the state should act as a catalyst by providing startup loans for the following:

#### INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION MODULES

A for-profit enterprise which manufactures traditional information modules, places brochures, manages unit placement, and monitors the flow of attraction related information. A fee for brochure placement would be paid.



## ALL IOWA STORE

A for-profit enterprise which develops and manages shops featuring Iowa products. While these stores are primarily directed to the Welcome Center System, placement at other locations would not be prohibited.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## IMPLEMENTATION

Although this is a five year plan, the implementation recommendations are specific only for the first two years. Without evaluation of the existing centers and pilot projects, major capital investment cannot be recommended. The implementation process is to be managed by the Iowa Department of Economic Development and the recommended schedule for 1988 and 1989 is defined below. Implementation beyond 1989 must be based upon the evaluation and monitoring of the pilot projects.

### 1988 IMPLEMENTATION

<u>Pottawattamie County Welcome Center</u> Provide planning grant to further define the project with the intent of funding on matching basis when federal commitment is in place.	\$25,000
<u>Polk County Area Welcome Center</u> Investigate the I-80/I-35 corridor to determine the best possible site for an interstate welcome center.	\$25,000
<u>Clear Lake Center Renovation Study</u> Investigate the potential and requirements for expanding information services.	\$25,000
<u>Davis City Center Renovation Study</u> Investigate the potential and requirements for expanding information services.	\$25,000
<u>Additional High Priority Welcome Centers</u> Continue Pilot Project process to select centers which meet needs in areas of high priority. (Based on proposals submitted in September 1987, Dubuque would be the next site to be recommended )	\$425,000
<u>Iowa Tourism Data Base</u> Complete data base using Survey and	\$20,000

Analysis in Volume Two of this document as beginning structure. Define computer system required.

<u>Iowa Publications</u>	\$150,000
Support the continuation of state-produced publications and brochures.	

<u>Pilot Project Evaluation</u>	\$25,000
Prepare evaluation and monitoring process which will evaluate Pilot Project success.	

<u>Educational</u>	- 0 -
A series of four audio-visual presentations about the State of Iowa as a whole and each of its three regions. Costs for these are addressed in the Tourism Five Year Plan.	

<u>Information Distribution Modules</u>	\$15,000
Explore potential of privately developed state-certified information modules for information distribution.	

<u>Signage</u>	\$15,000
Provide signage for the ten Pilot Projects.	

## 1988 SUMMARY

Pottawattamie County Welcome Center	25,000
Polk County Area Welcome Center	25,000
Clear Lake Center Renovation Study	25,000
Davis City Center Renovation Study	25,000
Additional High Priority Welcome Centers--Dubuque	425,000
Iowa Tourism Data Base	20,000
Iowa Publications	150,000
Pilot Project Evaluation	25,000
Educational	0
Iowa Information Modules	15,000
Signage	<u>15,000</u>

TOTAL	\$750,000
-------	-----------

## 1989 IMPLEMENTATION

<u>Pottawattamie County Welcome Center</u> Continue Planning Grant to further define the project.	\$25,000
<u>Polk County Area Welcome Center</u> Provide Planning Grant for site identified in 1988.	\$25,000
<u>Clear Lake Center Renovation Plans</u> Prepare and begin implementation of renovation plans.	\$25,000
<u>Davis City Center Renovation Plans</u> Prepare and begin implementation of renovation plans.	\$25,000
<u>Additional High Priority Welcome Centers</u> Continue Pilot Project process to select centers which meet needs in areas of high priority.	\$225,000
<u>Pilot Project Operating Support Fund</u> Provide support for operation of newly developed Welcome Centers.	\$200,000
<u>Iowa Tourism Data Base</u> Finalize data base definition, computer system identification, and support mechanism.	\$20,000
<u>Iowa Publications</u> Support the development of state-produced publications and brochures.	\$150,000
<u>Pilot Project Evaluation</u> Continue evaluation and monitoring process to identify system needs for 1990, 1991, and 1992.	\$25,000
<u>Certified Iowa Welcome Center Program</u> Establish the framework for certification, and develop program.	\$25,000

<u>Certified Hospitality Consultants Program</u>	\$25,000
Establish the framework for certification, and develop program.	

