

MANAGEMENT REPORT

FEBRUARY 2021



PRESENTED BY



FROM THE DESK OF MATT PIVARNIK

Community Leaders,

Spring is a time for new possibilities. In the past few weeks, we've faced everything from snow to bitterly cold temperatures. Now, new weather has arrived. And, from what I've noticed, there is a renewed morale within the community. Whether it be with the introduction of more vaccines or simply the weather, there are so many of us looking forward to and building toward the new possibilities to come. Spring may still be a few weeks away, but it feels like anything is possible in Topeka. Moreover, there is a feeling that possibility is outweighing the fear of improbability.

It reminds me of some of the thoughts brought to light in the new book **We The Possibility by Mitchell Weiss**. In this book, Weiss relates his experiences as the former chief of staff to Mayor Tom Menino during the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings and what happened when he and other leaders were tasked with quickly creating a new nonprofit to redirect the many donations pouring in from around the globe. The innovative thought process and experimentation that went into this experience was the catalyst for the book, which further delves into how public experimentation can broaden possibilities, new solutions and successes. Weiss argues that leadership should focus not only on the "probable" approach to solutions, but the new possibility brought on through an experimental approach. This includes opening up to the public for new voices and ideas, and finding ways to assess and test prospective approaches to find which are sustainable - Weiss relates it to hypothesis-driven entrepreneurship. On the whole, it's a collaborative experimental process that can lead to new found successes and breakthroughs that would have been difficult to arrive at without new voices at the table.

As Alice Johnson said when she led efforts to reform criminal justice in our country: **"I am but one person. You are but one person. But, together, we are many. And we can make a difference."**

Thank you to HTK Architects for sponsoring this Management Report!



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CHOOSE TOPEKA PROGRAM FUNDING EXPANDED INTO 2021

At the February Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) meeting, GO Topeka announced that JEDO approved the extension of the Choose Topeka Relocation Incentive, allotting \$300,000 in incentives meant to attract specialized talent to move to the Capital City. Additionally, 40% of this amount will be dispensed to the remote workers arm of the incentive program. Recipients of these incentives are eligible to receive a maximum of \$15,000 to be used in their moving expenses. In its first year, Choose Topeka attracted 40 workers and created a \$3.2 million regional economic impact. Learn more at www.topekapartnership.com/articles/post/choose-topeka-extended-with-funding-into-2021/.

PARTNERSHIP AWARDED PPP FUNDING

Early this year, the Partnership was awarded PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) funding after applying in 2020.

In April 2020, the Partnership had to implement furloughs and staff salaries reductions as a means to retain a sound and cost effective budget during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, many programs had to be canceled, scaled back, or reworked to keep within budgetary constraints.

The funds from the Program allowed the Finance Department work on budget reallocation during the month of February.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

It's truly difficult to put a cap on a year as challenging and unpredictable as 2020. But, despite the many obstacles, the Greater Topeka Partnership continued to uphold its mission and support Topeka & Shawnee County to the best of its ability.

We invite you to click on the link below to download the Greater Topeka Partnership's 2020 Annual Report. Let's reflect on what we've learned so that we may be able to better envision where we're headed.

[**View report >**](#)

FIRST LOCAL PLUG AND PLAY HIRE

Lindsay Lebahn has started her new role as Program Manager for the Plug and Play Topeka Animal Health Accelerator on February 22. Lebahn oversees programming and manages relationships with participating startups and stakeholders. This hire represents the first on-site staff for the startup accelerator in Kansas, with additional hires to be announced.

“I’m thrilled to help launch Plug and Play in Topeka and be a part of an organization that is at the forefront of innovation. It’s an exciting opportunity for us as a community to really advance and shape the animal health and ag tech startups reaching for growth in Kansas,” said Lebahn.

Lebahn has a rich background in marketing, strategic partnerships, and program development. She comes to Plug and Play Topeka with previous leadership and event experience with the Academy of Country Music Awards in Nashville, and most recently with the Bajillion Agency where she served as an Account Executive. Before this, Lebahn was the Executive Director of the Forge Young Talent organization, a workforce attraction and retention initiative of GO Topeka and the Greater Topeka Partnership. Lebahn is a graduate of Rhode Island University.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2021 SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

The Greater Topeka Partnership’s Small Business Council is seeking nominations for the 2021 Small Business Awards. This year’s Annual Small Business Awards will celebrate the accomplishments of small businesses and entrepreneurs in the categories of Emerging Entrepreneur, Non-profit, Minority-Owned Business, Woman Owned Business, Innovation and Capital City of Distinction. Nominate your favorite small business at <https://bit.ly/SBANominate2021>.

