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**JEDO Board Meeting**  
**May 11, 2022**  
**6:00 P.M.**

***City Council Chambers***  
***214 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor***  
***Topeka, Kansas***

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**JEDO Board Members**

Shawnee County Commissioners

Bill Riphahn District No. 1  
Kevin Cook District No. 2  
Aaron Mays District No. 3

City of Topeka Governing Body

Michael Padilla	Mayor
Karen Hiller	District No. 1
Christina Valdivia-Alcalá	District No. 2
Sylvia Ortiz	District No. 3
Tony Emerson	District No. 4
Brett Kell	District No. 5
Hannah Naeger	District No. 6
Neil Dobler	District No. 7
Spencer Duncan	District No. 8
Michael Lesser	District No. 9

**JEDO Board Voting Members**

Shawnee County Commissioners

Commissioner Aaron Mays  
Commissioner Bill Riphahn  
Commissioner Kevin Cook

City of Topeka Governing Body

Mayor Michael Padilla  
Deputy Mayor Spencer Duncan  
Councilmember Hannah Naeger  
Councilmember Neil Dobler

Public Comment. Comment from members of the public shall be entertained on each actionable agenda item and at the end of each meeting. Comment shall be limited to topics directly relevant to JEDO business. Members of the public wishing to speak must notify the County Counselor's Office (call 785-251-4042 or email [tabitha.pusch@snco.us](mailto:tabitha.pusch@snco.us)) before 5:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. The JEDO Secretary will provide the Zoom Link to those who sign up for public comment. Members of the public will be let in to speak, one at a time in the order they signed up. As is normally the case, public comment shall not apply to items added during the meeting. Members of the public shall be given four (4) minutes to speak and must maintain proper decorum relating to public meetings.

Agenda. Agendas are furnished at least five (5) business days prior to each meeting and posted on JEDO's website at <https://www.jedoecodevo.com/Meeting-Documents/>.

To make arrangements for special accommodations please call 785-368-3940. A 48-hour advance notice is preferred.



## **JEDO BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA**

**Wednesday, May 11, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.**

**City Council Chambers  
214 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Topeka, Kansas**

**Public Comment Allowed In-Person or via Zoom. Face Coverings & Social Distancing Encouraged**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. ACTION ITEM:**
  - A. APPROVAL of February 9, 2022 JEDO Board Meeting Minutes
  - B. APPROVAL of 2021 GO Topeka Auditor's Report
- 4. PRESENTATION:** Go Topeka Quarterly Update
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENT:**
- 6. REMINDER: 2022 JEDO Board Meeting Dates per the JEDO Operational Rules:**
  - Wednesday, February 9, 2022
  - Wednesday, May 11, 2022
  - Wednesday, September 14, 2022
  - Wednesday, December 14, 2022
- 7. ADJOURNMENT.**

Public Comment. Comment from members of the public shall be entertained on each actionable agenda item and at the end of each meeting. Comment shall be limited to topics directly relevant to JEDO business. Members of the public wishing to speak must notify the County Counselor's Office (call 785-251-4042 or email [tabitha.pusch@snco.us](mailto:tabitha.pusch@snco.us)) before 5:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting. The JEDO Secretary will provide the Zoom Link to those who sign up for public comment. Members of the public will be let in to speak, one at a time in the order they signed up. As is normally the case, public comment shall not apply to items added during the meeting. Members of the public shall be given four (4) minutes to speak and must maintain proper decorum relating to public meetings.

Agenda. Agendas are furnished at least five (5) business days prior to each meeting and posted on JEDO's website at <https://www.jedoecodevo.com/Meeting-Documents/>. View the Meeting online at at: <https://www.facebook.com/cityoftopeka/> and <https://www.topeka.org/communications/live-stream/>.

To make arrangements for special accommodations please call 785-368-3940. A 48-hour advance notice is preferred.



## *Agenda Item No. 3A*

**JEDO Board Meeting  
May 11, 2022**

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**ACTION ITEM:**

APPROVAL of February 9, 2022 JEDO Board meeting minutes

**Joint Economic Development Organization Board Minutes  
February 9, 2022**

In-Person and Via Zoom  
City Council Chambers  
214 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Topeka, Kansas  
Wednesday, February 9, 2022

The Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) Board members met at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom meeting and in-person with the following voting Board members present: Shawnee County Commissioners Aaron Mays, Kevin Cook and Bill Riphahn; City of Topeka Mayor Michael Padilla, Deputy City Mayor Spencer Duncan and City Councilmember Neil Dobler. The following members participated remotely: City Councilmember Hannah Naeger. Shawnee County Commissioner Aaron Mays presided as JEDO Chair.

The following nonvoting JEDO Board members were present: City Councilmember Tony Emerson. The following members participated remotely: City Councilmember Sylvia Ortiz.

The following JEDO Board members were absent: City Councilmembers Karen Hiller, Christina Valdivia-Alcala, Brett Kell and Michael Lesser.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was conducted in-person as well as virtually via Zoom meeting. Zoom access was provided to those individuals signed up for public comment.

**APPROVAL of December 8, 2021 JEDO Board Meeting Minutes was presented:**

*Commissioner Cook moved to approve the Minutes of December 8, 2021. The motion seconded by Councilmember Dobler carried unanimously. (7-0)*

**A PRESENTATION on 2021 GO Topeka Fourth Quarter Report was presented:**

Molly Howey, GO Topeka President of Economic Development, announced that GO Topeka had a ribbon cutting and grand opening for Honest Mill and Honest Kitchen, also known as Project Central. It will offer 50 new jobs and 10 million in capital investments. She stated how exciting it is to watch them grow here in the animal health corridor as a top of the line pet food manufacturer. She stated they have had some opportunities to work with the City for partnerships to apply for state funding for projects that are important for infrastructure such as finishing out central crossing and some other projects. She also explained how they have been making great strides in the aviation industry. Lastly, she introduced the President of Security benefit, Doug Wolf as the Chair of the Go Topeka Board of Directors this year.

Doug Wolf, Chair of GO Topeka Board of Directors spoke. He explained how he's been a part of Go Topeka for a while and is pleased to get to know the members of JEDO.

Ashley Lehman, GO Topeka Business Development Manager, presented. She shared the Activity Report and there are currently 24 active projects. She shared the No Submission report which tracks the types of projects that they have to pass on because they have criteria that Topeka and Shawnee County does not meet. This includes things such as site or building requirements, acreage and square footage.

Councilmember Emerson asked Ms. Lehman for the numbers on the No Submission percentages.

