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House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development
Hearing on House Bill 2561
February 10, 2012
Testimony of Dick Carter, Jr.

Good afternoon Chairperson Brown and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development. My name is Dick Carter, and I appear before you today on behalf of the City of Overland Park. I want to thank you for this time to address the Committee regarding the extension of the STAR bond legislation.

The City of Overland Park supports HB 2561. The bill extends the potential use of STAR bonds through the year 2017.

Presently the Prairiefire Museum project has been awarded STAR bond approval by the Kansas Department of Commerce. This mixed-use project will include a world class museum affiliated with the American Museum of Natural History and will house traveling exhibits – slated to change twice per year. The project also includes first to market entertainment venues and first to market retailers making it a regional tourism draw and place of destination in the State of Kansas. The \$350 million project has received authorization from the Secretary of Commerce for \$81 million in STAR bonds. The project developer, Merrill Companies, is finalizing development plans. The 30,000 square foot Museum facility and Phase 1 of the development is currently scheduled to open in 2013.

Extending this legislation will provide municipalities with another redevelopment and economic development tool, to assist in attracting visitors to this great State, recruiting businesses, creating jobs, and staying competitive in Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to present the position on behalf of the City; I would be pleased to stand for questions at the appropriate time.