

November 4, 2015

A Strategy for Effective Economic Development Change in Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas

Prepared for the
Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO)

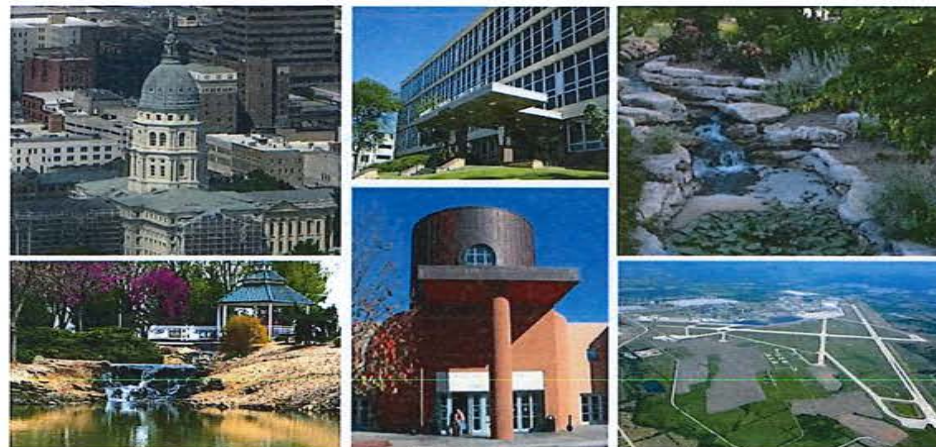




Table of Contents

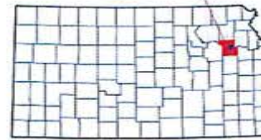
Overview	2
Chapter 1: Situation Analysis Summary	2
Seeing Where Topeka/Shawnee Stands.....	3
Community Engagement: What Stakeholders Think.....	7
Chapter 2: Where Do We Go From Here? Observations, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	11
Rationale and Proof Points	11
Recommendations.....	14
I. Execute Effectively (Organizational)	15
II. Renew and Transform (Product Improvement).....	23
III. Communicate Effectively (External Marketing and Internal Communications) presented by Brand Acceleration.....	28
Chapter 3: Conclusion.....	37
Recommendations Summary.....	38
Appendix A: EDO Benchmarking Survey – Comparison	41
Appendix B: Metrics Template.....	47

OVERVIEW

Recognizing its obligation to the taxpayers of Topeka and Shawnee County to ensure that the funds for economic development collected through the recently approved ½ cent sales tax are used effectively and “achieve the highest economic development return on investment,” the Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) sought consulting assistance to “advise JEDO on economic development objectives, strategies, and expectations for the Topeka/Shawnee County Community.”¹

After an RFP process, JEDO retained Garner Economics, LLC. Garner Economics selected Brand Acceleration, a marketing and branding firm, to audit the communication process for JEDO and its agents. Together, both firms worked to create a roadmap for attaining these goals. Garner Economics took the lead in assessing how economic development is conducted in Topeka and Shawnee County—overall and through JEDO’s main agent GO Topeka. Brand Acceleration examined internal communications among and from the economic

Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas



development organizations in the area and compared the current external marketing of Topeka as a place for business with that of other peer communities.

The result of this assessment and the recommended actions to attain those goals is summarized in **STRATEGY FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE**, through a series of observations and recommendations on how JEDO can work to enhance its economic development service delivery process and improve the area’s business climate.

While the strategy looks at ways to improve Topeka and Shawnee County’s competitive position as a place for high-quality jobs and world-class talent, the resulting recommendations focus on areas where JEDO can act as a catalyst to lead initiatives to improve economic development service delivery and build on existing assets to strengthen its ability to market the area to prospective companies and retain what already exists. The process to build the strategy is illustrated in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: PROJECT PHASES & METHODOLOGY

Assessment	Recommendations	Implementation Strategy
<p>Evaluate Topeka/Shawnee County’s competitive position from an economic development perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational assessment Best-practice benchmarking Incentive analysis Marketing audit <p>Supplement existing work and solicit public input through focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and an electronic survey and compare JEDO to peer EDOs and other best practices. Presentation of the Phase 1 Situation Analysis.</p>	<p>Position JEDO to achieve success through actionable, short- and long-term (3-5 years) recommendations, including addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development mission and vision Effective relationships with other economic development organizations Areas where Topeka/Shawnee County have gaps in programs and policies impacting the region’s business climate Policies to enhance investment Marketing and messaging to tell the value of Topeka/Shawnee County as a business location 	<p>High-level implementation plans for actionable items, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development service delivery Incentive policies Marketing Metrics and organizational monitoring <p>Presentation of the final report.</p>

¹ Joint Economic Development Board Resolution 2015-1

CHAPTER 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS SUMMARY

A **SITUATION ANALYSIS** was prepared and presented at the end of September 2015, to document the work of the first phase of the engagement. The goal of the assessment phase was twofold: (1) to benchmark Topeka and Shawnee County² against a defined competitor group to ascertain how the area ranks as a potential investment location and (2) to assess the economic development service delivery system in place. Below is a brief summary of the **SITUATION ANALYSIS**.

Seeing Where Topeka/Shawnee Stands

When companies decide on where to locate, they do so by comparing options among different communities. Hence, it is best to know how Topeka compares to similar cities. For the benchmarking exercise, Garner Economics evaluated key demographic and economic indicators for the City and County. These indicators were compared to statewide and national-level data, as well as to competitor communities identified in consultation with JEDO and GO Topeka. The competitor communities were communities with which the area currently competes or regions that Topeka aspires to be more like. The communities were: Linn County, Iowa; Minnehaha County, South Dakota; and Hamilton County, Tennessee. The counties selected comprise the cities of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Chattanooga, Tennessee. The variables against which Topeka, Shawnee County, and the other benchmark counties, the nation, and the state were compared are listed below.

This analysis relies heavily on raw objective data collected by governmental or impartial third-party agencies that had similar data for all benchmarks. The main source for most demographic

information is the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS), an ongoing survey reporting annual data. For the **SITUATION ANALYSIS**, 2013 was the latest data available for most benchmarks.

As noted in the tables below and as reported in the **SITUATION ANALYSIS**, Topeka ranked neutral or average in a number of economic indicators. While the area is strong in incomes of self-employed workers, touts a lower cost of living, and can provide high speed Internet service in most of Topeka's service areas, the community falls behind peer communities in terms of:








- Population growth (lower than peers)
- Crime rates (higher than peers)
- Average weekly wage rates
- Levels of self-employment
- Higher poverty rates
- Lower levels of educational attainment

In all other measures, the community is neutral or average. Unless mitigated, such gaps will make it difficult to attract and retain companies and talent to the region, and it will be difficult for the area to differentiate itself as a place for new business investment.

² Unless otherwise noted, reference further in the report to "Topeka" includes Shawnee County.



FIGURE 2: HOW TOPEKA COMPARES

<i>Demographic Dynamics</i>	
	Over the last decade, the total population of Topeka and Shawnee County has increased by 3,161 and 7,068, or 3% and 4% respectively. This is a slower rate than Kansas or the United States and less than half the growth rates of the benchmark communities.
	Over the 2009 to 2013 period, Topeka and Shawnee County attracted 3.4% and 2.9% of their new residents from a <i>Different County in Same State</i> —this is higher or on par with other benchmarks. Topeka had a higher percentage of residents moving in from a different state than Linn County as well as the national rate; however, they were lower than rest of the communities and the state along with Shawnee County's 2.2%. The area ranked slightly below all other benchmarks in attracting residents from <i>Abroad</i> .
	Topeka was slightly more diverse than Linn County, Minnehaha County, and Kansas—ranking highest in those who identified themselves as <i>Two or More Races</i> . Topeka and Shawnee County are less diverse than the nation.
	Although Shawnee County's median age was the second highest of the benchmarks, the age distribution among all communities was comparable to the largest percentage of population between 25 and 54. Topeka has the highest percentage of those under 5, 20-24, and then those over 75.
	In 2013, Topeka and Shawnee County had the highest property crime rates of all benchmarks and were second only to Hamilton County in violent crime rates.
	Topeka and Shawnee County have the top percentage of <i>High School Graduates</i> for residents ages 25+ but have lower shares of those who have achieved <i>Associate's Degree</i> . However, the percentage of those with <i>Graduate or Professional Degrees</i> is greater than other benchmark communities and close to state and national rates.
	Among new residents ages 25 and over, Topeka and Shawnee County are adding more <i>High School Graduates</i> than any other category; however, they closely match the state and national level for new residents with a <i>Graduate or Professional Degree</i> outranking the percentage of other benchmark communities attracted in this particular category.

Labor Dynamics

Topeka and Shawnee County show June 2015 preliminary unemployment rates of 4.9% and 4.6%, similar to the state. Linn and Minnehaha Counties are lower; Hamilton County and national unemployment rates are higher.



Labor force participation is decreasing; however, the trend is also being followed by most benchmarks with the exception of Hamilton County, which increased sharply from June 2014 to June 2015.



Topeka has the highest number of single female householders participating in the labor force (24%) and both Topeka and Shawnee County have the lowest percentage of families in the labor force. For married-couple families with both husband and wife in the labor force, Topeka (37%) and Shawnee County (41%) were in the middle of the array with Hamilton County the lowest (36%) and Minnehaha County the highest (53%).



Employment change for Shawnee County was low at 2% over the past decade; however, it was higher than Hamilton County (-2%). The average annual change for Shawnee County was 1%, the same as Linn County and Kansas.



Just 4.8% of workers in Topeka and 5.7% in Shawnee County classify themselves as *Self-Employed*; this proportion is well below the state, the nation, and the benchmark communities.











Median earnings among those workers classified as *Self-Employed in Own Incorporated Business* were \$70,608 in Shawnee County—the highest among all benchmarks. Topeka placed just behind Minnehaha County in this same category with median earnings of \$60,569. Median earnings for those classified as *Self-Employed in Own Not Incorporated Business* in Topeka were low at \$19,696, but not far behind other benchmarks, which ranged from \$21,541 (Hamilton County) to \$29,695 (Minnehaha County).



The number of startups from 2008 to 2012 in the Topeka MSA, the smallest geography available for this statistic, was less than other regions; however, the growth rate for Topeka MSA is increasing on a similar trajectory as Kansas and the United States. Chattanooga, which ranked the highest with number of startups among the MSAs, has a growth rate that has flattened since 2010.



Income & Economic Dynamics

	In 2014, the estimated average weekly wage in Shawnee County was \$801, and its growth rate (25%) was the lowest among all benchmarks. Shawnee County followed the general growth trend of all benchmarks, deviating in 2012 and 2013 with a slower rate.
	Topeka and Shawnee County ranked slightly higher in the lower income categories, dropping with the two highest income category levels of the state and nation. However, they were second only to Minnehaha County in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 category.
	The average per capita income in Topeka in 2013 was \$23,513 and \$25,156 in Shawnee County, the lowest of all benchmarks.
	Topeka has the highest percentage below poverty level within the general population (21%) and children under 18 (29%). Hamilton County was a close second with 27% of children under 18 below the poverty level.
	Topeka and Shawnee County both had a higher number of populations with <i>Less than High School</i> education levels below the poverty level than all other benchmarks.
	Median earnings are low for those with <i>Less than High School</i> , but second highest for those with <i>High School</i> level education. Income for other categories fell in the middle of the array for the benchmarks.
	At 93, the composite Cost-of-Living Index for Topeka was the lowest of all benchmark communities and it had a housing cost index significantly lower than the national average.
	Topeka has the highest availability of cable access and the fastest download and upload speeds of all benchmarks, including Shawnee County.