<u>Iowa Reservation System</u>	\$25,000
Based upon Iowa Tourism Data Base and Pilot Project Evaluation develop framework for Iowa Reservation System.	

<u>Marketing</u>	\$50,000
Based upon Pilot Project Evaluation develop Marketing Plan for Iowa Welcome Centers	

<u>Information Distribution Modules</u>	\$15,000
Explore potential of privately developed state-certified information modules for information distribution.	

<u>Signage</u>	\$15,000
Provide signage to Certified Iowa Welcome Centers.	

## 1989 SUMMARY

Pottawattamie County Welcome Center	25,000
Polk County Area Welcome Center Plans	25,000
Clear Lake Center Renovation Plans	25,000
Davis City Center Renovation Plans	25,000
Additional High Priority Welcome Centers	225,000
Pilot Project Operating Support Fund	200,000
Iowa Tourism Data Base	20,000
Iowa Publications	150,000
Pilot Project Evaluation	25,000
Certified Iowa Welcome Center Program	25,000
Certified Hospitality Consultants Program	25,000
Iowa Reservation System	25,000
Marketing	50,000
Iowa Information Modules	15,000
Signage	<u>15,000</u>

TOTAL	\$875,000
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Implementation during 1990 through 1992 should be based upon the monitoring and evaluation of the Welcome Center system. The following represents topics by year without establishing associated costs. These items are subject to change based on the evaluation process.

## 1990 IMPLEMENTATION

Pottawattamie County Welcome Center  
Implementation based on in-place federal commitment.

Polk County Area Welcome Center  
Implementation.

Clear Lake Center Renovation  
Complete implementation.

Davis City Center Renovation  
Complete implementation.

Additional Centers  
Implement if research supports need.

Pilot Project Operating Support Funds

Iowa Tourism Data Base Computer System

Iowa Publications

Pilot Project Evaluation  
Additions and alterations to system.

Certified Iowa Welcome Center Program

Certified Hospitality Consultants Program

Iowa Reservations

Welcome Center Marketing

Iowa Information Modules

Signage

1991-1992

Additional High Priority Welcome Centers  
Implement if research supports need.

Pilot Project Operating Support Funds

Iowa Tourism Data Base

Iowa Publications

Pilot Project Evaluation

Certified Iowa Welcome Center Program

Certified Hospitality Consultants Program

Iowa Reservation System

Welcome Center Marketing

Iowa Information Modules

Signage



## **APPENDIX A: Process**

## PROCESS

*DATE:* June 17, 1987  
Request for Proposal sent to interested parties

*DATE:* June 24, 1987  
*LOCATION:* Statehouse  
*PURPOSE:* Meeting with interested consultants.  
Review of H.F. 540/and R.F.P.

*DATE:* June 29, 1987  
Proposals Due

*DATE:* June 30, 1987  
*LOCATION:* Department of Economic Development  
*PURPOSE:* Review and Evaluation of Proposals

*DATE:* July 2, 1987  
Consultant Selection

*DATE:* July 6, 1987  
*LOCATION:* Department of Economic Development  
*PURPOSE:* Review Scope and Establish Schedule  
with Consultant Committee Workshop

*DATE:* July 7, 1987  
*LOCATION:* Department of Economic Development  
*PURPOSE:* Announcement of Welcome Centers Pilot  
Projects. Application for Financial  
Assistance Packets mailed to around  
1,000 public and private groups and  
individuals.

*DATE:* July 7, 1987  
*LOCATION:* Department of Natural Resources  
*PURPOSE:* Review with Arnie Sohn, Committee  
Member

<b>DATE:</b>	July 9, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Presentation to D.E.D. Board of Directors
<b>DATE:</b>	July 10, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Committee Review Draft Prospectus
<b>DATE:</b>	July 14, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Committee Review Final Prospectus
<b>DATE:</b>	July 15, 1987
	Welcome Centers Pilot Projects Application for Financial Assistance mailed to interested groups, individuals; announcement of Pre-Application Conference mailed
<b>DATE:</b>	July 17, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Committee Review Outline for Pre-Application Conference
<b>DATE:</b>	July 22, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	User Survey to D.E.D. for review
<b>DATE:</b>	July 22, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Establish Outline for Legislative Rules
<b>DATE:</b>	July 23, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Revised User Survey
<b>DATE:</b>	July 24, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review Draft Legislative Rules

