May 1, 2014

Mayor Mike Amyx
City of Lawrence
City Hall
P.O. Box 708
Lawrence, KS 66044

RE: City Funding for Watkins Museum Core Exhibit

Dear Mayor Amyx,

On behalf of the Douglas County Historical Society Board of Directors, I ask that the City of Lawrence consider providing financial support to complete the installation of a permanent core exhibit on the history of Lawrence and Douglas County on the third floor of the Watkins Museum of History in downtown Lawrence. We request $100,000, potentially spread over two or three fiscal years, toward the nearly $450,000 project. A project description, preliminary budget, and potential timeline for completion are enclosed.

The third floor core exhibit will continue the revitalization of the visitor experience at the Watkins Museum that began with the opening of the second floor core exhibit in August 2013. The third floor exhibit will utilize the same types of interpretive techniques as have been used on the second floor, incorporating graphics, artifacts, documents, and interactive elements. Themes of economic development/entrepreneurship, cultural expression, education, and consumerism will explore daily life in Lawrence and Douglas County over the past 150 years. A family education center will include the museum’s popular late 1800s playhouse. Audience research beginning this summer will help define exhibit storylines and identify opportunities for interactive experiences.

We are currently seeking a 2014 Douglas County Heritage Conservation Grant to continue the momentum of the project by completing the restoration and interpretation of the museum’s main stair hall by the end of this year. A 2012 gift from the Dolph Simons Family Fund of the Douglas County Community Foundation provided funding to plan the third floor portion of the core exhibit. Exhibit planning, which should be completed in late 2014, will produce a detailed and definite budget for exhibit installation and infrastructure improvement. The DCHS Board of Directors is now developing the strategy to fund the installation. In addition to seeking City funding, we intend to pursue
a major Heritage Conservation Grant in the 2015 funding cycle, a Douglas County Community Foundation grant, and contributions or sponsorships from local businesses and individuals.

In addition to exhibit fabrication and installation, the project includes refurbishment of the gallery space, particularly floors and plaster repair, and upgrades to the infrastructure that will support the exhibit, including electrical systems, lighting, and security. Such improvements will ensure the galleries meet modern museum standards for display and security and provide an up-to-date visitor experience. Upgrades to the third floor HVAC system were completed in the spring of 2014, funded by private contributions made in 2013. If the 2014 Douglas County Heritage Conservation Grant is awarded, work done under that grant will include restoration of the stained glass windows in the stair hall and upgrades to the lighting. In addition, a 2014 grant from the City of Lawrence Historical Preservation Advised Fund of the Douglas County Community Foundation will ensure that much-needed restoration of the Watkins Building's third floor windows will be completed this year.

The DCHS Board of Directors is determined to move the completion of the core exhibit forward in a timely way. An aggressive timeline (enclosed) bringing the project to a close in 2015 has been proposed, however, proceeding on this schedule is dependent on funding. It is possible to phase the project over a longer period of time, as funding becomes available. Phasing could be accomplished by separating infrastructure improvement from exhibit installation or by installing the exhibit in sections.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our exhibit project. We appreciate your consideration. Thank you also for investing in the preservation of the Watkins Building and for your support of the core exhibit installation on the second floor. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Nowak
Executive Director

enc.

cc: Dave Corliss
Watkins Museum of History
Third Floor Core Exhibit

The core exhibit to be installed on the third floor of the Watkins Museum will explore life in Lawrence and Douglas County through the following themes:

- Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Community and Cultural Expression
- Consumer Goods and Local Merchants
- Education and the Pursuit of Knowledge

The exhibit will utilize historic artifacts, photos and documents to highlight the people, causes, and events that shaped our communities. Exhibit storylines will feature native populations, early settlers, business leaders, activists, educators, athletes, philanthropists, and immigrants. Displays on schools and literary societies, farms and retail stores, railroads and industry, music and filmmaking will allow visitors to experience the past and learn how it influences who we are today. Interactive elements will draw visitors back in time and give them an opportunity to reflect on today’s issues. A family education center will help children and parents understand how things used by earlier generations reveal clues about the past.
## Watkins Museum of History

Estimated Budget for completion of Core Exhibit
February 25, 2014

### Core Exhibit Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Fees</td>
<td>$39,375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience Research</td>
<td>$3,700</td>
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Exhibit Design Total: $43,075 (funds in hand)

### Stair Hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Window Coverings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text Panels</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upgrade Electrical Systems</td>
<td>$2,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stained Glass Window Restoration</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
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Stair Hall Total: $41,850 (seeking Heritage Grant)

### Third Floor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit Fabrication and Installation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casework and Mounts</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Window Coverings</td>
<td>$39,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refurbish Playhouse</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
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<td>Upgrade HVAC System</td>
<td>$25,834  (completed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upgrade Electrical System</td>
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<td>Light Fixtures</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plaster Repair</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood Floor Repair</td>
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<td>Mosaic Floor Repair</td>
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<td>Painting</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Cameras</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Third Floor Total: $441,499
Watkins Museum Core Exhibit Development Timeline

2011
Phase 1: Interpretive Planning (complete)
- Develop interpretive plan
- On-going fundraising began November 2011

2012
Phase 2: Develop Storylines and Interpretive Approaches (complete)
- Define overall exhibit storyline
- Schematic design of exhibit layout

Phase 3: Fabrication & Installation, 2nd Floor (complete)
- Finalize 2nd floor design
- Define story detail, write interpretive text
- Develop/fabricate exhibit elements
- Ongoing fundraising

2013
Phase 3: Fabrication & Installation, 2nd Floor (complete)
- Ongoing fundraising
- Write/edit interpretive text
- Develop/fabricate exhibit elements
- Refurbish gallery space/upgrade systems
- Install exhibit

2nd Floor exhibit opened to the public, August 17, 2013

2014
Phase 4: Design, Fabrication & Installation, Stair Hall and 3rd Floor
Stair Hall
- Design exhibit graphics, lighting system
- Electrical work/lighting installation
- Plaster repair and painting
- Stained glass window restoration
- Install window coverings and banners

If funded, Stair Hall complete by DCHS Annual Meeting, approx. November 20

3rd Floor
- Identify funding sources
- Initiate fundraising
- Define exhibit
- Exhibit design/develop detailed budget

2015
3rd Floor continued (pending funding)
- On-going fundraising
- Gallery repair/systems upgrade
- Exhibit fabrication and installation