Ms. Lehman explained the total is 15 from around March of 2020 until now. That would be 9 for site or building requirements, 3 for acreage and 3 for square footage.

Trina Goss, GO Topeka Director of Business and Talent Initiatives, presented. She gave an overview of things that have been going on as it relates to workforce and talent development and retention. She stated they hosted an informational session regarding a new community resource tool called Workforce Inventory Website. The purpose is to connect job seekers with opportunities to find employment as well as tools for the process of finding a job. This will be hosted on the GO Topeka Website. Ms. Goss stated that she wanted to thank Councilmember Hiller for helping with the project. She then reported on the TopCity Teachers Program. This is a free class given twice a year for teachers and student teachers to educate them on the community and ultimately to retain their talent in Topeka. They will also host a panel with seasoned teachers and educators on how to best interact with parents.

Rhett Flood, Executive Director of Forge Young Talent presented. He explained that Forge's role is to focus on the attraction and retention of young talent in our community. He introduced two members of Forge that will present tonight.

Richard Kelly, Chair, Key Staffing & Premier Employment Solutions, presented. Forge Strategic Focus for 2022 is reviewing and updating strategy plans, refreshing and revamping the branding and messaging, and having new passion, new energy and new ideas.

Mayor Padilla asked about the recruitment with their membership, are there any professions that you still need to fill?

Mr. Kelly replied that they are still trying to work on those metrics in figuring out who they need to target to better expand their demographic.

Fatima Luthi, Chair-Elect, Envista Credit Union, presented. She explained that the DEI Committee (diversity, equity and inclusion) focuses on ensuring that young talent have voices that are included, heard and respected throughout the organization.

Glenda Washington, Chief Equity & Opportunity Officer for GO Topeka and the VP for Minority and Women Owned Businesses, gave an update on some things she has been working on. She reported on the DEI Summit. She said it all came together and they are planning on doing it again this fall. They had 18 *Seat at The Table* Meetings. She explained how she has been working with the City on the *Supplier Diversity Initiative*. Next, she talked about the *Holiday Pop-Up Shop* in which over 200 individuals attended and participated to support some of Topeka's minority owned

businesses. Ms. Washington explained that they have hired a consultant to help with the outreach to the Hispanic Businesses. They are looking at the needs for those businesses. Lastly, she announced that they will be holding a women's forum with a speaker out of Kansas City.

Lyndsay Lebahn, Program Manager at Plug and Play Topeka, presented. She explained how they just had their Selection Day. They start off with 100 companies and then have 20 that compete in a shark tank style pitch. The main focus areas were Packaging, AI, Sustainable Protein, Automation, 3D Food Printing, Gamified Nutrition and Telehealth. All reflect direct challenges that our businesses are facing. She went over the timeline and the graduation will be May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Laurie Pieper, VP of Small Business for GO Topeka, presented. She explained how they have retained some of some Small Business Incentives such as Marketing, Equipment, Construction & Renovation and Architect & Design. They also have added some new incentives to attract new kinds of businesses. She went over the new application process that includes the online application, cover letter and new requirements for new businesses. She also went over the new review process which includes a review committee charter, front-end review and evaluation based on program & specific incentive objectives. She then went over the review schedule which included the application close date, then materials to the review committee, then the committee review, the applicant notifications, then approved expenditure window, then reimbursement requests, the final review, and finally the checks are cut. She stating they are working on innovation by continuing to work on marketing the Innovation Center, working on a university engagement strategy and coordinating with Plug and Play to put together a webinar series. Ms. Pieper explained that for entrepreneurship they are working on a small business, entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem survey. They are also working on putting together a year-round mentorship program as well as giving small business awards on May 10, 2022.

**PUBLIC COMMENT was provided by the following:**

Danielle Twenlow spoke on equitable data use. She went over how equality is providing the same thing to everyone but equity is recognizing that not all people have equal resources or needs. She did an overview of some statistics for Topeka. She concluded by stating that she is urging the board today as they move forward in making project decisions and money investments to ask yourselves, how are all racial ethnic groups affected by these decisions? She believes that by building equity in our community, it will be a place that people want to move to and stay.

NO FURTHER BUSINESS appearing the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



## ***Agenda Item No. 3B***

**JEDO Board Meeting  
May 11, 2022**

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### **ACTION ITEM:**

APPROVAL of 2021 GO Topeka Auditor's Report

\*Please see Audit Report as separate attachment.

City of Topeka & Shawnee County



## *Agenda Item No. 4*

**JEDO Board Meeting  
May 11, 2022**

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### **PRESENTATION:**

2022 First Quarter - Go Topeka Quarterly Report



go  
>topeka  
Quarterly  
Report

Q1  
2022



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GO Topeka  
Staff



GO Topeka  
785.234.2644  
GOTopeka.com  
719 S Kansas Ave. Ste.100  
Topeka, KS 66603

Cover photo:  
Ad Astra on the Capitol Dome.

Inside COVER photo:  
Mistress of Ceremonies, Martha Piland from MB Piland, helps  
host the spring Women's Forum at the Beacon.

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GO Topeka New Staff Members



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2022 GO Topeka Board of Directors



Momentum 2022 focuses on five key elements to make Topeka & Shawnee County a better place to live, work, play and do business.

KEY



Develop Homegrown Talent



Create Vibrant & Attractive Places



Grow a Diverse Economy



Promote a Positive Image



Collaborate for a Strong Community

# TOPEKA & SHAWNEE COUNTY VITAL STATS

Updated 04.25.2022



## DEVELOP HOMEGROWN TALENT

### GRADUATION RATE

STATE OF KANSAS  
**87.9%**

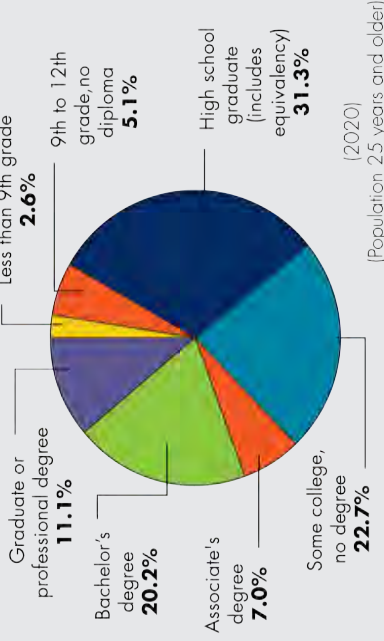
SHAWNEE COUNTY  
**87.8%**

Four-year adjusted cohort formula  
(all Schools 2020-2021) (1)

### STUDENT-LEVEL METRICS (2021)



### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



### CERTIFICATES EARNED

**1,106**

(Less than a 2-year degree)  
(2020)

### LIVABILITY

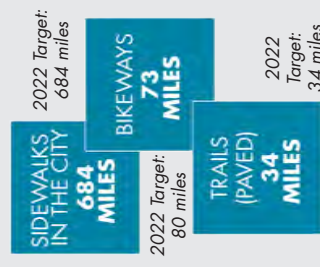
This score rates the overall livability of Shawnee County on a scale from 0 to 100. It is based on the average score of seven livability categories—housing, neighborhood, transportation, environment, health, engagement, and opportunity—which also range from 0 to 100.



