

**Civil War Museum Feasibility Study**  
**Arkansas Department of Heritage**

**As directed by the Arkansas 91<sup>st</sup> General Assembly**  
**in Act 921 of the Regular Session 2017**

**Winter 2018**

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## Section One: Executive Summary

As directed by the Arkansas 91<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, the Department of Arkansas Heritage presents this feasibility study concerning the potential establishment of a Civil War Museum in the state of Arkansas. The purpose of this study is to analyze public interest and options for building a Civil War museum in Arkansas. This study sets out financial estimates and economic analysis as well as site comparisons to provide policymakers with the tools they need to consider all issues—cultural, educational, and economic—that apply to the decision to create a Civil War museum for the state.

Evaluating the worth of an educational institution cannot be entirely a matter of profits and losses. Museums have preserved American history for generations, reminding us of both the best and worst aspects of human nature, and teaching us how to evaluate current affairs in light of past experience. Accordingly, policymakers must take these less tangible benefits of museums into consideration as they decide how best to allocate public funds: the question of whether an educational institution is financially profitable is not always the measure of its necessity or its worth to a society.

**Section Two** of this study explores research, including existing published reports about Civil War tourism, as well as more general reports about history museum visitation. Those reports reveal widely-varying perspectives on the level of public interest in Civil War museums and/or history museums in general, as well as the economic benefits of those museums.

- Reports published by booster organizations such as the American Alliance of Museums and the Civil War Trust claim significant economic benefits to a region that houses a history museum or Civil War battlefield.
- Studies and articles by unaffiliated third parties have reported an ongoing and serious decline in visitation to history museums since the 1980s, a symptom linked to declining interest in history and civics in younger generations of the American population.
- These reports are not irreconcilable, but they raise questions for policymakers about priorities in civics education and funds allocation.

Section Two also includes comparative criteria from six other Civil War museums in surrounding states and Georgia, as well as details about average museum costs and revenue from the American Alliance of Museums.

Section Two ends with results of a market research poll conducted with Arkansas residents to assess attitudes and support for a potential Civil War museum. Initial results indicate that there is considerable public support for the idea of constructing a museum, but that respondents have strong, conflicting opinions about the correct interpretation of the Civil War. A significant number of respondents on both sides of the debate indicate that they will oppose any museum that does not agree with their own interpretation of the Civil War.

**Section Three** of this study analyzes six potential sites for a Civil War museum. Those six sites are:

- **DeVall's Bluff**, DeVall's Bluff
- **Fort Lookout**, Camden
- **Pea Ridge** National Military Park, Garfield
- **Prairie D'Ane Battlefield**, Prescott
- **Prairie Grove** Battlefield State Park, Prairie Grove
- **Reed's Bridge**, Jacksonville

The six sites were identified for consideration by the following characteristics:

- each site's historic significance;
- the existence of preserved battlefields and earthworks;
- local support for historical preservation and museums; and
- traffic patterns, visitation, and other area attractions or a tourism ecosystem.

Section Three concludes with a geospatial analysis (ArcGIS) showing comparative demographic data for each site, including population, ages of residents, household income, and other significant demographic factors helpful in projecting future museum support, revenue capture, and attendance.

**Section Four** lays out design requirements and facility building costs, as well as the requirements for accreditation with the American Alliance of Museums. Projected construction costs range from **\$3.8 million** for a very small (10,000 s.f.), renovated existing structure to **\$12.7 million** for a new, 20,000 s.f. building. If the state issued a bond to fund new museum construction, based on a very conservative rate and payback of 20 years, the cost of debt service would be as follows:

\$6.4 million bond = \$571,000 annually needed for debt service

\$12.7 million bond = \$1,120,000 annually needed for debt service

**Section Five** details projected annual operational costs for a history museum of this nature based on similar institutions. Data collected in a national survey of 190 history museums indicates a likelihood that the museum would only be able to collect revenue approximating 30 percent (or less) of its annual operating budget.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the state of Arkansas would need to allocate approximately \$1 million per year to cover the museum's salaries and operating expenses.

**Section Six** summarizes conclusions based on all aspects of the study.

## Section Two: Research

This section of the study gives an overview of current reports on the economic impact of Civil War tourism, followed by a summary of a public survey conducted by the Department of Arkansas Heritage.

### Measuring the Economic Benefits of Civil War Tourism

Quantifying the *economic impact* of Civil War and heritage tourism depends on many variables involved in travel, spending, and local economies. Because of the subjectivity involved in choosing metrics, analytical outcomes can vary.

The most recent major report on Civil War tourism was published in 2012-2013 by The Harbinger Consulting Group, commissioned by the Civil War Trust. This report titled “Blue, Gray, and Green: Economic Benefits of Civil War Battlefields” paints a rosy picture of the impact of Civil War tourism on local economies. Some of the report’s conclusions are straightforward: for example, reenactments draw big crowds to battlefields, and spending by those big crowds is economically positive for the local area.<sup>2</sup>

More difficult is the larger economic question of whether Civil War battlefields and museums will bring enough tourist money to the community to justify the cost of their construction and operation. In this case, the optimism of the “Blue, Gray, and Green” analysis is also complicated by the fact that the report was created in the middle of the celebration for the Civil War Sesquicentennial (2011-2015), a time when major historical commemorations were boosting tourism at all Civil War sites. Since the end of the sesquicentennial, some institutions are reporting declining attendance, as are most history museums around the country, as detailed later in this section.<sup>3</sup>

A brief look at some reports will give some idea of the contradictory analyses, both formal and anecdotal.

#### **Data from the 2012-2013 Comprehensive Report on Economic Benefits of Civil War Battlefields**

From analysis of data in nine (9) states, “Blue, Green, and Gray” claims the following positive outcomes for Civil War tourism:

- Visitors to Civil War battlefield parks and historic sites provide significant economic benefits to nearby communities.
- Educational and commemorative events and reenactments attract additional visitors and can add significantly to a site’s economic impact.
- Civil War travelers are “high value” visitors, being of higher educational attainment and higher household income, and likely to spend more in the local economy than the average tourist.

- Studies of cultural and heritage tourism and the economic benefits of historic preservation suggest economic values associated with Civil War travel and battlefield preservation as subsets of the broader categories.<sup>4</sup>

The report authors do acknowledge that their conclusions must be read in light of the scarcity and potential unreliability of the data: visitation statistics for one site, for example, can vary when reported by different sources.

The report includes the following economic impact conclusions:

- In the four-state Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, ten Civil War national parks attracted seven million visitors in 2007. Visitation to these parks supported 5,100 jobs and \$92 million in wage and salary income in the area.
- In Missouri, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, major state and local Civil War battlefields, historic sites, and museums drew over 20 million visitors in 2009.
- At 20 Civil War battlefields surveyed between 2003 and 2005, out-of-town visitors added \$11.7 million per year to local government tax revenues, and \$21 million to state tax revenues.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Regional and State Data on Civil War Site Visitation***

The discussion of economic impact can be brought to a more local and tangible level by the most recent visitation statistics for regional Civil War museums near Arkansas. As shown in Table 2 (p. 11), each of the Civil War museums in Texas (Forth Worth), Missouri (St. Louis) and Louisiana (New Orleans) has averaged visitation of between 20,000 and 30,000 annually.<sup>6</sup> Those visitor counts approximate the visitor numbers at Arkansas's Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park (17,000-22,000 in each of the years 2014-2016). The only Arkansas site attracting significantly more visitors is the National Park Service-administered Pea Ridge National Battlefield, which attracted almost 80,000 visitors to its visitor center in 2017, and counted 119,000 visitors to the park at large in 2016.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Perspectives from Existing Museums***

Current reports from history museums across the nation urge caution and realism, with experience-driven perspectives on the importance of site selection for new museums.

In June 2017, the president of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation wrote an open letter addressing the famous history museum's serious financial woes. In 2016, the museum lost an average of \$148,000 a day. While some of this loss resulted from debt incurred for new construction, the chief problem is the drastic decline in visitorship since the 1980s, down by 50 percent from 1 million visitors annually to only about half a million visitors.<sup>8</sup>

Historic site visitation across America has declined significantly since the 1980s: 37 percent of Americans visited a historic site in 1982, but only 24 percent visited a historic site in 2012. Reports show that the decline is most striking among young people: in 2012, only 20 percent of people aged 18 to 24 visited a historic site, which reflected an 8 percent drop in only a decade. The same article reports rapid declines in enrollment in history courses, and a sharp drop in the number of history majors over even the past few years. The authors attribute this overall disappearance of interest in history to poor history education in lower grades, decreased emphasis in the American educational system on the importance of history and civics, and a lack of historical knowledge among people below the age of 65 that in turn begets apathy toward history. In other words, “Americans are growing incurious” about the past, its lessons, and the many rich heritages that inform a multicultural nation.<sup>9</sup>

The National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, has seen a significant decline in attendance since its opening. In its first five years, from 2001-2006, visitation averaged 67,209 per year. By 2013, attendance had declined to approximately 38,000 per year.<sup>10</sup> Though there has been a soft recovery since 2013, coincident with the national economic recovery, still, visitation figures are less than two-thirds of the visitation for the first five years at an annual average of 42,900 for 2014-2017 (fiscal years).<sup>11</sup>

Anecdotal reports also indicate struggles for Civil War museums. A staff member at a nonprofit, private Civil War museum reported that the museum is having difficulty surviving financially, and is considering expanding to “other wars” such as WWI and WWII, in order to overcome what that staff member sees as a generational lack of interest in the Civil War.<sup>12</sup> Other staff members interviewed for this study related the challenges of sustaining operations with skeleton crew staffs due to constant budgetary pressure.

Table 1 (p. 9) contains data from the American Alliance of Museums showing average budgets and revenues from a sample of 190 history museums and historical societies (highlighted in the table).

Highlights from the AAM survey of museum financial data include:

- History museums earn an average of only 24% of their revenues from sources such as admissions, events, and gift shop sales.
- Revenue from government sources for history museums averages 36.4% of total revenue.
- The median value of the endowment for history museums is \$526,500, which is dwarfed by the endowments of other types of museums.
- Median earned income per visitor for history museums averages \$4.39, lower than all other types of museums, many of which average between \$6 and \$11 earned income per visitor.
- Median annual attendance for all historical institutions in the table, including history museums, historic homes or sites, and historical societies averages 10,000-11,000. Other types of museums such as art museums, children’s museums, and science museums averaged between 44,000 and 357,000 visitors per year, by contrast.

In summary, the data from the American Alliance of Museums reflects the reality that history museums are less popular than other types of museums with the American public, and therefore attract less attendance and less revenue.

Data shows that history museums are unlikely to be a profit-making endeavor. Like public education, history museums must accordingly be viewed as a worthy expense relative to the survival of an educated public, with the acknowledgement that history museums will not be primarily funded by their own revenue and instead will present an ongoing expense to the state. Generally, museums dedicated to the Civil War enjoy less private-sector financial support than other types of history museums.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, the crucial importance of historical knowledge to American citizenship calls for more attention to engaging Americans with their history and their form of government, and support for history museums is one way to consider increasing historical engagement.



Table 1. AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS MUSEUM FINANCIAL INFORMATION 2009 (most recent available)

2009 AAM Profile	Art Museum	Children's or Youth Museum	General Museum	Historic Home or Site	History Museum or Historical Society	Living Collections	Natural History or Anthropology	Science or Tech	Specialized Museum	Overall 2009 Survey
Sample Size	156	18	71	89	190	17	32	25	73	671
Median Attendance	44,878	130,870	58,500	11,700	10,000	208,574	58,176	357,103	22,000	26,500
% Charging Admission Fees	47.6%	94.1%	63.2%	77.4%	49.2%	64.3%	63.3%	96.0%	57.1%	59.0%
Median Adult Admission Charge	\$8.00	\$7.50	\$7.00	\$6.00	\$5.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$7.00	\$7.00
Median Operating Income	\$2,379,176	\$1,729,532	\$1,930,895	\$350,000	\$260,000	\$3,072,452	\$3,256,810	\$7,857,138	\$602,080	\$1,168,559
Average Earned Revenues	21.5%	48.3%	24.8%	31.7%	24.0%	30.0%	31.1%	48.8%	33.2%	27.6%
Average Revenues: Private Donors	46.6%	27.8%	33.7%	34.6%	31.0%	20.3%	38.3%	28.9%	37.7%	35.2%
Average Revenues: Investment Sources	18.6%	12.1%	8.8%	10.7%	8.5%	14.3%	6.4%	3.0%	9.3%	11.5%
Average Revenues: Government Sources	13.3%	11.7%	32.6%	23.0%	36.4%	35.4%	24.2%	19.3%	19.9%	24.1%
Median Value of Endowment	\$9,744,500	\$414,875	\$2,539,870	\$1,202,817	\$526,500	\$14,253,806	\$5,078,964	\$1,829,599	\$2,526,508	\$1,580,537
Median Earned Income per Visitor	\$8.21	\$6.31	\$7.16	\$9.44	\$4.39	\$4.87	\$6.76	\$11.14	\$10.00	\$7.22
Median Operating Expenses	\$2,317,675	\$2,522,615	\$1,798,754	\$298,200	\$262,206	\$3,630,530	\$3,237,600	\$6,827,362	\$778,859	\$1,166,000
Operating Cost per Visitor	\$49.94	\$15.07	\$30.21	\$28.33	\$26.73	\$15.10	\$29.74	\$20.95	\$32.25	\$31.40
Staff salaries as % of total expenses (Median)	48.6%	54.5%	53.5%	56.0%	50.8%	63.9%	60.8%	45.8%	39.9%	49.9%
Collections care as % of total expenses	6.4%	4.1%	9.9%	4.9%	8.5%	26.7%	17.3%	1.2%	10.0%	8.0%

## Comparable Civil War Museums: Missouri, Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia

Existing Civil War museums provide a variety of models for consideration. Personal interviews with the curators or staff of these six institutions provided data from the museums as well as insight on strategies for founding successful museums. Curators also made experiential assessments of existing support for Civil War museums in their region.

