

PLACEMAKING

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TOPEKA

Arts & Culture Master Plan

2022 & BEYOND

Arts & Culture Master Plan
Developed by



Group Creative Services, Des Moines, IA
www.groupcreatives.com



ArtsConnect

ArtsConnect, Topeka, KS
www.artstopeka.org

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2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
ROLE OF AN ARTS & CULTURE MASTER PLAN	6
THE PROCESS	7
DEFINING ARTS & CULTURE	8
WHO IS TOPEKA	9
ROLES FOR PUBLIC ART IN TOPEKA	12
ART IN TOPEKA	13
STRENGTHS	13
RICHES IN TOPEKA	14
PLACEMAKING THEMES	16
CROSSROADS TO FREEDOM	16
CULTURAL FABRIC	17
SEPARATE AND NOT EQUAL	18
MORE PLACES, FEWER SPACES	18
HOMEGROWN TALENT	19
RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTIVATING PLACEMAKING THEMES ..	22
CULTURAL MAPPING	22
PRIORITIZE FUNDING	23
ANNUAL AUDIT	23
ADVANCING THE LOCAL ARTS AGENCY	24
TOPEKA'S PUBLIC ART PROGRAM	25
ARTSCONNECT EXHIBITIONS	25
COMMUNICATION OF ARTS AND CULTURE PROGRAMMING ...	26
SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS	26
SUPPORT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS	27
EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF ARTSCONNECT	27
EXPANDING THE PIE: MORE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE	
ARTS ECOSYSTEM IN TOPEKA	28
EXPANDED & DIVERSE FUNDING FOR THE ARTS	30
PROGRAMMATIC COLLABORATIONS	34
CULTURAL DISTRICTS & CORRIDORS	36
ART INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITIES	40
ADDENDUM: SURVEY RESULTS	42



INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Topeka Arts and Culture Master Plan helps civic leaders and stakeholders rely on the expertise of artists for creative problem solving; this plan guides investment to align cultural production with established community priorities, maximizing benefits while reducing risks.

Building a beautiful, welcoming and connected Topeka directly addresses the community's biggest challenges – perception issues on crime, division and lack of opportunity, as well as younger people leaving town.

The plan's vision emerged from diverse perspectives collected through months of primary and secondary research by Group Creative Services with support from a broad steering committee. Topeka's rich arts ecosystem and the strength of ArtsConnect join a range of community plans to integrate with the in-progress Momentum 2027, Topeka and Shawnee County's five year, holistic plan.

The recommended work focuses on maximizing existing cultural resources and unique history to push Topeka forward – activating placemaking themes, advancing ArtsConnect's roles, expanding resources, developing cultural districts and integrating artists in civic processes.

It's the right time to support more art in Topeka – to activate public art for continued momentum.

ROLE OF AN ARTS & CULTURE MASTER PLAN

Civic cultural support has become more complex, process-oriented, collaborative, and experimental. Artists of all disciplines wish to engage and enhance communities in new ways, creatively addressing a community's needs as identified by its citizens and stakeholders such as the environment, community health, cultural diversity, youth development, and tourism.

Civic goals are advanced by describing concepts, expressing community interests, providing distinct and novel character, and offering greater understanding and discussion around the art sites and their utility. For example, artwork located near the site of new stormwater infrastructure might facilitate understanding of watershed management as environmental stewardship and its importance for flood control. Art can engage with its site such that “the medium is the message.”

As the placemaking and cultural fields rapidly expand, many cities scramble to update and improve the way they plan and manage their cultural programs while finding new ways to maximize their investment in public art, to the benefit of their economy, their culture, and their community.

Cultural plans guide investment to maximize impact, reduce risk and align cultural production with larger civic goals.

The arts are more than decoration: they work hard for cities. A cultural master plan is an actionable tool used as a road map for Topeka's commissions, city departments, organizational stakeholders, and individual participants to maximize public art in support of the goals and of its community into the future.

ArtsConnect asked, “What does this community need? How can the arts provide a springboard for community development?” Cities that integrate art, design, and culture while investing in infrastructure and amenities gain the distinction and competitive advantage required for recruitment and retention in workforce and business development. Providing resources for the arts to work organically supports the creation of a unique sense of place. The culture of a city entices visitors to come for pleasure and recommend it to others.

This plan will align with and contribute to the influential plans and organizations already guiding Topeka.

THE PROCESS

The planning process employed a wide range of methodologies to ensure that diverse perspectives were included in the vision for the Topeka Arts and Culture Master Plan. Consultants from Group Creative Services conducted dozens of in-person interviews, several focus groups, an on-line community survey, and engaged with a Steering Committee.

Steering Committee Members:

Jordan E. Brooks, Artist & Educator
Michelle Cuevas-Stubblefield,
Greater Topeka Partnership
Michelle De La Isla, Topeka Mayor (former)
Sean Dixon, Visit Topeka, Inc.
Bill Fiander, City of Topeka
Connie Gibbons, Mulvane Art Museum
Jen Gogian, Topeka Police Department (former)
Kerrice Mapes, seveneightfive Magazine
Staci Ogle, NOTO Arts & Entertainment District
Michael Padilla, Topeka Mayor (current)
Donna Rae Pearson,
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Ellie Smith, Performing Artist
Zach Snethen, HTK Architects
Christina Valdivia-Alcala,
Tonantzin Society & City Councilwoman
Seth Wagoner, AIM Strategies

Additionally, the consultants looked at existing plans, surveys and other community initiatives to understand the current landscape of the community, its key concerns and swell of opportunities. This plan has been meaningfully integrated into the in-progress Momentum 2027 that serves as the community's holistic five year plan to collectively leverage resources towards key community issues.

**THE ARTS ARE
MORE THAN
DECORATION:
THEY WORK
HARD FOR
CITIES**



DEFINING ARTS & CULTURE

Culture can be defined as the customs, social institutions, arts, achievements, and traditions of a particular group.

Within this idea of culture, the arts are considered to encompass a wide range of mediums, disciplines, and approaches. This includes visual arts such as painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture. It includes experiential and performance arts such as theater, music, sound art, installation, film, and video. It also includes literary arts, poetry, creative writing, publishing, radio, internet streaming, and television.

Public art can include work on a variety of time scales, from permanent installations of murals and sculptures to temporary engagements like workshops or pop-up activations.

The **Cultural Industry** is a broad term that includes many different ways the arts, cultural production, and commerce can interact such as graphic design, advertising, architecture, art festivals, antique markets, fashion design, publishing, culinary arts and crafts traditions.

Cultural Assets include things like libraries, parks, theaters, galleries, heritage sites, community centers, and educational facilities.

**THE ARTS ARE
CONSIDERED
TO ENCOMPASS
A WIDE RANGE
OF MEDIUMS,
DISCIPLINES, AND
APPROACHES**



WHO IS TOPEKA

A look at demographic and economic data would suggest Topeka is a torpid seat of Kansas government. Stagnant incomes and relatively high crime rate are among metrics that help explain a lack of civic pride. Half of Topeka’s children are eligible for free or reduced price school lunches. Population is in decline.

But, we see a tipping point approaching.

Civic plans now activate toward achievable goals. This is supported by a bedrock of vital, diverse history and widely recognized assets – parks, museums and other touch-points for natural and cultural resources. Downtown capital improvements and an emerging arts district are among the early wins for a coordinated approach to community investment. Importantly, many organizations are now crafting broad strategies intended to build a better Topeka.


Looking closer, Topeka is a community found to be “living art personally.” Nearly half of those surveyed identify as an artist or cultural producer. Despite being loaded with art and artists, the arts in Topeka lack the kind of sustained support that could build stability and visibility within the cultural industry.

Topekans want their community to be a more welcoming, connected and vibrant place. The path toward this vision can be more easily cleared when civic leaders and stakeholders are encouraged to rely on the arts and expertise of artists to engage in creative problem solving.

Topeka is participating in the Americans for the Arts’ Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 survey. Economic impact numbers from this will be available in 2024.



WHO IT TOPEKA?



***CITIES THAT INTEGRATE
ART, DESIGN, AND CULTURE
WHILE INVESTING IN
INFRASTRUCTURE
AND AMENITIES GAIN
THE DISTINCTION
AND COMPETITIVE
ADVANTAGE REQUIRED
FOR RECRUITMENT
AND RETENTION IN
WORKFORCE AND BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT***



ROLES FOR PUBLIC ART IN TOPEKA

Research tells us that **community attachment** brings economic growth and well-being – prosocial behaviors including volunteering, voting, investment and more. When people feel connected, they engage to make a better place. According to the Knight Foundation, the **leading indicators** of attachment are social offerings (opportunities to interact), aesthetics, and openness. Public art directly supports these important dimensions of Topeka’s culture in a way that accelerates community growth and the attainment of civic goals.

COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

Communities with higher levels of attachment have more people who are likely to vote, volunteer and graduate from high school. The arts are the most effective and efficient way to increase community attachment.

NET PROMOTER SCORE

Net Promoter Score is a popular market research metric based on a survey question asking respondents to rate the likelihood that they would recommend a company, product, or a service to a friend or colleague. On a 1-10 scale, respondents are “promoters” who provide ratings of 9 or 10, “passives” who provide ratings of 7 or 8, and “detractors” who provide ratings of 6 or lower. The score is calculated by subtracting the proportion of detractors from the proportion of promoters surveyed. As used by the Greater Topeka Partnership, NPS is a measure of satisfaction with life in Topeka.

To be clear, Topeka’s **Net Promoter Scores** (a standardized measure of satisfaction) are **low** but improving, according to Greater Topeka Partnership data. The lack of civic pride stems from systemic issues compounded by cultural barriers. This makes the work of artists essential to growing community attachment. For example, the **Greater Topeka Partnership** finds nearly all job interviewees asking about the local art scene when considering a move to Topeka.

Existing civic plans clearly recognize that “quality of life is comprised of the attributes, amenities, and the esteem of the community.” Building a beautiful, welcoming and interactive Topeka directly addresses some of the **biggest challenges** – perception issues on crime, division and lack of opportunity, as well as younger people leaving town. Public art can be used to “collaborate for a strong community” (inclusion/equity), to “create vibrant and attractive places” (dynamic core and housing) and to “promote a positive image” – noting the recognized need for “greater incorporation and alignment of the arts into economic quality of life endeavors.”



ART IN TOPEKA

Topeka’s NOTO Arts & Entertainment District is the cultural hub – a top-of-mind success and perhaps the best framework for understanding how art and culture nourish Topeka. But there is so **much more happening**. Topeka is filled with people who identify as artists or cultural producers, yet it’s difficult to see their work as it is found in households and neighborhoods more often than in traditional venues or even local or social media. Having a local poet **nominated and confirmed** as a member of the National Council on the Arts certainly speaks to the quality of the **culture available for poets** and other artists. Current **economic impact** is unknown but is **likely north of \$20 million annually** according to 2014 AFTA data.

STRENGTHS

TOPEKA’S ARTS ECOSYSTEM IS RICH

Topeka is quietly loaded with art and artists across a range of venues and disciplines. Visual and performing arts have much to draw from in the history and cultures of the capital city.

EFFECTIVE & DYNAMIC ARTS LEADERSHIP

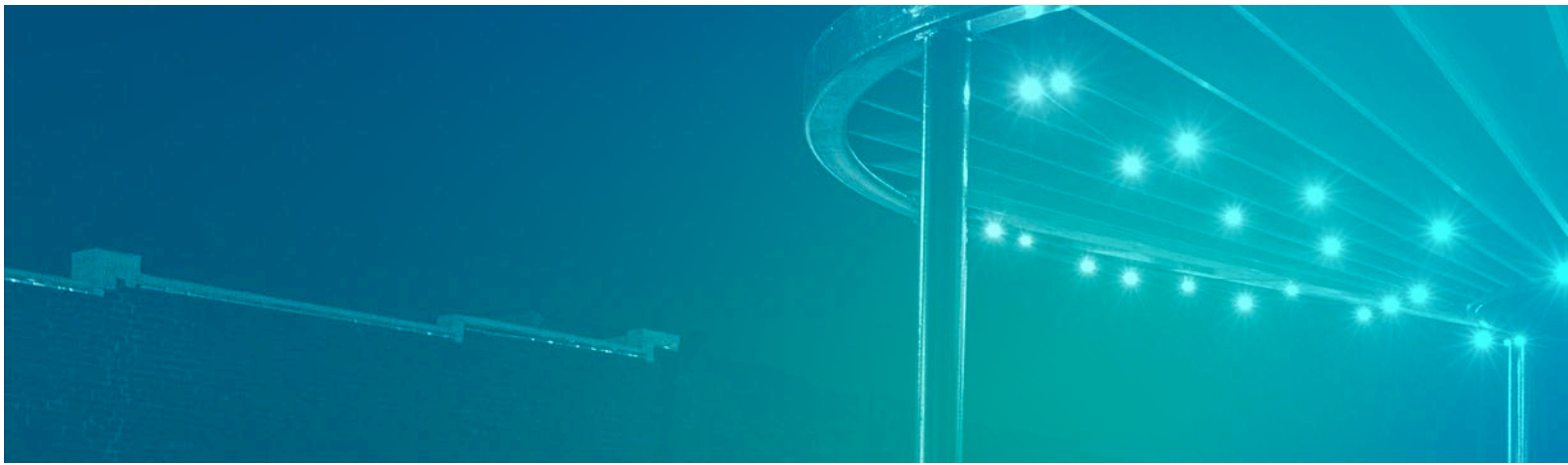
ArtsConnect is Topeka’s premier arts engagement organization, working to broaden the understanding of the arts as a tool for community transformation.

IT’S THE RIGHT TIME TO SUPPORT MORE ART IN TOPEKA

The community’s plans all cite the importance of creating a vibrant, welcoming place. It’s time for an arts and culture master plan.