Community Engagement: What Stakeholders Think

In addition to data comparisons, the team gathered community perceptions of JEDO and GO Topeka and the overall economic development service delivery of the community. This was accomplished through five channels:

- A small benchmark survey of similar economic development organizations
- Desktop research and professional experience of best practices in regional economic development service delivery
- Six focus groups with JEDO-identified stakeholders
- A public listening session
- An online survey to a broader range of Topeka/Shawnee County residents

FIGURE 2: MAIN SOURCES OF COMMUNITY INPUT



Community Perspectives and Key Themes

The focus groups, public listening session, and electronic survey were the mechanisms used by Garner Economics to gauge how stakeholders and the broader public perceive the current activities and results of JEDO and its primary agent GO Topeka (Figure 2).

- The focus groups had 124 participants and were organized into the following categories: Large Employers and Property Owners, Small Business and Entrepreneurs, Government and Partner Organizations, and Civic Groups and Nonprofits. Participants were chosen and invited by JEDO. The focus groups were held on August 17-18, 2015.
- Additionally, a public listening session was held on August 18 to allow citizens to voice their opinions and concerns regarding JEDO. Twelve members of the public spoke.
- Finally, an electronic survey was crafted based on the focus group responses and was distributed to a broader group of stakeholders. The survey was open September 1-10, 2015, and 707 people who either live or work in Topeka and/or Shawnee County completed the survey.

Among the focus groups, public listening session, and electronic survey, a number of key themes emerged. The quotations, statements, and summary of statements provided herein (and within the referenced [SITUATION ANALYSIS](#)) represent the feedback and perspectives provided by participants and respondents. They are opinions and not necessarily facts. Garner Economics used the feedback to provide a context for observed business climate issues and/or to validate observations made during the site visit and obtained via independent research.

Electronic survey responses and opinions expressed in the public listening session closely mirrored the overall sentiments expressed by the focus groups. Within all three mechanisms for feedback, the proportion of negative comments regarding the work of JEDO and GO Topeka as compared to supporters and those with constructive feedback was fairly consistent.

In summary, the key themes are noted below. Please reference the **SITUATION ANALYSIS** and Chapter 3 for further details.

- While many see the potential of Topeka and Shawnee County and are excited about recent developments such as the growth of NOTO and an emerging entrepreneurial community, most participants see the area as average and fear it does not distinguish itself from other adjacent or peer communities. The perceptions validated the data assessment that compared Topeka and Shawnee County to peer communities.
- There is an overriding sense of negativity around economic development in the area and this pessimism hinders progress.
- There is much confusion or misunderstanding as to the roles and results of JEDO and GO Topeka. This uncertainty leads to mistrust and negative perceptions about each organization.
- Participants and respondents believe that much of the area's infrastructure has been neglected and lacks curb appeal. In addition to affecting residents' opinions about the City/County, there is a perception that this also dissuades new business and talent from considering the area.

- The region has assets upon which it can build and while many negative opinions were offered in regard to the area's product and economic development activities, the majority of participants and respondents noted several assets of and strengths in Topeka and Shawnee County.

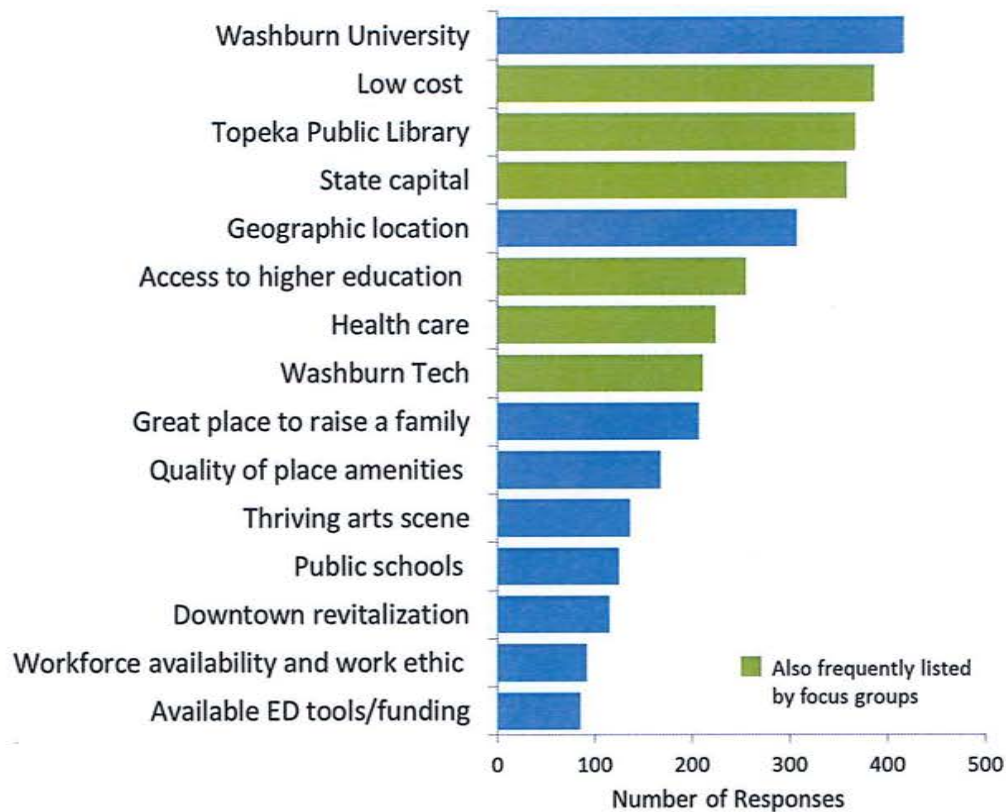
Figure 3 summarizes the feedback on the business climate and infrastructure needs provided by survey respondents. The green bars indicate those issues that were most frequently offered by the survey respondents and focus group participants.

"It is not enough to create a shared vision and plan. The plan must identify the opportunities and threats facing the Topeka and Shawnee County community; understand the strengths and weaknesses of the community to develop the opportunities and stop the threats; and contain specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time-bound (SMART) goals to maintain the strengths and correct the weaknesses. Otherwise, the vision and plan will only be attractive documents that are placed on bookshelves and not implemented."

FIGURE 3: SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

When asked to choose up to five options that are City/County's strengths, survey respondents answered:

Note: Similarities between frequently provided responses by both the focus group participants and survey respondents are indicated in green.



"Topeka doesn't capitalize on all of the great things that are happening. There is no organization to coordinate and tell the world about activities and events."

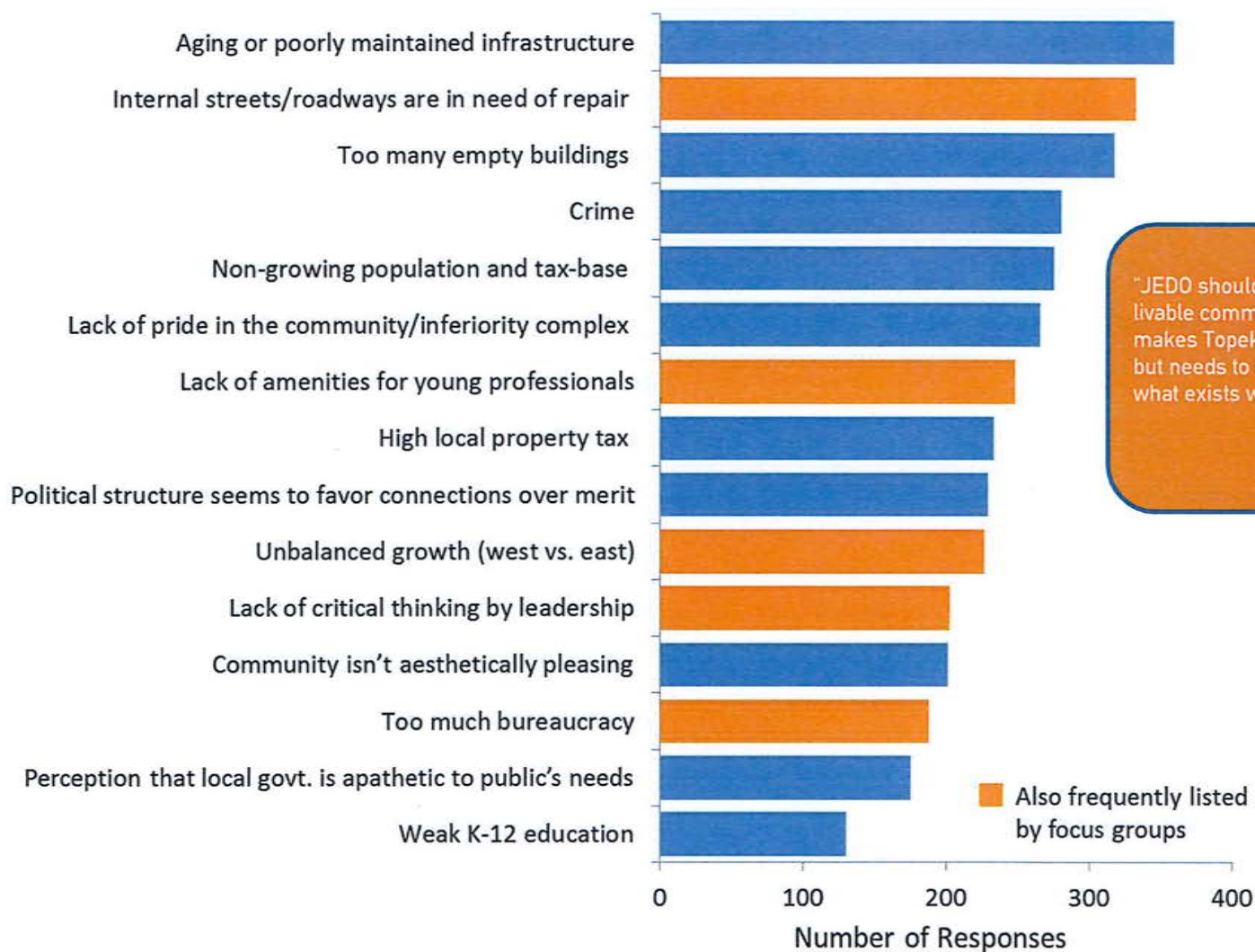
— Focus Group Participant



Summary of Feedback, continued

When asked to choose up to five options that are some of the biggest obstacles that inhibit Topeka and Shawnee County in their ability to attract, expand, or retain businesses and investment, survey respondents answered:

Note: Similarities between frequently provided responses by both the focus group participants and survey respondents are indicated in orange.



"JEDO should be focused on building a livable community. Much of what makes Topeka livable is already there but needs to be enhanced. Build on what exists with new amenities."

—Survey Respondent

CHAPTER 2: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS



To ensure that there are sufficient economic opportunities for its residents and that Topeka attracts high-quality talent and jobs, local government must be proactive in shaping the community's economic future.

The following observations, conclusions, and recommendations are based on data and feedback collected during Phase I of this engagement (and as noted in the previous Phase I Situation Analysis Summary).