### **Highlights of Comparative Criteria for Six Civil War Museums** (see Table 2, p. 11)

Funding: One site selected for comparison, Johnsonville State Historic Park in Tennessee, is not a full-sized museum but instead a state-funded historic battlefield with a visitor's center, which might be described as a mini-museum. This site was included in this study in order to show potential similarities to Arkansas state sites such as Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park.

Most other Civil War museums are privately funded, and several report significant challenges in trying to become self-sustaining. The only other publicly-funded example is The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, which is funded by the City of Kennesaw, Georgia. This city-funded museum also reports that generated revenue does not cover the full cost of operating expenses, despite its status as a strategically-designed facility with tremendous appeal to families and double the annual visitation of other comparable museums.

Visitation: Visitation for the six comparable museums ranged from 20,000 annually to 42,000 annually, with an average estimated at 23,000 (approximate).

Size in Square Footage: Comparable museum facilities ranged from tiny, historic Confederate Memorial Hall in New Orleans (3500 s.f. with 800 s.f. of storage space) to the large Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History in Kennesaw, Georgia (70,000 s.f.), which includes early childhood education facilities with playspace/active learning.

Founding Date: The oldest museum in the comparison pool was founded in 1891 (Confederate Memorial Hall, New Orleans) and the newest in 2013 (Missouri Civil War Museum).

Subsidiary Theme or Interpretive Angle: The Civil War Naval Museum (Columbus, GA) focuses on ships and nautical history of the Civil War, while the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History (Kennesaw, GA) focuses on railroads and trains. One staff member of the Southern Museum stated that she believes the railroad component (and its accompanying focus on children's education) is key to the museum's relative success and high attendance. She states: "Just because you build a Civil War museum does not necessarily mean you will be successful or have high attendance. You need a "hook," so to speak, that anchors your interpretation and is a major draw for attendance."<sup>14</sup>

Table 2. COMPARISON OF SELECTED CRITERIA FOR SIX CIVIL WAR MUSEUMS

	Missouri Civil War Museum (St. Louis, MO)	Texas Civil War Museum (Fort Worth, TX)	Confederate Memorial Hall (New Orleans, LA)	Johnsonville State Historic Park (Tennessee)	National Civil War Naval Museum (Columbus, GA)	Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History (Kennesaw, GA)
<b>Description</b>	Housed in historic Jefferson Barracks, on a burial ground for 16,000 soldiers. Includes a research collection of 13K books and a theater as well as galleries. Located on 2000 acre military base. 1000 artifacts, uniforms, lifesize dioramas.	Galleries, 75-seat theater, artifacts donated by founder including 300 Victorian dresses, artifacts on loan from United Daughters of the Confederacy	Historic building constructed by founder to house collected artifacts, primarily one large high-ceilinged gallery plus a smaller side gallery. Mostly glass display cases with wide variety of artifacts, textual narrative, pictures, uniforms.	State park with a new (2012) Welcome Center including museum, theater, and exhibits. Preserved earthworks are the redoubts of Fort Johnson. Also includes 8 miles of trails, bank fishing, geocaching.	Exhibits include surviving Confederate warship, shipwrecks, several ship replicas, Naval flags, and other artifacts, including working 15,000 lb Brooke Rifle (cannon)	Exhibits include: "Railroads, Lifeline of the Civil War" including actual locomotives and locomotive works. Children's museum building with playspace/active learning. Archival center.
<b>Square Footage</b>	22,000 s.f., books will go into basement of 6000 s.f. outbuilding with an upper floor to host events	19,500 s.f. Of that total, 15,000 s.f. is exhibit space	3500 sf, plus 800 s.f. of storage vaults	6000 s.f total with 2800 s.f. of exhibit space plus 500 s.f. theater	40,000 s.f., 30,000 is exhibit space (Ships need a lot of space, and in addition, the planners had intended a phase II with office space. Phase II never materialized, which means there are now makeshift offices under stair ramps.)	Main building 50,000 s.f. (expanded 2001) Jolley Education Center, 8,000 s.f. (built 2007) Research Center for archival material 8,200 s.f. (built 2016)
<b>Annual Visitors, approx.</b>	30,000 from 2013-2016, significant decline in 2017	20,000 per year. A similar museum (Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame) in the heart of downtown has 80,000 per year.	25,000, no visible decrease this year	30,621 to park total in 2016, visitor center figures lower at 4206.	2015 - 18,000 2016 - 20,000 2017 - 22,000	Approximately 42,000
<b>Year Opened</b>	2013	2006	1891	1971, new Welcome Center/museum in 2012	1962, relocated to current \$8MM facility in 2001	1972 as "Big Shanty Museum," later "Kennesaw Museum"
<b>Admission Costs</b>	Individual - \$9.00 Veteran - \$5.00 Senior - \$6.00 Student - \$5.00 Children, military, and members free Memberships \$30-75	Adult - \$6.00 Children - \$3.00 Under 7 - Free	Adult - \$10.00 Children - \$5.00 Members free Adult membership starts at \$35.00 individual, \$50.00 family, sponsorships are higher	No entry or parking fees	Adults - \$7.50 Military/Seniors - \$6.50 Students - \$6.00 6 and under - free	Adults - \$7.50 Seniors - \$6.50 Children 4-12 - \$5.50 3 and under - free

	<b>Missouri Civil War Museum (St. Louis, MO)</b>	<b>Texas Civil War Museum (Fort Worth, TX)</b>	<b>Confederate Memorial Hall (New Orleans, LA)</b>	<b>Johnsonville State Historic Park (Tennessee)</b>	<b>National Civil War Naval Museum (Columbus, GA)</b>	<b>Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History (Kennesaw, GA)</b>
<b>Public or Private</b>	Private nonprofit, Mark Trout, founder and CEO. Museum considering expanding into 20th century wars to increase visitation/revenue.	Private nonprofit, museum building purchased by Ray Richey, founder and curator. Current campaign to raise \$5 million in private donations to create a self-sustaining endowment.	Private nonprofit, constructed by 19th-century philanthropist Frank Howard	State park, funded by state at approx. \$377,000 annually	Private nonprofit, but for many years, staff salaries and insurance were paid by the City of Columbus. In 2015, the city ceased funding and now the museum is surviving on its income, which is quite a feat and possible only because they are running with such a small staff.	The museum is a department of the City of Kennesaw, with staffing, personnel cost, operational expenses covered by the general fund of the City. Generated revenue does not cover the full cost of operating expenses. Museum has expanded through a combination of capital campaigns, grants, state/federal funding, etc.
<b>Distance from Metro Center</b>	10 miles from downtown St. Louis	9 miles from downtown Fort Worth, no public transit	Located in downtown New Orleans	76 miles from Nashville, 40 miles off I-40 exit on US 46/US 70.	In downtown Columbus (pop. 209,000), 100 miles from Atlanta	27 miles from downtown Atlanta, population 32,000 but Atlanta metro area is 5.8 million
<b>AAM Accredited?</b>	No	No	No	n/a	Member, not accredited but accreditation is part of 5-year plan	Member, but not accredited

## Summary of Published Research and Reports

With conflicting published reports available on the economic health and benefits of museums, policymakers must be aware that a Civil War Museum is highly unlikely to be profitable or self-sustaining in a corporate sense. Few history museums can claim to be self-sustaining, and many rely on either governmental or charitable funding for their survival. Though there are some potential sources of revenue capture (admission charges, gift shop, or local taxes, if the community approves), the most likely scenario is that earned revenue will only somewhat mitigate the annual operating costs of a Civil War museum. Traffic-conscious site choice for a museum might make some difference in revenue capture, but historic preservation may be deemed more important than traffic-based differences in revenue capture.

Granted the likely necessity of ongoing, significant financial support from the state for a potential museum, policymakers will need to consider preservation priorities and revenue capture in light of the state's other budgetary needs.

In addition, faced with declining public interest in American history and civics, lower civic engagement, and reduced public interest in museum visitation, policymakers will need to balance educational needs with fiscal realities.

## **Market Research Poll of Arkansas Residents on Potential Civil War Museum**

A link to an online poll was sent to 20,000 residents of Arkansas by email. Of that group, 1,019 responded by filling out the survey, a response rate of 5.1 percent.

### **Summary of Results:**

- The poll results show considerable opinion in support of a Civil War museum in the state (at 68 percent of the polling sample).
- It is also likely (based on write-in responses) that any interpretation of the Civil War chosen by the museum curators would generate public controversy.

A sizable number of the poll respondents (20%) stated unsolicited and conflicting strong opinions about the reasons for the Civil War. They asserted that they would only support a museum that agreed with their interpretation of the war and its causes and consequences, and would oppose a museum that supported “the other side.”

Because these respondents differed from one another so vehemently, and demanded in many instances that the museum actively exclude certain types of historical interpretation, it logically follows that no matter what interpretation is chosen for a potential Civil War museum, even an attempt to represent “both sides” will lead to considerable heated public debate and criticism of the state’s actions. Public dissension should be weighed with the rest of the benefits and costs of a museum, as a part of this feasibility study.

### ***MAJOR QUESTION: SUPPORT FOR MUSEUM***

**Residents were asked: “Would you support a Civil War museum being established in Arkansas?”**

68% responded YES.  
12% responded NO.  
20% responded IT DEPENDS.

**The follow-up question asked “Why or why not?” and allowed open-ended responses. 715 of the poll’s respondents answered this question while 303 did not respond.**

**Those 715 responses fell into five major categories, summarized as follows:**

#### **1) Preserving history is important/History education is crucial**

A majority of respondents stated that their support for the museum was based on a belief that history (or specifically, Civil War history) needs to be preserved and people need to be educated about history.

## 2) “I will only support a museum that correctly interprets the war”

144 responses or 20% of the total (715) wrote in their own words a strong opinion on the importance of correct interpretation of the Civil War. They stated that that they would not support a museum unless it interpreted the reasons for the War in a way that agreed with their own perspective.

These responders included words such as “tell the truth,” “fair,” “accurate,” “biased/unbiased,” “fake facts,” “insulting,” or “politically-correct” to describe their concerns.

Many of these respondents held diametrically-opposed opinions about how the War should be interpreted.

69 responses expressed specific concerns that could collectively be described as “anti-Confederate”: including statements that any museum needs to reflect that the cause of the war was slavery, not state’s rights. Many of these respondents stated opposition for “glorifying the Lost Cause,” and that they could not support a museum that did so.

17 responses strongly advocated for the *states’ rights* view of the Civil War, with statements that the interpretation of the museum should not be about “slavery” and that they cannot support any “politically correct” museum that demeans the South.

58 responses expressed strong concerns about interpretation but were not positionally identifiable. For example, these answers said that the museum must “tell the truth” or “be accurate” but did not further elaborate what the respondent thought “truth” meant. Some of these respondents indicated their belief that the museum must be curated by “real historians and scholars” to avoid bias, but again, did not provide enough additional commentary to identify a particular interpretive perspective.

## 3) Concern about painful or divisive subject matter

21 respondents (3%) opposed the museum because they felt such a project was too divisive given the painful subject matter and current controversies.

## 4) We have enough museums and Civil War sites/It is too expensive and shouldn’t be state-funded

48 responses (7%) stated some objection to the expense of creating a new taxpayer-funded museum. Many of those respondents stated that Arkansas already has enough Civil War sites and material in other museums.

