

LEWIS AND CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER STUDY - BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM

Section 14 of Senate Bill No. 2019 (2019) ([Appendix A](#)) directs the Legislative Management to study the feasibility and desirability of reducing Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center fees and consider alternatives to address the sustainability of the Parks and Recreation Department's operations of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY REGARDING THE LEWIS AND CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Since 1999 the Legislative Assembly has approved funding totaling \$10,073,341 related to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, of which \$9,193,309 is from the general fund and \$880,032 is from other funds as detailed below.

1999

The 1999 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$100,000 from the general fund, to the extent the Lewis and Clark Foundation provided an equal amount of matching funds, to provide a grant from the Parks and Recreation Department to the foundation. The grant funds were to be used to provide a portion of the required match for federal transportation enhancement funds for the construction of an addition to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

2001

The 2001 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$100,000 from the general fund, to provide a grant from the State Historical Society to the North Dakota Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Foundation for expenses of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

2003

The 2003 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$150,000 from the general fund, for a grant from the Department of Commerce to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

2005

The 2005 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$100,000 from the general fund, for a grant from the Department of Commerce to the Lewis and Clark Foundation for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

2007

The 2007 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$100,000 from the general fund, for a grant from the Department of Commerce to the Lewis and Clark Foundation for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. The department may only provide grant funds to the extent the Lewis and Clark Foundation provides \$2 of matching funds for each \$1 of state grant funds.

2009

The 2009 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$1.5 million from the general fund, for a grant from the Department of Commerce to the Lewis and Clark Foundation for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. The department could only spend the funds to the extent matching funds were secured from nonstate sources on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The funds were to be used only for construction costs.

2013

The 2013 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$1.35 million from the general fund, for a grant from the Parks and Recreation Department to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, for its expansion project, during the 2013-15 biennium.

2015

The 2015 Legislative Assembly approved one-time funding of \$2.05 million to transfer the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and certain assets from the Lewis and Clark Foundation to the state. In addition, the Legislative Assembly appropriated \$125,000, from the general fund, to the Parks and Recreation Department for operating costs of the interpretive center for the remainder of the 2013-15 biennium.

The Legislative Assembly appropriated the following for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center for the 2015-17 biennium:

	FTE	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center staffing	4.00	\$366,384	\$183,895	\$550,279
Operating expenses ¹		1,330,000		1,330,000
Exterior building painting and staining ²		75,000		75,000
Allotment reduction		(12,000)		(12,000)
Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center 2015-17 biennium appropriation	4.00	\$1,759,384	\$183,895	\$1,943,279

¹Includes one-time funding of \$950,000 of state park enhancement funds.
²One-time funding for repairs at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

2017

The 2017 Legislative Assembly approved funding of \$1,250,687 from the general fund (\$888,668), a grant from the Department of Transportation (\$100,000), and from the parks and recreation operating fund (\$262,019), for the operation of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center during the 2017-19 biennium.

2019

The 2019 Legislative Assembly approved funding of \$1,304,375 million from the general fund (\$970,257), a grant from the Department of Transportation (\$100,000), and from the parks and recreation operating fund (\$234,118), for the operation of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center during the 2019-21 biennium.

OPERATIONAL DATA OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Fees

The following table provides information regarding the daily fees for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center:

	Rate
Facility rentals	
Event center	\$500 per day
Library meeting room	\$100 per day or \$75 per half-day
Fort Mandan lodge classroom	\$150 per day
Picnic shelters	\$50 per day
Interpretive passes	
Adult	\$8 per day
Student	\$5 per day
Family	\$25 per day

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Visitation Data

The following table provides information regarding annual visitation data for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center for calendar years 2016, 2017, and 2018:

	2016	2017	2018
Building use ¹	48,532	70,726	117,456
Paid admission	15,332	16,414	16,015

¹Calendar years 2017 and 2018 calculated by using vehicle counters, 2016 estimated by using physical counts during open hours only.

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Historical Comparison of Revenues and Expenditures

The following table provides a comparison of historical revenues and expenditures for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center for fiscal years 2015 through 2019:

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Revenue	\$54,128	\$270,493	\$253,742	\$432,801 ²	\$388,803
Expenses	(2,181,841) ¹	(868,693)	(954,881)	(858,737)	(984,242)
Total Income (Loss)	(\$2,127,713)	(\$598,200)	(\$701,139)	(\$425,936)	(\$595,439)

¹Includes Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center purchase cost \$2,050,000.

²Includes \$100,000 transfer from the Department of Transportation.

Attached as [Appendix B](#) is additional details regarding Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center historical revenues and expenditures.

PROPOSED STUDY PLAN

The following is a proposed study plan for the committee's consideration:

1. Review information from the Parks and Recreation Department regarding historical revenues and expenditures of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center as well as comparative data on revenues and expenditures from state parks.
2. Review information from the Parks and Recreation Department regarding historical fees and visitation data for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan.
3. Receive information from the Parks and Recreation Department and the Lewis and Clark Fort Mandan Foundation regarding historical initiatives designed to increase visitation at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.
4. Receive information from the Department of Transportation regarding funding provided for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and the potential for future funding.
5. Develop recommendations and any necessary legislation to implement the recommendations.
6. Prepare a final report for presentation to the Legislative Management.

ATTACH:2