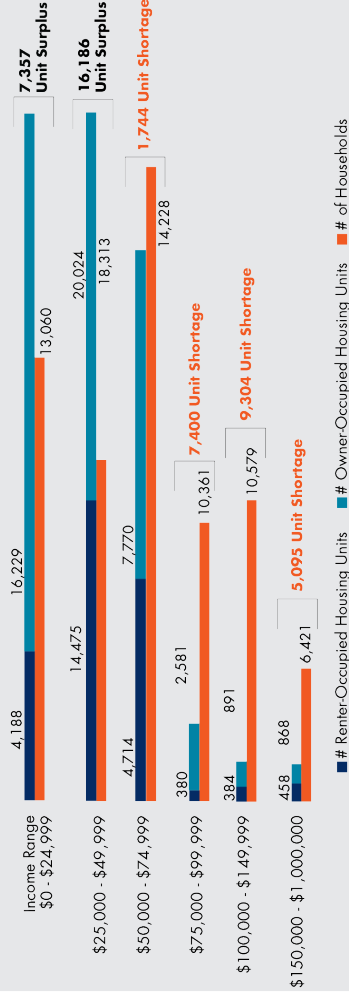
2022 Target: 58 AARP livability index

## CREATE VIBRANT & ATTRACTIVE PLACES

### PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLINESS (2021)



### AFFORDABLE HOUSING (2022 Q1)



\*The analysis does not account for age or quality of housing units, and there is the possibility that upper income households are likely outcompeting lower income households for the same housing units.

### ATTENDANCE AT ATTRACTIONS (2021)

**508,519**  
PEOPLE

Total attendance of the following Shawnee County Attractions:  
 Topeka Zoo, KS Children's Discovery Center, TPAC Old Prairie Town, KS State Capitol, TCT, Sullivan's Store, Mulvone Art Museum, Brown vs Board NHS, Earl Kiesel Museum, Museum of KS Nat'l Guard, Combat Air Museum, Jayhawk Theatre, Ritchie House, Great Overland Station

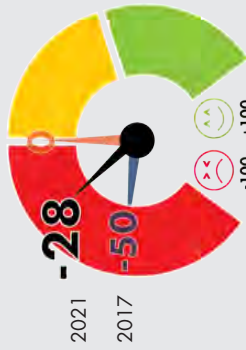
2022 Target: 750,000 people



## PROMOTE A POSITIVE IMAGE

### NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS)

An index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers to recommend a product or experience to others.



2022 Target: 0 NPS



## GROW A DIVERSE ECONOMY

### SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT AT NEW BUSINESSES

6,466 OR 8.4% PEOPLE WORK AT A NEW BUSINESS

(New business is any that has been open less than five years)(2020 Q3)

2022 Target: 7,093 people

### ANNUAL MEDIAN WAGE IN TOPEKA

\$39,290

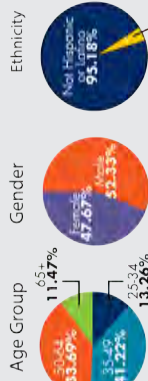
(2020 MSA)

2022 Target: \$39,000



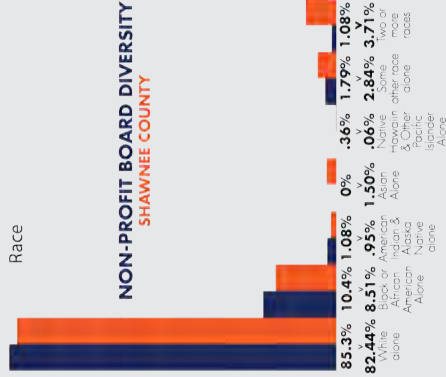
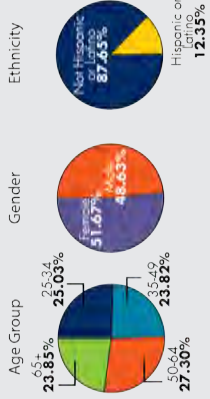
## COLLABORATE FOR STRONG COMMUNITY

### NON-PROFIT BOARD DIVERSITY (2019)



It is intended that non-profit boards are reflective of the community as a whole. To that end, the graphs above should mirror the graphs at right.

### CURRENT SHAWNEE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS



### NON-PROFIT BOARD DIVERSITY SHAWNEE COUNTY

2022 Target: 3.2 Mental

### INFANT MORTALITY RATE (2021)

7.0 WITHIN 1 YEAR, PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

(9)

### PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (2021)

3.7 POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH DAYS  
4.2 POOR MENTAL HEALTH DAYS

Average number of physically/mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)

2022 Target: 3.2 Mental

## GLOBAL METRICS

### GDP OF DOLLARS (10)

\$12.48 BILLION IN 2020

Gross domestic product (GDP) is equal to the sum of personal consumption expenditures, gross private domestic investment, net exports of goods and services, and government consumption expenditures and gross investment.

\$10.655 BILLION IN 2017

2022 Target: \$11.500 GDP in billions of current dollars

### PRIVATE CAPITAL INVESTMENT (DECEMBER 2021) (7)



Capital investment is the amount of money new or current businesses spend to create, expand or improve facilities. For this report, capital investment is captured by GO Topeka during regular communications with companies or when companies work with GO Topeka to receive an incentive for an investment. The numbers are self-reported and exclude the cost of maintenance. GO Topeka makes every attempt to gather this info for all companies in Shawnee County, however some will not be captured due to lack of awareness of the investment.