- 5) We need a central museum to pull together the heritage materials and sites/We do not have enough museums

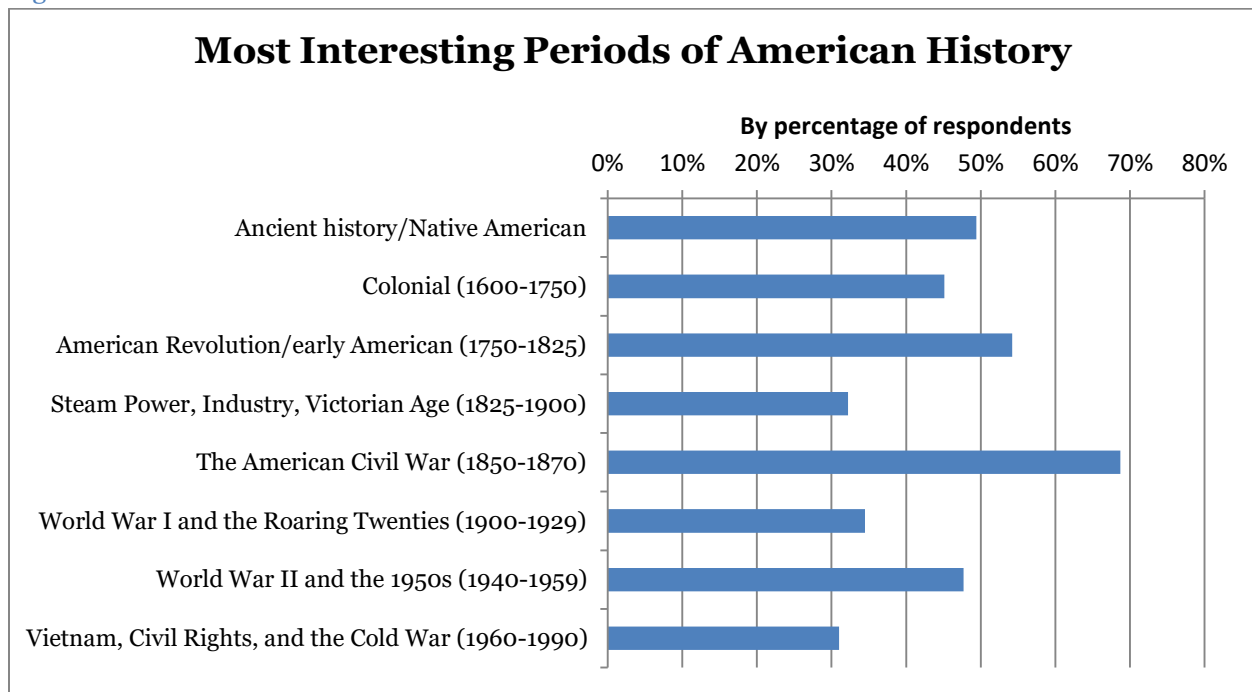
29 responses (4%) specifically stated the need for a central museum to give more complete interpretation and/or support other Arkansas Civil War sites.

#### **ANCILLARY QUESTION 1: INTEREST IN CIVIL WAR**

Respondents were asked to select one or more of the periods in American history that interested them the most. 793 respondents answered the question.

The American Civil War garnered the most interest, at 68.7%, with the American Revolution/early America second at 54.2%.

Figure 1



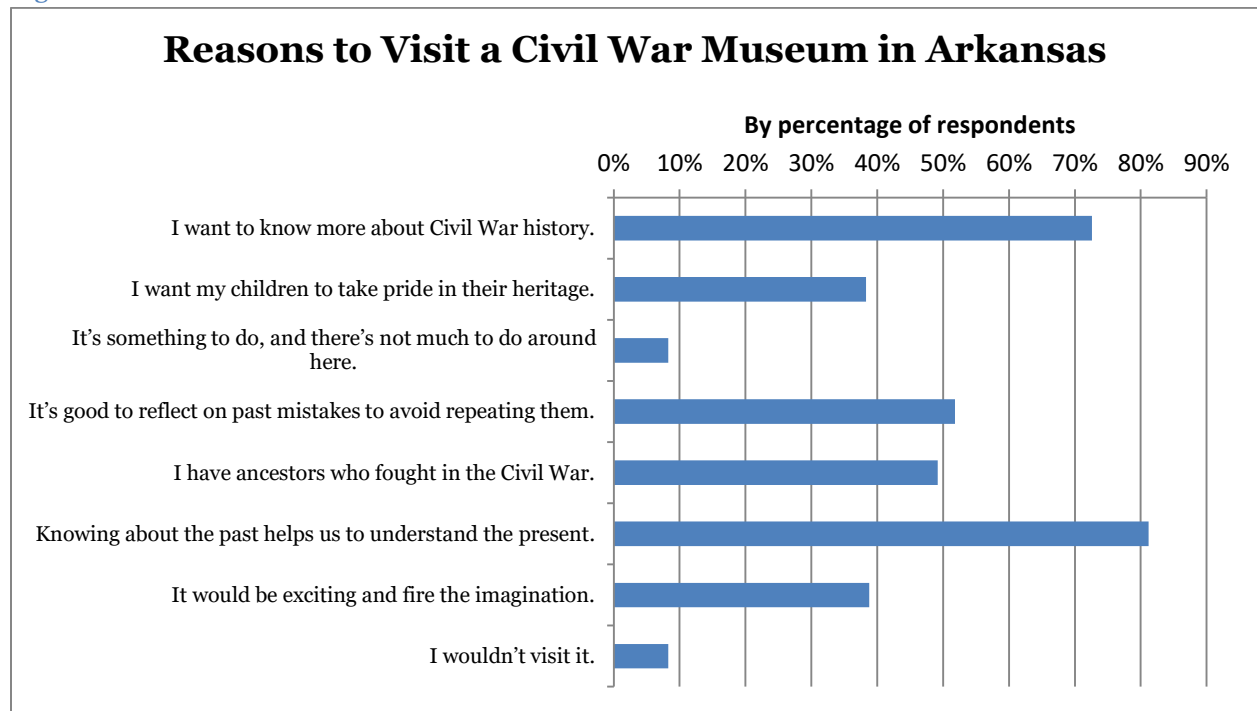
#### **ANCILLARY QUESTION 2: REASONS TO VISIT A CIVIL WAR MUSEUM**

“If there were a Civil War museum in Arkansas, which of the following reasons might make you visit? Check all that apply.” (760 respondents)

The leading responses were “Knowing about the past helps us to understand the present” (81%) and “I want to know more about Civil War history” (72.6%).



Figure 2

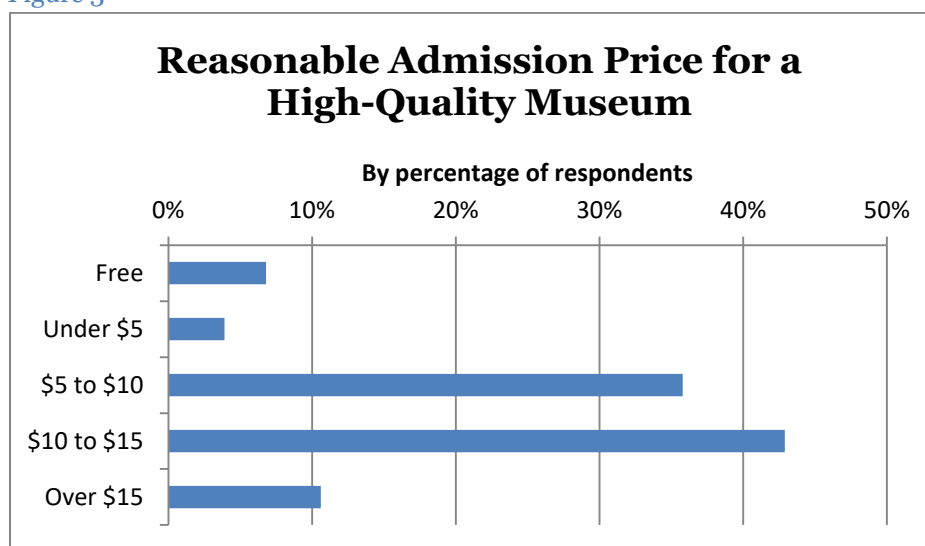


#### ANCILLARY QUESTION 3: OPINIONS ON TICKET PRICES AND TRAVEL

“What do you think is a reasonable ticket price for a high-quality museum?” (780 respondents)

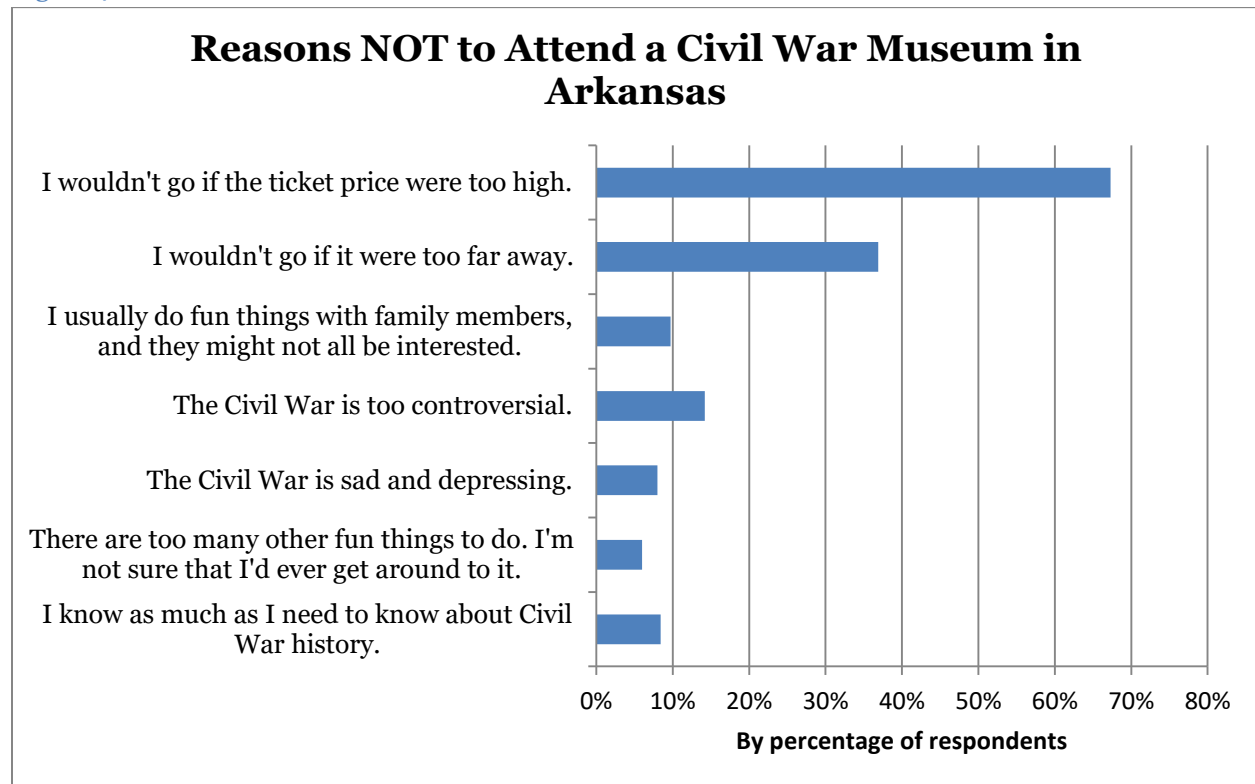
79% of the respondents chose either “\$5 to \$10” or “\$10 to \$15” as their response. Interpreters must bear in mind that this respondent group had higher levels of education and income than many state residents. However, it is also the group of respondents most likely to attend the museum, based on national demographics for history museum attendance.

Figure 3



In an interesting corollary on admission prices, when respondents were asked about reasons they might NOT visit a Civil War museum in Arkansas, 67% answered that they would not attend if the ticket price were too high. Taken in conjunction with the other admission price answers, one can conclude that if the ticket price were to exceed \$10, some residents might not attend a potential museum.