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, May 11 for the Small Business Awards ceremony!

FORGE ANNOUNCES NEW VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Forge is pleased to announce that Justin Moore, a principal in the USD 337 district, has assumed the role of Forge Chair-Elect. The Topeka community is extremely lucky to have Justin in this volunteer leadership role for the organization, alongside 2021 Chair Del-Metrius Herron.

For more information about Forge, or how to become a member or sponsor, please contact Kelli Maydew, Executive Director, at Kelli.Maydew@TopekaPartnership.com.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Total Resource Campaign (TRC)

Staff and the TRC Committee is working on the Partnership's 2022 sponsorships. Meetings are being held with our Executive Leadership Team to create new and review current events and sponsorships to continue to align with our mission. Martha Piland has been announced as the Chair for the TRC Committee.

Ambassadors

The monthly Ambassador Meeting was held the first Friday of the month. The Ambassadors Committee Chair, Jim Garrison, is excited to work with the team to grow the program.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Every February DTI works with the City of Topeka to collect and update information for the downtown Businesses Improvement District (BID). The BID allows for DTI provide general maintenance and cleaning of the district, promote the district through a variety of marketing tools and continue to grow downtown as the center of commerce, culture, history and recreation. Safety, programing, maintenance, recruitment and aesthetics are all partially funded by the BID and are key to the continued growth and success of downtown.

STR'S DESTINATION REPORT/TRAVEL STATS

Hotel statistics as reported in STR's Destination Report have remained predictably low as Topeka started the new year. January room demand was down about 16 percent from 2019 - a slight increase from December. With the opening of the new SpringHill Suites, room supply increased by 2,635 rooms compared to 2019. This has helped to drive down our occupancy rate which was down more than 7 percentage points for the month (36.11%) vs 2019. Revenue continues to be a concern as ADR continues to experience a steady decline. ADR for January was an estimated \$69.14 (down from \$79.79 in 2019) placing monthly hotel revenue at an estimated \$2,110,022 (down about 26 percent from 2019).

CUEVAS-STUBBLEFIELD NAMED MANA CHAIR

Michelle Cuevas-Stubblefield, senior vice president of strategy with the Greater Topeka Partnership, was named Chair of the MANA National Board. MANA, A National Latina Organization, advocates for equality and empowers Latinas through leadership development. This is Cuevas-Stubblefield's second term; she represents the North Central Region and is a member of MANA de Topeka in Kansas. The Partnership's Vice President of Resource Development and Events, Rosa Cavazos, is also a member of the MANA National Board of Directors.

[Learn More >](#)

PARTNERSHIP PARTNERS WITH JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT JOB FAIR

The virtual Junior Achievement Career Fair kicked off on Monday, March 1, and the Partnership is a presenting sponsor! As such, Partnership staff will host two day-long zooms for anyone interested in learning more about Topeka and what we have to offer. The Fair will be broadcasted to our eight surrounding counties, TV and radio, social media, plus directly to over 35,000 middle and high school students over 7,000 college students.

There are two LIVE dates: March 4 and 24. On March 4, the fair is geared toward college students and adults seeking work. March 24 will consist of local middle and high school students seeking to understand what types of businesses and job opportunities Topeka affords them.

Learn more at www.kansasja.vfairs.com.

TOPEKA YOUTH COMMISSION

The social media committee has been working with the Topeka Youth Project to have monthly podcasts that highlight some of the topics our members want to talk about. Community outreach is working on releasing our COVID/TYC merch to local COVID testing sites. The Topeka Youth-Led Granting Initiative Grant Selection Committee held interviews for select Stay785 Grant applicants. We are pleased to inform you that Miles Cusick, Sophia Friess, Eliseo Barreno, Charles White and Michelle Moe have all been selected to receive funding for their projects! Keep an eye out on our next newsletter highlighting each individual project. We at the Topeka Youth Commission are ecstatic to see these five projects come to life! The involvement committee is staying busy. We are planning meetings for all projects. The TCYC just recently had a meeting this past Sunday. We discussed the following topics: Examine Racism and Social Change, Gun Violence, and Drugs in Topeka. The broadcast can be found on the City of Topeka's Facebook page. The Government subcommittee is working on getting more involved with local government.