ART IN TOPEKA

TOPEKA IS FILLED WITH PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS ARTISTS OR CULTURAL PRODUCERS



AND THE SURVEY SAYS...

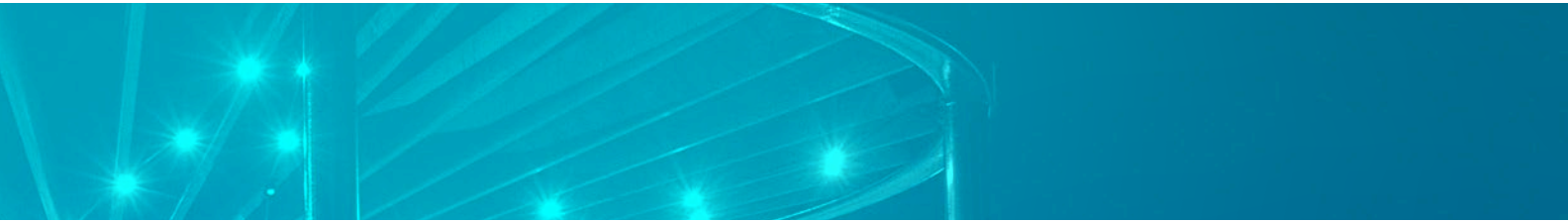
CULTURAL RICHES ABOUND

This list is a testament to the significant number and diversity of cultural riches that Topeka enjoys. While this list is not comprehensive, it is clear that Topeka is filled with assets and stories. When these are brought to life with the expertise of artists and cultural support organizations, existing spaces can be used to address key community challenges.

The authors hope that this list will spark conversation and serve as a resource for those engaged in supporting arts and culture in Topeka.

ASSETS

- + Aaron Douglas Art Fair
- + Alice C. Sabatini Gallery
- + Architecture
- + Artists
- + Civil rights legacy
- + Community connections
- + Community pride increasing
- + Cultural diversity & festivals
- + Downtown post office
- + Family-friendly attractions
- + Farmer's markets
- + Fiesta Mexicana
- + Film festivals
- + First Friday Artwalk
- + Innovation/bioscience corridor
- + Kansas (Kaw) River
- + Local businesses
- + Literary/poetry culture
- + Midwestern hospitality
- + Mulvane Art Museum
- + Mulvane Art Fair
- + Murals/public art
- + NOTO Arts & Entertainment Dist.
- + Parks & green space
- + Private support for the arts
- + Regional/local agrotourism
- + Rich food culture
- + Riverfront development
- + Strong arts leadership
- + Strong neighborhood identities
- + Topeka High School drumline
- + Trails & bikeways
- + Tulip Time
- + Urban gardening
- + Vintage signage



STORIES

- + 190th Air Refueling Wing
- + Bleeding Kansas
- + Displacement
- + Connection to Indigenous people/land
- + LGBTQIA+ rights
- + Mariachi Estrella
- + Progressive state history
- + Railroad history
- + School desegregation
- + Underground Railroad
- + Urban renewal
- + Women’s suffrage

SUPPORTS

- + ArtsConnect
- + Ballet Folklórico/Justicia, Inc.
- + Downtown Topeka, Inc.
- + Greater Topeka Partnership
- + Humanities Kansas
- + Kansas Ballet Academy
- + Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission
- + KTWU Public Television
- + On Stage Live
- + seveaightfive Magazine
- + Shawnee County
- + Parks & Rec
- + Sunflower Music Festival
- + Tonantzín Society
- + Topeka Art Guild
- + Topeka Blues Society
- + Topeka Community Foundation
- + Topeka Jazz Workshop
- + Topeka Pride
- + Topeka Public Schools (USD 501)
- + Topeka Symphony
- + Topeka United
- + Visit Topeka, Inc.
- + Washburn Tech

PLACES & SPACES

- + Brown v. Board Nat’l Historical Park
- + Burnett’s Mound
- + Combat Air Museum
- + Constitution Hall
- + Evergy Plaza
- + Gage Park Amphitheater
- + Great Overland Station
- + Heartland Motorsports Park
- + The Historic Jayhawk Theatre
- + The Historic Ritchie House
- + Kansas Children’s Discovery Center
- + Kansas Statehouse
- + Lake Shawnee
- + Redbud Park
- + Topeka Civic Theatre & Academy
- + Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
- + Reinisch Rose Garden
- + Topeka High School
- + Topeka Performing Arts Center
- + Topeka Zoo
- + Truckhenge
- + Washburn University

CHALLENGES

- + Artists need additional support
- + Dilapidated historic spaces
- + Employees living outside of Topeka
- + Housing inequity
- + Lack of artist input in community development
- + Lack of municipal funding for the arts
- + Limited state funding for arts
- + Low tolerance for risk-taking
- + Population decline
- + Stagnant incomes
- + Underutilized airports

The recommendations presented in this plan are based on a large amount of feedback from cultural stakeholders and the public. This process included an online survey, which garnered responses from 226 individuals. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that they themselves are artists.



PLACEMAKING THEMES

Placemaking seeks to shape public spaces to meet the needs and aspirations of the community, capitalizing on physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Outlined below are themes that offer opportunities to maximize existing cultural resources and unique history to push Topeka forward – to activate public art toward a more social, welcoming and beautiful Topeka.

PLACEMAKING THEMES

CROSSROADS TO FREEDOM

Kansas has, since her inception, been home to bitter arguments about equality – narrowly becoming a [free state](#) in 1861, leading the fight for women’s [suffrage](#), [ending school segregation](#) in the 1950s, and fighting for [LGBTQIA+ rights](#) today.

These movements have a place. Topeka is ready to have difficult conversations about this complex history. There are opportunities to recognize, engage and understand these stories.



CULTURAL FABRIC

Given Topeka's complex history, it is not surprising that diverse communities occupy historical space, such as Tennessee Town's roots as a freed slave settlement, the 'Golden Mile' on Southeast 6th Avenue with significant potential to emerge as the core of LatinX commerce, and the military history surrounding Forbes Field. Neighborhoods have modern relationships to significant milestones in national history and contemporary culture. This heritage can resonate as seeds for community, if embraced and nurtured. For example, there is a broad understanding that murals make Topeka safer and more beautiful. Interventions like murals can remind current Topekans of the heritage of their town and demonstrate that citizens already have a great many contemporary cultural forces of which to be proud.

**PLACEMAKING
SEEKS TO SHAPE
PUBLIC SPACES
TO MEET THE
NEEDS AND
ASPIRATIONS OF
THE COMMUNITY**



SEPARATE AND NOT EQUAL

Optimistic voices say Topeka can rally as an enigmatic place – a defiant act against its own expectations. [Planning continues](#), aiming investments at infrastructure, public safety and amenities. Broadly, Topeka has a once-in-a-lifetime chance to restore downtown as true dynamic core – where all are welcome and included. This requires repairing the community rifts that came with Urban Renewal and challenges related to natural disasters that significantly impacted downtown in the 1950s & 1960s. In the equitable planning and execution of community improvement, housing may be the most important to address, as the core neighborhoods’ lack of housing stability deters family well-being and creates headwind for the local economy. Moreover, Topeka’s acute need for affordable housing is an equity issue; non-white households are concentrated in neighborhoods with poor housing conditions. Affordable workforce housing is estimated to be a [\\$53 million annual investment](#) – an issue the city cannot solve alone.

MORE PLACES, FEWER SPACES

Visitors who come to see the Kansas State [Capitol Building’s](#) estimated \$475 million de facto art gallery, races at [Heartland Motorsports Park](#) or [Gage Park](#) attractions may not see other places like the [NOTO Arts & Entertainment District](#), [Jayhawk Theater](#), or the new [Evergy Plaza](#) as easily. Residents recognize the value of open space, both the abundant parks as well as the vacant lots and deficient structures. Topeka is filled with potential on the ground; open spaces can become meaningful places.

Plans for downtown capital improvement focus on infill development; there are significant opportunities to strengthen the programming for existing assets that celebrate arts, culture, and history. Transportation plans show great promise for improving quality of life and creating a vibrant welcome to the capital city.



HOMEGROWN TALENT

All themes unite around this one: artists are uniquely positioned to help us understand the lessons of the past, make sense of the present and shape the future. The community attachment that comes from knowing about Topeka's heritage and participating in contemporary culture creates a welcoming familiarity with long-term benefits.

Specifically, including artists and art curriculum in schools can be an important facet of this work and generates a strong return. [Research](#) finds college graduates are more likely to return home when they have higher levels of attachment to K-12 schools. This attachment comes from students feeling like they belong and can make a meaningful difference in Topeka when returning with ideas, skills, and social connections.

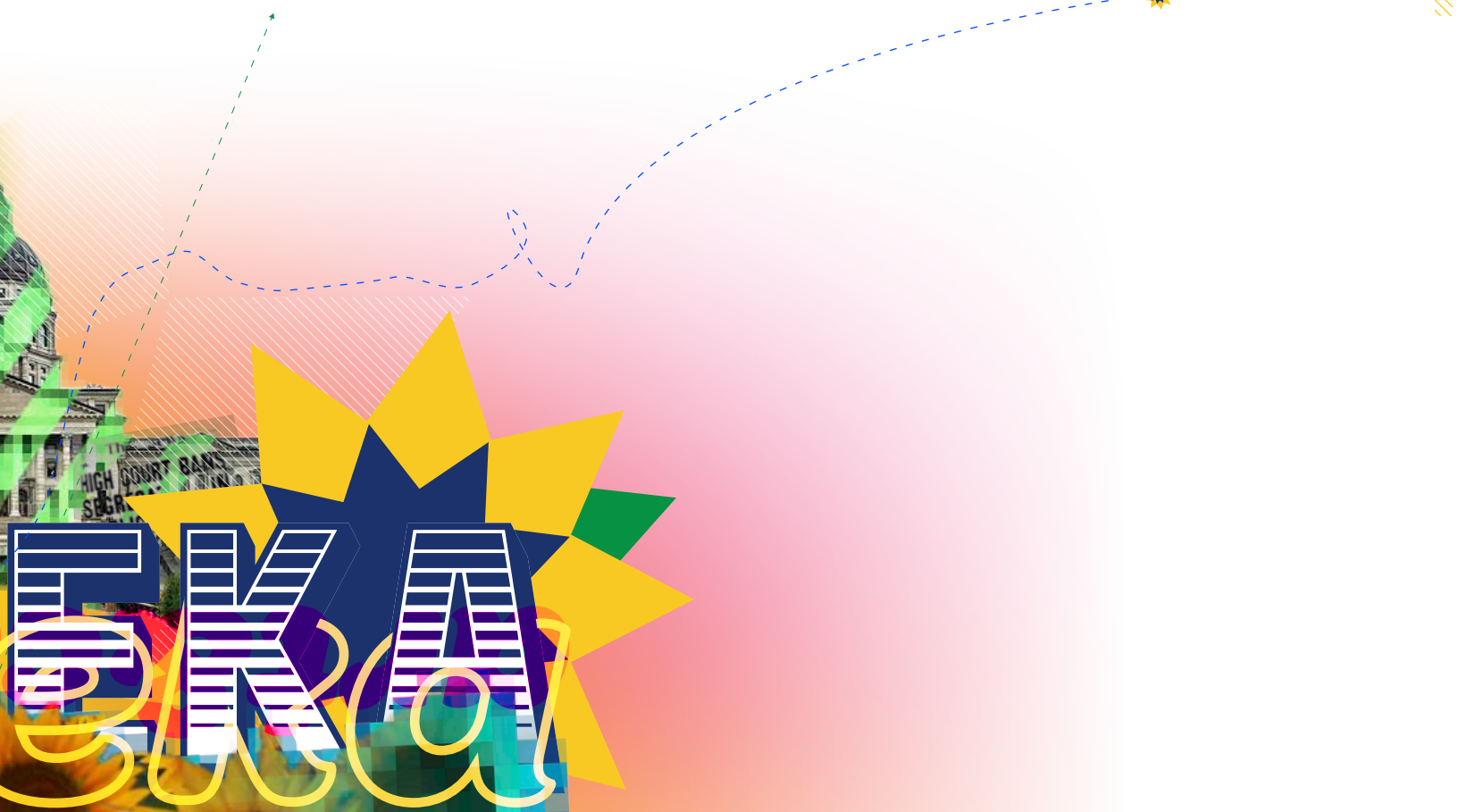
**TOPEKA IS
FILLED WITH
POTENTIAL ON
THE GROUND;
OPEN SPACES
CAN BECOME
MEANINGFUL
PLACES**

The background features a gradient from light yellow at the top to light blue at the bottom. Large, semi-transparent green and blue geometric shapes, including a large star-like polygon, are layered over the background. In the upper right, a portion of a classical building with a dome is visible, overlaid with a green grid pattern. The text 'TOP' is rendered in a stylized, blocky font with horizontal lines, set against a blue and purple background. Below it, the word 'RECOMMENSE' is written in a similar blocky font with horizontal lines, set against a white background with a blue outline. A yellow sunburst icon is positioned between the 'TOP' and 'RECOMMENSE' text. A yellow sunburst icon is also located at the bottom right of the page.

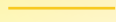
TOP
RECOMMENSE

ACTIVATIONS

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EKA AND ACTIVATIONS



RECOMMENDATIONS: ACTIVATING PLACEMAKING THEMES

Placemaking seeks to shape public spaces to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. By capitalizing on physical, cultural, and social identities, Topeka creates a definition of itself and supports ongoing, dynamic, and equitable evolution. Arts and culture will maximize existing cultural resources and unique history to amplify its distinction. Activation along these themes will move the city toward a more social, welcoming, and beautiful Topeka.