Both independent research and the feedback provided by the area's stakeholders strongly suggest that Topeka cannot accept the status quo if it is to become a place where talent and leading businesses want to locate and remain. As the interlocal agency charged with supporting a "strong economic development program designed to expand employment, strengthen the tax base, and diversify and strengthen the Topeka and Shawnee County economy," JEDO must be proactive to change the current trajectory.³

Rationale and Proof Points

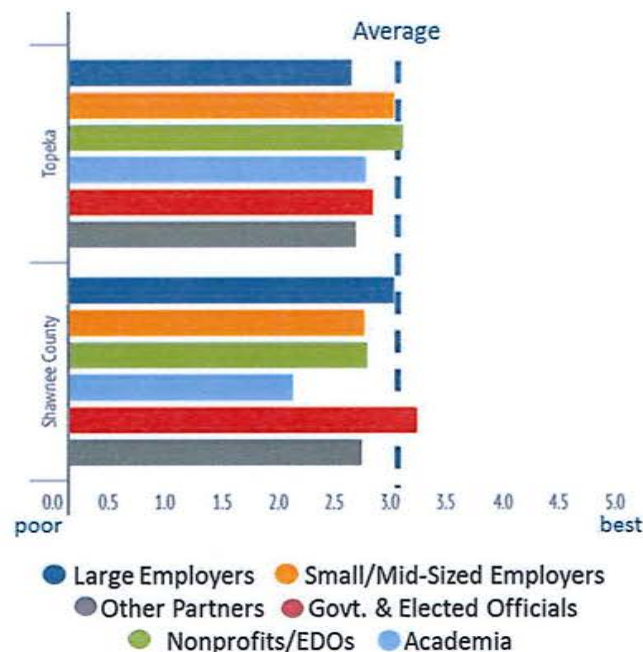
From a site-selection perspective, the following are offered as to why change is needed:

1. Topeka and Shawnee County are seen by its residents as average, at best

While there were some points of community pride and recognition of the economic development wins and positive attributes of the region as a place for business, the large majority of focus group participants

and survey respondents ranked the region as average and were hard-pressed to name amenities or assets that set it apart from any other like-sized metropolitan area in the United States. Moreover, there were several negative comments and pessimistic sentiments expressed when asked what the community lacks or could do to improve. Figure 4 notes the ones mentioned most frequently. Comparison data collected in Phase I validates several of these perspectives.

FIGURE 4: TOPEKA SEEN AS AVERAGE BY ITS CITIZENS



³ JEDO Contract 1 (2013) – establishing GO Topeka as the primary agent for economic development

2. The importance of place

As labor and companies continue to be more mobile and less dependent on fixed natural assets, the quality of place and environment an area possesses and uses to attract world-class talent and the types of companies it seeks to build its economic future are becoming even more important. While attributes such as business climate and access to space continue to be leading factors in

businesses relocation decisions, all other criteria being equal, quality of place is often a tiebreaker.

In the survey and focus groups, participants noted several areas where Topeka's infrastructure is lacking (Figure 5). Similarly, they recognize the need to strengthen quality of place and ranked several items high among things to be addressed in a strategy and plan (Figure 6).

FIGURE 5: INFRASTRUCTURE STAKEHOLDERS BELIEVE IS MISSING OR LACKING

*When asked to choose up to five examples of hard or soft infrastructure that is weak or missing in Topeka/Shawnee County, survey respondents answered:**

Note: Similarities between frequently provided responses by both the focus group participants and survey respondents are indicated in orange.

**Hard infrastructure was defined as the physical networks such as roadways, sewer, broadband Internet, airports and/or ports. Soft infrastructure was defined as institutions or places that support the economic, health, and cultural climate of a place, such as the education system, the health care system, system of government, and/or parks.*

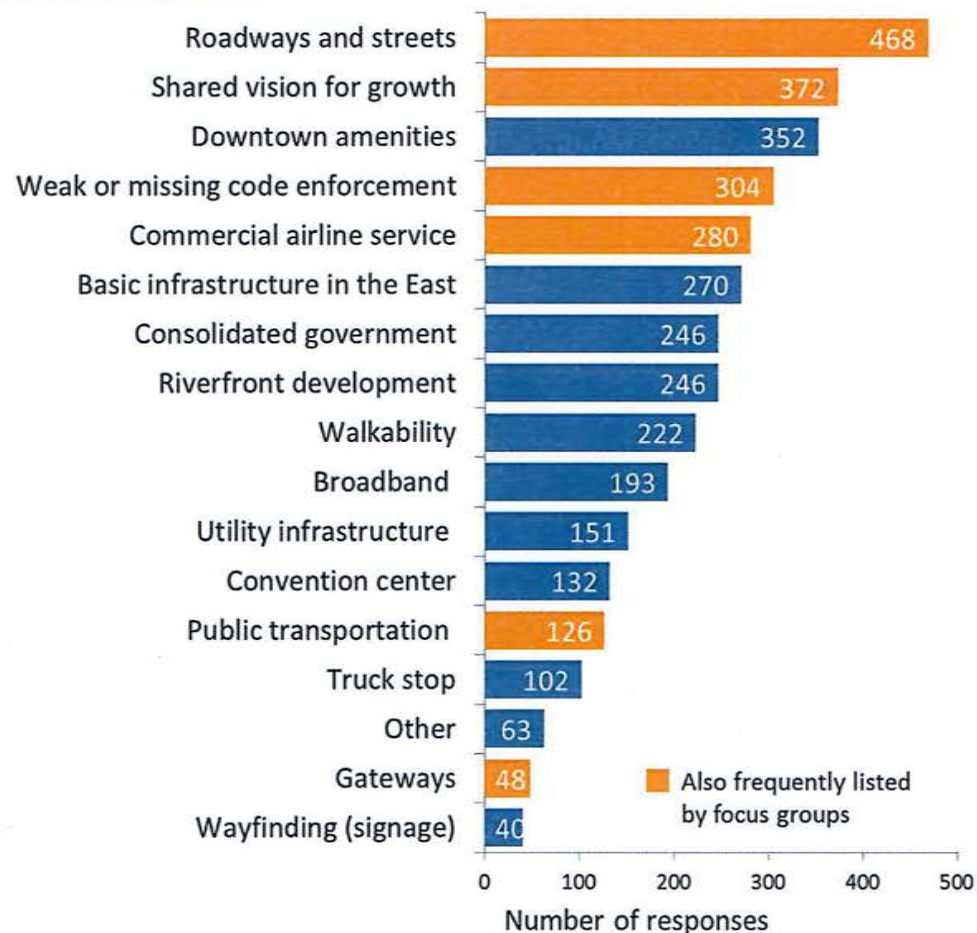
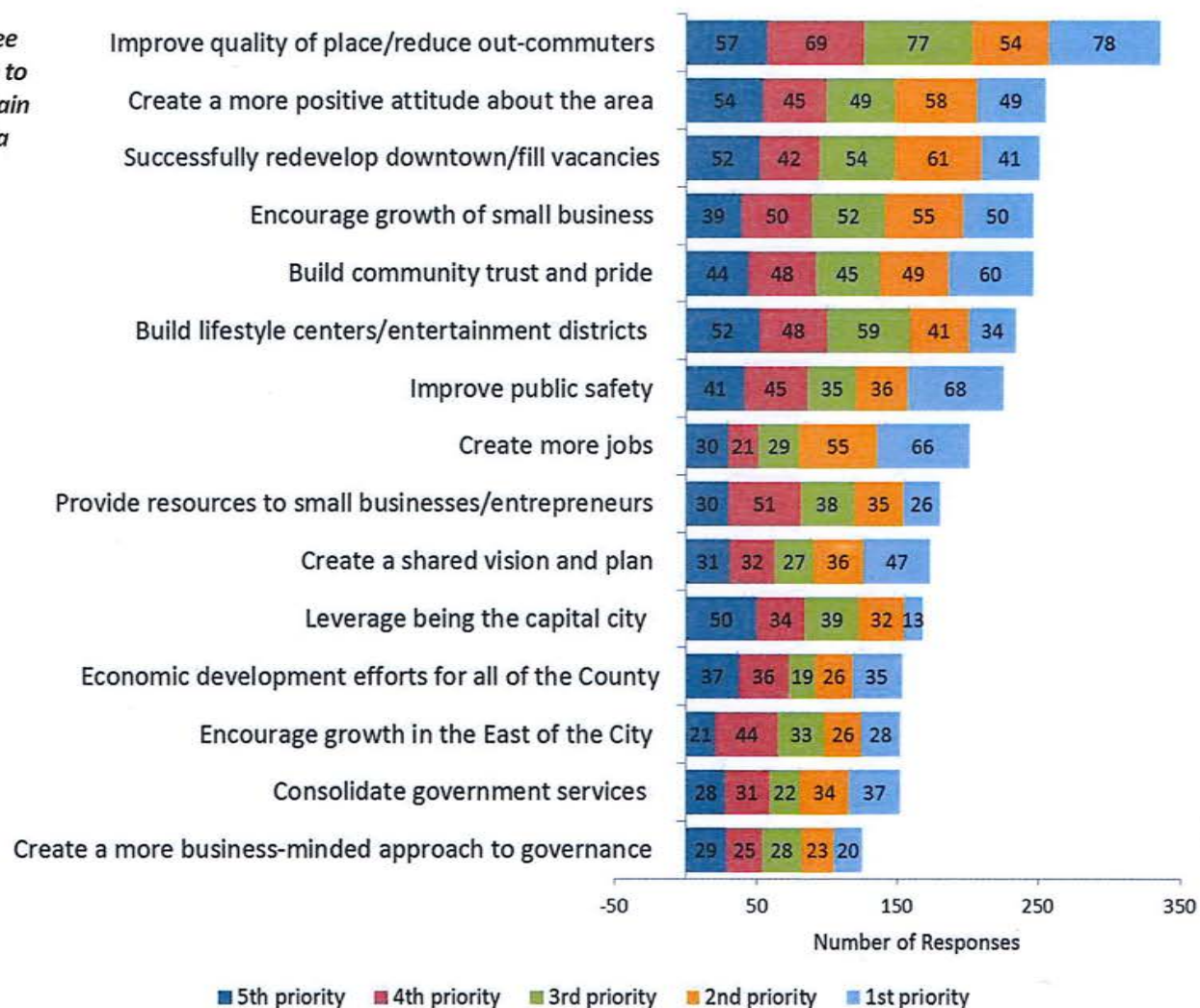


FIGURE 6: WAYS TO ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY'S FUTURE COMPETITIVENESS

When asked what they would like to see the County and City leadership take on to strengthen its ability to attract and retain quality companies and talent to Topeka and Shawnee County (not worrying about money or politics), survey respondents answered:



3. Ample resources, but unclear mission

Thanks to the leadership of the City and County that had the foresight to create a sales tax earmarked for economic development purposes in 2001, Topeka is blessed with a funding stream to affect such transformational change. While there are many challenges to overcome, Topeka is fortunate that it has the resources to work as a team and overcome several of them.

Nevertheless, an examination of JEDO's operations, perceptions of those operations, and external communications suggest that more needs to be done to educate the citizens of Topeka about how JEDO is using its resources and the results achieved.

"The sales tax for economic development has allowed us to compete for and successfully secure new jobs for the community."

— Survey Respondent

"Before the sales tax we couldn't compete at all; the sales tax made us a player. Whether we have used it effectively is yet to be determined."

Recommendations

Given the analysis of the consulting team based on data and feedback collected during Phase I, the following recommendations were developed to suggest ways that the City and County can work with other organizations involved in economic development initiatives to increase economic opportunities in Topeka. The strategy's first objective is to provide JEDO a framework to consider employing as it seeks to improve and enhance its economic development service delivery and support and augment the work of other organizations involved in improving the area's business climate and quality of place. Additionally, the recommendations that follow aim to leverage Topeka's financial resource structure and to help mitigate current quality of place gaps.