FORGE 101

This month, Forge hosted a “Forge 101” quarterly orientation for both new members, as well as those curious about the organization. This was held virtually over the noon hour, and attendees got to learn about the Forge mission, herds, and got to do a Q/A session with Executive Director Kelli Maydew and Forge Chair Del-Metrius Herron. Save the date – the next Forge 101 will be May 14 at noon!

To remain cautious, Forge continued to hold all February committee (herd) and board meetings virtually. However, virtual events and giveaways are well underway! The Play Herd is encouraging Forge members to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day safely and are giving away five growlers from Norsemen Brewing! The Leadership Herd will be announcing a Resume Building Workshop in the coming weeks, and the Inspire group will be participating in the annual Day of Service in April. Be on the lookout for further details in the Forge eNews! To learn more about the seven Herds, and view the upcoming meeting schedule, please click [here](#).

BUSINESS ATTRACTION

GO Topeka is partnering with the Kansas Department of Commerce to aggressively market Topeka as a place for aviation companies to locate. Forbes Field is a unique asset that offers a competitive advantage for companies who need the robust offerings Topeka has related to the aviation industry. The marketing efforts will focus on high quality jobs that will create more diverse employment opportunities for our current and future residents.

PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

Welcome to our New February Members:

Create Uplift

Alzheimer’s Association

Ribbon Cuttings for February include:

Yes! Athletics

Topeka Presbyterian Manor

Thank you to our 2021 Renewed Members:

[See entire list >](#)



BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

Multiple Business Retention & Expansion projects continue to move forward in 2021. Two (2) projects have been added in the first two months of the year. Projects represent a blend with an addition of new jobs, capital investment and expansion projects. Project types that we have in the pipeline remain varied across industries, including manufacturing, professional services and fabrication.

COLOR OF COVID 19 TOWNHALL AND PANEL DISCUSSION

Women and Minority Business Development (WMB) is collaborating with minority organizations to present a “color of COVID 19” townhall and panel discussion this March. Health equity is achieved when barriers are removed, allowing everyone the opportunity to experience a life as healthy as possible. COVID 19 is hitting the Latino and African American communities hard. Health Education to black and brown communities is critical. A combined group of minority organizations, including WMBD, led by the Topeka Chapter of the Links, Incorporate are working together on bringing COVID-19 vaccine education to these communities.

The event, COVID 19 Townhall for People of Color, will assemble a panel of medical experts, who are people of color, to educate the public about COVID-19 and the vaccines as well as answer questions related to same topics. This is an inclusive event; however, intentional focus will be on inviting African Americans and people of color to participate in the event. Collaboration with others will greatly expand the outreach and communication as it relates to education. The event will be held on Tuesday, March 30, 7-8 p.m. The discussion will be broadcasted on KTWU. It will be rebroadcast over the April 1 and 2.

CHOOSE TOPEKA EARNED MEDIA

Choose Topeka continues to achieve a monumental amount of national earned media into 2021. Be sure to catch up on the articles/video featured below.

See video created by:

[Wall Street Journal >](#)

A few select articles include:

[Indianapolis Business Journal >](#)

[Kansas Reflector >](#)

[BankRate.com >](#)

[WOSU - Ohio NPR >](#)

[Baltimore Sun >](#)

[Lonely Planet Travel News >](#)

[Tulsa World >](#)

[Davis Vanguard >](#)

[Bankrate >](#)

[San Francisco Business Journal >](#)

VISIT TOPEKA SALES UPDATE

Visit Topeka currently has 21 leads in its sales pipeline. This could lead to an impact of 8,006 rooms booked and \$8.6 in economic impact. Bids include the Jayhawk Collegiate Challenge, the Jayhawk Open, Men's Volleyball Championships and Kansas Shrine Bowl - 50th Anniversary.

Despite a weeks-long effort to find an alternative solution, USA Wrestling of Kansas Kids State Folkstyle Tournament decided to move the 2021 state championships to Mulvane, Kan. Many factors played into this disappointing outcome. The Stormont Vail Event Center became unavailable to the group in December when it was adapted into a vaccine distribution center. Additionally, area infection rates were much higher when this decision needed to be made and Topeka had no guarantee that its restrictions would allow the event to occur.