2022 Target: \$350M

### TOTAL PRIVATE JOBS

73,145

(September 2021)

(Private = Non-Government jobs) (5)

2022 Target: 79,000 jobs

### POVERTY RATE IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2020) (11)

10.5% TOTAL POVERTY RATE

13.1% CHILD POVERTY RATE

2022 Target: 10%

### STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCHES (2021)

51.4%

2022 Target: 48%

### NUMBER OF PEOPLE WORKING, BUT NOT LIVING IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2019) (8)

39,313 OR 38.7%

2022 Target: 33%

### PER CAPITA INCOME IN SHAWNEE COUNTY (2020) (10)

\$51,216

2022 Target: \$50,000

All metrics refer to Shawnee County unless otherwise stated.

Sources: **1** Kansas State Department of Education, **2** U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, **3** APP Livability Index, **4** City of Topeka Planning Department, **5** Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, **6** Occupational Employment Statistics, **7** Momentum 2022 Survey, **8** U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, **9** County Health Ranking, **10** Bureau of Economic Analysis, **11** U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

PROVIDED BY





# Business Attraction

GO Topeka works continuously to bring awareness of the business assets in Topeka and Shawnee County to site selectors and companies looking to relocate or expand. Currently, the new business attraction portfolio holds 28 active projects in various industry sectors: 15 manufacturing, eight aviation, two food processing, one general office, and two bioscience.

# 28

## ACTIVE PROJECTS



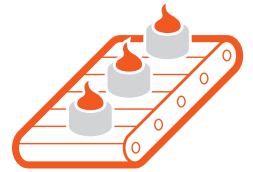
Manufacturing

# 15



Aviation

# 8



Food Processing

# 2



Office

# 1

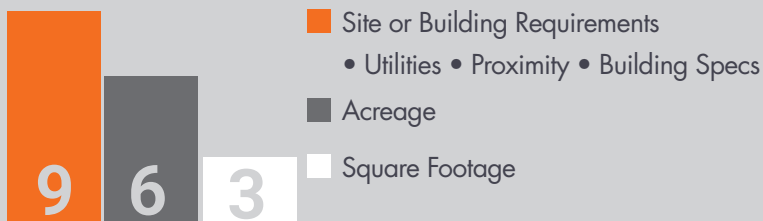


Bioscience

# 2

## No Submission

Some inquiries from companies interested in relocating or expanding have criteria Topeka and Shawnee County does not meet. Details around requests GO Topeka was unable to compete for are below:



### Additional Specific Requests

- 40 Minutes from airport
- Energy capacities
- Large shovel-ready tract with direct runway access
- Previously a bakery





# \$3,860,136

**Total Contract Awards for KS PTAC - Sub-Center Topeka<sup>1</sup>**

**\$3,860,136**

Federal

+

**\$0**

State & Local

+

**\$0**

Subcontracts

**4**

CONTRACTS AWARDED  
TO SHAWNEE COUNTY  
BUSINESSES TOTALING  
\$25,398<sup>2</sup>

**\$55**  
RETURN ON  
INVESTMENT (ROI)  
FOR EVERY \$<sup>3</sup>1  
JEDO INVESTS

SOCIOECONOMIC  
STATS ON FEDERAL  
CONTRACT AWARDS

6

Small Disadvantaged  
Business

11

Woman-Owned  
Small Business

6

HUBZone

1

Service Disabled  
Veteran-Owned  
Small Business

**20**

NEW CLIENTS

**130**

COUNSELING HOURS

**3**

TRAINING EVENTS  
HELD

**30**

CONTRACT AWARDS<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Service area covers 32 counties in NE KS

<sup>2</sup>Out of the Total Awards Amount shown above

<sup>3</sup>JEDO was requested to invest \$66,689 in the KS PTAC program for FY2021. This is the number used to calculate ROI.

<sup>4</sup>This Procurement Technical Assistance Center is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency. It is funded additionally by Wichita State University, Pittsburg State University, GO Topeka, and Johnson County Community College.



# Topeka In The News

## Topeka Housing Market 17th Most Affordable in U.S.

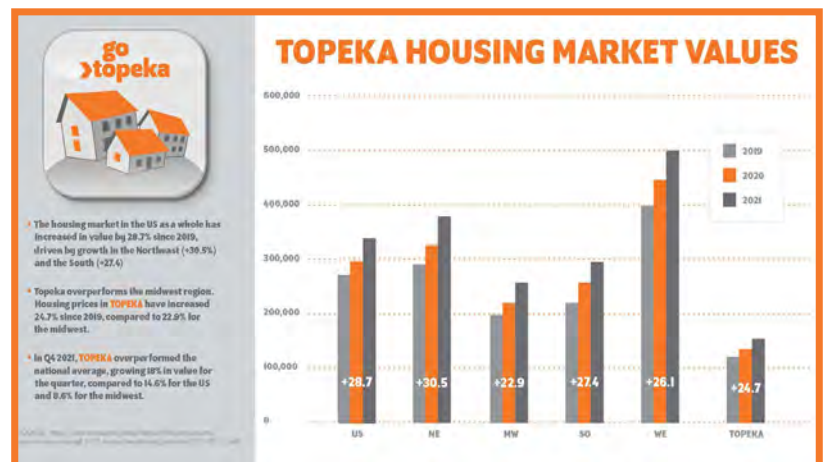


Fortune magazine reported in April that the Topeka housing market, which has grown in value by 24.7% since 2019, is in the normal range for American housing markets. Research from CoreLogic, a leading California-based financial, property and consumer information, analytics and business-intelligence firm assessed the health of 400 metropolitan statistical areas, determining that 65% of U.S. regional housing markets are “overvalued.” Overvalued markets include New York, Miami, Seattle, Las Vegas, Arizona, Florida and Texas. Topeka was among the 26% of markets assessed that were identified as “normal” markets, meaning they are not expected to lose value in the coming year.

“This report by CoreLogic reinforces our own research,” said Freddy Mawyin, senior economic advisor for GO Topeka and the Greater Topeka Partnership. “Data from the National Association of Realtors consistently show the Topeka housing market is far more affordable than the national average. The 24.7% growth in value we have

seen since 2019 is a normal market response to the economic improvement Shawnee County has enjoyed over the past ten years. With GDP rising by \$1 billion, poverty down 40%, household wages up 30%, and \$150 million in new investment in our downtown core, the value of a home in Topeka has predictably gone up.”

In February, the National Association of Realtors assessed 146 metropolitan statistical areas, looking at affordability and market value. Their data demonstrated that the U.S. housing market has increased in value by 28.7% since 2019, driven by growth in the Northeast (+30.5%) and South (+27.4%). Topeka overperformed the Midwest region, growing at 24.7%, compared to the Midwest’s 22.9% growth.