These recommendations are designed to go beyond traditional recruitment, expansion, and retention activities by looking at ways to better connect and leverage the community's talent and workforce, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, and business climate.

Unless otherwise noted, JEDO will serve as the lead organization in the implementation of each recommendation. Also, where appropriate, a budget or cost, timeline for execution, and/or best or lead practice examples are provided.

1. Execute Effectively (Organizational)

If JEDO is to enhance its role as a leader in economic development for the region, it must align its mission and focus on those areas that will directly impact economic growth.

Strategy:

Build a customer-friendly and highly effective economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in the community and supplement JEDO contractual/agent positions to focus on economic development needs.

Goal/Results:

Topeka is better able to attract the types of companies that will make it competitive for years to come and produce wealth-creating opportunities for its citizens.

1. Develop a JEDO-specific mission statement that guides economic development efforts for itself and its agents

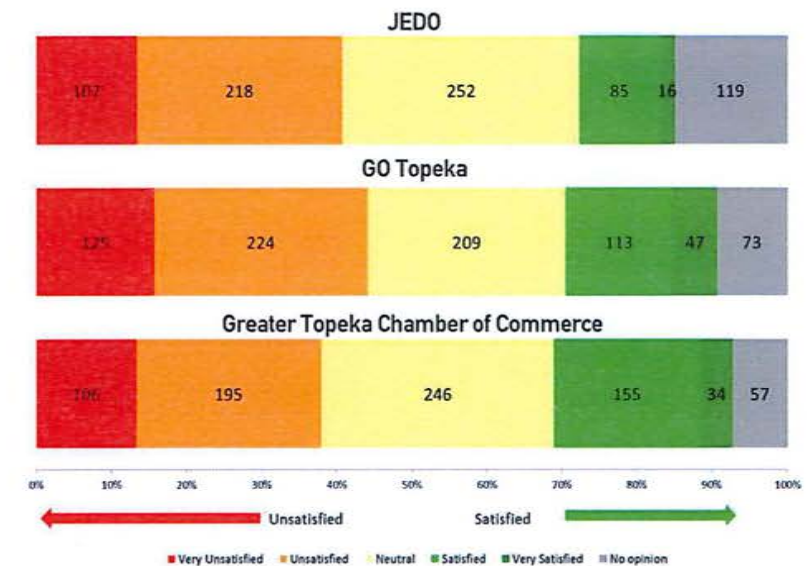
Observation: The consulting team was not able to locate a mission statement for JEDO within the focus group feedback or through due diligence efforts. Representatives of JEDO have said that the group deferred to its lead agent GO Topeka to craft any economic development mission. Without a stated and agreed-upon JEDO mission statement, stakeholders and constituents are either misinformed as to the organization's goals or unaware of what it does.

This lack of understanding among the community's stakeholders and citizens regarding JEDO's purpose and operations was highlighted in the feedback garnered by the consulting team (Figure 7). Higher numbers of stakeholders within the community rank the operations of both JEDO and GO Topeka as "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" and champions of the organizations (i.e., those that are "very

satisfied" with their work) are in the minority. Another interesting data point is that the number of those respondents who have no opinion of JEDO is more than double that of the number with no opinion of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce.

FIGURE 7: SATISFACTION WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

What are your past experiences with, and current perceptions of, the various economic development groups involved in investment attraction and retention?



Recommendation: As the organization that oversees more than \$262 million in sales tax funding and then contracts with organizations to implement its goals and objectives, it is imperative that JEDO create a vision and mission statement to drive agreed-upon goals and set a culture of accountability with any recipients of such funding. Ideally, JEDO leadership should create the mission statement that reflects the consensus of the board. This could be done in a board retreat setting or a facilitated work session. In absence of that, Garner Economics



offers two suggestions for a JEDO mission statement—either a simple one or one that is more specific:

- *Simple:* To improve and enhance the economic vitality of Topeka and Shawnee County for the benefit of its citizens.
- *Specific:* The mission of JEDO is to enable Topeka and Shawnee County to become a model for innovation and economic growth, fueled by the diversity of its people and businesses, the growing strength of the community's competitive position, and investments that grow quality jobs and cultivate dynamic, resilient, and livable neighborhoods throughout the County.

2. Create the position of a full-time JEDO economic development coordinator

Observation: There are two inherent issues of concern related to the execution of JEDO's mission as the fiduciary of the ½ cent sales tax. First, while the alternating roles of the City and County as Chair of the organization works, the lack of administrative functions alternating between the two could become problematic. The organization is able to make decisions and set an overall direction for growth; however, the implementation of resulting policy or ability to maintain alignment among policies could be lacking.

In essence, this makes JEDO a \$262 million dollar business with no staff. Such a practice is unheard of in the business world. With such responsibility, JEDO needs to be run more efficiently and effectively. The board should take no shortcuts simply because of its public agency status. Someone needs to be responsible for managing the day-to-day processes and ensuring that the will of the JEDO Board is executed properly.

Secondly, under the current structure, JEDO's reliance on its agent GO Topeka for much of its policy implementation related to incentives, land ownership, land management, and the management of carryover funds is fraught with transparency issues that are more difficult to overcome since GO Topeka is a nonpublic entity.

It is clear from the community engagement process that lack of transparency, lack of defined lines of responsibility and accountability, and perceived mistrust have caused a deep divide between the community, JEDO, GO Topeka, and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce (since GO Topeka is recognized as a subsidiary or department of the Chamber). As indicated in Figure 8, negative perceptions of JEDO and GO Topeka outweigh positive or constructive descriptors.

FIGURE 8: WORDS STAKEHOLDERS USE TO DESCRIBE JEDO AND GO TOPEKA

What words or phrases describe JEDO? GO Topeka?⁴

	Positive	#	Negative	#
JEDO	Well-intentioned	195	"Good old boy" network	332
	Serves the community	83	Little understanding of who JEDO is	321
	Collaboration	41	Non-transparent	248
	Effective	39	Ineffective	242
	Progressive	34	Oriented toward larger companies rather than small	230
	Supportive	23	Secretive	208
	Inclusive	19	Misunderstood	170
	Unique	9	Non-performing	151
			No out-of-the-box thinking	149
			Controversial	131
			Non-inclusive	120
			Focused on new growth	111
			Corrupt	111
			Lack of oversight by public officials	103
			Negative press	94
			Politically correct	38
GO Topeka	Markets the community	178	Non-transparent	296
	Community-focused	124	Unaccountable with funds	275
	Has had big wins and done effective work	103	Poor performing	256
	Optimistic	80	Exclusive group	255
	Ambassadors	72	Chamber of Commerce	225
	Progressive	50	Political	208
	Visionary	48	Arrogant	177
	Passionate	45	Misunderstood	171
	Service provider	34	For-profit organization using tax money	156
	Visible externally	26	Not elected	126
	Nimble	14		
	Stepping out of the box	13		
	Great listeners	12		

⁴ The table reflects responses from the survey. Options provided in the survey were crafted given feedback most frequently provided within the focus groups. Survey respondents were asked to choose their top five responses from the focus group generated list. Survey respondents were also able to provide "other" phrases. Of the 707 respondents, 1.4 percent or 44 provided "other" comments for JEDO, 2.3 percent or 70 provided "other" comments for GO Topeka.

Recommendation: JEDO should create and hire an economic development coordinator that will be responsible for managing:

- All of the public meetings (administrative functions related to the operations of JEDO)
- JEDO's incentive process
- JEDO-funded properties (that should be titled in JEDO's name)

Additionally, the coordinator should oversee any JEDO contracts or agents, etc. As the coordinator to ensure JEDO policies and responsibilities are executed, this position would not compete with or work at odds with GO Topeka or whatever group JEDO utilizes to carry out its economic development mission related to recruitment, retention, and entrepreneurship. If structured properly, the responsibilities of this position would be aligned with—and not duplicative of—those contracted for with GO Topeka or other groups utilized by JEDO.

A full-time staff of 1.5 FTEs is recommended to start and then ascertain the workload accordingly (see Figure 9). GO Topeka funding would be reduced based on the amount needed for the FTEs, in addition to other costs GO Topeka has incurred while performing work on behalf of JEDO (e.g., industrial park management). The staff could be housed in either a City or County office and would not need to alter location with the yearly change of JEDO Chairmanship.

Cost: \$80,000 +/- personnel-related costs. Other costs would be covered by the direct transfer of monies from GO Topeka back to JEDO.

FIGURE 9: PROPOSED JEDO STAFFING



3. JEDO should encourage GO Topeka to be a standalone, autonomous organization.

Observation: As noted above in Figures 7 and 8, responses from the community engagement process show lack of support as it relates to the perceived effectiveness of the Chamber, GO Topeka, and JEDO. Moreover, GO Topeka is viewed as an extension of the Chamber (which it is). Despite recent by-laws changes to reflect a greater sense of autonomy, GO Topeka is still part of the Chamber and its head staff reports to the Chamber president. Questions related to transparency, openness, and the utilization of tax money to help the financial state of the Chamber surfaced when the discussion ensued within the focus groups regarding the effectiveness of JEDO, the Chamber, and GO Topeka.

Stakeholders and community members sense a disconnect between the Chamber's role/mission in policy and political advocacy and the perception that the Chamber receives public monies (through its subsidiary GO Topeka). For this reason, some chambers like Jacksonville, Florida and Atlanta, Georgia take no public money so



that they can be true to their mission of advocating for a healthy business climate and pro-business political candidates.

Recommendation: If GO Topeka is to continue to act as JEDO's main agent for economic development service delivery, the JEDO Board should encourage GO Topeka to undergo a complete separation from the Chamber and create a separate governance structure (i.e., separate board of directors, separate tax status, separate by-laws, and separate staffs). Furthermore, GO Topeka should change its name to reflect this new status. (More discussion and recommendations regarding the name change are included in the marketing and communications recommendations section beginning on page 31).

4. Create performance metrics to measure the community's health and the operational success of JEDO's agents

Observation: One of the many goals for the Phase I Situation Analysis was to draw a picture of where the Topeka community stands relative to a set of similarly situated cities/counties—areas of like size with many of the same human capital and physical infrastructure capabilities and constraints—each seeking to move their local economies towards the type of high value-added manufacturing, knowledge-based industries, and entrepreneurship that will be the cornerstones of successful communities in the years ahead.

As part of this analysis, Garner Economics benchmarked GO Topeka with a similar economic development organization (EDO) located in Alabama. This benchmarking allowed the team to evaluate GO Topeka with a best-practice EDO. The benchmarking report can be found in Appendix A.

The benchmarking exercise to compare Topeka's business climate to peer communities should be continued and updated so that Topeka can measure progress and continue to gauge where it stands relative

to its competition or aspirations. Economic development metrics can shed light on a community's strengths and weaknesses as it competes to attract those kinds of employers and talent and, in turn, grow the region's economy. If properly identified, metrics provide a macro view of the community and should be used to assess the ongoing competitiveness of the Topeka economy and its ability to grow.

Recommendation: JEDO should develop and agree upon a set of metrics to monitor its progress and growth. Metrics should be organized as "Economic" and "Organizational," with the organizational metrics being used to evaluate the performance of JEDO and its agents (e.g., GO Topeka).

Garner Economics recommends JEDO use the following metrics and benchmark the community with a baseline of 2003 and 2013, followed by updates each year. A template for how JEDO could create and monitor the metrics is illustrated in Appendix B.