Despite the outcome, we look forward to working with this group next year and wish them well on this year's event.

INNOVATION CAMPUS ECONOMIC IMPACT PROJECTIONS

As part of the viability assessment which serves as a basis for the selection of an appropriate site for the innovation campus, GO Topeka conducted an analysis of the economic impact that this project will have on Topeka and Shawnee County. The analysis projects a \$1.35 billion impact over a period of 10 years. This number includes impact from the construction of phase 1 of the campus itself, operation of the building, and housing of the Plug and Play cohorts (two per year), but also companies that will be retained based on the environment conducive for business success that is being strategically created by the community under GO Topeka's leadership. The projection also assumes that Topeka will gain a reputation of being a hub of innovation in animal health and technology which will attract more attention by larger players looking for expansion opportunities within the Animal Health Corridor.

DOCKING STATE OFFICE BUILDING

The Chamber testified in support of the Kelly Administration's efforts to revitalize the Docking State Office Building before the legislature's Joint Committee on State Building Construction, which considered the Docking plans in late-February. The prominent downtown landmark currently stands largely empty and is in dire need of renovation. The Administration's plans include remodeling various floors within Docking to accommodate office space, installation of a new conference center and even relocation to downtown of the KDHE laboratories currently located at Forbes Field. Neither the Chamber nor Downtown Topeka, Inc. is wedded to any particular plan for the Docking building. What they do support is revitalizing the building and bringing high-paying lab jobs to downtown because doing so will add another spark to the renaissance of Topeka's dynamic core. The Chamber did urge the members of the committee to take account of the developers who have invested in office space in downtown and maintain a good balance between state-owned and leased office space.

KS PTAC UPDATE

The NEW KS PTAC Fiscal Year 2021 began Feb 1, 2021. Progress includes:

NEW CLIENTS - Guided 6 new small businesses through the process of becoming registered to do businesses with the federal government.

COUNSELING - Held 51 hours of one-on-one counseling sessions with existing and new small businesses.

EVENTS – Held one training event the topic covered, Introduction to Government Contracting. This was held virtually and hosted by JCCC.

Upcoming Training Events register to attend here: <https://www.wichita.edu/research/kansasptac/ptacevents.php>

VALUE - Assisted KS PTAC Clients across the state with obtaining Federal Contract Awards worth \$1.2million. These contracts have been awarded between 2/1/21 – 2/22/21

KS PTAC provides assistance working in the government market space. Currently KS PTAC is providing on-demand learning options through our network partners for those interested in Government Contracting.

-If interested, please register to work with KS PTAC at www.KansasPTAC.org

- Select register for services. Complete the Intent to Receive PTAC Client Services online form. Complete all sections of the form and click submit.

POLK QUINCY VIADUCT

The Kansas Department of Transportation is holding a public ZOOM on March 3 from 5 to 7 p.m. to share the current status of designs and plans for the Polk Quincy Viaduct project. The Chamber was very pleased the Polk Quincy project was selected to move into KDOT's "design pipeline" as part of the Eisenhower "Ike" Legacy Transportation Program initiated in 2019. Now pressure must be maintained to ensure this important highway project continues to move forward into the construction phase. Once completed, the new Polk Quincy Viaduct will have been transformed from a highway slicing through the center of downtown into an amenity which enhances and binds the riverfront south area to the center of downtown, as well as, a highly efficient conduit of goods and people along the Animal Health Corridor.

SMALL BUSINESS INCENTIVE SURVEY RESULTS

Last winter, GO Topeka surveyed the recipients of the Small Business Incentive Program. A total of 109 responded to the Small Businesses Incentive survey.

Below is a high-level view of the results:

92% of all the businesses surveyed are currently operating.

The small business incentives supported businesses with an average of 3 full-time workers and/or 3 part-time workers.

With a total of 544 workers; keep in mind that not all the businesses took the survey.

95% of all the businesses who took the survey rated the incentive program as either "Very helpful" or "Extremely helpful."

41% of those businesses expanded their operations, while 39% did not.