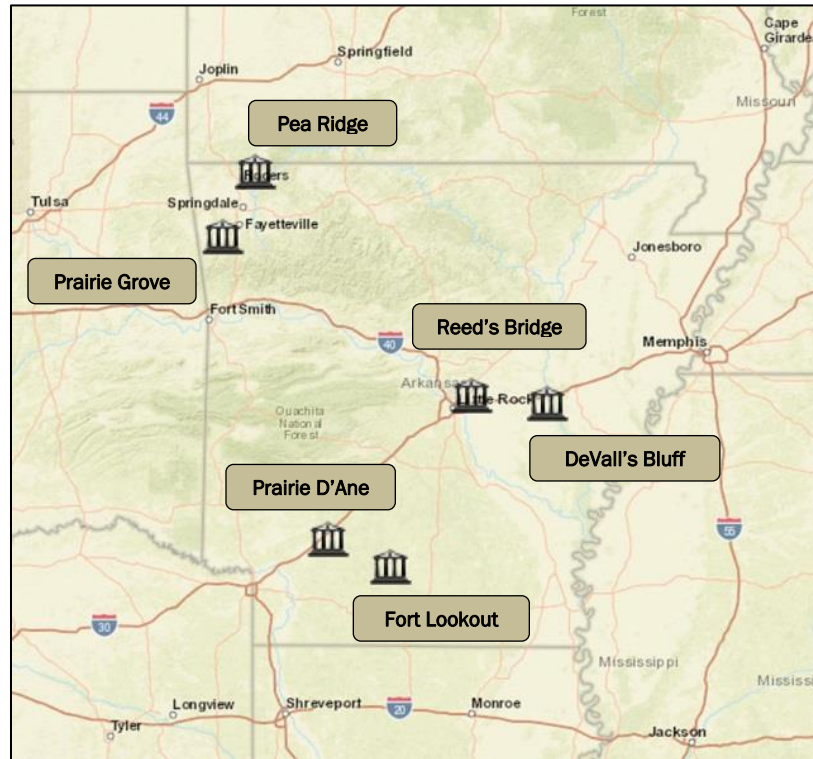
Figure 4



Also notable is the reluctance to travel too far out of one's path in order to attend a museum, which points to a need to locate any potential museum in an area with pre-existing traffic and visitors. (See Figure 13 in Section Three.)

## Section Three: Comparison of Potential Sites for Proposed Civil War Museum

Figure 5



### Site Characteristics

Six (6) potential locations have been identified for consideration based on:

- each site's historic significance;
- the existence of preserved battlefields and earthworks;
- local support for historical preservation and museums; and
- traffic patterns, visitation, and other area attractions or a tourism ecosystem.

- 1) DeVal's Bluff (Prairie County, Eastern AR)
- 2) Fort Lookout National Historic Landmark, Camden ( Ouachita County, SW AR)
- 3) Pea Ridge National Military Park ( Benton County, NW AR)
- 4) Prairie D'Ane Battlefield Site, Prescott (Nevada County; SW AR)
- 5) Prairie Grove Battlefield and Cane Hill Cemetery (Washington County, NW AR)
- 6) Reed's Bridge Battlefield Heritage Park (Jacksonville, Pulaski County, Central AR)

## **1. DeVall's Bluff (Prairie County, Eastern AR)**

- DeVall's Bluff was part of the White River Expedition after the capture of Arkansas Post in January 1863.<sup>15</sup>
- An extensive network of earthwork fortifications, known as Fort Lincoln, was built during the war for the defense of DeVall's Bluff's federal base. It currently survives on private property.<sup>16</sup>
- Proposed site has close proximity to US 70/AR 33 with traffic count of 2,500 vehicles/day<sup>17</sup>; closest Interstate is I-40 at Hazen (6.5 miles) with traffic count of 30,000/day.<sup>18</sup>
- The Fort Lincoln Freedom Fest has been a recent yearly event commemorating the area's Civil War Heritage but did not take place in 2016 or 2017.<sup>19</sup>
- The Prairie County Historical Museum in DeVall's Bluff closed on July 23, 2017 and has yet to reopen as of October 12.<sup>20</sup>
- Lodging capacity: none in DeVall's Bluff; nearby room capacities at Hazen (6.5 miles, 1 motel, 40 units); Lonoke (17 miles, 4 motels, 240 units); Stuttgart (19 miles, 2 motels, 110 units); and Brinkley (24 miles, 3 motels, 197 units)<sup>21</sup>
- In addition to Fort Lincoln, heritage tourism sites in the area include the Downs Prairie Natural Area, which is one of the few surviving tracts of tallgrass prairie in east central Arkansas, and is an extension of Railroad Prairie Natural Area (RRPNA).<sup>22</sup> Near DeVall's Bluff, at Hazen, the Railroad Prairie Natural Area is a bird sanctuary featuring native wildflowers and trees of the prairie. The site preserves a pristine image of what the area was like before the dawn of modern agriculture.<sup>23</sup>

## **2. Fort Lookout National Historic Landmark, Camden ( Ouachita County, SW AR)**

- Fort Lookout is a well-preserved earthwork "built in defense of the city by Confederate Army forces in early 1864, preparatory to the Union Army's Camden Expedition (March–May 1864)." Fort Lookout was occupied at times by both Confederate and Union forces moving through the state.<sup>24</sup>
- Proposed site has close proximity to US 79B with traffic count of 4,900 vehicles/day and US 278/US 79 with 9,500 vehicles/day<sup>25</sup>; no Interstate access; closest Interstate access is Interstate 30 at Prescott (39.7 miles)<sup>26</sup>
- Ouachita County Historical Society plans to locate a museum in an existing structure adjacent to Fort Lookout.<sup>27</sup>

- Lodging capacity: 3 motels with combined 175 units; nearby room capacities at El Dorado ( 28 miles; 8 motels: 601 units ), Fordyce (27 miles, 1 motel: 46 units) and Magnolia (30 miles; 2 motels:124 units )<sup>28</sup>
- Heritage tourism opportunities in the area include the McCollum-Chidester House Museum (now owned and maintained by the Ouachita County Historical Society)<sup>29</sup>, the Camden Visitors Center And Museum<sup>30</sup>, Poison Spring State Park (commemorating part of the Camden Expedition)<sup>31</sup>, and the Washington Street Historic District, considered the city's most historically significant neighborhood.<sup>32</sup>
- Non-heritage tourism opportunities in the area include Camden Riverfront Park on the Ouachita River<sup>33</sup>, Carnes Park & Splash Pad<sup>34</sup>, White Oak Lake<sup>35</sup>, and Sandy Beach Park.<sup>36</sup>
- The Historical Society's plan to establish a museum has potential to complement any plan to place a Civil War museum along this portion of the Camden Expedition Scenic Byway.

### **3. Pea Ridge National Military Park ( Benton County, NW AR)**

- Also known as the site of the Battle of Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge is an installation of the National Park Service. The park preserves the 4,300 acre battlefield where a pivotal Civil War battle was fought—the most important battle in the Western theatre. Known as “The Battle That Saved Missouri for the Union,” Pea Ridge is the most intact Civil War battlefield anywhere in the United States.<sup>37</sup>
- Proposed site has close proximity to US 62 with traffic count of 11,000 vehicles/day, and AR 72 with 3,500 vehicles/day.<sup>38</sup>
- The park features a 7-mile self-guided road tour that also contains 28 interpretive exhibits, 9 miles of horse trails, and 7 miles of hiking trails.<sup>39</sup>
- The park also hosts numerous special events, including living history reenactments such as a recent demonstration of how artillery affected the outcome of the battle by blank firing from a reproduction six pound cannon.<sup>40</sup>
- Lodging capacity: None in Pea Ridge; 9 motels in nearby Bentonville (9 miles) with 813 units; and Rogers (11 miles) with 6 motels with 564 units.<sup>41</sup>
- Heritage tourism sites in the area include the Museum of Native American History, The Peel Mansion Museum & Heritage Gardens, War Eagle Mill, Rogers Historical Museum, Scenic Highway 12, and War Eagle Cavern on Beaver Lake.<sup>42</sup>

- Other attractions in the Pea Ridge area include the Big Sugar Golf Club, Country House Quilting, Sew 'N' Sew Quilt Shop, and the Wonderland Tree Farm.<sup>43</sup> Nearby Bentonville features the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Walmart Museum, the Melvin Ford Aquatic Center, 21c Museum Hotel Bentonville, and the Walmart Arkansas Music Pavilion and Daisy Airgun Museum in nearby Rogers.<sup>44</sup>

#### **4. Prairie D'Ane Battlefield Site, Prescott (Nevada County; SW AR)**

- Historic significance: Key point in preventing General Frederick Steele's planned advance on Washington (Rump Confederate Capitol)<sup>45</sup>
- Close proximity to Interstate 30/Exit 44 (US 371)
- US 371 near the site has traffic count of 3,500/day I-30 through the area carries 26,000 vehicles/day<sup>46</sup>
- Interpretive plan in place<sup>47</sup>
- Lodging capacity: 42 units at Americas Best Value Inn & Suites Prescott at US 371 and I-30<sup>48</sup>; nearby room capacities at Hope ( 13 miles; 5 motels: 345 units<sup>49</sup>), and Arkadelphia (29 miles; 513 units<sup>50</sup>)
- Key to Camden Expedition Scenic Byway (under development)<sup>51</sup>
- Potential part of an expanding heritage tourism hub that would include Crater of Diamonds State Park (Murfreesboro, Pike County), the Nevada County Depot & Museum (Prescott, Nevada County), Historic Washington State Park, the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site, the Hope Visitor Center & Museum, the Cairo-Fulton Depot and Paul W. Klipsch Museum, and the Henry C. Yerger School Museum (Hope, Hempstead County). The Hope Watermelon Festival also attracts over 50,000 visitors to the area each year.<sup>52</sup>
- Other non-heritage tourism opportunities that can attract visitors to these sites within easy driving distance include Millwood Lake (Hempstead, Howard, and Little River Counties), Lake Greeson (Pike County), and Lake DeGray (Clark County). The area's proximity to Hot Springs gives Prescott the opportunity to benefit from a broad base of tourism potential where none had previously existed, along with a community that appears eager to support preservation plans.

## **5. Prairie Grove Battlefield and Cane Hill Cemetery (Washington County, NW AR)**

- The site of the Battle of Prairie Grove is nationally known as one of the country's most intact Civil War battlefields. The park interprets the battle and preserves the battle site where, on December 7, 1862, the Confederate Army of the Trans-Mississippi engaged in a fierce clash with the Union Army of the Frontier. The result after heavy fighting was over 2,700 casualties. After the Confederate failure to hold back the Union advance, Prairie Grove was the last major engagement of the war in northwest Arkansas.<sup>53</sup> Prairie Grove is part of the Arkansas State Parks System.
- Proposed site has close proximity to US 62B with an average daily traffic count of 6000 vehicles a day; and US 62 with 8400 vehicles a day.<sup>54</sup>
- The park contains three kinds of tours: a geocache tour (self-guided, 15-point virtual cache tour of the park grounds), a self-guided driving tour (with a CD available for purchase describing the 14 stops along the tour), a guided walking tour of the battlefield which includes the historic Morrow and Latta houses, and begins at the Hindman Hall Museum (nominal fee), and a presentation website developed by the Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies at the University of Arkansas. This technology allows visitors to familiarize themselves with the battle site either by watching the video of the battle or by the use of interactive maps, which features audio segments, 3D images of the historic troop movements, and other historic accounts.<sup>55</sup>
- Lodging capacity: None in Prairie Grove; 17 motels in nearby Fayetteville (13.5 miles) with 1,657 units.<sup>56</sup>
- Other heritage tourism sites in the area include the Clinton House Museum, Old Main at the University of Arkansas, the Historic Downtown Square, the Arkansas Air and Military Museum, the Ozark Military Museum, Headquarters House Museum and Garden, the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, and Devil's Den State Park,<sup>57</sup> along with the Arkansas Archeological Survey Headquarters<sup>58</sup> and the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History.<sup>59</sup>
- Other attractions in the area include Barnhill Arena, Bud Walton Arena, and Donald W. Reynolds Razorback Stadium, Lake Wedington Recreational Area, the Razorback Museum, the Fayetteville Farmers' Market, and the Fayetteville Ale Trail.<sup>60</sup>

## **6. Reed's Bridge Battlefield Heritage Park (Jacksonville, Pulaski County, Central AR)**

- Reed's Bridge Battlefield Heritage Park preserves the Action at Bayou Meto, which was also called the Action at Reed's Bridge. It took place on August 27, 1863, as Confederate troops sought to hinder the Union advance toward Little Rock.<sup>61</sup>
- Proposed site has close proximity to AR 161 with traffic count of 4,900 vehicles/day and US 278/US 79 with 10,000 vehicles/day; closest Interstate-grade access is US 67/167 with 77000 vehicles/day<sup>62</sup>; closest Interstate access is I-40 at North Little Rock (10.2 miles)<sup>63</sup>
- Local preservation efforts are ongoing.
- Includes seven acres on the banks of the Bayou Meto<sup>64</sup>
- Driving tours of the area feature exhibit panels commemorating Reed's Bridge; the Battle of Brownsville, near Lonoke<sup>65</sup>; the Skirmishes at Ashley's Mills and Willow Beach Lake, near Scott<sup>66</sup>; and Mount Holly Cemetery<sup>67</sup> and Fourche Bayou.<sup>68</sup>
- Lodging capacity (Jacksonville proper): 6 motels with combined 362 units; multiple lodging options at nearby North Little Rock, Little Rock, Cabot<sup>69</sup>
- Heritage tourism opportunities in the area include the Jacksonville Museum of Military History<sup>70</sup>, the Jacksonville Guitar Center and Museum, which has an expansive collection of "cowboy guitars" painted with the likenesses of Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, and others<sup>71</sup>, and the Camp Nelson Confederate Cemetery in nearby Cabot<sup>72</sup>, along with numerous heritage tourism opportunities in nearby Little Rock.
- Non-heritage tourism opportunities in the area include the Bayou Meto Urban Canoe Trail, a two mile shaded waterway that has views of large cypress trees, beaver dams, and a plethora of wildlife<sup>73</sup>, the Deer Run<sup>74</sup> and Hickory Creek Golf Courses<sup>75</sup>
- The site naturally complements the military history/heritage tourism focus of Jacksonville's Museum of Military History and Little Rock Air Force Base, as well as similar themed heritage tourism attractions in the Little Rock area such as the MacArthur Museum of Military History<sup>76</sup>, the Arkansas Korean War Veterans Memorial<sup>77</sup>, Historic Mount Holly Cemetery<sup>78</sup>, the war monuments on the State Capitol grounds<sup>79</sup>, and the Old State House Museum<sup>80</sup>, among others.