ECONOMIC BENCHMARKS

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| • Population growth | • Self-employment |
| • Sources of new residents | • Startup firms |
| • Age | • Household income |
| • Crime rates (violent & property) | • Weekly wage |
| • Educational attainment—bachelor's degree | • Poverty rates |
| | • Covered employment |

ORGANIZATIONAL BENCHMARKS

- Number of new jobs from attraction
- Number of new jobs from expansion
- Number of jobs retained
- Capital investment
- Number of suspects (leads)
- Number of prospects
- Number of company locates from new
- Annual community satisfaction survey of JEDO and GO Topeka

Lead organization: JEDO and GO Topeka

"GO Topeka has done a good job marketing Topeka to external markets, but they haven't told their story well internally. They haven't told the community all of the good things they've done. They need to take the time to tell people how they are spending their money and celebrate the results."

— Focus Group Participant

5. Modify the JEDO/GO Topeka incentive policy

Observation: Garner Economics reviewed the current incentive policy in detail as provided by GO Topeka. Incentives are provided by JEDO and managed through GO Topeka. Given Garner Economics' experience and knowledge of incentive best practices, the team believes that the existing incentive policy is sound given Topeka's current goals and objectives for economic growth.

The team offered a specific suggestion to GO Topeka to improve the incentive policy and are noted below in the Recommendations section. GO Topeka has presented the change (or is in the process of presenting it) to the JEDO Board for consideration.

Going forward, JEDO should consider amending and changing the policy to meet the needs of its economic development strategy.

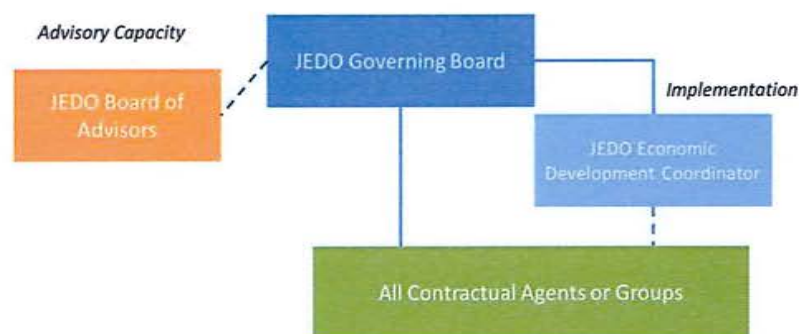
Recommendation: As it relates to attracting higher valued jobs in the region, the team suggests that JEDO offer a 10 percent premium to the current base incentives to those companies that the community attracts or assist in expansion in the most recent targeted list of sectors (i.e., advanced systems technology, food manufacturing, logistics and distribution, and professional and financial services). The additional premium places a greater emphasis on and inducement to JEDO's targeted business sectors and higher valued jobs.

6. Create a JEDO Board of Advisors

Observation: The JEDO meetings that the consulting team has observed—in-person and broadcasted online—have often taken an adversarial tone and have projected trust issues and a lack of collaborative decorum. Added to this (as noted in the community engagement summary), there is a strong perception of transparency issues related to JEDO and its agent (some perceptions are unjustified, but are widely held nevertheless) and there was much feedback that the JEDO Board does not take into consideration the opinions or input of its constituents and stakeholders.

Recommendation: The JEDO Board should engage a representative sample of the general public as a Board of Advisors to meet 2-3 times a year. The role of the Board of Advisors will be to provide input and feedback on JEDO programs and initiatives. As noted in Figure 10, they would provide feedback to the Governing Board.

FIGURE 10: BOARD OF ADVISORS



In addition to strengthening JEDO's inclusion and engagement efforts, the cultivation of the Board of Advisors will likely yield community champions for the organization and its efforts.

The Board of Advisors should be a non-voting board. The consulting team recommends that each JEDO member (voting and non-voting) be given the opportunity to appoint a Board of Advisors member for a two-year term.

The JEDO coordinator would facilitate the meetings of the Board of Advisors. This group could provide valuable feedback on policy initiatives and in community discretionary spending, noted in the Renew and Transform section.

7. JEDO should institute new operational guidelines (based on the implementation of the recommendations noted above)

Observation: If recommendations 1 and 2 above are implemented, JEDO will be more actively engaged in the execution of its policies rather than relying on a third party to implement JEDO's directives. Items and activities that emanate directly from JEDO using public tax money (e.g., incentive management, industrial park ownership and management, and financial contributions to outside organizations using JEDO directed tax money), need to be led and managed through JEDO leadership, both on a policy level and execution level.

GO Topeka (or its successor) should be tasked to focus on business solicitation (generating deal flow), business retention, and initiating and supporting programs designed to grow entrepreneurship.

Recommendation: JEDO should create guidelines and procedures for operations that reflect the above division of responsibilities. The roles should include the following:

- a. Transfer the ownership of and accountability for all sales tax-funded developments (e.g., Central Crossing and Kanza Fire) from GO Topeka to JEDO. All management functions associated with the oversight of these parks by GO Topeka will revert to the JEDO coordinator. This would result in a reduction of fees paid by JEDO to GO Topeka.
- b. All incentive monies should be managed through JEDO. The JEDO coordinator will be responsible for working with JEDO's economic development agent in providing an analysis of incentive qualifications to the JEDO board. This would include an economic impact and a Return on Investment (ROI) analysis, which should be paid for by the applicant. Once approved, the JEDO coordinator will be responsible for the incentive oversight in accordance with the new Governmental Accounting Standards Board and new rules on tax abatements:
<http://www.gasb.org/jsp/GASB/Page/GASBBridgePage&cid=1176164472248>
- c. Only fund GO Topeka (or any agent) for the actual operating funds needed. For example, the 2015 GO Topeka budget calls for \$2,077,227, with an overage of \$2.9 million. GO Topeka's budget from JEDO would be incrementally reduced based on tasks for which they are no longer responsible [e.g., land management, funding outside groups as discussed in item (e) below]. Overages are discussed in item (d) below.
- d. JEDO should be in control of all fund balances. There is currently a fund balance of sales tax monies managed by GO Topeka in the amount of \$16.3 million (as of 4/30/2015). Those funds should be transferred to a JEDO-managed fund balance account, which can

then be used for quality of place type projects noted on the next page.

- e. Funding for JEDO-approved projects should be disbursed directly through JEDO. Currently, GO Topeka funds outside groups once the project/funding has been approved by JEDO during budget discussions. There are at least 10 workforce groups that GO Topeka appropriates monies to through JEDO-sourced funds. Additionally, there are miscellaneous organizations like Heartland Visioning, numerous entrepreneurial groups, etc. whose support was approved by JEDO, but for whom monies flow directly from GO Topeka. While the consulting team does not question whether these groups are worthy of JEDO funding and merit assistance, the point is that the programs are using public tax money. Hence, JEDO—as the interlocal government entity—should have ultimate oversight for these organizations and should negotiate performance contracts with each annually, as further described in recommendation (f) below.
- f. Create performance contracts with all organizations that receive sales tax funds through JEDO on an annual basis. When developing a performance contract, the following questions should be asked:
 - Does the issue or the action relate to JEDO's mission?
 - Is it important to the community?
 - Will it attract or retain investment and/or jobs?
 - Is it a duplication of effort?
 - Is it measurable?
- g. The JEDO operational rules accepted February 12, 2014, are sound and should be followed, especially as they relate to following meeting protocol using Robert's Rules of Order.

"Nature abhors a vacuum—when JEDO's work is poorly defined by the elected leaders and the organization, the negative stories prevail."

— Focus Group Participant

II. Renew and Transform (Product Improvement)

Topeka's future success will rest upon its ability to shape its "product"—its infrastructure, quality of place, physical building stock, economic development service delivery, and regulations—in ways that leverage its unique features to attract the types of companies, investors, and talented workforce the community desires. Many other cities that compete with Topeka—regionally and nationally—have taken proactive measures to differentiate themselves and sell their unique qualities to potential companies. Topeka needs to play catch up.

Strategy:

Take concrete steps to improve the City and County's infrastructure, so as to strengthen the area's quality of place and differentiate itself from competitor regions.

Goal/Results:

Topeka is able to overcome its current shortcomings and better able to attract and retain the talent and companies it desires to grow and sustain its economy.

"If you want to have economic development, you need to create an environment where people want to live and businesses want to locate. Businesses look at things like having an educated workforce available, good schools, a reasonable cost of living, a city where its employees will want to live."

— Survey Respondent

1. Invest in more quality of place projects that will enhance the competitiveness of the community and attract and retain talent

Observation: In 2006, Garner Economics was part of a team engaged by JEDO and GO Topeka to conduct an economic development strategy for the community. Within this strategy, we offered 25 specific recommendations. One key recommendation made was the need for a more attractive community countywide, but clearly with a focus on the gateways into the community. This perception was made based on significant feedback from focus group participants at the time.

However, during this engagement eight years later, the same perceptions pervade the community (and are shared by the consulting team), yet the work done to improve this facet of Topeka is lacking. With the resources afforded to it thanks to the ½ cent sales tax monies, JEDO should advocate for a renewed effort to invest in infrastructure, enhance the blighted areas of the community (e.g., East Topeka), improve the scenic gateways, and successfully redevelop downtown to attract investment and fill the many vacant storefronts.

The Topeka City Manager has also identified this issue as an impediment to economic growth. In a memo to the JEDO Governing Board dated September 15, 2015, he offers the development of a new program called the "Urban Economic Development Fund," utilizing sales tax funds for specific quality of life/place projects and workforce service delivery needs. The purpose of the fund would be to rehabilitate blighted, derelict, and underutilized facilities and to invest in infrastructure that will attract economic development prospects. The consulting team reviewed this proposal and commends the City Manager for offering a much-needed approach to enhance the community's quality of place.

Recommendations: The consulting team offers these specific suggestions below to enhance the economic vitality of Topeka and to attract and retain talent from a site-selection perspective.

a. Create a plan to improve gateways into the City—including new signage and landscaping.

As reiterated by focus group participants and survey respondents during this latest engagement, the gateways into Topeka are either nondescript or are in disrepair. As a way to welcome both visitors and potential businesses, the City should work to improve major gateways by enhancing landscaping and creating signage that clearly indicates entrance into the City's boundaries and into the historic downtown and the central business district. Work should also be done to encourage redevelopment or refurbishing of structures near the gateways to complement the face-lift. By improving the overall appearance and creating a unified brand, the City can make itself more distinct and build a sense of community pride.

Lead organization for implementation: City of Topeka

Best practice examples:

- **Augusta, Georgia:** The City of Augusta, Georgia formed a public/private partnership between the Georgia Department of Transportation, the Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau, local businesses, and concerned citizens to work on several projects aimed at beautifying the City's major corridors. For each of these projects, the group has commissioned plans, conducted bids, managed construction, and continues to oversee ongoing weekly landscape maintenance.
<http://www.augustaga.gov/index.aspx?NID=1695>
- **Jersey City, New Jersey:** The Jersey City, New Jersey Gateway Beautification program sought to enhance the appearance of the Gateway areas and to make them safer by upgrading planting; maintaining trees, shrubs, evergreens, and flowering plants; and installing paved walkways and crosswalks, decorative steel fencing, flag and banner poles, and lighting. The program is run by the Jersey City Division of Economic Development.



Examples of Gateway Signage

- b. Provide public free, high-speed Internet access to enhance the visitor and resident experience in the core business district and in disadvantaged neighborhoods where access is limited based on affordability.

Access to broadband infrastructure is critical to the development of distressed areas and is an enabling platform for rapidly growing business sectors such as e-commerce, social networking, online education, health IT systems, and delivery of public services. High-speed connections are increasingly becoming a fundamental infrastructure element rather than a luxury for an area.

