



**REQUEST FOR COMMISSION ACTION**  
**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE**  
**January 27, 2022**

**Department** Administration

**Director Approval** *Kelly Passauer*

**AGENDA ITEM** Consider authorizing the Mayor to sign a support letter for EDA tourism Funds for the Freedom's Frontier as requested by the Independence Historical Museum.

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION** Authorize the Mayor to sign the support letter.

**BACKGROUND** The City was contacted by Ray Rothgeb representing the Independence Historical Museum. Mr. Rothgeb indicated that support letters were requested on behalf of Freedom's Frontier to support their request for EDA Tourism Funds. Mr. Rothgeb indicated that the local museum is listed on Freedom's Frontier website at no cost to the museum, and they have previously received financial assistance from this group.

**SUGGESTED MOTION** I move to authorize the Mayor to sign a support letter for EDA tourism Funds for the Freedom's Frontier as requested by the Independence Historical Museum.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

1. Letter
2. Request



January 24, 2022

Subject: Letter of Support for FFNHA Application

Dear Economic Development Administration:

The purpose of this letter is to support Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area (FFNHA), Inc.'s application for tourism grant funds from EDA to update their existing website and map, correspondingly hiring additional staff, to better promote the hundreds of heritage tourism sites (including museums and historic sites) in the entire heritage area, including the Independence Historical Museum and Art Center and the Little House on the Prairie Museum.

FFNHA's platforms, as they have used them and envisioned them, not only deliver, but prompt us to do more. They are a cost-effective way to preserve our heritage, spur economic growth, and create jobs.

Freedom's Frontier, as evidenced by their newsletters, has been useful to its members and the public with promotion of museums and historic sites. Updating of their website and map, with the corresponding additional staff, funded by the EDA tourism grant, will both drive and support increased tourism in our area, resulting in increased visits to existing and new museums, historical sites, restaurants, shops, other vendors and lodging establishments, which, in turn, are anticipated to generate new positions in our community.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Dean Hayse  
Mayor  
City of Independence, Kansas

**From:** [Ray Rothgeb](#)  
**To:** [Dean Hayse](#); [Kelly Passauer](#)  
**Cc:** [temert@sehc-law.com](mailto:temert@sehc-law.com); [louisysusi@yahoo.com](mailto:louisysusi@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Letter of Support on Behalf of Freedom's Frontier  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 19, 2022 11:57:51 AM  
**Attachments:** [EDA Tourism Grant Support - Workforce Dev - Independence KS.docx](#)

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Dean and Kelly,

I received an email from Freedom's Frontier while I was in Arizona and had not had an opportunity to share this until now. You may know that the museum is listed on Freedom's Frontier website (<http://www.freedomfrontier.org/Visitors/Places-To-See/Default.aspx?search=Independence>) at no cost to us. Additionally we received a \$1,000 grant to help with the "Climate & Energy Central" exhibition which is now open to the public in the IHMAC Gallery, for free. Freedom's Frontier has applied for a grant and as you can see from the "CONTENT" below, is needing letters of support. I hope this is something that you can accommodate as the acquisition of this grant can be helpful to our community and SEK Tourism. The letter can be sent to: [hzane@freedomfrontier.org](mailto:hzane@freedomfrontier.org)

Thanks for your consideration!  
Ray Rothgeb

(CONTENT OF EMAIL FROM FREEDOM'S FRONTIER)

Freedom's Frontier has applied for EDA Tourism funds, but have received feedback from their staff that our application will not be viewed favorably unless we obtain letters from **city**, **county or state officials** (e.g., **Mayor**, City Councilperson, County Commissioner, **City Manager**, etc), in both urban and rural areas, that indicate they believe what we do with the funding is anticipated to result in job growth.

We are planning to use the EDA grant funds to update our old (circa 2010) website and map so that all sites and partners are listed and are spectacularly promoted, as well as hire staff to help us with that updating and submitting content to our website and APP.

Would you be willing to find a local government official to sign and return the attached letter? I was extremely conservative and only estimated a growth of 2 jobs due to our efforts. Would you feel comfortable with that? If not, please revise so that it makes sense to you.