### **Model for Collaborative Efforts at Potential Sites**

The Discovery Network is a collaborative network of 18 Arkansas museums including the Mid-America Science Museum in Hot Springs and the Arkansas State University Museum in Jonesboro. The Discovery Network seeks to accomplish with a **mobile museum vehicle** the following objectives:

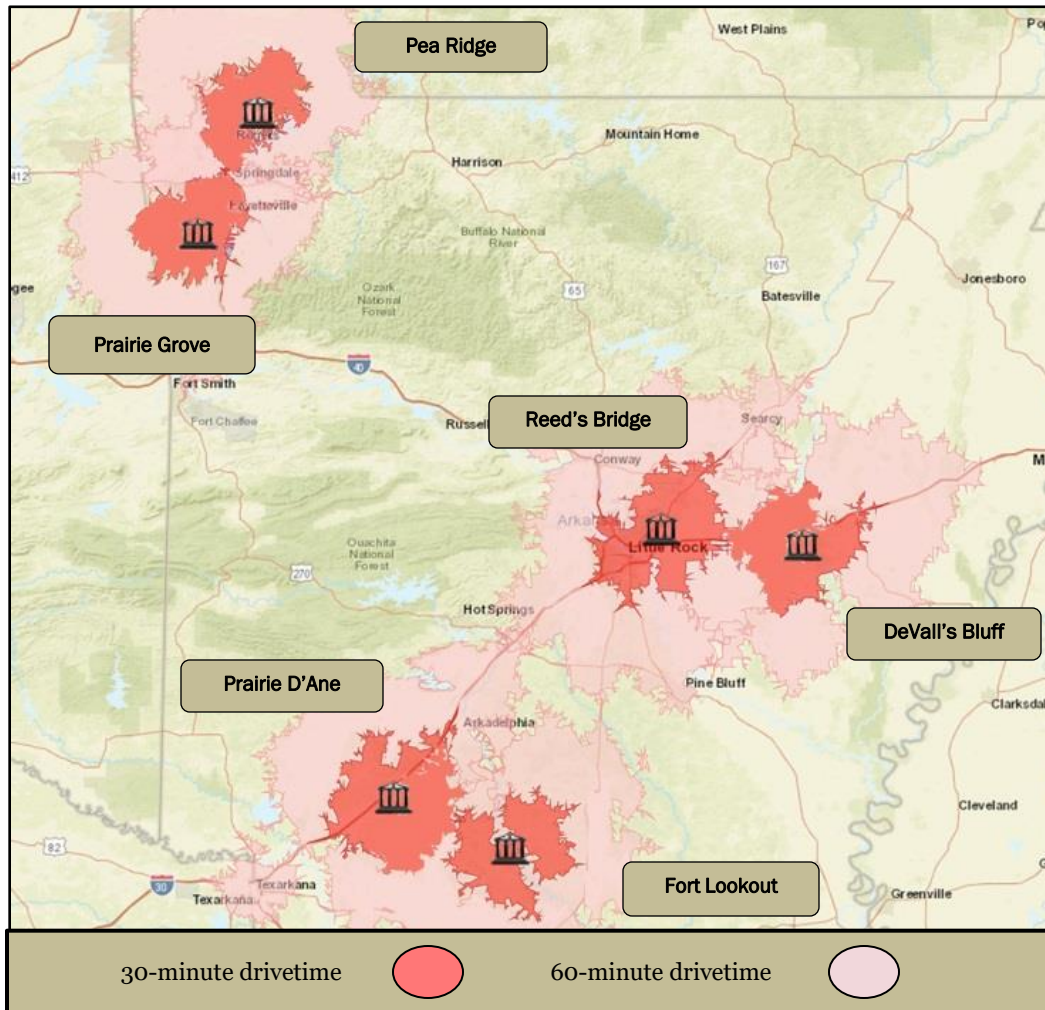
- engaging interactive custom and rental exhibits;
- ongoing contact with advisory groups;
- teacher workshops;
- mobile making/tinkering kits; and
- networking with other museums, libraries and community centers in the state and throughout the country.

All of these efforts will contribute to a unique synergy of systems to improve the quality of educational experiences in Arkansas<sup>81</sup> and assist with coordination of a potential Civil War museum site with other museums and audiences around the state.

## Location Demographics: Geospatial Analysis (GIS)

### POTENTIAL MUSEUM SITES: RESIDENT MARKETS

Figure 6



This section analyzes available resident markets for six potential sites for a proposed Arkansas Civil War museum, sites which are described in full in the preceding site comparison and depicted in Figure 5.

- **DeVall's Bluff**, DeVall's Bluff
- **Fort Lookout**, Camden
- **Pea Ridge** National Military Park
- **Prairie D'Ane**, Prescott
- **Prairie Grove** Battlefield State Park
- **Reed's Bridge**, Jacksonville

### *Resident Market Definition*

Resident markets are analyzed with a “gravity model” context, meaning that the closer residents live to a museum, the more likely they are to visit.<sup>82</sup> Resident market is here divided into Primary Resident Market and Secondary Resident Market.

**Primary Resident Market is defined as the population residing within a 30-minute drive of the center of each of the proposed sites.** This population is not only more likely to visit the museum frequently but will also provide the most likely pool of potential volunteers. As museum volunteers tend to skew toward residents over 50 years of age and museum visitors often are motivated by a desire to educate their children, the age demographics of the population surrounding each site may also influence numbers of visitors and volunteers.

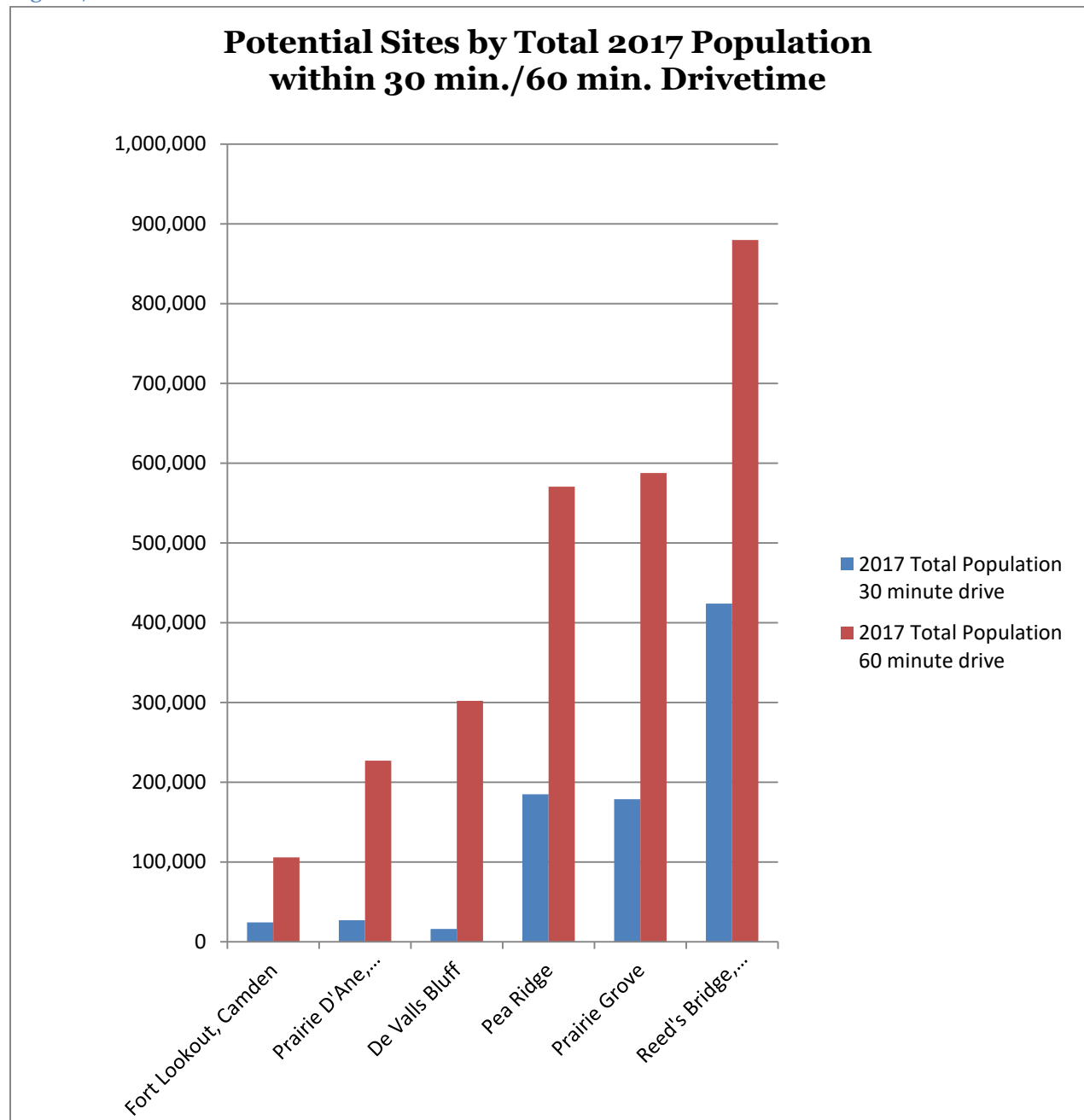
**Secondary Resident Market is defined as the population residing within a 60-minute drive of the center of each of the proposed sites.** Because museum supporters also tend to have higher educational attainment and household income, data sets revealing those demographics also reveal projected levels of local support for a museum.

Total 2017 population for each of the sites is outlined in Table 3 below and appears as Figure 7.

Table 3

Site	2017 Total Population 30 minute drive	2017 Total Population 60 minute drive
Fort Lookout, Camden	24,312	105,656
Prairie D'Ane, Prescott	26,912	227,097
De Valls Bluff	16,086	302,131
Pea Ridge	184,933	570,412
Prairie Grove	178,780	587,548
Reed's Bridge, Jacksonville	423,842	879,761