<b>DATE:</b>	July 28, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Wallace Office Building Des Moines, Iowa
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Pre-Application Conference. Review Application Requirements. 92 parti- cipants
<b>DATE:</b>	July 30, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Site Visitation, Existing Welcome Centers Victor, Davenport, Wilton, Des Moines
<b>DATE:</b>	July 30, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	User Survey Issued to All Centers
<b>DATE:</b>	August 3, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Committee Review Preliminary Evaluation Process
<b>DATE:</b>	August 4, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Welcome Center Staff Survey Draft
<b>DATE:</b>	August 5, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review Welcome Center Staff Survey/ Send
<b>DATE:</b>	August 19, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review Potentials for Expanded Com- mittee
<b>DATE:</b>	August 20, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Des Moines, Iowa
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review H.F. 540 and Pilot Project w/American Institute of Architects Representatives
<b>DATE:</b>	August 21, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Ankeny
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review H.F. 540 and Pilot Project w/ American Society of Landscape Archi- tects Representatives

**DATE:** August 24, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Updated Evaluation Process

**DATE:** August 27, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Des Moines, Iowa  
**PURPOSE:** Review H.F. 540 and Pilot Projects w/  
Iowa Travel Council Representatives

**DATE:** august 28, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Review Committee. Preview slide  
presentation of other state welcome  
centers

**DATE:** September 1, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Receive Pilot Project Applications.  
47 Applications received.

**DATE:** September 2, 1987  
**PURPOSE:** Review Applications for technical  
proficiency. Categorize Applications

**DATE:** September 3, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Committee Evaluation and rating

**DATE:** September 8, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Committee Evaluation/rating

**DATE:** September 9, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Committee Pilot Project Recommen-  
dations

**DATE:** September 10, 1987  
**LOCATION:** Department of Economic Development  
**PURPOSE:** Present Pilot Project Recommendations  
to D.E.D. Board of Directors

<b>DATE:</b>	September 28, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Review out of state centers and I.D.O.T. signage requirements
<b>DATE:</b>	October 6, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing Welcome Center Visitation Clear Lake, Davis City</li> <li>• Pilot Project Visitation: Dows</li> </ul>
<b>DATE:</b>	October 8, 1987
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing Welcome Center Visitation Underwood, Sergeant Bluff</li> <li>• Pilot Project Visitation Sioux City</li> </ul>
<b>DATE:</b>	October 13, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Administrative Rules. Review/ Approve
<b>DATE:</b>	October 15, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Pilot Projects Review Draft Contracts Project Presentations--17 participants
<b>DATE:</b>	October 16, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Long Range Plan Outline
<b>DATE:</b>	October 21, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Lake Okoboji
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	State Tourism Conference Long Range Plan Process Review Questions/Answers 33 Volunteers for workshops. Survey distributed
<b>DATE:</b>	October 23, 1987
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Department of Economic Development
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Committee Review Preliminary Survey Results Preliminary Inventory

<i>DATE:</i>	November 2, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Department of Economic Development
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Review Committee
<i>DATE:</i>	November 4, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Bellevue
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Eastern Region Tourism Industry Input Workshop 34 participants
<i>DATE:</i>	November 9, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Carroll
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Western Region Tourism Industry Input Workshop 22 participants
<i>DATE:</i>	November 10, 1987
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Inventory Request Distributed to 149 County Tourism Representatives Due December 1, 1987
<i>DATE:</i>	November 12, 1987
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Survey Sent to all State Legislators Due November 30, 1987 Review of Pilot Project Procedures with Applicants
<i>DATE:</i>	November 13, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Des Moines
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Review with Department of Cultural Affairs Representative
<i>DATE:</i>	November 16, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Des Moines
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Central Region Tourism Industry Input Workshop 35 participants
<i>DATE:</i>	November 18, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Department of Economic development
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Committee Review