The City of Topeka should take action to build a free, high-speed wireless node downtown and in distressed neighborhoods. This effort will show residents, visitors, and entrepreneurs that the community has embraced technology and supports a mobile workforce. By working with appropriate vendors to create an area downtown and in specific, disadvantaged neighborhoods that has access to free, high-speed wireless Internet connections, the City will not only create an amenity that will draw activity to the area, but will also provide an added utility and asset to some of the economically disadvantaged populations noted above. The Wi-Fi zone could be publicly sponsored or be supported by the provider.

Lead organization for implementation: City of Topeka working with private-sector providers and leveraging funds from the Kansas Department of Commerce:

<http://www.kansascommerce.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1003>.

Best practice examples:

- Alexandria, Virginia - <http://wirelessalexandria.com/>
- Amherst, Massachusetts - <http://amherstma.gov/index.aspx?NID=805>
- Anderson, Indiana - <http://www.cityofanderson.com/wifi.aspx>
- Ponca City, Oklahoma - <http://www.poncacityok.gov/index.aspx?NID=417>
- Mountain View, California (in conjunction with Google) - http://www.mountainview.gov/services/learn_about_our_city/free_wifi.asp.



Public Hotspots

- c. Create a “cool factor” in the core business district that will encourage families and young professionals to live, work, and play there.

Adopt ordinances that encourage landlords (local and absentee) to improve their properties and encourage homeownership—especially in the core business district—by enticing families and young professionals to move there and making infrastructure improvements to increase overall property values. One way to catalyze activity and growth in downtown areas is to encourage residential activity. The live, work, and play activity brought by residents serves the purpose of encouraging and sustaining other activities. Christopher B. Leinberger of the Brookings Institution detailed the best practices and critical path followed by other municipalities looking to revitalize their downtown. Encouraging residential growth is one of the early success factors of communities that have done well.

The City should enact incentives to encourage landlords to improve their stock. This could be in a combination of training and tools, rewards for improving properties, and working with neighborhood groups to encourage change. As an Entitlement Community for the Federal Community Development Block Grant Program, Topeka could better leverage requests and funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to address these needs.

Additionally, incentive funds from JEDO, falling within the confines of economic development and quality of life, could be used as leverage to incentivize developers and property owners to rehabilitate and renovate properties. This also fits within the confines of the City Manager’s Urban Economic Development Fund.

Lead organization for implementation: City of Topeka

Best practice examples:

- Ogden, Utah -
http://www.ogdencity.com/en/doing_business/business_licensing/good_landlord.aspx
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin -
<http://city.milwaukee.gov/Landlordtraining>
- Boise, Idaho -
<http://pds.cityofboise.org/planning/comp/neighborhood/neighborhood-reinvestment-grants/>



Fast Company recently ranked Boise as the #2 Best City for Millennial Entrepreneurs (September 2015)

2. Conduct a countywide community improvement planning effort that looks at assets and neighborhood planning by City and County districts

Observation: Each district of Topeka and Shawnee County is distinct and unique. Each has its own personality, and as such, they have all their own needs and demands that may be separate and distinct from other parts of the City and County. During community engagement sessions, feedback was received about the needs of East Topeka, downtown (especially vacant buildings), rural parts of Shawnee County with limited Internet access or speeds, and other examples of targeted economic development and quality of place needs.

Recommendation: Each member of JEDO should lead (facilitated and managed by the planning staff and the JEDO coordinator) a planning initiative for their respective district (County Commissioners should match up their districts with the respective City districts to avoid duplication) and conduct a long-term planning discussion of what quality of place amenities are needed to enhance the economic prosperity for these particular neighborhoods/districts. A charrette should be conducted for each session so that the respective planners could help visualize these quality of place enhancements. Topeka must plan first before it can act. This effort leads to a greater and more consensual long-term vision rather than those immediate needs noted in recommendation 1 above.

Lead organization: JEDO, with assistance from the respective planning departments of the City and County.

Best practice examples: Several cities of various sizes have undertaken such a process to envision their futures. By looking at select experiences, Topeka can get a sense of the process that is entailed and tailor on to fit the City's and County's needs.

- One example is PlaniTulsa, a citywide process to update Tulsa's Comprehensive Plan by creating a new vision for the City and setting forth guidelines for its physical development. Input was garnered from the entire community through public workshops, stakeholder interviews, and a public survey. The process also identified a set of guiding principles that will serve as the foundation for future planning efforts. The PlaniTulsa effort is run out of the Mayor's office with the City Planning Office being the lead. The effort also had a consulting team consisting of an urban and regional planning team, transportation experts, an economic development team, and a research arm.

<http://planittulsa.org/>

- Another example is Charlotte City Center. Facilitated by the Charlotte Center City Partners, the plan implements strategies to drive the economic, social, and cultural development of Charlotte's Center City. They work to create a Center City that is a sustainable, visitor-friendly place where residents want to live. The Partners tout the area's modern infrastructure, a tapestry of unique neighborhoods, and a diversity of thriving businesses.

http://files.charlottecentercity.org/2020/Charlotte2020VisionPlan_1_Intro.pdf



Charlotte City Center

3. JEDO should continue to acquire real estate for economic and growth opportunities

Observation: GO Topeka, with funds appropriated from JEDO, owns two industrial parks: Kanza Fire and Central Crossing. There are currently 417 available acres combined from these parks (236 and 181 respectively).

Recommendation: JEDO should evaluate its long-term property needs based on growth scenarios and the needs of its targeted industries strategies to accommodate greater industrial, office, and entrepreneurial activity. It is our understanding that JEDO recently released an option on 570 acres referred to as the Kanza Fire II site. But for future growth needs based on the possibility of increased economic activity, growing your site inventory of shovel-ready sites is imperative.

KANZA ECONOMIC GROWTH COMPLEX

TOPEKA, KANSAS, SHAWNEE COUNTY/USA



III. Communicate Effectively (External Marketing and Internal Communications) presented by Brand Acceleration

Economic development professionals and elected officials rely on effective communications to build strong relationships while developing a sound base of customers and constituents. Whether asking a prospective employer to open a facility in the area or simply informing area residents of the organization's activities, the way people express their ideas can impact how their audiences perceive those concepts. Poorly communicated ideas, even when fundamentally sound, often fail to interest or satisfy their intended targets.

Strategy:

Proactively work to increase communications about JEDO's economic development efforts so as to grow support for long-term initiatives using the monies from the ½ cent sales tax, as well as differentiate Topeka in the perception of external audiences.

Goal/Results:

JEDO is able to gain support for the initiatives it undertakes and supports and Topeka becomes known as a vibrant location for high-quality business and world-class talent.

By launching this new strategy, JEDO has the opportunity to communicate more effectively to its local constituents on the efforts and initiatives it is taking and supporting to enhance the economic vitality of the community. It also has the opportunity to publicize the renewed goals of its mission statement.

Similarly, GO Topeka (or JEDO's external agent) has the opportunity to be more proactive communicating to its external audience of site location consultants, existing companies, prospective companies, and entrepreneurs—all designed to attract better job opportunities and wealth building for the citizens of Topeka and Shawnee County.

The recommendations that follow are for both JEDO and its agent(s) to communicate more proactively and successfully to its many audiences—both external and internal. The first three of the recommendations are specifically for JEDO; the remaining are directed at enhancing the communications and marketing effectiveness for GO Topeka or JEDO's agent for economic development service delivery.



1. Strengthen Internal and External JEDO Communications

Observation: A significant part of the process of discovering how well a community communicates is listening to the words and phrases its residents and leaders use. In some cases, the words and phrases used are very similar, indicating agreement. In other cases, groups may use completely different words and phrases, indicating disagreement. In Topeka, when describing the Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO), there was a clear difference between what would be considered insiders and non-insiders. In this situation, the term “insiders” largely refers to individuals close to JEDO or GO Topeka. “Non-insiders” represents those not part of these groups. While the groups were often in agreement, there was a clear trend that may indicate opportunities for improvement.

One of the exercises conducted by the team in Phase I asked each group to identify words and phrases that, in their opinion, represent JEDO's communication habits. The most commonly selected words and phrases are captured in Figure 11.

These words indicate a real difference between people who are informed versus those who are uninformed. While this is not an implication that non-insiders would simply change their perception of JEDO if they were to become informed, it is important to note that people who are not informed about the goings-on of an organization are much more likely to make erroneous assumptions or accept the claims made by a vocal party. With so little communication coming from JEDO and its agent GO Topeka, the public and media are left with only one side of the story, which often portrays a fairly pessimistic point of view. It is quite possible that this communications void contributes to the perception that JEDO is secretive and not inclusive.



FIGURE 11: WORDS THAT DESCRIBE JEDO

Non-Insiders	Insiders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretive • Misunderstood • Politically correct • Corrupt • Dysfunctional • Anonymous • Confusion • Unknown • Uncertainty • Operates in secrecy • Semi-transparent • Non-transparent • Inept • Not inclusive • Mysterious • Rude • People don't understand what they do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive • Collaborative • Growth • Ideas • Misunderstood • Negative press • Lack of transparency • Pessimism • Perception Issues • We're our own worst enemies • Negative attitudes • No public outreach

The groups surveyed often expressed frustration that the JEDO leadership shows a lack of leadership or courage by failing to stand up to opponents when there is an obvious and logical rebuttal. There is a desire among some that the leadership defend its position in order to demonstrate courage and clarity of purpose.

Recommendations: The JEDO leadership has a very significant opportunity to improve its reputation with residents of Topeka. Although not all that ails the organization can be attributed to the aforementioned communications void, a strong and well-thought-out communications strategy could help to improve JEDO's reputation among residents.

a. Develop/enhance the current JEDO website

JEDO should develop a website that offers a clear explanation of the organization's purpose and mission. This can include details of its leadership structure, a listing of leadership term limits, information about how and why the group was established, and a clear and concise definition of *economic development*. The site should also have a calendar of meeting dates and a list of the agenda items to be discussed at each meeting. Make the Standard Rules of Behavior readily accessible to all potential meeting attendees, so they can come prepared to properly discuss any agenda items.

Cost: \$12,000 – \$14,000

b. Adopt an open-communications policy

It is in JEDO's best interest to adopt an open-communications policy that encourages residents to get involved. Invite area residents to meet with JEDO leadership in order to discuss the organization's progress and offer input regarding future plans. In a separate meeting, invite young adults (residents aged 20-35) to offer recommendations about the community's direction and how to best attract and retain young adults.

This open-door policy should extend to online platforms. JEDO already releases all budgets, meeting minutes, meeting announcements, and reports via the JEDO website, all social media platforms, media announcements, community discussion boards, and emails to community leaders and other interested parties. Go Topeka should do the same as its agent. In addition to making this information readily accessible to the public, encourage thoughtful discussion by allowing the public to post comments, suggestions, and questions. The JEDO staff should respond to all posts within 24 hours.

c. Host a local/regional media tour

The JEDO leadership should conduct a local media tour to meet one-on-one with news directors, editors, and reporters. During these meetings, explain JEDO's purpose, structure, meetings, and open-door policy; promote the new JEDO website; promote social media platforms and invite the public to participate; and invite the media to call and/or visit JEDO leadership. Offer to send JEDO representatives to group meetings throughout the County to answer questions, hear recommendations, and relay vital updates. JEDO should utilize the services of a professional public relations firm with expertise in economic development and community reputation management.

d. Conduct a community pride campaign

Finally, due to a lingering pessimism in the area, consider a community pride campaign to remind area residents of the many positives of living in Topeka and Shawnee County. The scope of such a campaign could vary widely.