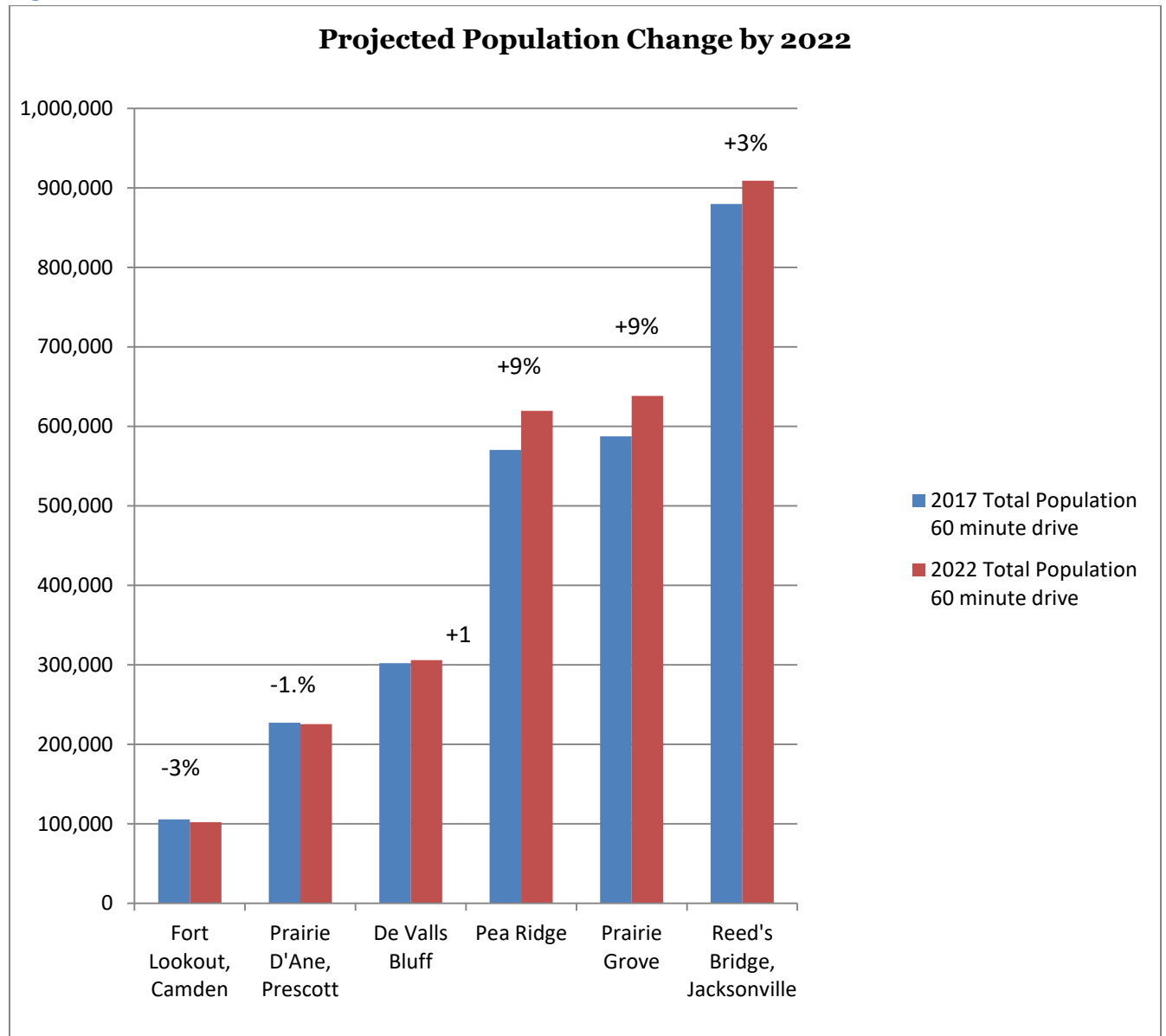
Figure 7



The three sites on the right of the chart (Reed's Bridge, Prairie Grove, Pea Ridge) each contain a Primary Resident Market that is at least five to ten times the size of the three smaller markets on the left. The Secondary Resident Market for the three more populous sites is approximately double to triple the comparable secondary markets for the three smaller sites.

Figure 8 shows projected population change for the next five years (through 2022) for each potential site.

Figure 8



Though the Reed's Bridge site will remain the most populous, the sites at Prairie Grove and Pea Ridge show the most striking, rapid population growth within their Secondary Resident Markets. Fort Lookout and Prairie D'Ane lie in markets projected to show slight population decline, and Devall's Bluff will experience only slight growth.

### ***Age and education as predictors of visitation and volunteerism***

Due to declining interest in history in the young American public, older residents are more likely to provide both visitation and volunteerism for a proposed history museum, at least initially.<sup>83</sup> That initial public support will prove important to the early health of the museum, and consequently, to the museum's potential ability to prosper and generate more interest from younger generations.<sup>84</sup>

The number of residents over age 50 near each site may prove an important indicator of the strength of a resident pool of visitors and volunteers. As higher educational levels also correlate with increased museum visitation<sup>85</sup>, the study ran a suitability analysis based on both age and educational levels to predict the likelihood of resident market support at each site, based on 60-minute drive times.

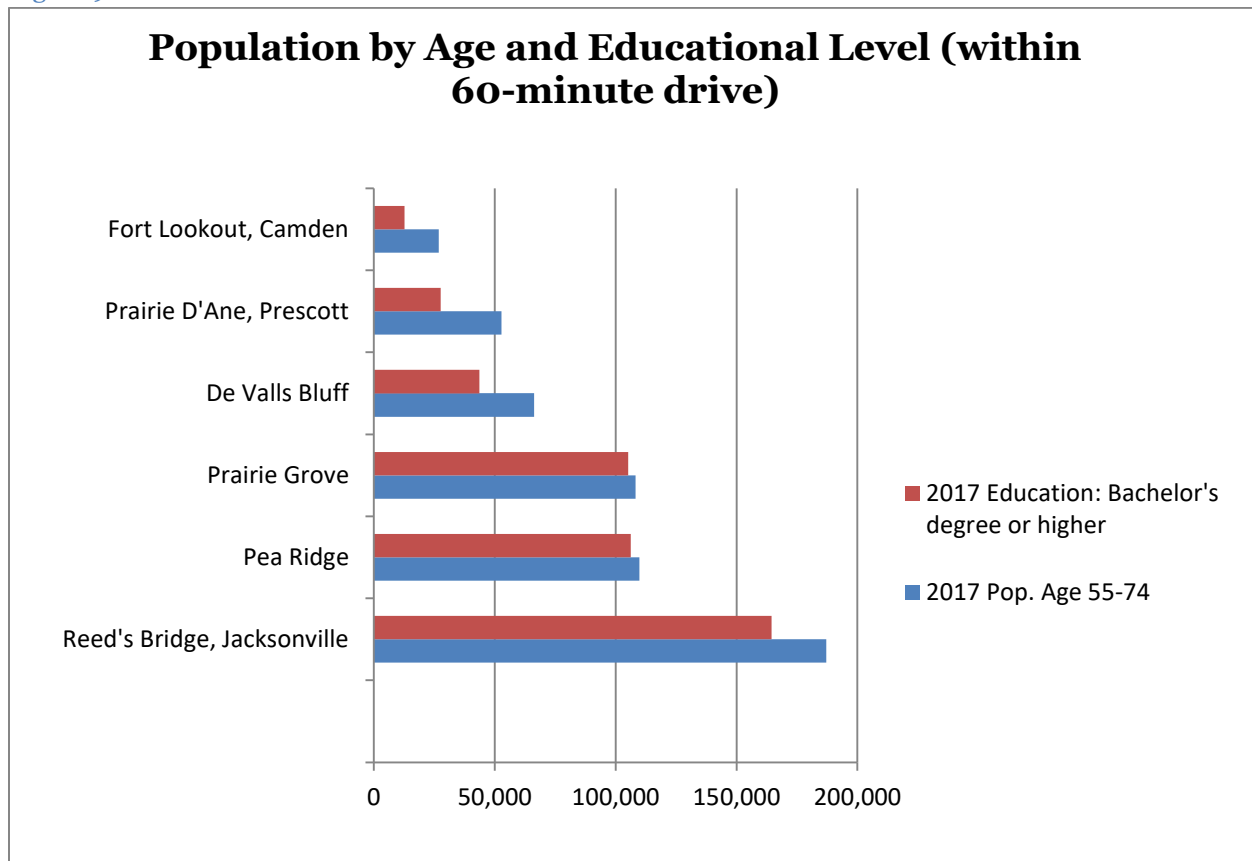
Table 4 shows the ranked suitability score from ArcGIS Business Analyst derived from comparing the six potential museum sites for number of residents age 55-74 and number of residents who have attained educational levels of bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 4

Sites	Rank	Final Score	2017 Population Age 55-74	2017 Education: Bachelor's degree or higher
Reed's Bridge, Jacksonville	1	1.00	187,120	164,505
Pea Ridge	2	0.55	109,790	106,242
Prairie Grove	3	0.54	108,163	105,199
De Valls Bluff	4	0.23	66,317	43,675
Prairie D'Ane, Prescott	5	0.14	52,691	27,646
Fort Lookout, Camden	6	0.00	26,797	12,693

Figure 9 depicts the total numbers of residents listed in this table. Higher total numbers of residents at sites near urban centers will inevitably yield higher numbers of residents with any selected set of characteristics. However, total numbers of residents are correlated to total numbers of potential visitors and volunteers (i.e., total support for the museum), while a percentage analysis of residents would not be. For this reason, museums of all varieties tend on the whole to be located near larger population centers: only 26% of museums are located in rural areas.<sup>86</sup>

Figure 9

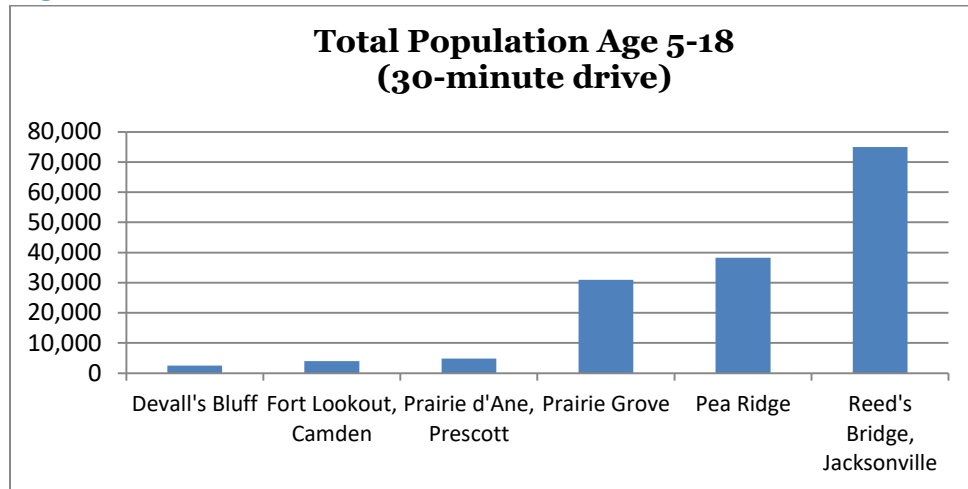


Based on this suitability analysis by age and educational level, it is clear that Prairie Grove, Pea Ridge, and Reed's Bridge are the sites most likely to provide larger numbers of resident visitors and volunteers.

### ***School-age children as potential visitors***

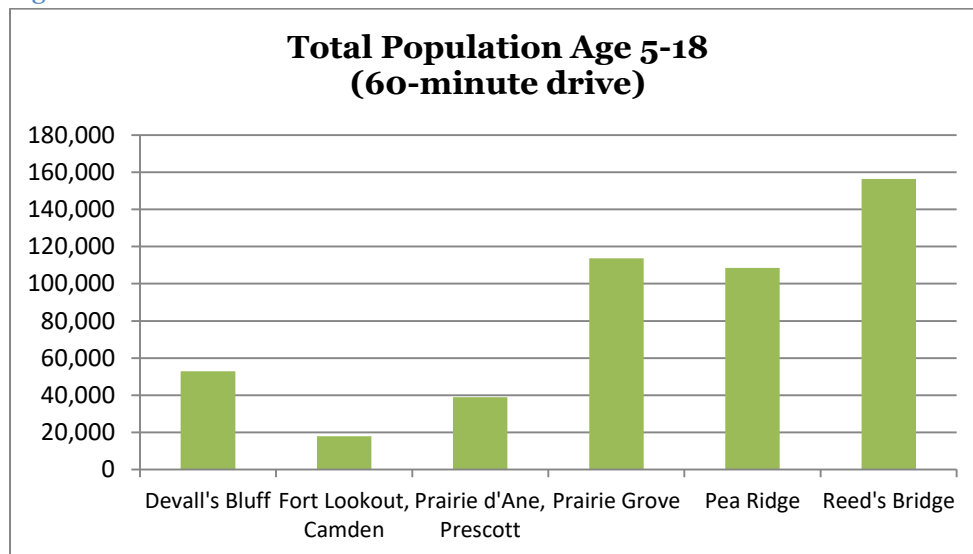
School field trips and parent-guided field trips are a major source of museum visitation. Accordingly, the number of school-age children (5-18 years of age) in each resident market will also affect the potential visitation of any museum located there.

Figure 10



When the sites' resident markets are expanded to a 60-minute drivetime, the three large markets still contain two to eight times the number of school-age children as the three small markets.