RECOMMENDATION:

CULTURAL MAPPING

How can you honor, save, and celebrate Topeka's unique cultural heritage if there isn't a collective remembering? To remember is to also begin to reckon with issues that likely remain very relevant today. Some of Topeka's rich cultural heritage is recognized, yet not collectively celebrated in the community, nor is all of it well cataloged. A strong model for gathering community history and lore is the [Chicago Black Social Culture Map](#). This mapping initiative represents the first attempt to compile and construct a public and accessible archive for the exploration of Black social culture in Chicago.



RECOMMENDATION:

PRIORITIZE FUNDING

Topeka must have a cohesive approach to amplification and activation. Funding for arts and culture projects in the community must be prioritized by how effective they are at addressing the placemaking themes presented in this report, which will require funders at all levels to formalize their commitment to celebrating Topeka’s cultural richness.

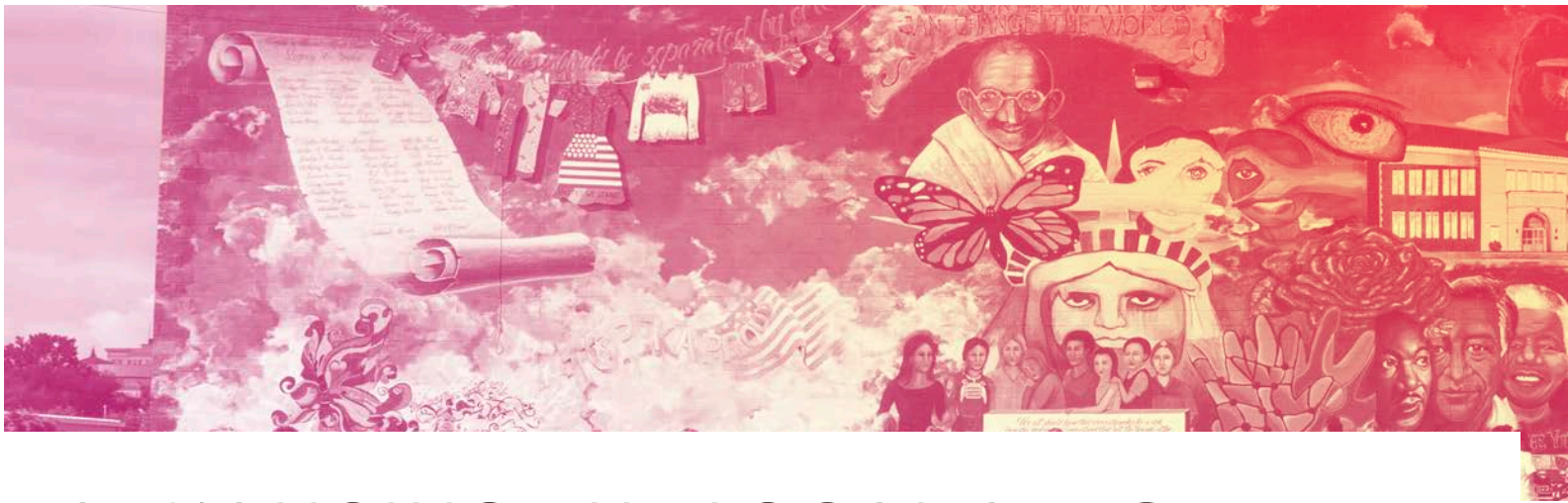
This can be done most effectively by utilizing the expertise of artists who will ensure that white stories and white history do not dominate the narrative.

Likewise, strategic investments must be made in order to address gaps in programming — such as art-based youth interventions.

RECOMMENDATION:

ANNUAL AUDIT

As funding for amplification and activation is secured, the results of these investments must be monitored. This is an opportunity to celebrate successes and evaluate and refine future programs and outcomes. The audit will take into consideration the largest funders of arts and culture programming, including but not limited to ArtsConnect, City of Topeka, Greater Topeka Partnership, Shawnee County Parks & Recreation, Topeka Community Foundation, and Visit Topeka. The annual audit will be made available to those organizations as feedback and learning for upcoming funding cycles. This annual audit will be conducted by a third party external to the community.



ADVANCING THE LOCAL ARTS AGENCY

ArtsConnect leads the work to “make Topeka a great arts town” and is the authoritative organization for leadership, development, approval, advocacy, and funding of the arts. For meaningful integration of the arts into the daily fabric of Topeka, there needs to be a community-based organization that works to advance the arts locally. ArtsConnect is Topeka’s local arts agency working to sustain both the health and vitality of the arts and artists locally while ensuring the arts are accessible to all. Strong arts leadership keeps the arts rooted in amplifying unique assets of Topeka and connecting the arts strategically to broader civic issues.

**HELP ENSURE
THAT PUBLIC
ART IN THE
COMMUNITY
ADVANCES IN
STRATEGIC WAYS**

CURRENT AND EMERGING ROLES OF ARTSCONNECT IN TOPEKA

- + Grantmaking to local arts organizations and artists
- + Management of a nonprofit gallery space
- + Advocacy for arts-friendly policies and funding
- + Communication and outreach about arts related events and programming via the [Topeka Arts event calendar](#) and beyond
- + Ensures funding for the arts and artists
- + Provides services to artists and arts organizations including professional development, visibility, advocacy, networking, and educational opportunities
- + Forges partnerships with a wide net of stakeholders including elected officials, schools, business owners, and other community leaders
- + Manages an expanded public art program



RECOMMENDATION:

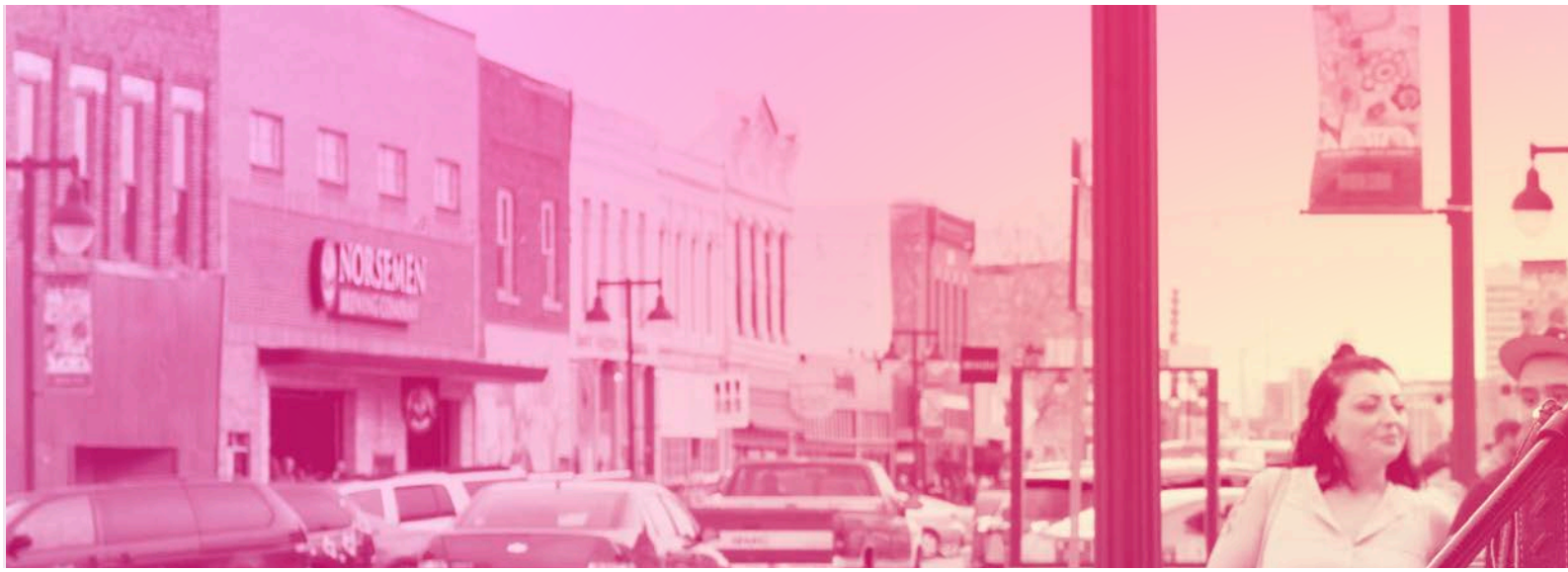
TOPEKA'S PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

ArtsConnect is best-suited to function as the city's review and recommending agency for art on city and county property. The art in public spaces in Topeka currently has no overarching leadership. Centralizing the review and recommendation of public art on behalf of city and county officials will help ensure that public art in the community advances in strategic ways, including amplification of key placemaking themes and utilizing best practices for development, implementation, and management. Similar to the city delegating the role of economic development to Greater Topeka Partnership, the city should delegate advancement of public art to ArtsConnect. ArtsConnect will serve a semi-public function by actively seeking opportunities for meaningful art integration into public spaces. This role will also benefit the government by having a central agency for members of the public to go to when interested in implementing a public art installation. ArtsConnect will assist entities in navigating the city's approval process and other needs that arise such as insurance, site planning/preparation, etc.

RECOMMENDATION:

ARTSCONNECT EXHIBITIONS

Spaces that showcase artwork, like galleries and museums, provide a place for artists and art communities to come together. However, galleries can be intimidating to many. ArtsConnect is well-positioned as a leader in the Topeka arts community and has a large enough following to create and support its own formalized, inviting and approachable space for gathering, similar to a gallery, via means of a public exhibition space with works on display. As the organization continues to host events in their physical space, ArtsConnect will continue to provide a sense of place for the city's current – and future – artists and patrons. Tapping into the organization's current 501c3 status will allow ArtsConnect to showcase artists and sell works on their behalf, while taking a small percentage exempt from sales tax (as a more traditional gallery might). Or, operating as a nonprofit, ArtsConnect may choose not to sell works and showcase art as a museum might. Either model could be successful. ArtsConnect could enlist guest curators, feature local, regional, and national artists of all disciplines (visual art, movement, music, etc.) or utilize the gallery as a rentable event space for private events.



RECOMMENDATION:

COMMUNICATION OF ARTS AND CULTURE PROGRAMMING

ArtsConnect is uniquely positioned to engage in comprehensive promotion and communications intended to build community support for the arts and artists. ArtsConnect will work with Visit Topeka and other organizations dedicated to ensuring awareness of cultural offerings, resulting in increased community pride.

Beyond a calendar and related resources, local media can be a strong partner for reaching Topekans. Peer promotion via social media can be amplified with digital advertising and grassroots outreach.

RECOMMENDATION:

SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS

Artistic creativity needs infrastructure to thrive. To support the advancement of creatives in the community, artists need a stable web of relationships, resources, and conditions in their support system including:

- + Free or affordable studio space
- + Entrepreneurial training such as marketing, business planning, financial management
- + Opportunities to learn from other artists
- + Artist residencies
- + Financial assistance such as grants, fellowships, commissions, insurance, planning
- + Living assistance such as subsidized housing, insurance, health care
- + Public recognition of their work such as awards, articles, reviews

ArtsConnect will develop strategic partnerships with organizations that are focused on the arts as well as those for whom cultural industry support will expedite and enrich mission related work. This includes organizations such as the Mid-America Arts Alliance, Washburn University, the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, and Greater Topeka Partnership.



RECOMMENDATION:

SUPPORT ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

ArtsConnect will convene all arts organizations at least two times per year as an opportunity for the organizations to communicate upcoming plans, seek opportunities for collaboration, assess evolving needs, and share upcoming funding opportunities.

ArtsConnect will seek to help resolve common issues — one example shared by a cultural arts organization was the barrier of insurance to rent certain event spaces.

Lastly, ArtsConnect will set up mentorships between organizations to help support each other. It is notable that several nonprofits with white leaders were able to navigate funding streams more easily than BIPOC-led organizations.

RECOMMENDATION:

EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF ARTSCONNECT

The implementation of the recommendations presented in this plan require ArtsConnect to significantly increase organizational capacity. This additional capacity will allow ArtsConnect to serve as a resource for organizations both inside and outside of the cultural industry.

As non-arts organizations begin to develop projects and activities that include art-based interventions, ArtsConnect should be available to serve in a consulting role in order to offer technical expertise, partnership and guidance.

LOCAL MEDIA CAN BE A STRONG PARTNER FOR REACHING TOPEKANS

EXPANDING THE PIE: MORE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE ARTS ECOSYSTEM IN TOPEKA

Sustainable and diverse sources of funding, K-12 arts education, new programming for existing or adaptive venues, and a healthy entrance of new roles and perspectives in the shared work support future growth and build a more vibrant future for all of Topeka. ArtsConnect must have broad municipal support at both the city and county levels. In addition to this support, there must be access to funding sources beyond the city, including private foundations, corporations, and individuals.

It is widely understood that private and corporate support for arts and culture has room to grow. Prospective employees are asking about the art scene in Topeka, presenting a strong case for investment in the arts.

HONOR, SAVE, AND CELEBRATE TOPEKA'S UNIQUE CULTURAL HERITAGE



EXPANDING THE PIE

RECOMMENDATION:

EXPANDED & DIVERSE FUNDING FOR THE ARTS

City of Topeka: Percent for the Arts

[Percent for the Arts](#) is a type of initiative, often passed through a city ordinance, where a certain percentage of the budget for large public or private developments is allocated to fund public art selection, creation, and maintenance in the community.

Topeka should hire an artist to be a design consultant on all major municipal projects.

There are many variations of the model and [sample ordinances](#), but it is an important tool used to ensure that a community develops with distinction and enhanced livability. Residents need pride-building activities and there need to be systems in place to provide funding for such projects. To aid in local adoption, speakers and case studies from similar cities that have approved percent for arts programs such as [Wichita, KS](#), [Columbia, MO](#), and [Salina, KS](#) will be helpful to inspire and show precedent.