“Topeka experienced very strong home-value growth in Q4 of 2021,” Mawyin said. “Year over year, the Topeka MSA grew by 18%, well above the national average of 14.6% and significantly better than the Midwest average of 8.6%. Home-value growth in that quarter contributed to the Topeka housing market being ranked third best in the U.S. by Realtor.com.”

To read the full release, visit [GOTOpeka.com](http://GOTOpeka.com).



## GO Topeka President Named A Top-50 Economic Developer

Consultant Connect, a leading international resource for economic developers and location consultants, has named GO Topeka president Molly Howey one of North America's Top 50 Economic Developers. Consultant Connect announced its 2022 class of leading economic developers via social media Tuesday, with GO Topeka's Howey making the coveted list. According to its website, Consultant Connect each year asks its robust site-selector and economic development communities to nominate individuals worthy of being named a "Top 50 Economic Developer." The latest list represents economic developers from a variety of backgrounds, who are united in their vast expertise and leadership abilities.

"Releasing the Top 50 list is one of Consultant Connect's favorite times of the year because we are so passionate about recognizing economic development leaders' transformative work," said Carla Sones, managing director of Consultant Connect. "This year's group faced hurdles unlike any other Top 50 group has seen over the past year, and we are honored to provide a platform for them to be recognized for the passionate commitment they've made to their communities."

To read the full release, visit [GOTOpeka.com](http://GOTOpeka.com).



## Top-5 City for Remote Workers

Ownerly.com released its 2022 "Best Cities for Remote Workers" report, evaluating 1,488 micropolitan statistical areas (MSA) and cities, as identified by the US Census Bureau. After vetting, the final list of places and MSAs evaluated in the study was limited to 445 cities. Topeka, Kansas, was recognized as the No. 4 best city in the United States for remote workers, and the No. 1 best city in the Midwest for remote workers. Lancaster, Pa. (1); Dalton, Ga. (2); McAllen, Texas (3); and Rochester, N.Y. (5), round out the top-five ranking.

"Ownerly is pleased to recognize Topeka, Kansas, as a top 'Zoom Town' city for 2022," said Kerry Sherin, of Ownerly.com. "We ranked metrics based on a weighted average of home values, rental costs, web connectivity, safety, park access, availability of coworking spaces, city and state-level athletic health levels and gym

options, affordability of goods and services and utilities, as well as affordability and availability of childcare services and restaurants. Our team is impressed with the value and quality of life Topeka provides remote workers, and we are excited to announce that Topeka ranked No. 4 on our list!"

To read the full release, visit [GOTOpeka.com](http://GOTOpeka.com).





# Entrepreneurship & Innovation

## Plug & Play Webinars

GO Topeka partnered with Plug and Play to offer a series of webinars for Plug and Play ecosystem and area entrepreneurs called "The In's and Out's of Innovation." The second and third installments in this webinar series were offered in March. On March 8, GO Topeka's Laurie Pieper gave an overview of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grants and contracts. She presented alongside Melinda Coffman, a USDA SBIR program coordinator, who talked about taking advantage of funding opportunities through USDA SBIR grants. Then, on March 22, Dulce Zahniser, managing director of Towpath Group International, spoke about how to put together export compliance plans for technology companies. The last installment of this series was April 12 and was titled "Working with Regulatory Agencies."

## DealRoom Platform

- Contract signed in March
- Platform to launch early Summer 2022
- First midwestern launch of the platform
- Tracks startup activity by region
- Helps us engage with companies
- Helps companies be found by potential investors

## Innovation Panel

On March 9, GO Topeka partnered with Plug and Play Topeka to host a moderated panel discussion titled "igniting Innovation: The Role of Community in the Startup Journey." This hybrid (part zoom, part in-person) panel allowed Topeka and Shawnee County leaders and community members to hear from local and national startups about their own entrepreneurial journeys and about ways Topeka, Shawnee County and northeast Kansas develop it's entrepreneurial ecosystem and become more startup friendly. Panelists included John brown, CEO of StenCo; Justyn Eddins, CEO of MrAugmented.com; Emilie Flink, chief engagement officer at Hitchpin; and Michael Odupitan, CEO of Omni Circle Group. The GTP hopes to hold similar conversations in the future.

## Plug and Play Topeka Spurs Partnership

Plug and Play Topeka announced in March that its local startup accelerator has led to a second partnership between a graduate of its program and one of its founding partners. Cargill, a global leader in agriculture technology and production, has announced a partnership with Birmingham, Alabama-based StenCo, a company specializing in sustainable and biodegradable packaging. StenCo was one of the first companies to go through the Plug and Play Topeka program and Cargill is one of the program's three founding partners, alongside Evergy and Hill's Pet Nutrition. These types of startup-corporate partnerships are one measure of success for the Topeka accelerator, as helping cutting-edge companies connect with resources and grow is a primary goal of the initiative.



## University Engagement Strategy

GO Topeka is partnering and collaborating with different universities to help support innovation and entrepreneurship. These partnerships include K-State, Washburn University, and KU. With these partnerships, the hope is to encourage startups, attract innovation companies, retain talent, and attract capital.



## Silicon Valley Summit



## GO Topeka to Launch Propeller Program

Propeller is a Mentorship Network created to help entrepreneurs set course, lift off, and arrive at their desired destinations with the guidance of subject matter experts who are volunteering their time to support Topeka's entrepreneurial ecosystem.



The program is designed to offer some structure and guidance to participants while also allowing for organic connections and flexible scheduling. Run in three-month journeys, month 1 starts with mentor-mentee (pilot-navigator) pairings with each participant being matched with up to 3 other participants. Month 2 will have a networking breakfast with a featured speaker and month 3 will conclude with an evening networking session. In between network meetings, Propeller participants will connect with each other to work on specific topics as their schedules allow.

All participants will be held to a Code of Ethics and Conduct and mentors and mentees must go through initial training to set expectations. Time commitment is expected to be around 12 hours per 3-month journey.

## Ecosystem Survey

A strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is an important component of a strong local economy for multiple reasons. While this is often measured in terms of jobs created and tax revenues generated, a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is also vital for bringing new ideas and business innovations to a community and for the contributions that it makes to a region's community identity that make it a vibrant place for residents and for attracting new businesses. To help us best support our ecosystem, we encourage small businesses, entrepreneurs and startups to participate in GO Topeka's Ecosystem Survey:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GO\\_Topeka\\_Ecosystem\\_Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GO_Topeka_Ecosystem_Survey)

# Small Business Incentive Program

## Incentive Types

10

Construction

13

Marketing

4

Architecture  
& Design

13

Equipment

PREAPPROVAL THROUGH  
Q1 OF 2022

40

Incentives  
Totaling

\$147,009

LIFE OF PROGRAM

507

Incentives  
Totaling

\$2,236,534

Some companies may have been awarded more than one incentive.