Figure 11

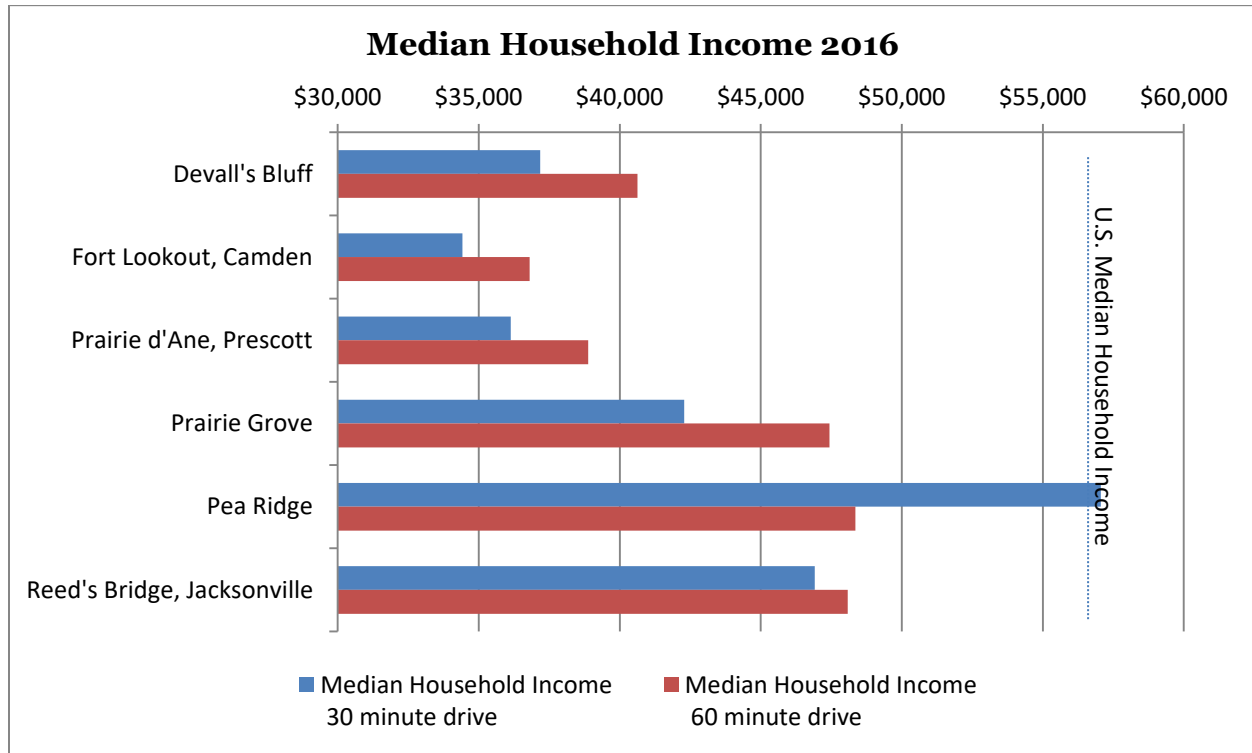




## Median Household Income

Higher household incomes are correlated with more Civil War tourism by higher-earning households,<sup>87</sup> as well as reflecting greater financial ability to donate to the museum.

Figure 12



The 60-minute drivetime (red bar in Figure 12) shows a difference of approximately \$7,000 a year in household income between the three higher-earning areas and the lower-earning areas. The 30-minute drivetime area analysis (blue bar) shows a much greater disparity in median household income than the 60-minute drivetime. Particularly notable is Pea Ridge, in which proximity to the city of Bentonville/Rogers and WalMart headquarters makes median household income by far the highest of the six sites for the Primary Resident Market.

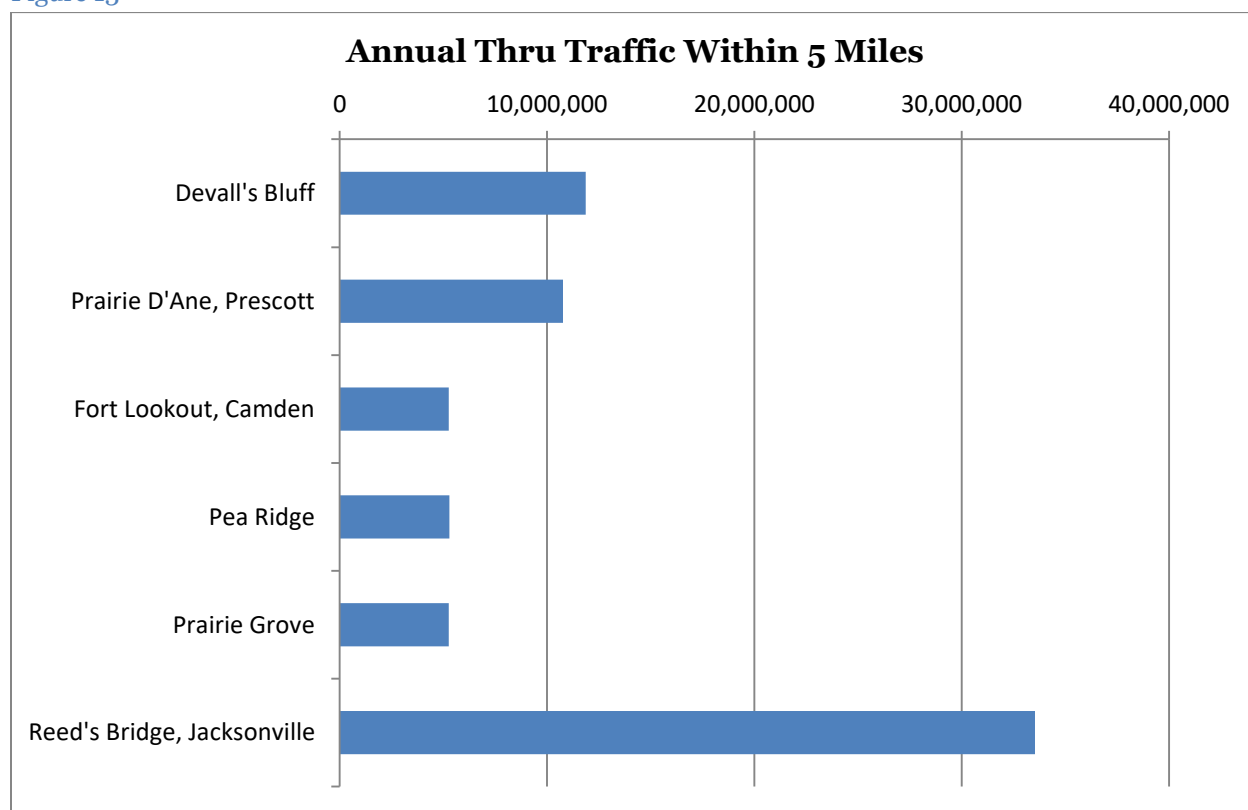
Because median household incomes in most of Arkansas are significantly lower than the U.S. median household income (\$57,617 in 2016<sup>88</sup>), museum planners should be sensitive to the fact that visitation may be sensitive to admission costs.

## Beyond Resident Markets: Recorded Data on Traffic, Lodging, and Day Trips/Overnight Visits

Though resident markets are crucial to local museum support, local highway traffic can also affect visitation. If a museum is located close to a major traffic artery, the thru traffic will affect visitation numbers, as in the case of Vicksburg, Mississippi, which had 581,459 visitors in 2010<sup>89</sup>, though the town's population is only 22,925 and county population is 48,773.<sup>90</sup> Average daily traffic on I-20 through Vicksburg is 45,000, yielding estimated annual traffic of 16,425,000<sup>91</sup>, for comparison with annual traffic counts in Figure 12. However, Vicksburg is a very large, famed battlefield, a national park, and the only major stop for miles on I-20. Therefore, Vicksburg's attendance should not be seen as typical, and instead only used as a general guide to the potential value of heavily-trafficked roads near a Civil War site.

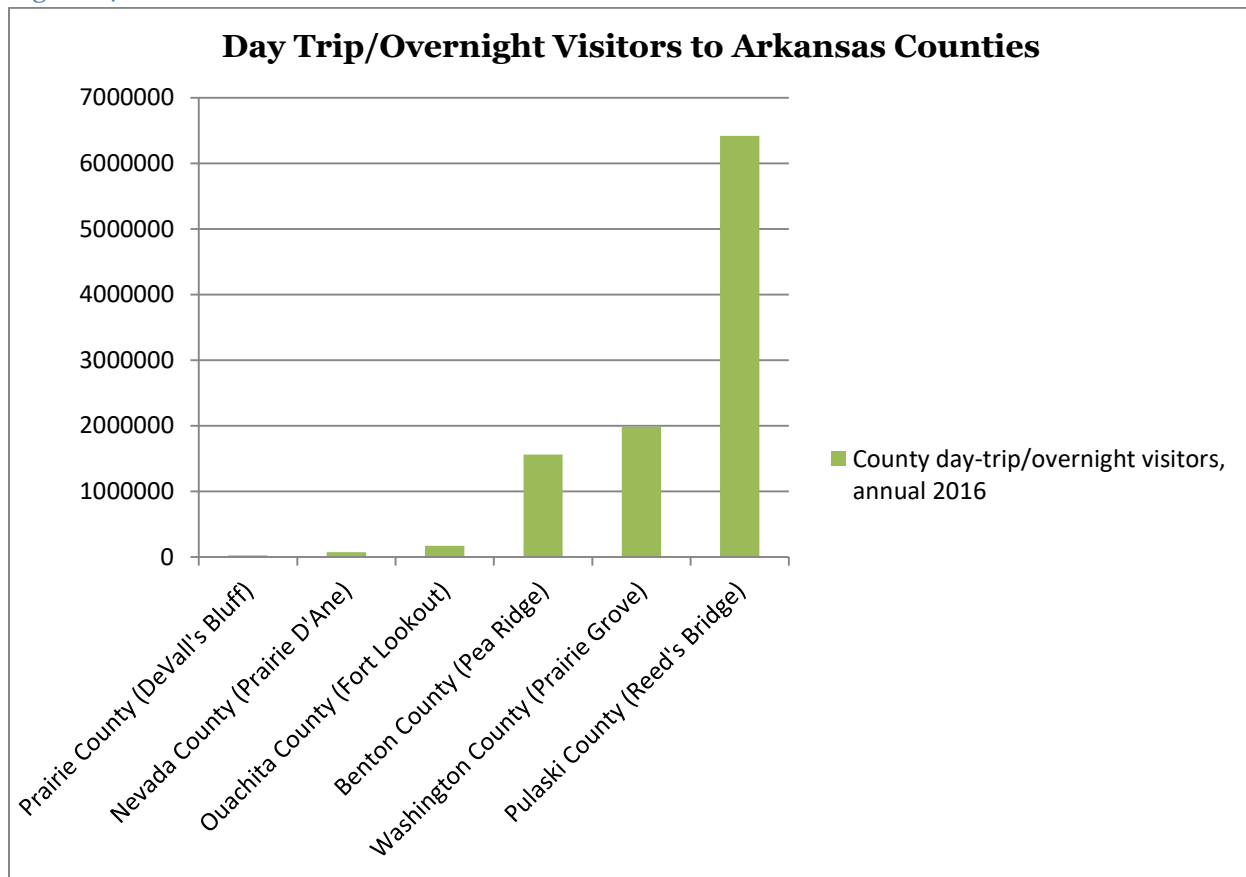
Traffic does not follow population-based trends in the demographic data: in this case, small population areas DeVall's Bluff and Prescott have higher thru-traffic counts than Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove.<sup>92</sup> The traffic at Reed's Bridge still far surpasses the traffic from every other site.

Figure 13



Another important influence on visitation will be the number of annual visitors who already tend to visit the **counties** in which the potential sites are located. Visitors on day trips or overnights for other reasons (business, vacation) are more likely to visit the museum, according to the same gravitational model that applies to resident visitation. Proximity equals convenience, so more out-of-town visitors to an area increases the gravitational appeal of the museum.

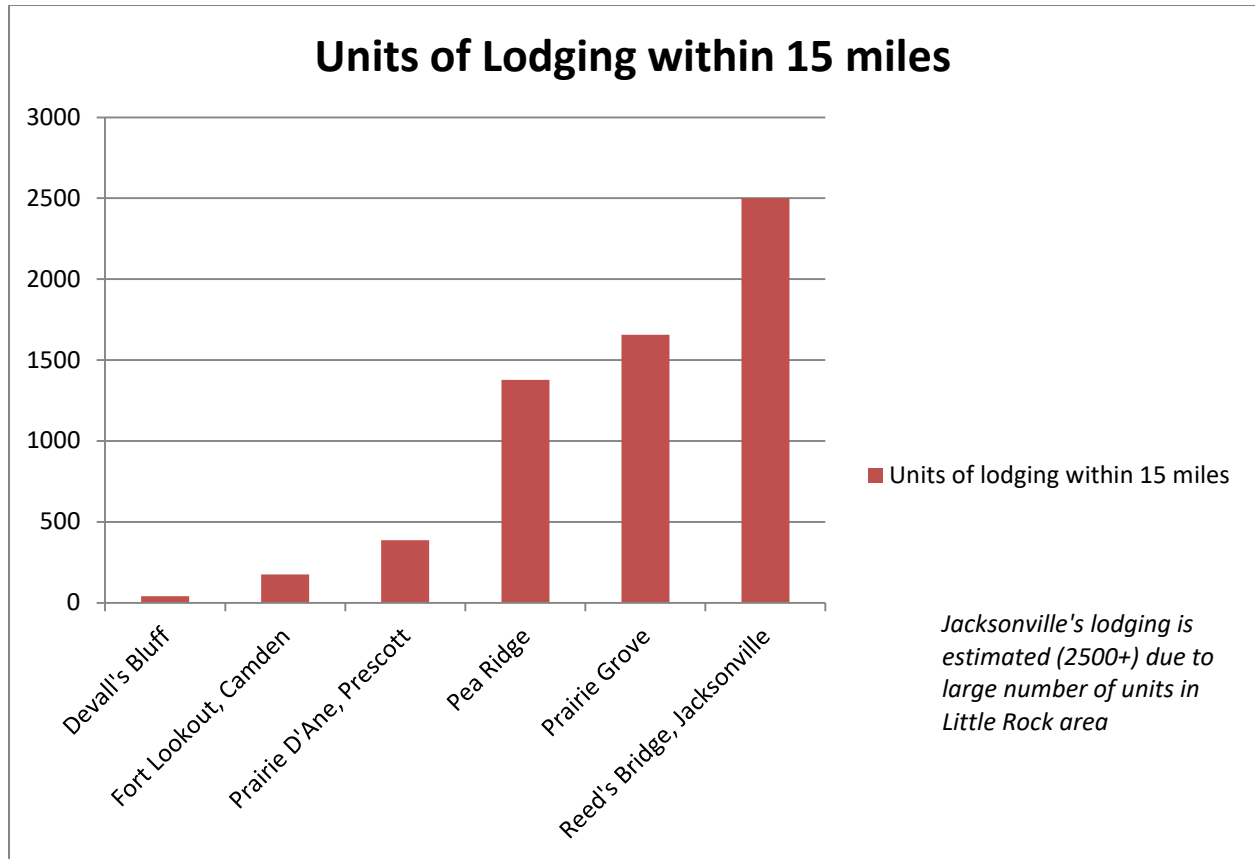
Figure 14



The data for annual visitors depicted in Figure 14 reflects the same balance as the population models: Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, and Reed's Bridge are located in counties that attract far more out-of-town visitors than the other three potential sites.