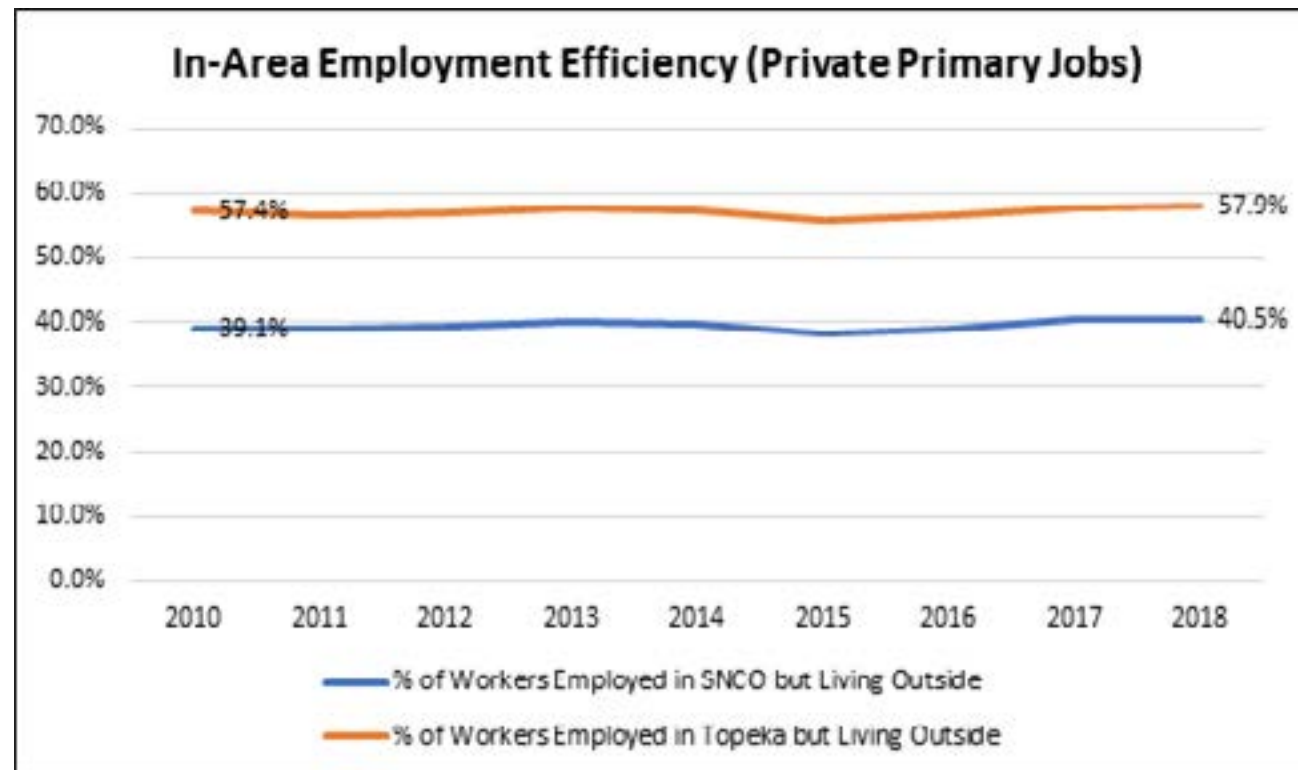
SHAWNEE COUNTY IN-AREA EMPLOYMENT FINDINGS

The Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program at the U.S. Census reports data related to the location of where workers are employed and where they live. Using this data, we can see how labor commuting patterns are changing over time in both Shawnee County and the City of Topeka. The latest dataset available is for the year 2018.

As of 2018, 40.5% or 29,243 workers were employed in Shawnee County, but lived outside the county. This is quite different when we look at the City of Topeka limits, where 57.9% or 35,933 of those workers worked within the city but lived outside the city limits; this means that more than half of Topeka's workers live outside the city boundaries.

Although over time this employment dynamic hasn't drastically changed, as the region add additional jobs, one could argue than it would be more beneficial to the overall community if those workers work and live within the same place.

Another consideration is that this employment dynamic is affected by income; workers with higher salaries are more likely to live outside the county and the city, and commute to work. This could be reflected by the types of housing options, and local amenities those worker's desire but are not locally available.



LEADERSHIP GREATER TOPEKA UPDATE

There are still slots available for individuals interested in leadership training through the Kansas Leadership Center. The training provides adaptive leadership training that is beneficial on both a personal and professional level. If you are interested or aware of an individual who would benefit, you are encouraged to contact michelle.stubblefield@topekapartnership.com for more information. Slots are limited.