Cost: \$15,000 – \$35,000

2. Explain the Process to Disclose Economic Development Projects

Observation: A concern expressed by many was that the public is not made aware of prospective economic development projects. Understandably, the public perception may be that if taxpayer money is provided in the form of incentives, then the public should have the right to know the details of the project in advance. What residents often don't know is that site consultants and/or corporate executives nearly always require the community economic development representative to sign a confidentiality agreement that prohibits public disclosure until the project is finalized. This is a non-negotiable practice. If disclosure is ever made (leaked), thus breaking the agreement, the community will very likely be removed from consideration and the jobs will go elsewhere. Additionally, if the word gets out that Topeka can't be trusted, the area's reputation could be tarnished, making the attraction of future jobs projects more challenging.

Recommendation: JEDO should continue to work to explain the need for confidentiality to the public. Conversely, Go Topeka should do so also. In an effort to improve transparency, it is important to provide the public a summary of project details after the location is announced, whether the project selects Topeka/Shawnee County or another location.



3. Inclusion of Community Groups

Observation: Looking to the future, it may be necessary to reassess the relationship between community groups and JEDO. As such, community groups were included throughout the research process.

Recommendation: Prior to JEDO meetings, provide the public with guidelines for productive discussion. Encourage the public to come with constructive suggestions for the future. If JEDO's response to questions and/or concerns requires a bit of time and research, communicate this. Convey to the audience that JEDO intends to look into the topic more and will be prepared to discuss it in more detail at a later date. Also, have a predetermined media strategy about how to address the media and public. JEDO needs to work more diligently to control the narrative. It is important for all parties to be heard. Hopefully, as JEDO works to make these changes, the community groups will mirror its efforts and find ways to be positive and helpful partners.

Recommendations for GO Topeka

4. Change the name of GO Topeka

Observation: Based on feedback garnered in Phase I, there is much confusion as to the relationship between JEDO and GO Topeka and suspicions around how GO Topeka is using the monies entrusted to it. Both GO Topeka and the Chamber (its parent organization) have a tainted image for economic development activities locally (see discussion under "Execute Effectively," pages 17-18). Moreover, most constituents do not differentiate between GO Topeka and the Chamber, nor are they aware of or understand the contractual relationship between GO Topeka and JEDO. Internally (community-based), the two organizations are polarizing. Externally, (outside of Topeka), GO Topeka has a benign image, which means the majority of site location advisors either have no strong negative perceptions of GO Topeka or have no awareness of the organization and what it does. In the site-selection world, having a benign image is better than having a poor reputation.

In assessing GO Topeka's economic development operations and comparing it to the best in class example in Alabama, the consulting team believes that GO Topeka operates efficiently, but could enhance operations if given sufficient staffing and oversight/direction by the JEDO Governing Board.

"GO Topeka brings a lot of envy from other entities in how it has been successful and how it operates. If we told our story better, we wouldn't be sitting here right now."

— Focus Group Participant

Recommendation: If GO Topeka and JEDO maintain the current agent relationship, JEDO should require GO Topeka to change its name so as to reflect the enhancements and refinements to JEDO, as well as to start building more awareness of GO Topeka’s role and its relationship with JEDO.

GO Topeka should capitalize on this opportunity as it restructures itself to overcome current negative perceptions and misunderstandings by mounting an internal communications campaign that articulates its purposes, activities, and past achievements to the community. It can also use this opportunity to better clarify its role and objectives to external markets (see recommendation 4 below).

In looking at successful rebranding activities taken on by other communities, three key words are typically found in the name of an economic development organization:

- The geography identified (e. g., Topeka)
- “Economic”
- “Partnership” or “Alliance”

Examples like the Topeka Economic Partnership or the Topeka Economic Alliance are a start. JEDO should enlist the expertise of an agency with extensive branding experience to help determine and market test the new name.

Lead organization: GO Topeka and JEDO

5. GO Topeka Communications - Internal

Observation: As noted above, there is much confusion or misunderstanding regarding GO Topeka and its role in the community’s economic development efforts. In addition to changing the name of the organization, much could be done to improve

communications by GO Topeka within Topeka and to external markets and site selection clients.

Similar to the methodology in considering actions JEDO can take to improve communications, the consulting team assessed how GO Topeka is viewed by “insiders” (those who work closely with JEDO or GO Topeka and are more knowledgeable about its mission) and “non-insiders” (those who are not as engaged and not part of the former groups). Commonly used words or phrases describing GO Topeka (includes only words or phrases related to communications) are:

<i>Non-Insiders</i>	<i>Insiders</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretive • Misunderstood • Impotent • Ineffective • Community marketer • Perception issues • Lack of transparency • People don’t understand what they do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visionary • Great listeners • Ambassadors • Optimistic • Service provider • Passionate • Out of the box • Progressive

As with JEDO, the above disconnect suggests that different approaches should be taken to change perceptions among the above groups. Additionally, given GO Topeka’s role to market the region to external audiences—namely those in the site-selection industry and companies interested in Topeka as a location for business expansions—attention should be given to key messaging that articulates the community’s value-proposition to business and differentiates it from competitor areas.

Recommendation: GO Topeka should focus communications on external markets. Once the organization name change is complete (with accompanying messaging as to its mission and role within the Topeka’s economic development efforts as the primary agent for

JEDO's economic development marketing), GO Topeka should focus communication efforts to external markets and the site-selection community. GO Topeka could continue touting its efforts to promote local entrepreneurship and existing business expansions; however, such communications and messaging should be made in the context of how a strong existing company base and/or vibrant startup community is vital to the overall business climate and attractiveness of Topeka.

6. Strengthen and enhance branding and communications efforts around Topeka's value as a business location

Overall, the current GO Topeka marketing campaigns are used together to form a nicely designed and cohesive campaign. While the layouts are clean and consistent, some graphic elements are dated and a lack of attention to detail has led to some inconsistencies that undermine the power of the pieces. Moreover, while brochures are also effective in addressing the needs of prospective businesses, other collateral is not as communicative.



The larger question for GO Topeka's marketing efforts is whether the entirety of the collateral effectively differentiates Topeka from other potential business locations. The consulting team's assessment is mixed. Topeka is presented in a positive and attractive way, but nothing clearly differentiates the area from the thousands of other communities competing in an increasingly noisy space. Simply stating "We Can Do That" and that Topeka is a place that can "See Farther" doesn't really tell someone unfamiliar with the area what makes it the best place to locate a company.

From the consulting team's perspective, the most important deficiency of current materials is lack of clearly defined direction. A number of the pieces begin strong, but the overall messaging begins to wander. By the conclusion of the piece, the key message about Topeka is not clear. It seemed as though the message was being crafted to match a headline. This was most notable in the "Values" brochure and the "Mars Has Landed" ad.

Recommendation: As part of the overall branding of Topeka as a competitive place for business and talent, GO Topeka should develop a crystal clear strategy statement that defines target industries, target audiences (and their expectations), and exactly what message GO Topeka will convey. The strategy statement will form the basis and "key messaging" for all external marketing collateral produced by GO Topeka. It will set the brand promise for the community for site selection clients and others evaluating Topeka and Shawnee County as a potential business location.

7. Develop a prospectus for each targeted industry that clearly articulates Topeka's value

Observation: Overall, the current collateral pieces are nicely designed and look as though they belong to a cohesive campaign. While the layouts are clean and consistent, some graphic elements are dated and may not resonate effectively with the target audiences.

Recommendation: GO Topeka should create new collateral for each of the community's target industries. When creating the new pieces, Topeka's value proposition for that industry should be clearly defined. The pieces should be short and to the point, not extensive essays that try to tell the whole story in one fell swoop. The pieces should be used to pique the interest of the reader and direct them to the website for more details.

8. Refresh the GO Topeka Website

Observation: Overall, the website does not appear to cater to the wants and needs of the target audiences. In many cases, the most in-demand information is buried deep within the site, making it difficult to access. There seems to be no clear design flow that makes it easy to find desired information. It is more of a collage than a well-thought-out economic development website.

Recommendation: GO Topeka should approach the "refresh" from the perspective of what a site selector or corporate executive wants and needs when navigating the site. In order to meet the needs of the intended audiences, the website should make the most important information (data about sites and buildings, workforce, and the economy) easily accessible. Site selectors or corporate executives will not spend a lot of time rooting around in the site trying to find key information. If the information is not highly visible, the site selector or corporate executive will likely move on.



Website copy should be written by professional Search Engine Optimization (SEO) writers who are knowledgeable in economic development messaging. The attention paid to SEO will better the website's chances of appearing in search results. This will be especially helpful to those who are searching for potential sites but may or may not have Topeka in mind.

Additionally, if Topeka aspires to be a location for global business, the website should be professionally translated. GO Topeka will need to determine which languages are most applicable to target industry clients. All pages of the website need not be translated; however, pages with key information should be considered.

Finally, the website should provide a staff directory that includes individual names, phone numbers, email addresses, and headshot photos. Best practice research shows that site consultants, corporate executives, and real estate professionals do not like fill-in "Contact Us" forms.

9. GO Topeka Social Media Activity

Observation: Despite having an active social media presence, the content posted by GO Topeka is very local and would have little value to national or industry-specific audiences. Also, little is being done to reach a wider audience externally.

Recommendation: GO Topeka should treat social media as a serious business communication tool, including strategy, targets, goals, and practices. The content GO Topeka develops and shares should be informative, educational, and beneficial to target audiences. Considering the organization's target industries, the content should benefit people in the Food, Biomedical, Back Office, Logistics, and Clean Energy industries.

Going forward (and as GO Topeka changes its name), GO Topeka should create and curate content that shows that local leaders and employers are staying up to date on advancements in these fields. This will present the economic development staff as experts in these target industries and make the area more attracted to prospective employers. This type of content should make up roughly 80 percent of the social media posts. Only 20 percent should be promotional.

Additionally, GO Topeka should better utilize hashtags in its social media posts. GO Topeka currently uses hashtags to emphasize words or topics. Hashtags are meant to provide easy sorting of useful content. For example, GO Topeka should use hashtags like #econdev, #workforce, #education, and #rail. These are much more likely to be searched by the targeted audiences.

Costs: This activity may be better served by utilizing a social media marketing firm with expertise in economic development. If GO

Topeka decides to engage a firm, the required budget would be \$5,000 to \$6,000 per year.

10. GO Topeka Trade Show, Conferences, and Event Activities

Observation: Conferences and trade shows are very expensive and time-consuming forms of marketing. GO Topeka attends and participates in several events. While there are numerous shows and conferences that are specific to the target industries, budget may limit the organization's ability to participate at a more extensive level.

Recommendation: GO Topeka should conduct a complete audit of trade shows, conferences, and events, determining which offer the best opportunities for project attraction keeping in mind the audience attending (e.g., corporate decisionmakers or site location consultants who facilitate location decisions).

When attending a conference, pre-set meetings with carefully selected attendees. For example, know which site consultants and corporate executives will be there and contact them in advance to set a meeting. Only attend events where decisionmakers of investment projects will attend. Talking to marketing and sales representatives at a trade show has limited value. Write and rehearse industry-specific "elevator pitches" in order to be prepared for the possible 30-second opportunity.

Costs: For the audit and plan, a budget of \$10,000 to \$12,000 would be required. Total costs will be dependent on the activities defined.



CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION



Topeka and Shawnee County are in an envious position. They have financial resources at their disposal that many communities beg for. With a ½ cent sales tax dedicated for economic development and quality of life purposes, the tax is estimated to create more than \$262 million in tax proceeds over the next 15 years.