City of Topeka: Transient Guest Tax

The use of taxes levied on visitors staying in hotels to fund arts and cultural programs is widespread and considered a popular way in which to dedicate tax dollars to the arts. Topeka should consider dedicating a portion of the transient guest tax to arts and culture on the basis that the city relies on cultural facilities to attract tourists, improve neighborhoods, and contribute to the local economy. There are many models for how the funds are distributed, although common themes include operational funding for key cultural institutions, grants to emerging programs, and events and seed money for artist-led programs. [Lewisville, TX](#), [Des Moines, IA](#) and [Columbus, OH](#) are strong examples of leaders in this area. This effort will need strong support from Visit Topeka as well as all of the cultural institutions in the community.

Local “Ad Astra” Fund

Based on feedback from many of the artists and arts organizations, there is a lack of support for innovative ideas. Investors want to fund successful programs, but they also must push boundaries. Artists and arts organizations want to try new things. An “unproven fund” can provide systemic support for stretching the roles of the arts while proving the value via pilots and demonstrations. ArtsConnect will be the grantor of the innovation funds received from a lead local corporation. The lead corporation will advertise its support of innovative arts and culture programming while ArtsConnect will provide the political, financial and community cover for individual programmatic successes and learning experiences.

State Funds

The state of Kansas has eliminated the majority of its support for the arts. A collective effort should be made by a coalition of arts and non-arts agencies, such as tourism and economic development organizations, to advocate for funding to advance arts and culture investments with an ultimate goal of state funding for the arts.

Federal Funds

Topeka received \$45 million in American Rescue Plan money. As the City of Topeka decides on its priorities, effort will be made to bake art and artists into the process of planning and implementing initiatives with the belief in artists to provide innovative solutions and humanize large civic endeavors ([How Artists Help Build Equitable, Empathetic Infrastructure](#)). Additionally, Topeka is well-poised for some federal grants including the NEA’s [Our Town grant](#).

Greater Topeka Partnership:

Economic Development Incentive Packages

As Greater Topeka Partnership and other chambers and economic development groups work to recruit new businesses and development to the community, they should consider integrating funding for arts and culture into the packages. Arts and culture are a key part of workforce development, making the community an attractive place to work and play. Local businesses should be encouraged to support the arts in their community.

**EFFORT WILL BE
MADE TO BAKE ART
AND ARTISTS INTO
THE PROCESS OF
PLANNING AND
IMPLEMENTING
INITIATIVES**

ArtsConnect: Earned Revenue

In diversifying funding for ArtsConnect, there are three relatively easy ways to begin to generate revenue while advancing the work of artists in Topeka:

- + Work with corporations and businesses in the hospitality and commercial sectors to promote local emerging and mid-career artists with art that rotates monthly, or in three or six month periods. The host agency pays a small stipend to support the administration of the program and benefits from a more interesting, beautiful space where some individuals would come just to view the art.
- + ArtsConnect has strong experience implementing murals. It is ready to promote a paid service to private companies wishing to commission a mural to activate their spaces. It can then expand from mural consultation to connecting businesses with artists for other branding services like storytelling, improvisational workshops for customer service training, creative awards or donor recognition, etc.
- + Solicit additional amounts at the point of service, earmarked for ArtsConnect endeavors like arts education in schools. These gifts are a transactional, tax-deductible way for local businesses to fund the arts and be acknowledged as local supporters of the arts.

Topeka Community Foundation: Impact Investing

The Topeka Community Foundation is currently funding many arts and culture projects and organizations and has committed more than \$200,000 to supporting additional staff to do the work called for in this report.

A stronger tie to ArtsConnect will benefit the region to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the community's arts and culture assets and gaps, including communication with grant decision makers. The Topeka Community Foundation should consider requirements for arts and artist integration as a strategic tool for social impact along areas of targeted funding (i.e. social determinants of health).

**A STRONGER
TIE TO
ARTSCONNECT
WILL BENEFIT
THE REGION
TO ENSURE A
COMPREHENSIVE
UNDERSTANDING
OF THE
COMMUNITY'S
ARTS AND
CULTURE ASSETS**



EXPANDING THE PIE

RECOMMENDATION:

PROGRAMMATIC COLLABORATIONS

Washburn University's Mulvane Art Museum: Youth Education Programs

One area of opportunity for Topeka to focus on as a whole is accessible youth art programming. Washburn University and the Mulvane could become pioneers in Topeka for arts education in two major ways.

With Washburn connecting its Art, Art Education, Art History, Early Childhood Professional, Education, Film and Video, Music, Music Education, and Music Performance majors and minors to the public schools or even an after school program (like the Boys & Girls Clubs) in Topeka, it could provide a necessary outlet for school aged children to learn and grow through the arts. Washburn University students could work with a specific class for a semester and spend time on campus or in classrooms to mentor, teach and learn alongside the youth of Topeka.

There are a variety of organizations already fostering the development of Topeka's youth (schools, nonprofits, after school programs, summer camps, etc). Putting together an age-appropriate curriculum could be led by staff of Washburn's education and arts programs, with input from partner organizations, and borrowed from the hundreds of other arts institutions that implement programming.

A variety of studies have documented the value of arts related programming for youth; this one by [ART WORKS](#) shows the positive impact of arts education for school-aged children specifically.

Greater Topeka Partnership: Entrepreneurial and Start-up Programs

The Greater Topeka Partnership is the key cheerleader for supporting entrepreneurs in Topeka. Current interest in supporting innovation and start-up businesses is an opportunity for Topeka to consider artists as innovators with expertise in creative processes. One possible connection with other creatives, technology or art, and technology activities is to partner with [Washburn Tech's Applied Media program](#). Americans for the Arts (AFTA) provides excellent supporting materials that make the case to support the alignment between arts and technology/innovation. Additionally, programs that support small business development and entrepreneurs should look for key ways to engage and support local and regional artists.

**Washburn University’s Mulvane Art Museum:
Visiting Artist / Artist-In-Residency Programs**

As Washburn University strives to continue to be a leading Midwestern based institution and the Mulvane Museum looks to unite more with the Topeka community, growing its footprint and reach in the local and national creative arts community could be a real differentiator.

Most liberal arts schools and many state universities have integrated artist-in-residence programs. Providing opportunities on campus at Washburn for visiting artists to curate shows at the Mulvane, teach classes, and engage in the community of Topeka by giving talks, creating public art, or hosting shows will only solidify Washburn’s place as a forward thinking, nationally-renowned university that encourages its students to learn, grow, and maintain future relationships with the institution. Beyond the [Catron Professorship model](#), a visiting artist program will also be a natural way to engage the larger Topeka community and get outside perspectives, on campus and at the Mulvane. An easy way to start a visiting artist or residency program would be for Washburn to ‘plug in’ to an existing Kansas-based artist residency program, such as [Tallgrass Artist Residency](#) or one of the many other arts residencies in the state or greater region.

Additionally, governments and nonprofits are increasingly offering artist residencies as a means to harness the power of creatives to provide innovative approaches to meeting civic and social challenges. Embedding artists into government or nonprofit spaces is a collaborative process to achieve shared outcomes. Outcomes may include finding new approaches to ongoing challenges, increasing community outreach/buy-in or enhanced outreach. There are many [guides, models, and examples](#) of artist residencies.

**Greater Topeka Partnership:
Artist Relocation Programs**

The Greater Topeka Partnership’s ‘Choose Topeka’ program should be updated to have a targeted approach to creative placemaking. Incentives that intentionally attract professional artists would have a positive impact on the local economy as well as the community’s arts and culture industry. Artists are attracted to an area through a variety of planning tools and recruitment incentives including flexible zoning for live/work spaces, low-rent studio spaces, financing to restore homes, free marketing, etc. Focus groups with target audiences would help define the best incentives to provide as well as means to promote the program regionally and nationally. A quick primer on artist relocation programs can be found [here](#).

**EMBEDDING ARTISTS INTO
GOVERNMENT OR NONPROFIT SPACES
IS A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS TO
ACHIEVE SHARED OUTCOMES**

CULTURAL DISTRICTS & CORRIDORS

For civic leaders facing limited resources, arts and cultural initiatives have become an appealing community development strategy. A cultural district is an urban area intended to create a critical mass of places of cultural consumption that may include music, food, theatre, and visual arts. Each district reflects its neighborhood's unique built environment and history, showcases the region's artists and cultural heritage, and increases social engagement.

For the next five years, development of cultural hubs should focus on six key areas in Topeka:

- + NOTO Arts & Entertainment District
- + East Topeka Corridor
- + South Topeka Boulevard
- + Downtown Topeka
- + Golden Mile
- + Oakland Neighborhood

Cultural Districts:

- + are unique to the character, community, and resources available locally
- + have a significant economic impact on cities, attracting businesses, tourists, and local residents to a central part of the city
- + facilitate community engagement and social interaction
- + can help revitalize neighborhoods and increase the quality of life for residents
- + serve as a vehicle to assist in the support and marketing of local nonprofit cultural organizations
- + serve as a focal point to brand a city's unique cultural identity and embrace its historic significance
- + some have formal boundary lines with specific zoning ordinances and economic tax incentives
- + others might have less formal, unofficial boundaries that become a focal marketing point to cluster arts organizations



RECOMMENDATIONS:

ALL CULTURAL DISTRICTS & CORRIDORS

- + Engage the right partners, including a diverse, rich mix of leadership from nonprofits, local businesses, developers, artists, neighbors, etc.
- + Establish a clear, well-ordered vision and set of objectives that are shared across all stakeholders. This includes collective agreement on the district's purpose and amplifying the district among competing uses of funds/space/time, as well as understanding that not all goals or projects are mutually compatible.
- + Designate space for individual artists, which may include studios, live/work space, galleries, and other places to show their work.
- + Incentivize artists and community groups to host events through small grants that take place in those districts.
- + Execute at least one experimental temporary program each year. Experimental, temporary programs lower the risk factor and increase innovation, leading to permanent and more expansive programming.
- + Invite Greater Topeka Partnership to be an umbrella of support for all of the districts, including investigating benefits of state legislation to designate the cultural districts, which is often a necessary step for the development of incentives for a cultural district.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

NOTO ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

- + Secure a large, multi-tenant development project. Work with the City of Topeka and Greater Topeka Partnership to incentivize a developer to finance and construct (or rehabilitate) a multi-tenant project to bring a variety of organizations together for a shared-use facility. The [Youngstown Cultural Arts Center](#) in Seattle, for example, provides low-income housing for artists who in turn support the arts, education and social development work of the center.
- + Expand the geographic and social footprint of the district. Engage artists as creative thinkers to address issues in the district including homelessness, mental health, and quality housing stock. Take inspiration from [Project Row Houses](#) with a mission to “empower people and enrich communities through engagement, art, and direct action.”
- + Investigate the pros and cons of including the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District under the administrative umbrella of Greater Topeka Partnership to garner support from a broader economic development agency, as well as solidify its identity as a key part of downtown development.

ARTS AND CULTURAL INITIATIVES HAVE BECOME AN APPEALING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS:**EAST TOPEKA CORRIDOR**

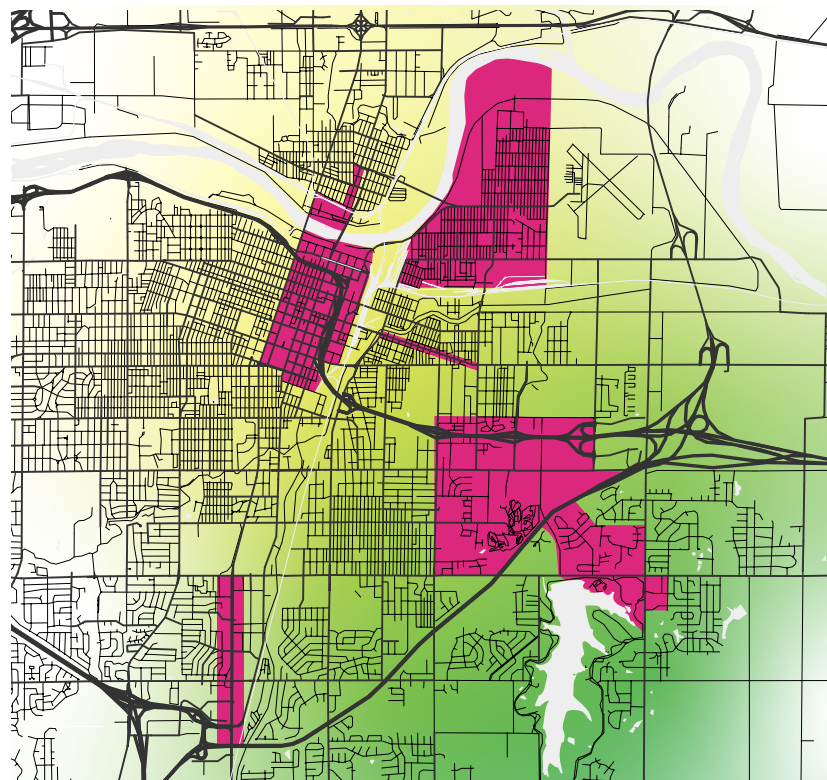
- + Engage ArtsConnect to assist in the corridor development, including mapping of cultural assets. Find out what residents need in order to make their neighborhood more livable.
- + Engage artists in the development of a branding campaign including the implementation of creative signage to declare this emerging cultural corridor, building off of the unique cultural assets of the community.
- + Host an event to offer new visitors a chance to engage with businesses along the corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS:**SOUTH TOPEKA BOULEVARD**

- + Create features that are highly photogenic and visually maximalist to build momentum on social media and enhance the visual appeal of the corridor with at least six structures that embody Topeka's placemaking themes. This long gateway corridor with set-back buildings hosts the majority of visitors to Topeka and is a visual and design challenge. Look to examples such as small town Ackey, Minnesota's [Paul Bunyan](#) or Strawberry Point, Iowa's [giant strawberry](#).
- + Cost share the development of the giant selfie-inducing installations with local businesses that may benefit from increased stops at their parking lot.
- + Host a national design challenge with an award for the winner to generate buzz for the corridor and activate it.