The LGT Advisory Board is currently reviewing the mission and vision of the organization and setting up some strategic objectives for Leadership Greater Topeka toward enhancing and sustaining the programs future.

METL EVENTS

The week of March 15, the METL Coalition conducted two final ZOOM forums for legislators representing Lawrence, Manhattan and Emporia. Topeka legislators met with METL community leaders the week before. Virtual technology enabled all of these public policy makers to learn firsthand about the METL Coalition's legislative priorities and share their views on the 2021 legislative session. METL continues to champion transportation funding, Medicaid expansion, focus on career preparedness and education, a coherent statewide economic development plan and leading through the pandemic.

MOMENTUM 2022

The community survey was completed. Recommendations and continued emphasis on the following area of focus include:

1.3 Prepare Students for College and Careers.

2.1 Optimize Tools and Programs to Improve Quality of Place that concentrate on Housing incentives, options, and availability.

2.2 Develop a Dynamic Regional Core.

3.1 Enhance the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

4.2 Project a Positive Message to Residents and Outside Talent.

5.1 Foster and Promote a Diverse and Inclusive Topeka-Shawnee County.

Additional areas of emphasis realized through the survey also include:

- Improving digital equity and broadband access
- Incorporate and align the Arts into economic quality of life endeavors and
- Increased efforts to retain young professional talent

GO TOPEKA REALIGNMENT

Entrepreneurship and the animal health and agricultural technology industries will receive increased support as GO Topeka realigns resources to underscore this strategy. Increased staff support along with the physical investments the community is working on will help bolster the strong momentum that has been built over the past two years in these areas.

WMBD AND FORGE JOIN TO SPOTLIGHT YOUNG PROFESSIONAL WOMEN IN PANEL DISCUSSION

The Women and Minority Business Development (WMBD) Women's Initiative is uniting with the Forge Diversity Herd to host a virtual panel discussion: the Young Professional Women's Panel on March 25. The discussion titled, Young Women in Leadership – Challenges and Successes, will take a deep look at young professional women and how they address the challenges of today's workplace, as volunteers and leaders.



CHAMBER BOARD DISCUSSES ISSUES

At its February meeting, the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors filled its role as the Partnership's key deliberative public policy group. The Chamber Board first received a baseline report on the status of COVID-19 and vaccinations in Shawnee County. Then it took on robust discussions of such imminent issues as a proposed increase in the federal minimum wage and legalization of medical marijuana in Kansas. Board members reviewed data and information on these topics and then shared their own perspectives on how such matters impact their businesses in particular. Such debates help keep the Partnership in sync with the business community and lay the groundwork should more formal public positions need to be taken in the future.

SMALL BUSINESS DISCUSSES MINIMUM WAGE

The Minimum Wage conversation continues to grow. Proponents for increasing the minimum wage believe that the current minimum wage is too low for someone to live on; while opponents believe if the minimum wage is increased, most businesses will not be able to pay workers and will be forced to close their doors, lay off staff or reduce or freeze hiring. On March 8, 11:30 a.m. -1 p.m., the Small Business Council will host a Lunch and Learn to gather input from small businesses throughout Shawnee County. Come to learn and share your concerns.

Click here for more information <http://bit.ly/2021minwage>.

VISIT TOPEKA MARKETING UPDATE

Visit Topeka received a partial marketing grant from the Kansas Tourism Office in support of the new Thunder Over the Heartland event. The grant is offered in support of new marketing opportunities and projects for DMOs across the state. This \$5,000 funding will be secured and placed into a budget for promotion of the new event as it gets closer.

Visit Topeka has almost completed the 2021 Visitors Guide and has partnered with TARC to help distribute the guide.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

The City of Topeka Planning & Development Department, in cooperation with Downtown Topeka, Inc. (DTI), is excited to share the long-awaited draft of the Downtown Master Plan for public review!

The Plan is market-based building upon DTI's 2019 Market Strategy by creating a series of nine (9) District Plans. Each district contains further recommendations and illustrations to guide potential physical development, land use, street circulation, and design. With a resurgence of private/public improvements in the last decade unlike any in the past 30 years, the Downtown Master Plan is intended to accelerate this momentum and begin answering the question "what does the next generation of Downtown development look like"?