Since its formation, JEDO has served in an oversight role to manage how the sales tax monies are spent. They have utilized as a third party an agent, the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce and its economic development function, named GO Topeka. Because of a multitude of factors and considerable public discussion, JEDO engaged Garner Economics to perform a review of how economic development could be done better by JEDO and its agents. With these recommendations noted in the previous chapters, JEDO is now in a better position to serve as a catalyst for positive, transformational change in the community.

The messages from the public have been clear: more transparency, better utilization of how public money is deployed, a need for metrics to measure how Shawnee County is performing economically, how JEDO's agents and funding partners are performing, investing in quality of place and basic infrastructure, and how the public views the performance of JEDO annually. Ways to address each of these items have been referenced in the recommendations section.

In 2006, Garner Economics was part of a consulting team selected by JEDO and GO Topeka to create a countywide economic development

strategy. We offered 25 recommendations on what the client, JEDO and GO Topeka, needed to do to enhance the economic vitality of the community. Some of the same issues that public input respondents considered impediments to economic growth are still being discussed in 2015 as part of our community engagement process. Of the 25 recommendations from 2006/2007, it is believed by many that eight of these recommendations have been implemented, at varying degrees of success. As compared to many other locations where our strategy recommendations are implemented, this is a low ratio.

The status quo is not an option. We encourage JEDO to work differently this time by having an edict that actionable and measurable plans must be brought forth, followed by a review of its success in the implementations of these plans, in order for organizations and programs to receive public money overseen by JEDO.

Garner Economics and Brand Acceleration would like to thank the JEDO governing board, The City of Topeka, Shawnee County, and GO Topeka for their valuable assistance as we sought answers to our questions. A very special thank you to the 124 focus groups participants, the 707 public survey respondents, and the 12 participants of the community listening session who participated and provided tremendously valuable feedback in this process. There were also numerous letters and e-mails from the public expressing their concerns and ideas—all very much appreciated.

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the recommendations offered within. These were developed given the analysis and assessment taken during the first two phases of the project.

Strategy	Goal/Results	Actions	Timeline
I. Execute Effectively (Organizational) Build a customer-friendly and highly effective economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in the community and supplement JEDO contractual/agent positions to focus on economic development needs.	Topeka is better able to attract the types of companies that will make it competitive for years to come and produce wealth-creating opportunities for its citizens.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a JEDO-specific mission statement that guides economic development efforts for itself and its agents. 2. Create the position of a full-time JEDO economic development coordinator. 3. JEDO should encourage GO Topeka to be a standalone, autonomous organization. 4. Create performance metrics to measure the community's health and the operational success of JEDO's agents. 5. Modify the JEDO/GO Topeka incentive policy. 6. Create a JEDO Board of Advisors. 7. JEDO should institute new operational guidelines: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Transfer of land ownership bad accountability b. Incentive management c. Funding of its agents d. Fund balances e. JEDO disbursements to agents f. Performance contracts g. Meeting protocol 	2016 2016 2017 2016 2016 2016-2017

[illegible]



APPENDIX A: EDO BENCHMARKING SURVEY – COMPARISON

The following are the answers obtained from Shoals Economic Development Authority and GO Topeka. Collected salary information is not reported. The budget breakdown and FTE allocation for each group is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1: SURVEY RESULTS

	Shoals Economic Development Authority (SEDA)	Growth Organization of Topeka/Shawnee County, Inc. (GO Topeka)
Organization Structure		
Years in existence	More than 10	More than 10
Mission Statement	SEDA serves as the area's lead organization to design and implement strategies that create new business and employment opportunities essential for sustainable economic growth.	GO Topeka's mission is to create exceptional opportunities for growth, prosperity, innovation, and economic diversity and vibrancy that positively impact current and future citizens of Topeka and Shawnee County by attracting world-class companies, providing existing companies with the knowledge and resources to reach their highest potential, and cultivating entrepreneurial development and growth.
Organization Classification	An independent, standalone economic development entity	A program of, or entity associated with, a Chamber of Commerce or similar entity to undertake economic development service delivery for a city, county, or group of jurisdictions (regional) by contract to a public body(ies)
Organization Legal Charter	Autonomous public body	501c(6)
Service area		
Area population	150,000	178,406
# of communities	10	2
# of counties	2	1
Crosses state line?	NA	NA



	SEDA	GO Topeka
Economic Development Program		
Activities included in organization's mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New investment attraction • Regional or local external marketing/branding • Existing Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) • Workforce development • Prospect management/hosting • Property management (e.g., industrial park or spec building management or ownership) • Entrepreneurial development (through programs that nurture entrepreneurship) • Research and analysis • Proposal generation • Community development or product improvement • Public policy advocacy • Incentives analysis and recommendations to a public body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New investment attraction • Regional or local external marketing/branding • Existing Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) • Workforce development • Prospect management/hosting • Property management (e.g., industrial park or spec building management or ownership) • Entrepreneurial development (through programs that nurture entrepreneurship) • Research and analysis • Proposal generation • Community development or product improvement • Public policy advocacy • Incentives analysis and recommendations to a public body • Minority- & women-owned business developmentⁱ
# of suspects yearly*	45	40
# of visiting prospect yearly*	20	5
# of visiting prospects making return visit on same project yearly*	11	1-2
Closure ratio	10% ⁱⁱ	18%
Avg time to close a deal with a <u>new</u> company	10-12 months ⁱⁱⁱ	1 year ^{iv}
Dedicated staff to manage relationships w local partners/investors	No	No
Formal client protocol?	No	Yes ^v

*Yearly, based on 3-year average



	SEDA	GO Topeka
Funding, Budget and Staffing		
Funding Sources (%)		
• Private sector investors (members)	5	13
• Municipal or County budget allocation (or contribution)	80	86
• Grants	0	0
• In-Kind	0	1
• Other	15 ^{vi}	0
Does community have a dedicated tax to fund programs in the organization?	Yes	Yes
• If yes, what purpose?	Fund special initiatives	Fund special initiatives
• If yes, how much is derived annually	\$7 million	\$5 million
• If yes, what is the source?	Sales tax	County ½ cent sales tax that generates around \$16 million per year
• If yes, are there any prohibitions to the monies?	Up to 10% is used for SEDA operations with the remainder available for activities that directly create job opportunities.	Funds may be used for research, target marketing, existing business retention and expansion, new business recruitment, minority business development, entrepreneurial business development, infrastructure development, site acquisition and development, incentive funds, workforce training and expansion, and other such activities deemed necessary and appropriate. Unofficially, this effort has been limited to primary jobs and, more recently, workforce development.



	SEDA	GO Topeka
Outcomes		
Jobs announced (most recent year)	1,024	45
Jobs announced (last 5 years)	3,934	2,322
New/expanded capital investment (most recent year)	\$203,989,278	13,000,000
New/expanded capital investment (last 5 years)	\$529,379,860	392,483,500
Organization's success metrics (as defined by the Board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new jobs from attraction • Number of new jobs from expansion • Number of jobs retained • Capital investment • Number of leads (Suspects) • Number of potential investor visits to the community (Prospects) • Number of company locates (new locations/announcements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new jobs from attraction • Number of new jobs from expansion • Number of jobs retained • Capital investment • Number of leads (Suspects) • Number of potential investor visits to the community (Prospects) • Number of company locates (new locations/announcements) • Strategic plan • Small business development
Organization's top priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New employment created by external capital investment • New employment created by existing industry expansion • Capital investment • Job retention^{vii} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new jobs from attraction • Number of new jobs from expansion • Capital investment • Number of jobs retained • Small business development • Average salaries



EDO Comparison endnotes

ⁱ GO Topeka is involved in other non-checked items, but not on a day-to-day basis. For instance, the organization is currently working on a retail project involving a new supermarket looking to go into an underserved area of our market. Normally, however, GO Topeka would just provide data and information to retailers in the market and/or downtown area.

Separately, GO Topeka is also providing assistance to a new angel/venture capital group getting started in the market and also is doing joint branding and advertising with the Topeka tourism group.

ⁱⁱ If only those projects that ultimately make an investment are considered, the percentage of successful closures would increase to 30+ percent. The closure on competitive existing industry expansions is much greater at 60+ percent.

ⁱⁱⁱ The length of time between first contact and determination of a “finalist” list has decreased since so much initial investigation is now accomplished prior to first contact. However, the actual finalist decision making process is as slow as ever.

^{iv} Actual closing times vary dramatically and are normally dependent on the prospect and complexity of the project.

^v While a formal real estate policy exists, it was released years ago and has not been reviewed or kept up to date.

^{vi} Includes rental income from investments.

^{vii} Quality of employment growth is beginning to overshadow quantity of employment growth.



TABLE 2: ORGANIZATION BUDGETS

	SEDA		GO Topeka	
	Annual Budget	Staff/FTE	Annual Budget	Staff/FTE
New investment attraction	290,000	1	165,200	0.55
Regional or local external marketing/branding	20,000	.2	266,000	1.07
Existing Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)	120,000	1	51,600	0.58
Workforce development	10,000	.2	197,100	0.35
Prospect management/hosting	15,000	.5	1,000	0.08
Property management (e.g., industrial park and spec buildings management or ownership)	81,000	.5	170,000	0.42
Entrepreneurial development	10,000	.2	478,700	1.6
Research and analysis	30,000	.5	25,900	0.52
Proposal generation	30,000	.5	0	0.22
Community development or product improvement	75,000	.5	0	0.1
Public policy advocacy	5,000	.01	0	0.29
Incentives analysis and recommendations to a public body	90,000	.5	0	0.13
Venture or early stage capital			0	0.01
Retail attraction			1,000	0.07
Downtown development/redevelopment			0	0.01



APPENDIX B: METRICS TEMPLATE

1. ECONOMIC BENCHMARKS FOR SHAWNEE COUNTY

Variable	2005	2013	2014	2015
Population	171,893	178,574	178,406	
Average age	37.6	38.5	38.2	
Crime rates:				
Violent	441	395	510	
Property	6,381	4,088	4,903	
Educational attainment				
Bachelor's degree %	18.8	18.4	18.3	
Graduate degree %	9.3	10.2	10.6	
Self-employment %	8.4	5.7	6.7	
Startup firms	375	184	Not Available - release Sep 2016	
Household income	\$44,052	\$50,150	\$53,507	
Weekly wage	\$665	\$791	\$800	
Poverty rates %	11.9	17.2	14.7	
Covered employment	93,673	95,491	97,000	

Data Sources:

Population: US Census Population Estimates

Median Age: US Census American Community Survey (ACS)

Crime: FBI Uniform Crime Reports; 2014 is Topeka Only as Shawnee County was not reported

Educational Attainment: US Census ACS

Self Employment %: US Census ACS

Startup Firms: US Census Business Dynamics Statistics

Household Income: US Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program 2003; ACS 2013-2014

Weekly Wage: BLS, QCEW Annual Average

Poverty Rates: US Census ACS

Covered Employment: BLS, QCEW Annual Average

2. ORGANIZATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR JEDO/GO TOPEKA

Variable	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total new jobs from recruitment and local expansion	45	166		
Jobs from <u>expansion</u>	25	116		
Jobs from <u>new</u> investment	20	50		
Capital investment that the organization helped facilitate	\$13,000,000	\$168,800,000		
Number of suspect (leads)	40	25		
Number of prospects (visits)	12	6		
Number of new company locates	1	1		
Number of new startups facilitated	6	8		
Annual community satisfaction survey for JEDO	TBD			
Annual community satisfaction survey for GO Topeka	TBD			