RECOMMENDATIONS:**DOWNTOWN TOPEKA**

- + Invest in repairing the economic and cultural losses to the downtown area, especially those losses that were a direct result of Urban Renewal efforts, redlining and other attempts to disenfranchise and disadvantage people of color in Topeka. Targeted grants/business assistance for BIPOC artists and business owners could be a way to put this work into action.
- + Create vibrancy and highly visual appeal in downtown Topeka as a gateway and hub for government activities. Initial steps could be engaging parking lot facades or murals.
- + Honor history and people through more than statues. Future investments in public art should reflect placemaking themes, be interactive, and offer fun and delight alongside opportunities for learning and reflection.



MAP OF TOPEKA WITH CULTURAL DISTRICTS HIGHLIGHTED IN PINK

RECOMMENDATIONS:

GOLDEN MILE

- + Engage ArtsConnect to assist in the corridor development, including mapping of cultural assets. Find out what residents need to make their place more livable.
- + Engage artists in the development of a branding campaign including the implementation of unique and creative signage for the district.
- + Host an event to offer new visitors a chance to engage with business along the corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

OAKLAND NEIGHBORHOOD

- + Harness broad awareness of the existing Fiesta Mexicana in order to expand awareness of and support for activities focused on Latinx cultural heritage and traditions.
- + Honor the founding, growth and continued importance of the neighborhood with public art investments. These should interpret the original settlement and development of Oakland as a cohesive working class neighborhood and also honor the Indigenous ancestry of the Latinx individuals who live there.

MODEL CULTURAL DISTRICTS

The [freespace toolkit](#) for creating a multi layered community-created space attracted city funding in San Francisco.

[Irrigate: A Toolkit for Mobilizing Local Artists to Solve Challenges in Your Community](#) stems from a 3-year creative placemaking initiative in St. Paul involving 600 artists creating 150 projects across the city, generating over 50 million positive social media impressions.

[The Ninth Street Corridor Project: From The Studios To The Streets](#)

[‘Poetic’ lighting, sound art, rocks: East Ninth committee signs off on streetscape design](#)

[The LuigART Makers Spaces](#) creates live/work spaces by rehabilitating and recreating historic workforce housing in Lexington, KY, through innovative construction techniques and zoning. In addition to creating new spaces, the program connects these residents with partner nonprofit organizations to help with downpayment assistance, financial literacy training and low-risk mortgage financing. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) created for LuigART Makerspaces makes it possible for people to create and sell their goods out of their homes, and even allows residents to hire employees to work out of their house.

[The Minot Artspace Lofts](#) opened in 2013, providing 34 units of affordable artist housing as well as a gallery operated by the Turtle Mountain Tribal Arts Association for the exhibition and sale of works by Chippewa, Mandan, Hidatsa, Artkara and Sioux artists, including regalia, beadwork, quillwork and baskets.



ART INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITIES

The work to integrate art within civic processes and across economic sectors likely starts small. Using space in new ways, sharing knowledge and creating multi-disciplinary experiences will generate a strong return quickly. This work generates optimism and fuels social change. It's hard to overstate the role of aesthetic makeovers for downtown and beyond; beauty drives behavior.

Community is named as Topeka's greatest strength among those that have it. Building community beyond families is a cultural imperative for a vibrant, welcoming Topeka. In short, Topeka needs to think arts first when working to advance community goals, especially investing in integrated work.

USING SPACE IN NEW WAYS, SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND CREATING MULTI-DISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCES WILL GENERATE A STRONG RETURN QUICKLY

**HERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC WAYS
ART HAS BEEN SUGGESTED
TO IMPROVE TOPEKA**

Public engagement, education

- + Environmental design addressing crime prevention
- + Environmental design addressing housing equity
- + Improving communication about public planning and investments
- + Promoting the value of art in Topeka, especially ‘filling your life’ with art

Social services

- + Art as intervention for addressing mental health challenges
- + Art as a way to help the veteran population dealing with various forms of trauma
- + Art and community gardening and other food justice programs
- + Arts programming to improve public safety

Neighborhood support

- + Districts seek refined identities
- + Traffic calming needed broadly using quick, cheap calming tactics
- + Public schools need partnerships
- + Rehabilitating fire stations
- + Removing the blight and adding vitality to empty homes and storefronts
- + Supporting housing stability

Downtown’s Master Plan elements

- + District designs, especially the Great Overland Station and river corridor
- + New City/County ‘Justice Center’
- + NOTO expansion supports vitality
- + Immersive, experiential programming, including alleyways
- + Beautification that erases some of the brutalist facades
- + Diversify who gets honored and find new ways to do so beyond static sculptures

Parks need innovative programming, inclusive of capital improvements

- + Improve accessibility to neighborhood parks (ex. Gwendolyn Brooks Park)
- + Pocket parks are a potential neighborhood intervention
- + Pop up programming, prioritized for low-resourced neighborhoods
- + Regional parks need experiences beyond the parks themselves
- + Continued improvements to the popular and widely-used Shunga Trail

Transportation corridors are neither welcoming nor scaled for people

- + Kansas Avenue needs work beyond sculptures and streetscaping
- + South Topeka Boulevard is an under-resourced gateway requiring significant investment to improve
- + Polk-Quincy Viaduct construction presents immediate opportunity

ADDENDUM - SURVEY RESULTS

ADDENDUM - SURVEY RESULTS





Figure 1

Residential Zip Code

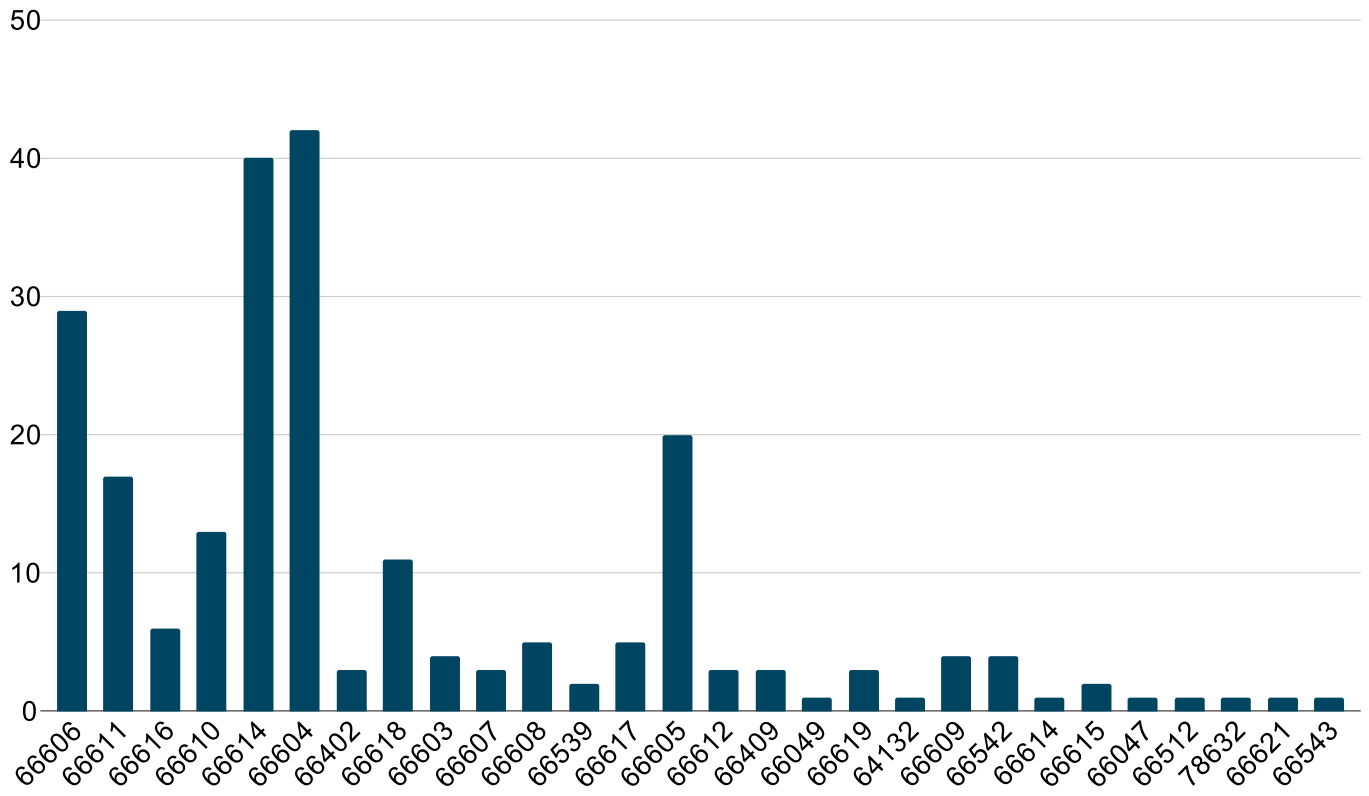


Figure 2

Count of Race/Ethnicity: I describe my race/ethnicity primarily as...

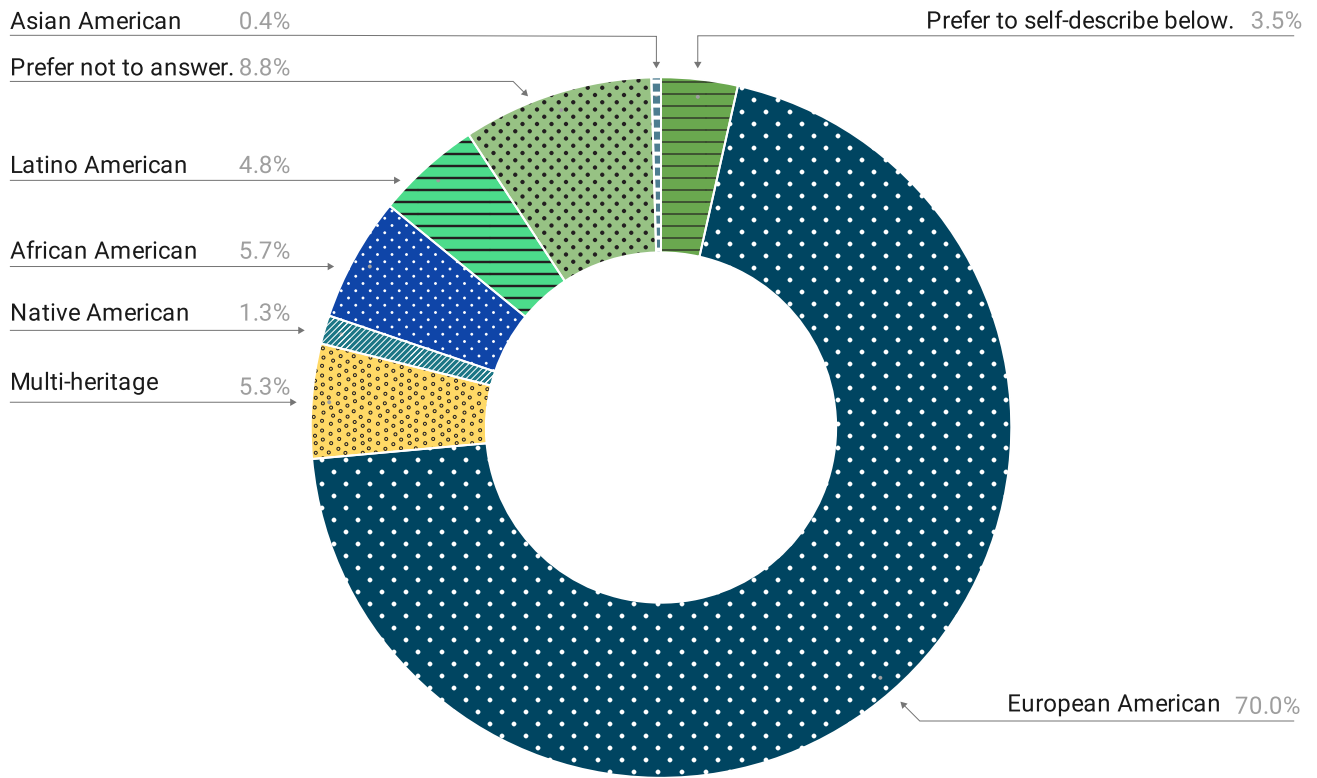


Figure 3

Count of What is your age?