There are four different ways to view and interact with the draft Plan:

- View entire **Draft Document**
- View a high level overview of each district plan in the **Summary Presentation**
- Within the Summary Presentation, click on the district's 3-d image to view interactive StoryMaps for each district so you can easily scroll through that specific district and leave questions/comments
- **Take a brief 4-question survey** as a way for you to help set priorities for the next 10 years

All public input should be collected by March 1, 2020 in time to present to the Topeka Planning Commission.

Questions? Contact dwarner@topeka.org

PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

The Partnership Events Team is still playing it safe and have not held gatherings this month but are looking ahead at the rest of the year. As we are seeing an improvement in our community's COVID numbers, we believe we will be reintroducing smaller events and meetings soon and hope to have larger group events as early as May!

We will continue to focus on health and safety while we plan these events to bring our community back to our events and stay in communication with our local officials for the most up-to-date information.

The Partnership is looking forward to seeing you again soon for corporate and community events!

PARTICIPATE IN THE 21 DAY RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUST CHALLENGE

What Is the 21 Day Challenge?

The 21-Day Challenge is one of the most powerful interventions an organization can do to build community and create an inclusive culture. Led by the YWCA, the 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge asks participants to make daily time and space to build more effective social justice habits- particularly those dealing with issues of race, power, privilege and leadership - for 21 days. Participants who sign up for the Challenge will receive ally tasks via email to help foster their understanding and awareness, including activities such as: reading an article, listening to a podcast, or reflecting on personal experience.

Participation in an activity like our 21-Day Challenge helps us to: discover how racial inequity and social injustice impact our community. Connect with one another and identify ways to dismantle racism and other forms of discrimination.

To learn more about the 21-Day Challenge, contact Allison Marker, Resource Development Director at resourcedevelopment@ywcaneks.org or 785-233-1750.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STAFF AIDS IN NATIONAL "CURTIS" COVERAGE

In recognition of Vice-President Kamala Harris, as the first female/Afro-Asian American U.S. Vice President, CBS profiled our country's first vice-president of color: Charles Curtis. Vice-President under Herbert Hoover, Curtis was born in Topeka (then the Kansas territory) in 1860. He was a member of the Kaw Nation and spent a large portion of his childhood on the Kaw Reservation that once existed in Council Grove. Curtis would return to Topeka to become an attorney, later being elected to public office in the Kansas House and Senate.

The Greater Topeka Partnership's Marketing and Communication staff aided in the following two CBS features on Charles Curtis:

- <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/the-history-of-charles-curtis-the-first-vice-president-of-color/#x>
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/remembering-charles-curtis-the-first-native-american-vice-president/>

MOSAIC PARTNER PAIRS

Topeka United invites you to participate in a communitywide program called Mosaic Partner Pairs. The fundamental concept of Mosaic Partner Pairs is that by building deep and lasting individual relationships between people who may not look alike, or worship alike, or otherwise relate to family and community in the same way is essential to building access to the full range of community health and equity.

The structure includes a community leadership team, a group of 16 volunteer facilitator/coaches and 60 partner pairs – individuals from diverse sectors of our community – in a 9-month engagement. To participate or learn more, visit www.TopekaUnited.org.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Partnership Private January results came in just slightly under budget. This was entirely the result of the Partnership Annual Meeting being pushed to a later point in the year.

Throughout February, the Finance Team has been busy working on finalizing the 2020 year end close and wrapping up all of the documents needed for our annual audit. The team was also busy working on budget reallocations as a result of the Partnership being awarded PPP funding.

In February, we finalized the contract with the implementation company who will be working alongside the Partnership staff to implement our new CRM. The project will kick off in late February and will be wrapped up in time for a July 1 go-live date.

BOARD GOVERNANCE DEEPENS

Each of the principal organizations which form the core of the Greater Topeka Partnership has elected its nominating committee for 2021. Work will commence in April to select a diverse slate of leaders to serve the Chamber, DTI, Visit Topeka, GO Topeka and the Chair's Council in 2022. Now similar efforts commence within the many important groups which serve a more targeted role within the Partnership. Groups such as the Small Business Council, the Topeka Youth Commission, the Riverfront Advisory Board and others will all take advantage of the Partnership's leadership nominations resources to steadily elevate the caliber and diversity of their own volunteer governance boards.