



1108 S. BROADWAY  
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66048  
(913) 912-3459

**JEFF PITTMAN**

Dear Members of the Lansing City Commission,

I'll start off with by expressing my sincere gratitude for your service to our community. As fellow public servants, we know the importance of our work, often carried out without recognition, yet always aimed at the betterment of our community. It is in this spirit of collaboration that I write to you today as a facilitator.

I am advocating for the transfer of non-taxpayer funds, totaling approximately \$139,000, which were entrusted to the City of Lansing for the Kansas Regional Prison Museum (KRPM) project. As you may be aware, the Lansing Historical Society has recently been granted exclusive rights by the State of Kansas to conduct tours of the historic retired Lansing Correctional Facility by the State of Kansas, effectively fulfilling a significant portion of KRPM's original mission. See the MOU between the Society and KDOC attached.

I want to acknowledge and thank the City of Lansing for diligently safeguarding these funds over the past four years. Your stewardship has ensured that these privately raised funds remain intact, supporting the mutual goal of preserving and showcasing the rich history of the Lansing Correctional Facility.

To provide some background, these funds were established around 2006 and have been accumulated through a series of fundraisers and donations from individuals and corporations, many of which were conducted, often in partnership with the Lansing Historical Society or with the Society in the main fundraising role. Of particular gravity are the funds that were given as memorial gifts specifically intended to support the development of a museum and tours highlighting the 150-year history of the penitentiary, including narratives about guards, notable events like Johnny Cash's visit, the darker aspects involving executions, and other significant stories that have shaped Lansing, Leavenworth, and the surrounding areas.

Given the Lansing Historical Society's readiness to lead this initiative, I respectfully request that the City Commission consider transferring these funds to the Society. This transfer would be a significant milestone in recognizing the work of the Kansas Regional Prison Museum project but also serve as a bridge-building gesture that benefits the city, state, and our entire community. The state has already committed substantial resources to this project and will likely continue to ensure its success in this nascent stage until it becomes a self-sustaining entity, contributing to local tourism and preserving an important aspect of Kansas's history.



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The financial model for the Lansing Prison Museum is inspired by the highly successful Missouri Penitentiary Museum, which now generates over \$1 million annually now that it is in full swing after two decades. Find a draft of those numbers used at Legislative committee hearings attached. With my efforts in the State Senate, we have secured more than \$490,000 in the 2024-25 budget for structural stabilization, and an additional \$75,000 for general use or content development. The Kansas Historical Society has also expressed strong support for this project moving forward and is willing to offer assistance, including discussing bringing back relevant artifacts to Lansing.

I believe this transfer would mark the beginning of a new era for the Lansing Prison Museum project, honoring the KRPM's legacy while embracing future opportunities. Your decision to approve this transfer would not only help ensure the project's success but also demonstrate a commitment to preserving our shared history for future generations. Additionally, I would like to note that this transfer of non-taxpayer funds does not preclude the possibility of further support from the city, should the commission choose to provide additional funding in the future, though I am not asking for that.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. The Lansing Historical Society is in full support, as noted by their attached letter, and are moving forward rapidly, with an initial tour planned for September 12, 2024. They continue to build out tour content, recruit guides and put infrastructure in place. I am confident that, together, we can make this project a reality and continue to build on the strong foundation already in place.

Sincerely,

Senator Jeff Pittman  
jeff.pittman@senate.ks.gov

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Pittman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.