## Small Business Incentives Application and Other Documents Now Available In Spanish

GO Topeka is now offering application materials in Spanish for its Small Business Incentives program. To obtain Spanish-language materials, one can simply contact [SmallBusinessIncentives@TopekaPartnership.com](mailto:SmallBusinessIncentives@TopekaPartnership.com). In the coming weeks, these documents will be available on the website with a dedicated page in all Spanish that is identical to the main Small Business Incentives page.





## New Operating Guidelines

In March, the Small Business Council adopted new operating guidelines, with changes to how local businesses become a member of the SBC. Moving forward, any bona fide business entity that conducts business in Shawnee County, is a member in good standing with the GTP, and has more than one but fewer than 50 employees may become an SBC member by alerting a GTP representative or signing up through GO Topeka's website. The group that has traditionally been considered the SBC will now become more of an oversight committee, and becoming an SBC member will ensure you receive communications about SBC initiatives and activities. More information about how to sign up will be available soon.

## Small Business Awards

Nominations have now closed for the partnership's 41st annual Small Business Awards. The 2022 Small Business Awards will be held as a luncheon on Tuesday, May 10 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Townsite Avenue Ballroom. Award categories include the Young Entrepreneur, Woman-Owned Small Business, Veteran-Owned Small Business, Top City Small Business of the Year, among other categories. Tickets for the awards luncheon may still be purchased through Go Topeka.



## Elected to NASBITE International Board

GO Topeka's Laurie Pieper, vp of entrepreneurship and small business, was elected to the NASBITE International Board of Governors. NASBITE is the governing body for the Certified Global Business Professional (CGBP) credential, and is also a leading organization for promoting education, developing educational materials and fostering connections for small businesses involved in international trade. NASBITE has more than 2,000 members around the world, including companies involved in international trade, international trade service providers, trade specialists, support resources and educators.

## Small Business Newsletter

GO Topeka in March launched a monthly newsletter geared toward small businesses, entrepreneurs and startups. Dubbed "Big News for Small Business," this newsletter aims to provide all the local business related news area professionals need to know about upcoming events, opportunities and much more. A link to sign up for this newsletter is in the process of being created. In the meantime, if you would like to receive the communication, send a note with the subject line "Big News for Small Business" to the communications manager at [India.Yarborough@TopekaPartnership.com](mailto:India.Yarborough@TopekaPartnership.com).





# Equity and Opportunity

## Fast Trac Program

The attendees will get started by making their idea a reality and exploring the entrepreneurial life, positioning the business in the marketplace, researching cost of goods, pricing the product or service, refining their idea, financing, launching, leading, and growing their business. 15 individuals registered for the Spring Fast Trac program.

- 3 White Males
- 7 White Females
- 4 Black Females
- 1 Mixed Female

## Equity at the Center of MO27

The Greater Topeka Partnership is set to introduce its DEI Equity and Opportunity Strategy. Intertwined throughout the Momentum 2027 Plan, equity will be at the Center of each of the pillars. Positioning equity will allow for the discovery of inequalities and disparities and set the stage for focused work. The three Strategic Pillars of the Greater Topeka Partnership's Equity and Opportunity Strategy are:

**Awareness:** A place to learn and increase the business community's knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Economic Inclusion:** A place to prosper and ensure that all individuals can enjoy the benefits of what Topeka has to offer.

**Commitment:** A place to belong by elevating opportunities to address gaps for underrepresented/under-resourced communities across Topeka-Shawnee County.

## U.S. Small Business Administration

In an effort to promote equity and inclusion, Minority



and Women Business Development hosted Michael Barrera, Kansas City district director for the U.S. Small Business Administration, on March 24 for a full day of outreach and networking. In attendance were local elected officials Mayor Mike Padilla; Topeka City Council members

Karen Hiller, Sylvia Ortiz and Spencer Duncan; more than 50 local small-business owners and bank leaders.

Barrera discussed how he could improve the community's relationship with SBA's district office and teach businesses about the role the SBA could play in strengthening their businesses. Barrera and his staff had the opportunity to share information about business products and services, such as grants, investment capital, disaster assistance and more. They also participated in a Q&A session with business owners and provided insight on various loan programs.

The informational programming was followed by a tour of eight minority-owned businesses in east Topeka. The goal was to hear their stories and concerns, and provide potential solutions.



## Quarterly Tour of Minority Businesses

The MWBD and US Small Business Administration District Director, Michael Barrera, then embarked on a bus tour to visit eight local businesses. Barrera traveled along with 10 other individuals including business owners, GTP Staff and SBC staff members. A Spanish speaking translator also joined the tour. The tour allowed everyone to be engaged as they visited Latino, Hispanic and African American business owners.



## Women's Initiative

On March 16, GO Topeka put on its annual spring Women's Forum at downtown venue The Beacon. The forum, held during Women's History Month, featured presentations by Wendy Doyle, of United WE, who talked about the organization's "The Status of Women in Kansas" report; Reva Wywadis, with Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas, who discussed the issue of affordable childcare; and a Forge panel that discussed strategic leadership and women in business. The forum concluded with an engaging presentation by Polo Tate, of Athena International, who helped announce the launch of Athena Leadership programming coming this year to Topeka. Approximately 150 women attended the Forum.

The MWBD is currently certifying two facilitators to deliver the new Athena Programs. The program is based on the Athena Leadership model. The program is designed to actively assist women in realizing their full leadership potential.



## Events and Activities

### 2022 QUARTER 1

Met with the SBA

Hosted the Women's Foundation Women's Report, Women's Forum, & launched the Athena Powerlink

Hosted a quarterly Listening Sessions- 1

Doing Business with the City- Series

### UPCOMING IN 2022

Minority Enterprise Development Week (Sept. 11-17)

DEI Summit (Sept. 27)

Fall Women's Forum

Minority Business Boot Camp

Various training programs

2nd Quarter Tour & Listening Sessions

Minority Business Pitch Contest (Sept)

Supplier Diversity Initiative (Meet the Buyer Match)

## What are we working on?

### DEI Strategy

- Awareness
- Inclusion
- Commitment

### Monthly Outreach Efforts

- Survey
- Translation of documents
- Collaborations/FDIC

### Expanding the Loan Fund

Micro Loans \$5000 - \$10,000

### Minority Business Directories

Directories are getting the finishing touches and will be printed soon.