<i>DATE:</i>	November 19, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Sioux City
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Sioux City Pilot Project Presentation to Board of Directors, D.E.D.
<i>DATE:</i>	November 20, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Des Moines
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Classification of Welcome Centers American Institute of Architects Representative
<i>DATE:</i>	November 23, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Department of Natural Resources
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Review D.N.R. Information Base
<i>DATE:</i>	December 1, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Department of Economic Development
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Committee Review
<i>DATE:</i>	December 2, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Denison
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Western Region Tourism Industry Update
<i>DATE:</i>	December 4, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Clinton
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Eastern Regional Tourism Industry Update
<i>DATE:</i>	December 14, 1987
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Ankeny
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Central Region Update
<i>DATE:</i>	January 8, 1988
<i>LOCATION:</i>	Department of Economic Development
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Committee Review Long Range Plan Draft
<i>DATE:</i>	January 15, 1987
<i>PURPOSE:</i>	Submission to State Legislature



## **APPENDIX B: House File 540**

## CHAPTER 178

### WELCOME CENTERS

H.F. 540

**AN ACT** relating to the planning, acquisition, development, and operation of welcome centers in proximity to highways and at other locations throughout the state.

*Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

#### Section 1. **NEW SECTION. 15261 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE — INTENT.**

1. The general assembly finds that:

- a. Highway travelers have special needs for information and travel services.
- b. Highway travelers have a significant positive influence on the state's economy.
- c. A principal goal of economic development in this state is to increase the influence which travel and hospitality services, tourism, and recreation opportunities have on the state's economic expansion.
- d. Facilities and programs are needed where travelers can obtain information about travel and hospitality services, tourism attractions, parks and recreation opportunities, cultural and natural resources, and the state in general.
- e. A program shall be established to plan, acquire, develop, promote, operate, and maintain a variety of welcome centers at strategic locations to meet the needs of travelers in the state. The program is intended to be accomplished by 1992.

2. The primary goals of a statewide program for welcome centers is to provide to travelers the following:

- a. High quality, accurate, and interesting information about travel in the state; national, statewide, and local attractions of all types; lodging, medical service, food service, vehicle service, and other kinds of necessities; and general information about the state.
- b. Needed and convenient services, including but not limited to, restrooms; lodging information and event reservation services; vehicle services; and others. Services shall also include the distribution and sale of souvenirs, crafts, arts, and food products originating in the state; food and beverages; fishing, hunting, and other permits and licenses needed for recreation activities; and other products normally desired by travelers.
- c. Settings that will convey a sense of being welcomed to the state through hospitable attitudes of personnel; high quality of site landscape architecture, architectural theme, and interior design of the buildings; special events that occur at the centers; and high levels of maintenance.

#### Sec. 2. **NEW SECTION. 15262 STATEWIDE WELCOME CENTER PROGRAM — OBJECTIVES AND AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES — PILOT PROJECTS.**

The state agencies, as indicated in this section, shall undertake certain specific functions to implement the goals of a statewide program, including the pilot projects, for welcome centers.

1. The department and the state department of transportation shall jointly establish a statewide long-range plan for developing and operating welcome centers throughout the state. The plan shall be submitted to the general assembly by January 15, 1988. The plan shall address, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Integrating state, regional, and local tourism and recreation marketing and promotion plans.
- b. Recommending a wide range of centers, including state-developed and state-operated to privately managed facilities.
- c. Establishing design, service, and maintenance quality standards which all welcome centers will maintain. Included in the standards shall be a provision requiring that space or facilities be available for purposes of displaying and offering for sale Iowa-made products, crafts, and arts. The space or facilities may be operated by the department or leased to and operated by other persons.

d. Making projections of increased tourist spending, indirect economic benefits, and direct revenue production which are estimated to occur as a result of implementing a statewide welcome center program.

e. Projecting estimated acquisition, construction, exhibit, staffing, and maintenance costs.

f. Integrating electronic data telecommunications systems.

g. Identifying sites for maintaining existing centers as well as locations for new centers.

The departments may enter into contracts for the preparation of the long-range plan. The departments shall involve the department of natural resources and the department of cultural affairs in the preparation of the plan. The recommendations and comments of organizations representing hospitality and tourism services, including but not limited to, the regional tourism councils, convention and visitors bureaus, and the Iowa travel council, and others with interests in this program will be considered for incorporation in the plan. Prior to submission of the plan to the general assembly, the plan shall be submitted to the regional tourism councils, the convention and visitors bureaus, and the Iowa travel council for their comments and criticisms which shall be submitted by the department along with the plan to the general assembly.