Similarly, the units of available lodging tend to parallel the number of annual county visitors, though the correspondence is not complete. Figure 15 shows the number of available units of lodging within 15 miles of each site.<sup>93</sup> A scarcity of lodging will correlate to a lack of annual county overnight visitors, deterring business travel or tourism, which will in turn decrease the potential for out-of-town visitors to a museum at a lodging-scarce site.

Figure 15



## Section Four: Requirements and Facility Design for Museum Accreditation

### Accreditation

Accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) is an indicator of a museum's ability to operate in a professional manner and according to best practices.

The strict collections care conditions certified by AAM accreditation enable museums to receive loans of sensitive artifacts from other accredited institutions. For example, accredited Department of Arkansas Heritage museums are able to routinely borrow artifacts from various state museums nationwide, the Smithsonian Institution and the National Archives.

**Without the ability to borrow artifacts enabled by accreditation, a museum will be severely limited in its holdings and in its capacity to host new seasonal exhibits, an important part of attracting repeat local visitors.** DAH recommends that any proposed new museum meet the standards for accreditation. Accreditation by the AAM requires applicant museums to demonstrate compliance with the highest standards regarding governance, staffing, facilities, collections care, interpretation, operations and financing.

To achieve accreditation by the AAM, an organization must:

- \* be a legally organized nonprofit institution or part of a nonprofit organization or government entity
- \* be essentially educational in nature
- \* have a formally stated and approved mission
- \* use and interpret objects and/or a site for the public presentation of regularly scheduled programs and exhibits
- \* have a formal and appropriate program of documentation, care, and use of collections and/or objects
- \* carry out the above functions primarily at a physical facility/site
- \* have been open to the public for at least two years
- \* be open to the public for at least 1,000 hours a year
- \* have accessioned 80 percent of its permanent collection
- \* have at least one paid professional staff with museum knowledge and experience
- \* have a full-time director to whom authority is delegated for day-to-day operations
- \* have the financial resources sufficient to operate effectively
- \* demonstrate it meets the **Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums**
- \* successfully complete the **Core Documents Verification Program.** <sup>94</sup>

## Facility Requirements

The ideal museum gallery and collection storage space/facility is a windowless box.

A windowless structure minimizes the effects of light, humidity, dust and insects on sensitive artifacts. Without question, the aspect of museum operations that is most unlike that of other facilities is the consideration of environment. To protect artifacts and documents, a museum facility must possess appropriate physical characteristics and climate control.

### **Appropriate physical characteristics of museums according to the General Facility Report last revised in 2008 by the AAM Registrars Committee:**

- 1) Building Construction, Configuration and Maintenance
- 2) Environment – The museum gallery and storage environments must be tightly sealed and controlled. This will require a HVAC system that monitors and adjusts both temperature and humidity. Windows must be treated in order to reduce or eliminate UV light. Vendors providing pest control must be aware of the effects of insecticides on various materials (artifacts) and service the facility routinely. Likewise all areas of the museum must be cleaned regularly. Storage equipment for collection items not on exhibit comes in several forms. The most efficient is “mobile aisle” storage shelving and racks. *Presently mobile aisle storage costs about \$160 per square foot.*<sup>95</sup>
- 3) Fire Protection
- 4) Security – Guards and Access, Physical and Electronic Systems
- 5) Insurance

*To renovate an existing structure to museum standards will cost approximately \$81- \$135 per square foot. A new building will cost approximately \$297-\$434 per square foot.*<sup>96</sup>

## Exhibitry

Another significant museum expense is exhibitry. Museum exhibits are often sophisticated and technologically advanced and can include interactive A/V, cast-from-life replicas, artifact mounts, graphic panels, cases, etc.. Several companies in the U.S. provide exhibit development and fabrication services.

The cost of exhibit development is about *\$300- \$500 per square foot* (2013 United States Department of the Interior, Interior Museum Program, Cost estimates).

## Section Five: Construction and Operational Cost Estimates

### Construction and Design Cost Comparison: Renovation vs. New Build

Renovate an existing building to create a 10,000 square foot facility with 5,000 square feet of exhibit space (very small museum): **[\$3.82 million].**

Renovate an existing building to create a 20,000 square foot facility with 10,000 square feet of exhibit space (small museum): **[\$7.38 million].**

Table 5

<b>Renovation Costs for an Existing Structure to be Renovated to Accreditation Standards</b>			
	<b>Cost per square foot</b>	<b>10,000 sf building (5,000 exhibit space, 5,000 storage and offices)</b>	<b>20,000 sf building (10,000 exhibit space, 10,000 storage and offices)</b>
Exterior Improvements	TBD	TBD	TBD
Infrastructure Upgrades	\$135 per square foot	\$1,350,000	\$2,700,000
Exhibit Design/Build	\$400 per square foot	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000
Storage shelves	\$160 per square foot of mobile aisle storage	\$320,000	\$480,000
Furnishings & Equipment		\$150,000	\$200,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,820,000</b>	<b>\$7,380,000</b>

Build a new 10,000 square foot facility with 5,000 square feet of exhibit space (very small museum): **[\$6.47 million].**

Build a new 20,000 square foot facility with 10,000 square feet of exhibit space (small museum): **[\$12.68 million].**

Table 6

<b>New Building Construction Costs</b>			
	<b>Cost per square foot</b>	<b>10,000 sf building (5,000 sf exhibit space, 5,000 sf storage and offices)</b>	<b>20,000 sf building (10,000 sf exhibit space, 10,000 sf storage and offices)</b>
Site Improvements	TBD	TBD	TBD
Infrastructure Upgrades	\$400 per square foot	\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000
Exhibit Design/Build	\$400 per square foot	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000
Storage shelves	\$160 per sf of mobile aisle storage	\$320,000	\$480,000
Furnishings & Equipment		\$150,000	\$200,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,470,000</b>	<b>\$12,680,000</b>

**Bond Issue:** If the state issued a bond to fund museum construction, based on a very conservative rate and payback of 20 years, the cost of debt service would be as follows:

**\$6.4 million bond = \$571,000 annually needed for debt service**

**\$12.7 million bond = \$1,120,000 annually needed for debt service**

## Operational Costs

Total estimated annual operational costs would be **\$1,391,149**. This total figure is calculated in Tables 7 and 8, which list operational costs and salaries based approximately on costs for the Old State House Museum in Little Rock. At 34,750 sq.ft. and 10,372 sq. ft of exhibit space, the Old State House is larger than the proposed Civil War museum facility. However, many operational expenses remain constant despite variations in square footage.

Table 7

<b>Non-Salary Annual Operational Costs (Estimated from Old State House Museum, Little Rock)</b>	
Supplies	\$97,000
Insurance	\$51,000
Facility Maintenance	\$32,100
Telecom	\$17,900
Sanitation, Water, Sewer	\$6,300
Electricity	\$96,200
Natural Gas/Propane	\$50,000
Pest Control	\$1,100
Security Services	\$52,000
Technical Services	\$113,000
Postage/Printing	\$7,300
Date Processing	\$19,000
Software Maintenance	\$8,400
Food	\$3,300
Freight	\$3,000
Hauling/Moving	\$78,000
Gasoline	\$1,300
Memberships	\$1,300
License/Permits	\$1,000
Seed Weed Control	\$3,600
Conference Fees/Travel	\$5,000
Travel	\$2,000
Professional Fees	\$74,300
Chiller Maintenance	\$52,000
Elevator Maintenance	\$5,900
Vehicle Expenses	\$1,500
Laundry/Uniforms	\$1,000
Purchase for Resale (Gift Shop)	\$24,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$808,500</b>



### Projected Annual Cost for Staff Salaries

Some staff positions at the Old State House Museum have been deleted from the estimate below in order to reflect the likely staff at a smaller museum.

Table 8

<b>Staff Position</b>	<b>Approximate Salaries</b>
Director	\$69,460
Assistant Director	\$50,221
Development Director	\$49,557
Education Director	\$47,935
Curator	\$41,988
Maintenance Director	\$40,339
Development Assistant	\$37,748
Education Outreach	\$36,000
Admin Assistant	\$30,000
Public Information	\$36,154
Maintenance Assistant	\$22,451
Museum Assistant	\$11,845
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$473,698</b>
+23% Benefits	\$108,951
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$582,649</b>

### Total Annual Operational Costs Plus Salaries:

Annual Operating Costs	\$808,500
Annual Staff Salaries	\$582,649
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,391,149</b>

## Section Six: Conclusions

### *History Museums Not Self-Sustaining*

Research and national surveys reveal that history museums are unlikely to sustain themselves. Like public education, history museums must accordingly be viewed as a worthy expense relative to the survival of an educated public, with the acknowledgement that history museums will not be primarily funded by their own revenue and instead will present an ongoing expense to the state.

### *Controversy Likely for Any Interpretive Plan*

Market research for this study revealed strong conflicting opinions on the “correct” interpretation of the Civil War. Many respondents indicated that they would only support a museum that agreed with their own interpretation of the war, and would actively oppose a museum that incorporated the “other side.”

### *Projected State Funding Necessary*

An accredited Arkansas Civil War Museum would require significant state investment, projected to total between \$6.4 million and \$12.7 million in initial construction costs and \$1.39 million in annual operating costs. A bond to cover construction costs is projected to cost between \$571,000 and \$1.12 million annually for debt service.

### *Site Selection*

By most indicators in this study, the following three sites emerged as top choices for potential public support and revenue capture:

- Reed’s Bridge in Jacksonville
- Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park
- Pea Ridge National Military Park

Site selection may influence how much revenue can be collected through admissions or facility rentals. Though revenue at any site is likely to total 30 percent or less of the museum budget, selecting a site in a lower population or less-trafficked area may result in lower potential for revenue capture. Site selection may also influence the number of local volunteers, as more populous areas have a much larger pool of potential volunteers.

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## Appendix

### Act 921 of the Regular Session

State of Arkansas

91st General Assembly A Bill

Regular Session, 2017

By: Representative Della Rosa

#### **For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS HERITAGE  
TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY CONCERNING THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF A CIVIL WAR MUSEUM IN ARKANSAS; AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

#### **Subtitle**

TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS  
HERITAGE TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY  
CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CIVIL  
WAR MUSEUM IN ARKANSAS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. *DO NOT CODIFY. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE.*

(a) The Department of Arkansas Heritage shall conduct a study to  
determine the feasibility of establishing the Arkansas Civil War museum.



(b) The feasibility study shall include an assessment of:

(1) Market, including without limitation:

(A) A study of the demand and interest in Civil War tourism in Arkansas;

(B) The target markets for a Civil War Museum in Arkansas, considering demographic and geographic characteristics; and

(C) Proposed locations for a Civil War Museum;

(2) Organization and technological requirements, including without limitation:

(A) A study of qualifications needed to manage and operate a Civil War museum;

(B) Staffing requirements; and

(C) Special technology, equipment, and collection needs for startup and maintenance; and

(3) Financial analysis, including without limitation:

(A) An assessment of startup costs and operating costs;

(B) Potential revenue projections; and

(C) Possible funding sources.

(c)(1) The feasibility study shall be completed no later than July 1, 2018.

(2) After completion of the feasibility study, the department shall furnish a feasibility report to the Legislative Council that includes its recommendation concerning the establishment of the Arkansas Civil War Museum.