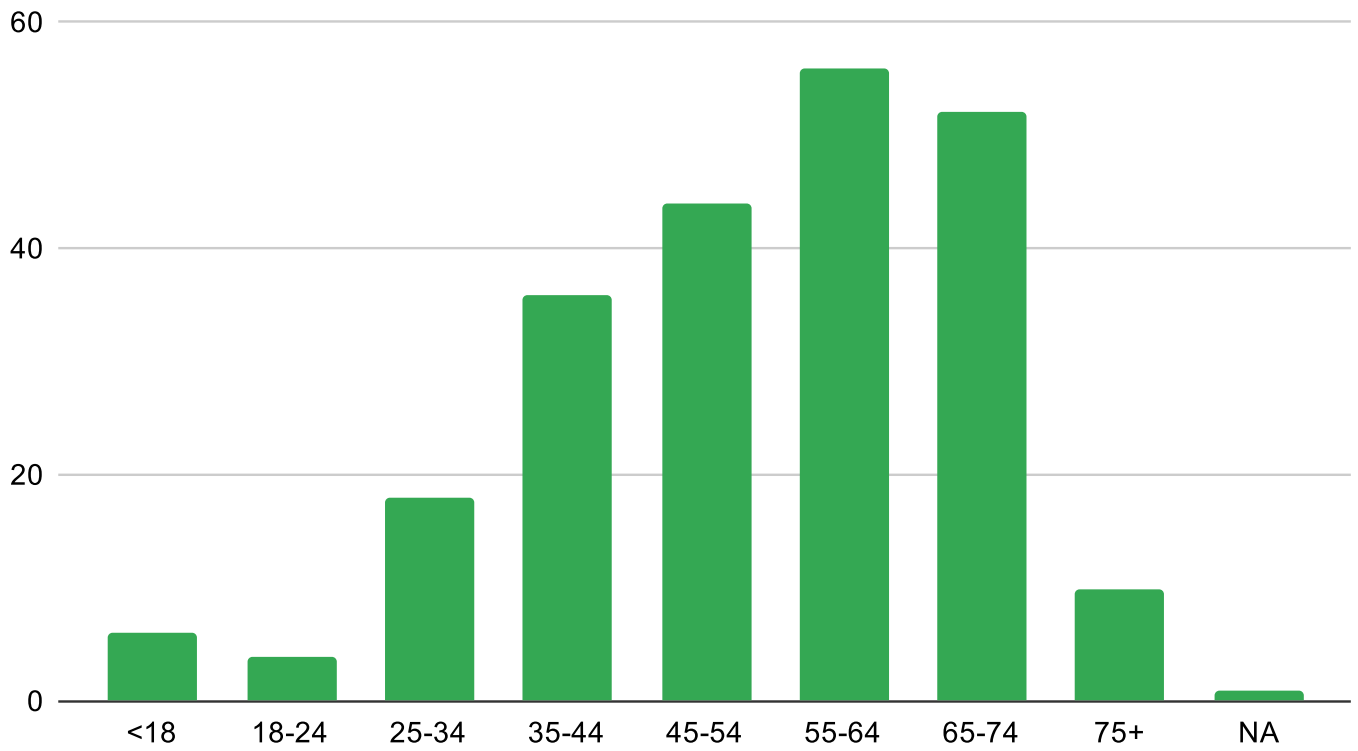


Figure 4

Count of Gender: I currently identify as a...

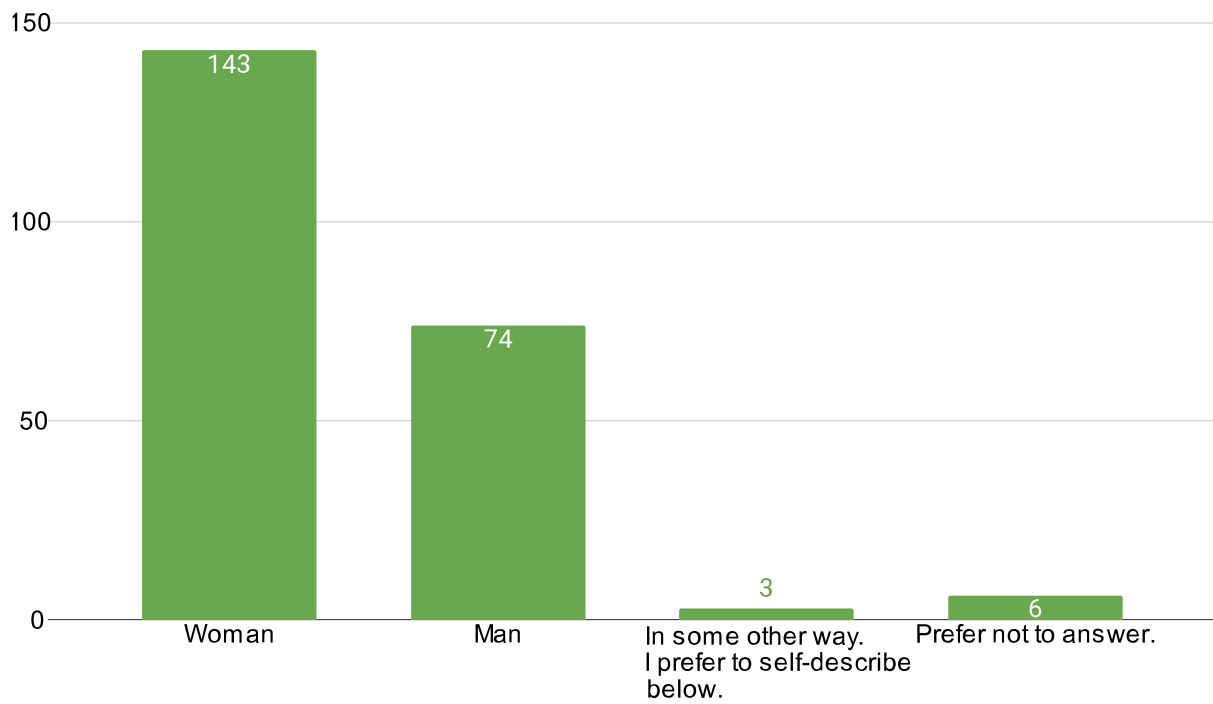


Figure 5

Count of How did you decide to make Topeka your home?

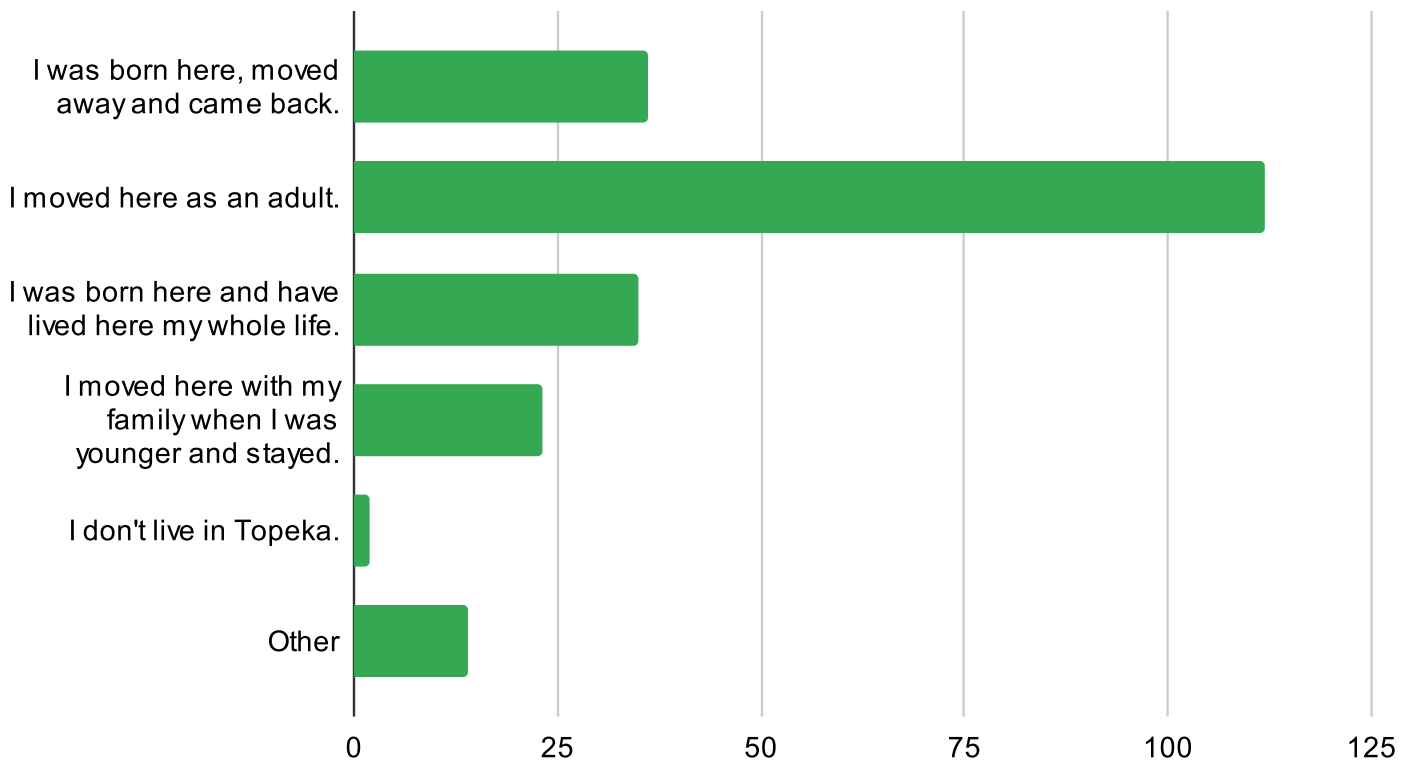


Figure 6

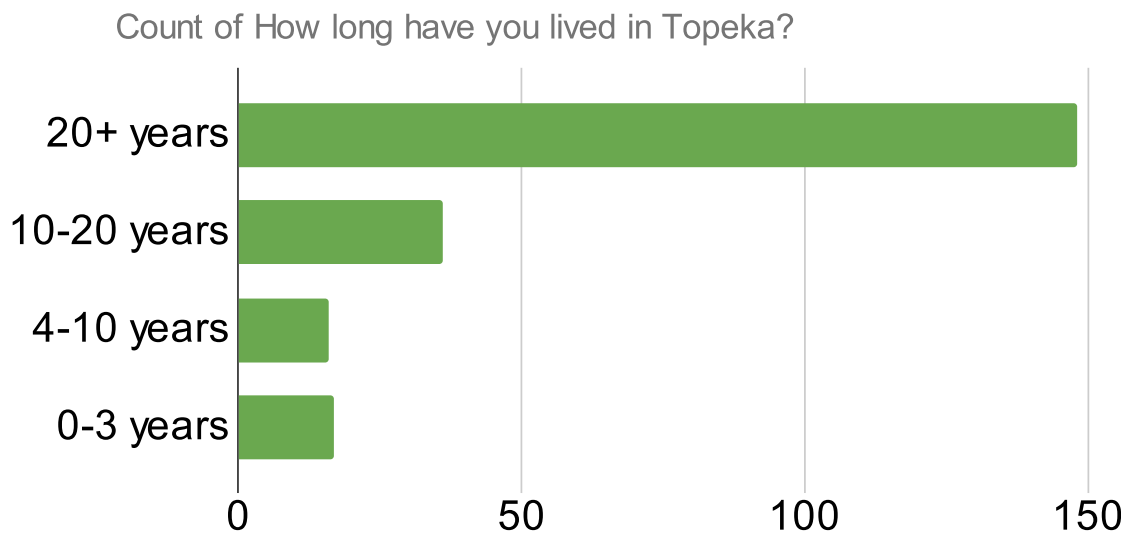


Figure 7

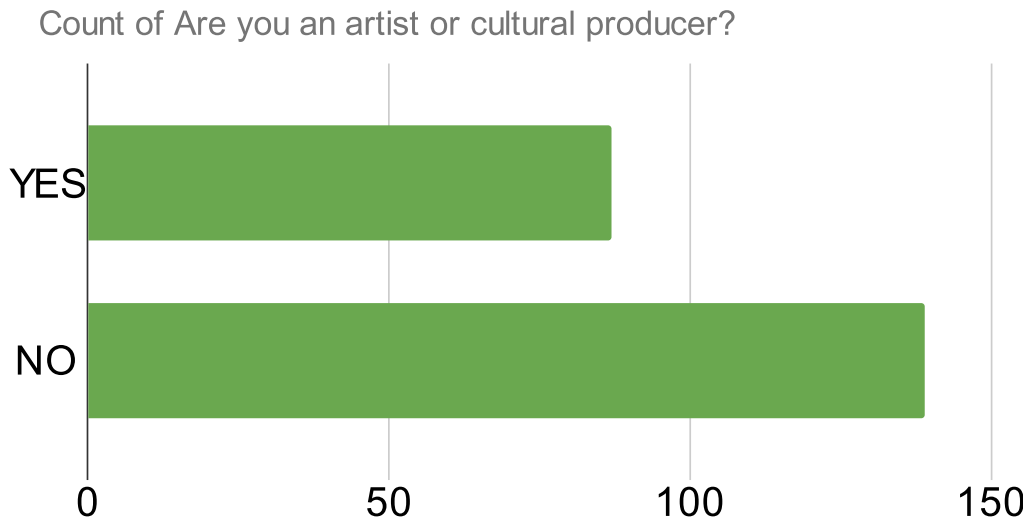
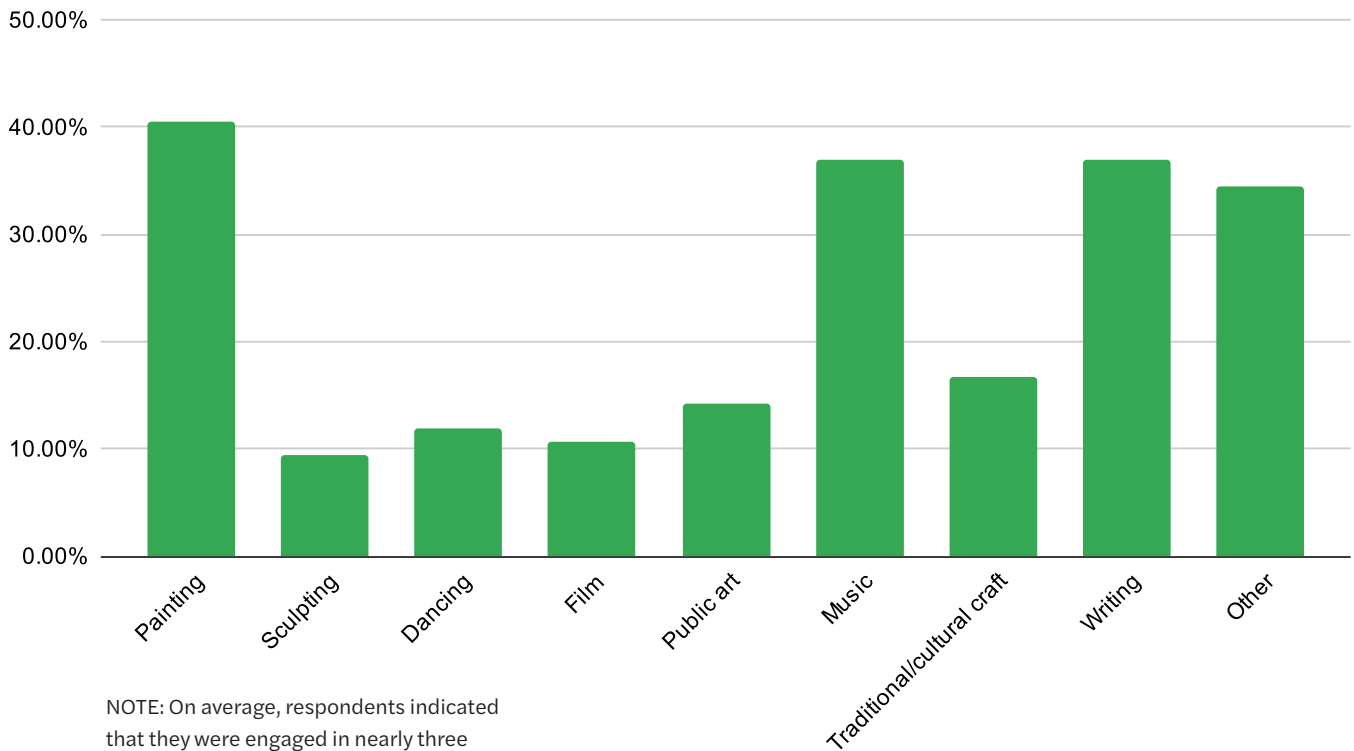


Figure 8

If yes, in what disciplines are you engaged?