2. The responsibilities of the department include the following:

a. Seeing to the acquisition of property and the construction of all new welcome centers including the pilot projects selected by the department pursuant to paragraph "e". In carrying out this responsibility the department may, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) Arrange for the state department of transportation to acquire title to land and buildings for use as and undertake construction of state-owned welcome centers. In acquiring property and constructing the welcome centers, including any pilot projects, the state department of transportation may use any funds available to it, including but not limited to, the RISE fund, matching funds from local units of government or organizations, the primary road fund, federal grants, and moneys specifically appropriated for these purposes.

(2) Contract with other state agencies, local units of government, or private groups, organizations, or entities for the use of land, buildings, or facilities as state welcome centers or in connection with state welcome centers, whether or not the property is actually owned by the state. If the local match required for pilot projects or which may be required for other welcome centers is met by providing land, buildings, or facilities, the entity providing the local match shall enter into an agreement with the department to either transfer title of the property to the state or to dedicate the use of the property under the conditions and period of time set by the department.

b. Providing for the operations, management, and maintenance of the state-owned and state-operated welcome centers, including the collection and distribution of tourism literature, telecommunication services, and other travel-related services, and the display and offering for sale of Iowa-made products, crafts, and arts.

c. Providing, at the discretion of the department, financial assistance in the form of loans and grants to privately operated information centers to the extent the centers are consistent with the long-range plan.

d. Developing a common theme or graphic logo which will be identified with all welcome centers which meet the standards of operations established for those centers.

e. Selecting the sites for the pilot projects. In selecting the pilot project sites, the following apply:

(1) Up to three sites may be located in proximity to the interstates and up to three sites may be located in proximity to the other primary roads. The department shall select at least one site which is in proximity to a primary road which is not an interstate.

(2) Proposals for the sites must be submitted prior to September 1, 1987 and shall contain a commitment of at least a one-dollar-per-dollar match of state financial assistance. The local match may be in terms of land, buildings, or other noncash items which are acceptable by the department.

(3) Priority shall be given to proposals that have the best local match, that are to be located where there is a very high number of travelers passing, and for which the department, after consultation with the departments of transportation, natural resources, and cultural affairs, considers the chances of success to be nearly perfect.

(4) The department shall select the sites by September 15, 1987.

Approved June 2, 1987

SF 515, Sec. 11, 1987 Iowa Acts

Sec. 11. Section 99E.32, subsection 5, Code 1987, is amended by adding the following new lettered paragraphs:

NEW LETTERED PARAGRAPH. i. There is appropriated from the allotment to the jobs now capitals account under subsection 1 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1987 to the Iowa department of economic development the sum of two million dollars for the establishment of welcome centers as provided in 1987 Iowa Acts, House File 540. Of the amounts appropriated, sixty thousand dollars shall be used for the establishment of rural centers to be located in or near communities with populations of five thousand or less. Not more than twenty thousand dollars shall be expended for each center. The local communities are required to equally match state funds.

## **APPENDIX C: Pilot Projects**

WELCOME CENTERS  
Pilot Projects

CATEGORY - Interstate

City of LeClaire - LeClaire, Iowa; this facility will be called the Iowa Mississippi Valley Welcome Center (IMVWC) and will provide a showcase for the Mississippi River and other state resources. Architecture will focus on the history of the Mississippi River through its resemblance to a river boat captain's home and through a dramatic view of the Mississippi River. Types of information provided will include travel, attractions, historical, cultural, lodging, medical services, food service, vehicular service, parks and recreation, and reservation. Live presentations by visiting artists and local theatre and performing groups will take place periodically at the Center. Construction will start in October, 1987; will open in October, 1988.

Requested:	\$ 652,638.00
Awarded:	\$ 645,080.00
Total Project Cost:	\$2,251,227.00

City of Sioux City - Sioux City, Iowa; this project will renovate the Sergeant Floyd, a Missouri River tow and work boat, and will convert the engine compartment into a tourist/visitors center with restrooms, the second level into a museum/display depicting a history of the Missouri River and the Lewis and Clark expedition, and return the pilot house portion of the boat to its original condition. Construction will start in October, 1987; will open in April of 1989.