# Forge Young Talent

## 1st Quarter Programing

**FEBRUARY 18**

Live Your Dream Symposium

**FEBRUARY 24**

VIP Tour Capper Foundation

**FEBRUARY 24**

TopCity Teacher/Forge

## 2nd Quarter Programing and Events

**APRIL 23**

TopCity Half Marathon Volunteer Opportunity

**APRIL 24**

Prep Your Bike & Let's Ride

**APRIL 27**

Drink Outside the Box

**MAY 7**

Helping Hand Humane Society Volunteer Opportunity

**MAY 12**

Mimosa Yoga on the Terrace

**MAY 19**

May Pub Club & VIP Tour

## Recruiting Campaign

After launching the new Forge website - The Forge spring recruiting campaign kicked off earlier this month and has been performing better than expected. In the first two weeks of the recruiting campaign, the two sets of social ads had over 55,000 impressions and over 24,000 people reached. In addition, we have had three different sized ads running digitally and on tv through WIBW website and tv channels. On top of that, we have been running ads in enews, have been featured on KSNT morning show twice, which was all kicked off by a press release to local media. This has led to more than 35 new member sign-ups in the first two weeks of the campaign. Forge will continue to give updates on the performance of the campaign throughout its runtime.

Later this year, the organization will collaborate with regional colleges and Choose Topeka to spread the word that Kansas' capital city is a place full of opportunities for employment and community involvement for young professionals. In addition, Forge has relaunched its "Pub Club" series, a happy-hour-themed networking event designed for young professionals, and is looking to stand up new events that cater to a variety of interests.







## Choose Topeka Reception

GO Topeka hosted an inaugural Choose Topeka reception on April 1 in NOTO's Redbud Park and invited the more than 60 candidates, and their families, who moved to the Topeka area through the Choose Topeka program. The idea was to connect these newcomers with other people who may have gone through similar experiences, helping them find community and potentially make some new friends.

## Child Care Summit

GO Topeka and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce partnered with Child Care Aware of Eastern Kansas to hold a child care summit on March 24 with some of the area's major employers. About 40 attendees were present, representing employers, child care providers and local nonprofits. During the one-day summit, they heard about the supply and demand of child care in Topeka, talked about related workforce implications, listened in on a panel discussion, and participated in small-group discussions about innovative child care solutions that may be possible in our area. In addition, a representative from the K-State Research and Extension office shared a needs assessment the office has been pushing out to other counties in Kansas. Shawnee County may look to do a similar survey to determine the level of need in Topeka and Shawnee County. Conversations about the aforementioned issues are ongoing, as a child care task force is expected to be established through Momentum 2027; it may consist of some of the players who participated in the March summit. If you have questions or would like more information about the summit or upcoming opportunities, please reach out to GO Topeka's Trina Goss at [Trina.Goss@Topekapartnership.com](mailto:Trina.Goss@Topekapartnership.com) or the chamber's Curtis Sneden at [Curtis.Sneden@TopekaPartnership.com](mailto:Curtis.Sneden@TopekaPartnership.com).



## TopCity Interns

Topeka's TopCity interns planning committee held an information session on March 30 for local HR professionals and businesses to introduce them to the TopCity Interns Program and encourage enrollment. During the session, the planning committee shared details about this summer's calendar of events, relayed different housing options for interns, and discussed Choose Topeka and a few other initiatives that may help enhance the program and recruitment tools for employers. Topeka may have close to 200 interns participating in this year's program, which is set to kick off on June 2 at the Topeka Zoo. If you or a business you know is interested in learning more about TopCity Interns, reach out to [TopCity-Interns@gmail.com](mailto:TopCity-Interns@gmail.com).





# Choose Topeka Relocation Incentive

## 3,000+

CALLS TO DATE  
(FROM CANDIDATES & EMPLOYERS)

## 7,800+

SUBMISSIONS WITH  
RESUMES OR QUESTIONS

## 900+

REMOTE WORKER  
SUBMISSIONS

## 41

EMPLOYER CANDIDATES  
ACCEPTED, EQUALING

## 24

REMOTE WORKERS  
ACCEPTED, EQUALING

## \$262,000

IN MATCHING JEDO  
FUNDS COMMITTED

## \$185,000

IN RELOCATION  
INCENTIVES

# \$447,000

IN TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS FROM THE EMPLOYER  
MATCHING FUNDS AND REMOTE WORKER OPTIONS

## ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

# 65

CANDIDATES

# \$91K

AVERAGE SALARY

# 12x

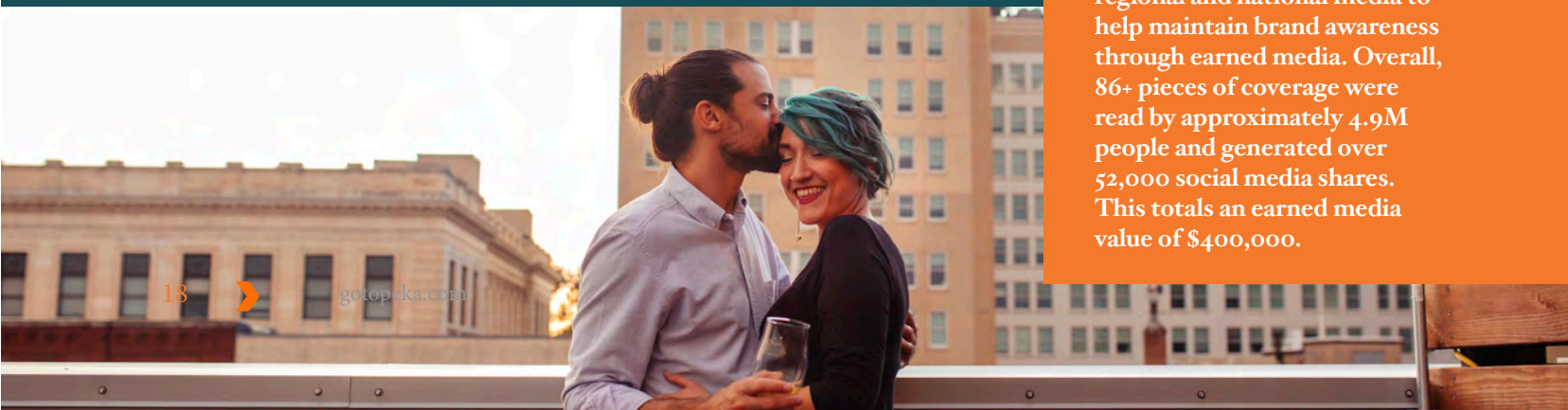
RETURN ON INVESTMENT

# \$5M

IN ECONOMIC IMPACT,  
YEAR ONE

## CHOOSE IN THE NEWS

GO Topeka uses several public relation tools and have cultivated relationships with regional and national media to help maintain brand awareness through earned media. Overall, 86+ pieces of coverage were read by approximately 4.9M people and generated over 52,000 social media shares. This totals an earned media value of \$400,000.