NOTE: On average, respondents indicated that they were engaged in nearly three (3) different artistic disciplines. Survey allowed multiple answers per respondent and therefore numbers are not intended to equal 100%.

Figure 9

Count of Do you work for a business or organization focused on the arts?

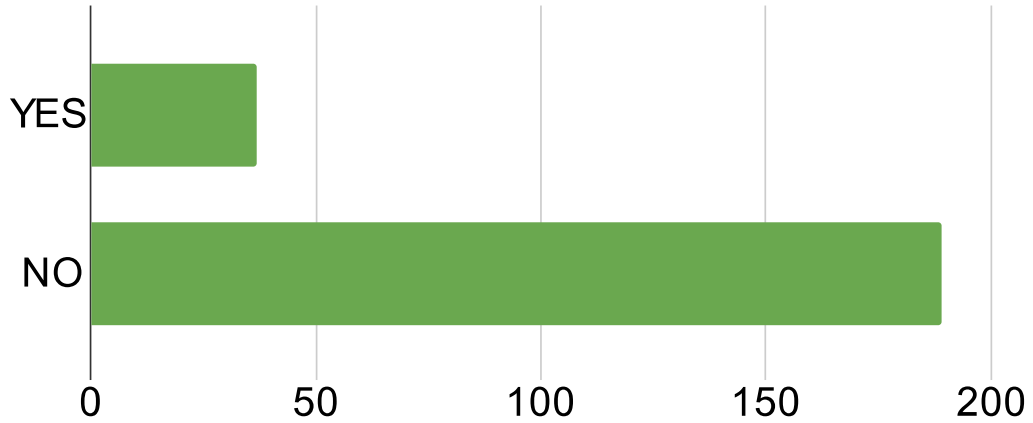
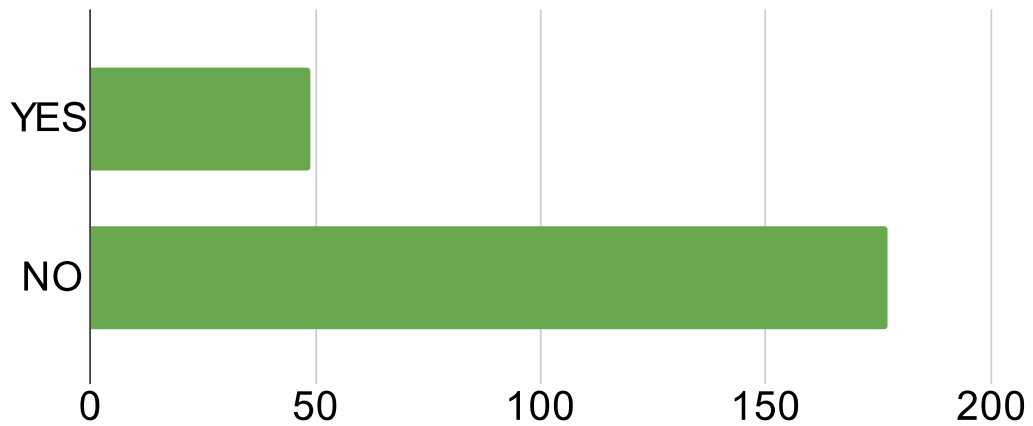


Figure 10

Count of Do you work in any other field closely associated with the creative sector?



Why did you move to Topeka?

Career
 husband's job
 job
 Work
 1970
 Cost of living/schools
 job
 Husband's job brought us here.
 Job
 spouse job
 Stepfather worked for BNSF
 Job
 We were both working in Topeka and commuting. A Realtor friend told us we could buy a house in Topeka for less than what we were paying rent in Lawrence....and he was right!
 Work
 Husband's job
 Family
 Been living here
 job offer
 My husband got his first job after Law school with the Kansas Supreme Court
 People

For work
 family reasons
 FAMILY IS HERE.
 Elderly parents
 A job
 Good place to raise a family.
 Family
 Closer to family
 Work
 Financial reasons.
 Moved here for a job
 I didn't return
 to be closer to my job.
 It was home
 Felt established and at home here.
 NA
 Topeka is a place where starting again comes naturally safe.
 Na

Where else have you lived?

Tempe, Arizona and Fort Collins, Colorado
 Various places in the United States
 Cleveland, Ohio; Milwaukee, Wisconsin
 California, Arizona, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas
 Pierre, SD; Nashville, TN; Lawrence, KS
 MD, CA, OH, Lawrence
 Manhattan, KS for college
 Texas and Oklahoma
 Other parts of Kansas and Texas
 Central Kansas, Spain
 Overland Park, Lawrence, Meriden, Rossville, Randolph
 Miami and Tampa, Florida
 Texas, Missouri, Ohio
 Illinois, California
 N/A
 Colorado/California/Florida
 MS, IA

Houston, TX; Omaha, NE; Sioux City, IA; Peoria, IL
 Wichita
 Manhattan, KS Galva, KS McPherson, KS Concordia, KS Glasco, KS
 Nebraska
 nowhere
 Western Kansas
 Newton KS, Moundrige KS
 Indiana and Massachusetts
 Portland, OR
 As an adult: Allen, Emporia, Lawrence, Topeka.
 Alaska, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, & Idaho
 Garnett, Overland Park, Manhattan, Lawrence, Ft Scott, Hays, Dodge City(all in Kansas), Columbia Missouri, Idaho Falls Idaho,
 Southern Missouri
 Manhattan
 Meriden
 All over the midwest
 Manhattan, Lawrence
 Columbia and St L Missouri
 Kansas City, KS
 Lawrence and Washington D.C.
 Cimarron and Garden City
 Lawrence, Kansas, and Iowa City, Iowa
 Pittsburg, KS (Pittsburg St. University) - Iowa City, IA (University of Iowa) - Derby, KS
 Kansas City, MO; Gladstone, MO; Kansas City, KS; St. Louis, MO
 Lincoln NE
 Central Ks, Dallas, Los Angeles, Bakersfield
 Wichita, Great Bend, East coast
 Texas
 Just here
 Several places in Kansas and Colorado
 Kansas City and Chicago
 Lawrence, St. Louis, Madison, Northampton, texas
 Just Topeka
 California, Colorado, Missouri
 Independence, KS; Camarillo, CA; Columbus, KS;

Pittsburg, KS
 Hays, Kansas, Denver, Chicago, DC,
 Kansas City
 GA, SC, TN
 Germany; Korea; Texas; Georgia; Arkansas; Virginia; Missouri; Leavenworth; Washington DC
 Na
 Houston

What is iconic about Topeka?

Statehouse
 BVBoard
 The People
 Connection to the railroad - the strong cultural history with that. Also Brown v. Board, being the state capitol.
 Brown V Board Site
 the state capital
 State House
 State Capitol
 The Capitol?
 A civil rights legacy.
 Kansas State Capitol
 Brown vs. Board of Education
 Burnett's Mound; Brown v. Board of Ed; Forbes Field; Potawatomie Reservation; Capitol Dome; TSCPL
 It's the Capitol City!
 State Capital
 Brown v Board, Topeka High
 State Capitol Building
 Lakes and rivers
 State Office Building
 Public art or the Brown v. Board site
 Nature
 Parks
 Parks
 Capitol
 From an outside perspective maybe Burnetts mound or a local restaurant, in the future hope-

fully downtown
 Truckhenge
 Our State Capitol Building
 Topeka High School
 Nothing
 Fiesta Mexicana
 Capitol Building
 rich history, NOTO, Brown V Board, Capito City, Aaron Douglas Arts Fair, Mulvan Art Fair, Fiesta Mexicana of Topeka, Billard Airport, Forbes Field, Heartland Park,
 Capitol Building?
 The people
 Jayhawk Theatre, Noto, Gage Park, Capitol building, THS (Hoy Hoy), so many things really.
 Topeka is the capitol city
 Capital building
 We are the capitol city of Kansas.
 Sunflower Music festival, state capitol, great library
 an awesome atmosphere to raise a family. Capital building, Kansas Children's Discovery Center, Brown V Board Museum, NOTO, Harley Museum, great sporting opportunities for kids
 The capital building
 Noto
 The State Capitol
 Brown V. Board
 The capitol building
 State Capitol
 It's the capital city on the Kansas River. It has an iconic role in desegregation.
 The statehouse
 State Capitol
 the Capitol, the zoo, Burnett's Mound, Ken Berry baseball/softball, in the past-The Adventure Center
 Menninger
 Government
 State Capitol
 Capitol
 The Capitol Building, Gage Park

Capital building
 Small town feel.
 Everyday I go to work or pass by, the historic water tower catches my eye. It's architecture is very appealing and unique. Just in case I can't mention it elsewhere, painting it with a mural of the history of Topeka or Kansas. The other iconic thing are the beautiful historic homes.
 Obviously the Capital Building
 The Capitol
 the Kaw
 The Capitol Kansas Museum of History Washburn University
 The Statehouse
 The Statehouse which I wouldn't really call it iconic. Maybe The Jayhawk Theatre would be a distant second.
 Capital City
 Small town feel large town attitude
 the statehouse
 The Capital
 capitol
 The Capital, and Topeka High School
 The Capitol
 Its the state capitol
 Our capital building; Brown v. Board; NOTO; Lake Shawnee; library
 Gage Park, the capital, the state museum, NOTO, Old Prairie Town
 Capital of KS
 State Capital
 potential: downtown resurgence; Kansas river recreation
 State Capitol
 Evil Knievel Museum
 Property Crime
 State Capital
 The capital building
 The Capitol
 The Phelps
 The Capital
 All the iconic things are no longer iconic. Forbes, Zoo, Menninger, Capital.

Capitol	capitol building	Good size and location
small town feel in a big town	the Capitol	Opportunities
Capital building	State Capitol, Brown vs BOE	Capitol Building, neon Jayhawk
Burnett's Mound	Washburn University as a municipal university, and Brown v. Board NHS	The State Capitol Building
High crime rates and a bloated city government who wastes my tax dollars on nonsense projects	Our Capital building stands out.	state capitol
Capitol	State Capitol	Capital Dome
Brown v Board	The Ad Adstra statue	John Brown level grit
Capital City of Kansas	State Capitol, Downtown, NOTO, Topeka Civic Theater, Topeka Zoo, Gage Park, Lake Shawnee, Public Library	Diversity
Brown V Board	Capitol Bldg	Capital
The Capital	Railroad, river, Washburn, beer	Capital city
The capital building	The capital of Kansas	Capital building
Brown v board	Home of Santa Fe Railroad, Topeka High, the State capital and its people	All different kinds of people
Brown v Board, State Capitol	Murals	Brown Vs board
Travelers Inn	Topeka High School	Brown VS Board Building and the Capitol
westboro baptist church, brown vs the board of education	potholes. No really, the Topeka Zoo, Lake Shawnee	Beautifully renovated Statehouse
State capitol	the capital	Gage park
Westboro baptist church unfortunately	capitol dome, Brown vs Board, Topeka High School, water tower,	State capital building
The Topeka Zoo	obviously the Capitol building...but our place in the history of freedom and civil rights is iconic to me. The Capitol building represents that ideal as well	Architectural buildings such as Topeka High School
Capitol building	the capital, Washburn University, jayhawk theatre	the Capitol. As a state capitol, it should be a hub for history and culture.
Small minded politics, sadly, inconsistent, politics-driven policies, but overall a good heart.	State Capital, Zoo, Tire manufacturer, Frito Lay, several Walmarts, Dillons, restaurants, some entertainment.	Kansas capitol
Capital of Kansas	The capitol, the parks, Burnett's Mound, Cedar Crest	Brown v Board
Menninger property could be	The railroads, Topeka High School, Shawnee Lake and state capitol.	Capital
Other than the Capitol Bldg, all I can think of is potholes.	touchpoint of midwest change	The combination of government, education and the Arts is the attraction for us.
Topeka High School	Capital	Library, capital building
so many people begging for money while standing under a help wanted sign	the State Capitol - how can we use it to promote the arts available in Topeka and encourage a state wide audience?	Large number of vapid warehouses and dilapidated spaces ripe for revitalization
A lake, a river and a capitol	Capital City of KS	The capital building
The Capitol building	I really don't know. I guess I probably picture the Capitol Building. We need something more and cool. :)	Topeka Civic Theatre, Topeka Festival, Topeka Symphony.
Capitol Building, Governor's Mansion, Gage Park		Fred Phelps and "God Hates Fags"
Capital of the State of Kansas		It is the state capital.
Capitol		potential
Brown v Board and the Capitol Building		The Statehouse
Capital city		State Capitol, Brown v Board of Education
Capital		Trees
Topeka is the capital of Kansas		Capitol building
Meade Park, Evel Knievel Museum, Forbes Air Museums, Capitol, Governor's Mansion and Grounds		The Capitol building
		The Capital, Burnetts Mound

Noto

The Capitol Building

Capital building

Capitol Building

Library

Capitol Bldg

Capital of KS with homey Midwest feel but mid metro!