Requested:	\$407,500.00
Awarded:	\$335,000.00
Total Project Cost:	\$815,000.00

CATEGORY - Primary

Amana Society - Amana, Iowa; the Amana Visitor Orientation Center will serve as the focal piece of a major exposition center. The Visitor Orientation Center will include a comprehensive information/service center, a 200-seat theatre, a 52-acre exposition ground, a 9,000 square foot meeting/convention facility and a new Amana Society Visitor Services Operation. The Orientation Center will provide the following services to the traveling public: restrooms, menu collection, information desk, direct dial to participating hotels in region, computer-generated maps to other Iowa locations, brochure collections, phones, lounge area, All-Iowa products gift shop, small refreshment center, video center, guides, maps, calendars, etc. All facilities will be handicapped accessible. Construction will start in January, 1988; will open in January, 1989.

Requested:	\$ 482,930.00
Awarded:	\$ 458,410.00
Total Project Cost:	\$1,887,970.00

City of Burlington - Burlington, Iowa; this project is the renovation of the historically and architecturally significant Port of Burlington building, to establish a high quality, comprehensive welcome center. The center will include visitor information room, an open-air, multi-functional river-view display pavillion, a concession/rest room area, river deck and stage, and a fully landscaped recreational park area overlooking the Mississippi River. Construction will begin in October, 1987; will open in May, 1988.

Requested: \$201,000.00  
Awarded: \$201,000.00  
Total Project Cost: \$639,102.00

Clayton County Conservation Board - Elkader, Iowa; this project will expand the programs and enlarge the physical facilities of the Osborne Conservation Center, a park that serves a large area of northeast Iowa. The project will provide a new building and allow for expanded service and programs at the Center. Construction to begin September, 1987; will open in 1988.

Requested: \$150,000.00  
Awarded: \$150,000.00  
Total Project Cost: \$300,000.00

#### CATEGORY - Rural

Davis County Tourism Corporation - Bloomfield, Iowa; the Davis County Visitor Center is a 1910 Sears & Roebuck Catalogue home donated by the Davis County Community School Board. The home will be remodeled to depict the time frame of the home. The center will serve as an outlet for local arts and crafts persons to display their items for sale. Construction will begin in September, 1987; will open in April, 1988.

Requested: \$20,000.00  
Awarded: \$20,000.00  
Total Project Cost: \$64,356.00

Dows Community Betterment/Dows Historical Society - Dows, Iowa; - the Dows Depot (c.1890) will become the Welcome Center. The readaptation of the structure in a small town setting is appropriate and representative of rural Iowa (and America). Construction will begin in October, 1987; will open in September, 1988.

Requested: \$20,000.00  
Requested: \$20,000.00  
Total Project Cost: \$74,000.00

Danish Windmill Corporation - Elk Horn, Iowa; the Danish Windmill Welcome Center will be housed in the Danish Windmill. It will provide travel related services to the visitors, plus Iowa products for sale. This program will help expand information and economic development for the state and provide the image of Iowa as a hospitable state. Expansion will begin in September, 1987; will open May, 1988.

Requested: \$ 20,000.00  
Awarded: \$ 20,000.00  
Total Project Cost: \$101,285.00 (7 year total)



Emmetsburg Chamber of Commerce - Emmetsburg, Iowa; the Iowa Official Welcome Center will be housed in the existing Chamber of Commerce building. The Welcome Center will have two areas devoted to tourism literature, a tele-communication equipped information counter, rest room facilities, water fountain, seating of various types and a table. This rehabilitation will begin in September, 1987; will open in January, 1988.

Requested:	\$18,695.50
Awarded:	\$18,695.50
Total Project Cost:	\$37,391.00

Harrison County Conservation Board - Woodbine, Iowa; this project will utilize the area of the Harrison County Historical Museum as a Welcome Center for all travellers in this area of western Iowa. Addition will begin in September, 1987; will open November, 1988.

Requested:	\$ 20,000.00
Awarded:	\$ 20,000.00
Total Project Cost:	\$150,000.00