# Workforce & Talent



## 2022 Q1 Workforce Data

<b>Total Population</b>	<b>122,741</b> TOPEKA	<b>173,701</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 2,255,594 US 263,324,000
<b>Labor Force Participation</b>	<b>62,490</b> TOPEKA	<b>91,902</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 1,492,919 US 163,608,000
<b>Employment</b>	<b>60,539</b> TOPEKA	<b>88,238</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 1,442,690 US 156,889,000
<b>Jobs</b>	<b>81,462</b> TOPEKA	<b>95,342</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS 1,355,159 US 143,820,840
<b>Average Wages</b>	<b>\$51,287</b> TOPEKA	<b>\$51,293</b> SHAWNEE COUNTY	KS \$52,740 US \$66,648

### Labor Force Participation Rate

**50.91%** TOPEKA

**52.9%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 66.19%  
US 62.13%

### Employment-Population Ratio

**49.32%** TOPEKA

**50.8%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 63.96%  
US 59.58%

### Unemployment Rate

**3.1%** TOPEKA

**4.0%** SHAWNEE COUNTY

KS 3.4%  
US 4.1%

\*Total Civilian Non-institutionalized Population



# GO Topeka Staff

**Matt**



**Pivarnik**

CEO, Greater Topeka Partnership

**Molly**



**Howey**

President of Economic Development

**Glenda**



**Washington**

Chief Equity & Opportunity Officer

**Laurie**



**Pieper**

VP of Entrepreneurship & Small Business

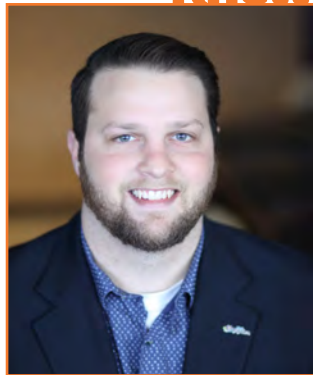
**Freddy**



**Mawjin**

Senior Economic Advisor

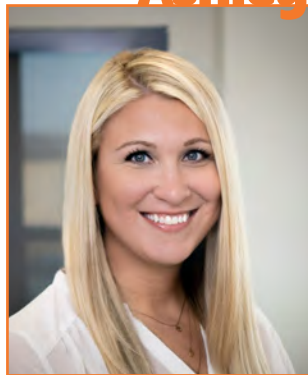
**Rhett**



**Flood**

Executive Director of Forge Young Talent

**Ashley**



**Lehman**

Business Development Manager

**Kristi**



**Dunn**

KS PTAC Subcenter Director

**Elle**



**Browne**

Executive Coordinator

**Trina**



**Goss**

Director, Business & Talent Initiatives

**Cindy**



**Kraus**

Administrative Coordinator

**Stephanie**



**Moran**

SVP of Innovation



# New Staff Members

## Welcome Our Newest Go Topeka Staff Member



GO Topeka announced that it has hired Stephanie Moran to serve as the organization's new senior vice president of innovation. She has assumed the role previously held by Katrin Bridges. Moran comes to GO Topeka after spending three years as president of Nutri-Shield, a Kansas-based agriculture startup. Moran also spent 18+ years at Payless Shoe Source's headquarters and led many efforts, including the creation of their international franchising division. At GO Topeka, Moran will build on progress made in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship, and pursue new initiatives that arise under her leadership. Moran's first day with GO Topeka was March 28.

### **Stephanie Moran** **SVP of Innovation**

785.246.6169

[Stephanie.Moran@TopekaPartnership.com](mailto:Stephanie.Moran@TopekaPartnership.com)



HERE.  
GREAT  
GROWS  
MS



**Positioned as an industry leader, the new GO Topeka will strive to innovate, collaborate and boldly move Topeka and Shawnee County into the future.**

**Great. Grows. Here.**

**Visit [GoTopeka.com](http://GoTopeka.com)**



# 2022 Go Topeka Board of Directors

## Elected Directors

Steve Anderson	University of Kansas St. Francis
Abbey Frye	Kansas Gas Service
Renita Harris	My Company, Inc.
Dr. Bob Kenagy	Stormont Vail Health
Martha Piland	MB Piland
Marsha Pope	Topeka Community Foundation
Marvin Spees	Capital City Oil
Tammy Dishman	Capitol Federal
Dan Foltz	KBS Constructors
Calla Haggard	Community Bank
Shane Hillmer	Southwest Publishing
Kurt Kuta	CoreFirst Bank & Trust
Jeff Russell	Reser's Fine Food
Daina Williams	L&J Building Maintenance
Dr. Sam Al-Murrani	Strategic Business Consultant
Scott Hunsicker	Kansas Financial Resources
Cassandra Taylor	HTK Architects
Doug Wolff	Security Benefit
Jim Klausman	Midwest Health
Jacob Wamego	Prairie Band, LLC
Jeff Martin	Evergy
Chris Faulk	McElroy Electric, Inc.
Paul Bossert	Premier Staffing

## Directors Appointed at Large

Linda Briden	Sunflower Association of Realtors
Brittany Crabtree	Topeka Collegiate
Sarah Girard	Central National Bank
Dr. Kevin Hahn	Tri-Source Pharma
Manny Herron	Haus Property Partners
Linessa Frazier	USD 437
Kevin Rake	HME, Inc.

## Directors By Virtue of Position Held

Michael Padilla	City of Topeka, Mayor
TBD	Shawnee County Commissioner
TBD	City of Topeka, Council Member
Eric Johnson	MTAA
TBD	City of Topeka, City Manager
Dr. Jerry Farley	Washburn University
Roger Wilson	Chair of MWBD

# go >topeka

A Greater Topeka Partnership Organization

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

*AEDO*

Accredited Economic Development Organization



Prepared for JEDO  
Joint Economic Development Organization