Capital building

Menninger Tower

Capital

State Capitol

The Capitol

Gage Park

Our capitol

Zoo

Capital of Kansas

Gage Park (including the zoo, gardens, etc.)

the Capitol building

Brown vs. Board

We are extremely diverse, allowing us to experience and embrace all. It is our difference that make the difference.

The Kansas State Capitol

Pot holes

The Capitol, maybe? Honestly drawing a blank, here. Topeka really has no defining identity.

Topeka High and the statehouse

Capitol

Brown v Board

Shootings

potential outdoor spaces ie riverfront, patios, alleys to be activated

It is the state capital, a fact often forgotten by Topekanese.

Road construction

Gage park from Terry glenn

It's friendly people!

Capitol

Our heritage...as a community offering freedom for all

What do you find to be special/memorable about Topeka?

Parks & green spaces

Our history

The ease of life

the history of my Mexican American community and their migration, building their community including church and school.

People are nice and cordial

sense of community - larger city that functions as a small own

The way the community works as a team

Governors trails, Washburn university, capital, history such as brown vs board

There are some tightly knit communities throughout Topeka that can provide a "small town" feel.

Gage Park, Lake Shawnee, hiking and biking trails, Sunflower Music Festival.

Topeka Civic Theatre is my favorite part of Topeka and makes ever moving from Topeka a really hard decision.

City benefits, reasonable traffic, spectacular public library system.

Capitol Bldg.; History Museum; Gage Park; Lake Shawnee, the mix of city and country; TSCPL

Great residential neighborhoods.

the people and sunsets and festivals

NOTO, fiesta Mexicana, Ensley Gardens

Events downtown, Topeka Civic Theater

Not sure

Brown Board

The people and the arty atmosphere

Time spent with my family

State Capitol

The capitol

the improving bike trails/routes

People forget just how large and diverse topeka really is

Truckhenge

Nice neighborhoods where you would want to raise a family; ability to easily join meaningful groups that are focused on making life better for all citizens;

Capital building

The down town area

It's a big small town

The history

Topeka is the biggest small town,

Diverse community

The people

Gage Park comes to mind first, as the pool was huge and Helen Hocker Theatre was a bath-house. Jayhawk theatre had famous people play on that stage in vaudeville.

Parks

As a child, the Mexican Fiesta and at Christmas seeing the beautiful homes decorated in Potwin.

As an adult and a business owner and how special our community and the support to see the downtown grow and retain and recruit new talent.

It's a great arts town.

The desire to support Kansas artists. I haven't seen this in any other state I've lived in.

the people and their work ethic and kind attitudes

It's history

Our community support level for good people and causes

Its rapid redevelopment

Gage Park and all that entails.

Gage Park, downtown is becoming really fun, Lake Shawnee, Shunga Trail, TCTA

Caring people

It's a small town in a good-sized city.

It's a friendly place and a good place to raise a family.

Treasures of the Czars exhibits

It's just home. Topeka is that kid with the inferiority complex. We aren't as cool as Lawrence or as exciting as KC.

Not sure

Kind, hard-working people.

Very diverse

People; small town feel with some city amenities

The friendly people, and the local shops around town

Governor's mansion	Easy to live here, people are friendly, close to K.C., inexpensive	Topeka Zoo, Washburn University, Library, Gage Park
Silent Film Festival		
Topeka has a charm and homey warmth that makes it so lovely. Another, it appears to me that no matter what side of the political/ideological side a person falls, there's this general idealized end-goal everyone's pushing toward, which is so refreshing.	The drive to create community events.	kindness of people
The different running trails around town	capital, Brown v. Board,	Park spaces and coffeehouses
NOTO District, Cyrus Hotel, Ted Ensley Gardens	Capital building, NOTO, downtown remodel, more businesses coming to Topeka	Community relationships
Gage Park	NOTO	Parks, zoo, SO events
the history - Brown vs Board of Education, Underground Railroad etc	1966 tornado	People are genuine and generally nice; we have 4 seasons; it's easy to get from one place to another.
Topeka Zoo	NOTO	How friendly and helpful the people are. Visiting the Kansas History Museum. The Jayhawk Theater. TPAC
I think it's not a bad place to raise grade school to middle school aged children.	How many members of the community showed up to support local law enforcement during LEO funerals despite the national narrative.	nada
Brown vs The Board of Education	The subsections of Topeka - Sherwood, Lake Shawnee, Oakland, Potwin	The arts: murals, public art, performing arts, art studios, NOTO
Santa Fe Railroad A railroad history	Mixing bowl of cultures	Capitol, parks, zoo, museums, NOTO, Downtown, people and nice neighborhoods, lots of cool murals
the activities	The History	
The last city-funded university (WU)	small town feel	Our excellent recreational lake, Gage Park, and other area parks; our superb library; the vibrant Hispanic heritage of Oakland; the Underground Railroad history exemplified in the Ritchie House; the rich Exoduster history of Tennessee Town and nearby neighborhoods
music scene	The mannerisms of the people here	
How it's changing and moving forward. I.e downtown and Noto	Burnett's Mound, Endsley Gardens at Lake Shawnee	Gage Park/Zoo has many fond memories for me and my children. Lake Shawnee is an area I love to take visitors to.
Brown vs. Board of Education	Downtown Topeka	State Capitol
A small city with a rural feel - friendly folks who are trying to be progressive	Capital building	The Art Walk, trees, library, college, Gage Park, & the Indian casinos.
Murals (especially Brown v Board mural); plaza neighborhood culture, excellent parks, great library	In spite of a sentiment from some born and raised, others see it as special and are working to make it better.	The people and our public library!
Shunga trail; 1st Pres Tiffany windows; Zoo/Gage Park; Libe; Huf n Puf; Sunflower Music; indy burger joints; Fiesta; Collins Park parade	Not much	Zoo
Gage Park, Evergy Plaza	Diverse population, culture, friendliness of the community	PT's, breweries
NOTO arts district	The community	Community activities
Excellent Library, strong University	How hard some folks work to make a difference.	The fact that we are emerging stronger than ever to grow the community and make it better for everyone
The community feel	How much some people put their money where their mouth is.	TCT
Everything that isn't nailed down is stolen	The number of things to do in our community.	Potwin
How out North of Topeka it feels like small town or country life but you are close to the city.	The fact that it has barely grown in 30 years (population)	Capital
Ted Ensley Gardens at Lake Shawnee	It doesn't change. Try as they might, it doesn't change.	the 12step groups
Washburn	all of the road construction all over town that gets started, but seems to never be anyone working on it	More than what people think it is
Rainbow house	A lake, a river, a capitol	its history
June 6th Tornado	Nothing	the city and businesses continue to try to be progressive
The Capital	NOTO Arts District 1st Fridays, Fiesta event, Gage Park	

Capital Building, Legislature, TV channels, Governor's Mansion

The community! Eclectic.

everyone knows each other

Fiesta's

Many festivals, live theater and dance performance opportunities for children.

Gage park and zoo

The people

NOTO and emerging Downtown; Capital building; gateway to the Flint Hills; Brown vs Board of Education site; Gage Park

The people. Gage Park, Lake Shawnee, Discovery Center, Evel Knievel Museum, Jayhawk Theatre, local restaurants

Comfortable family atmosphere

It's my hometown, so I love it, and it has history, too! But I think it has at long last matured into a city that has found its own value and is busily enhancing that value!

Lovely parks and gardens

Washburn University

Community support

Opportunity for work, recreation, and entertainment

Sense of community

First Fridays

All communities; black, white, mexican, German, Russian, Indian all exist on an equal basis.

The generosity of its residents

Beautiful capital, kind people

Not sure yet

A variety of different types of people represented here

Education

The History

Brown V. Board, Const. Hall, Ward-Meade, NOTO, Gage Park, Topeka Zoo, train, Carrosel, Lake Shawnee,

Parks, potwin, zoo, lake Shawnee, noto, community theatre

In a single visit I believe the capital building would be most memorable. I lived in Topeka for several years before I developed an appreciation for reasonable housing costs, short commutes,

and unique places - the library, and Washburn university, interesting architecture (that has not been demolished)

StJoseph church

It's people. Down to earth and generous.

It's a big "small town"

Good places to eat

Overall buildings, neighborhoods. the variety of small businesses

Zoo, community events, library, community centers,seaman high school and events,Washburn university and events

Reminds me of home, not too big for her britches

The murals

The offerings of the arts.

Bupkis

The people are kind

the people

Taking the Grandkids to the zoo

Important part of railway history.

Fiesta

Mulvane Art Fair - neighborhoods - gatherings (small and large), Kay's Garden

The historical qualities

Gage Park

Noto

Our beautiful parks.

NOTO Arts District

Brown v Board Museum

History museum

The variety of arts and entertainment venues

Great physical location on the map, with hometown feel to a 3rd largest city in the state. We are embracing "local" and had explosion of so much more to do here in Topeka.

Noto

The prairies, wetlands, the Kansas River, and the Flint Hills

Friendly

Ted Endsley garden

Topeka has a small town feel

Sense of community

Our parks, such as lake Shawnee and gage

Tornado

Green spaces. My cousin visiting from San Diego commented on the number of small parks we went by as we drove.

Gage Park, Ward Meade, Civic Theatre, Topeka Public Library

NOTO

As we stepped through 2020 I watched how Topeka stood in peace wanting the voices of all to be heard and valued on purpose.

The people.

Nothing

Unfortunately, next to nothing.

The walkable areas like NOTO and downtown

People

Capital

Not much

lack of development in cultural areas over last 40 years leaves ample room to grow and develop something fresh

Capital of Kansas

The parks, the library and Washburn University

Musuems

The state house from Terry glenn

Unbearable humid weather

Low cost of living

it's a great place to live..big enough for big city issues, small enough to be engaged

Think back over the last 4 years. What's the coolest thing that's happened to you in Topeka?

Brown v Board mural dedication event

Became Mayor

Seen the Downtown Redevelop

Continued work with the Mulvane Art Museum. Building of Topeka as hub for Tonantzin Society across Kansas and the US.

66th Anniversary of the Brown v Board case involvement as a volunteer at Topeka Civic Theatre

Being embraced as a new resident

Shawnee Lake Ted Ensley Gardens blooming

?

Downtown redevelopment which I think has re-kindled pride about Topeka. We are the capital of Kansas which everyone in Kansas knows - except Topekans. I think that is changing at long last.

The "coolest thing" I've seen in Topeka was the neon electric violin and guitar at White Auditorium. That and the occasional hot air balloons are awesome. It hasn't happened lately, but when TCTA does Shakesphere with Matt Briden, that is definitely the coolest part of Topeka. Matt Briden is the most amazing actor I've ever seen on stage in person.

Toured the justice building with the chief state justice.

I published my first book! There was a big book launch and lots of media coverage.

I'm proud of the efforts and priority given to the downtown.

Seeing Topeka come alive, especially downtown.

buying a house and my son starting high school

Being on stage with amazing talent at Topeka Civic Theater

Connecting to the Poetry Community

How the community have come together to help small businesses

The growth that is happening. The arts and entertainment are rapidly growing in Topeka.

Watching my youngest child enter her freshman year at Seaman High School

Daughter opened Art Gallery

riding the train at the zoo

Having more local events that where not possible years prior

Truckhenge

When we started the BIG street concerts in the intersection of 9th and Kansas Ave

Every plaza

Leadership Greater Topeka

Downtown renovations

Working in NOTO and providing opportunities for our community through art

Fiesta Mexicana!

Summer Fireworks in Hi-Crest, Thunder Over the Heartland Airshow

I got 95+ good friends together to put on a variety show to raise some money for an ailing friend and then it got out for control and out of that my nonprofit Artist's Wellness Endowment (which Huascar helped name our NP) was born from Scroggie & Friends.

Involvement in networking organizations geared to people of color

Downtown upgrade with pocket parks and Everygy Plaza

I started working in an art museum on a university campus--pretty fun and cool!

the development of the NOTO arts district, new studios and galleries - although I do miss the ones that closed and changed. Camp Cowabunga at the Zoo.

My daughter, who is also a life long Topekan, graduating from college and choosing Topeka to start her teaching career.

designing the trail system

Being able to, after having been the first to ever do so, bring others into a national award spotlight

I started a theatre company.

TopCity Swing, A Big Band Christmas, the chocolate festival downtown

Downtown Topeka revitalization

Watching the continued revitalization of downtown Topeka.

It makes me happy to see cars and activities back on Kansas Ave. I remember how barren it used to be!

NOTO

Being part of a weekly nonprofit collaboration cb Zoom call and seeing how much talent and compassion are at play among the people who work tirelessly to make our home better for everyone.

Nothing

Various theatre experiences

Worked in Topeka

Downtown investment

Kayaking on Lake Shawnee

Japanese garden at the zoo and tulip time

Kansas Music Festival

Walmart on 37st remodelled & stopped soliciting at the front door

Advisors Excel

got sobriety

Tour of the old Woman's Club of Topeka before restoration into the Beacon

I thought the Food Truck Festival was nice.

getting to see my grand children mature

nothing

May have been over 4 years ago, but I watched a movie premiere (by a local director) at the Jayhawk Theatre downtown.

zoo

Festivals

Topeka Blues Society events and how downtown and the NOTO areas are coming on strong

We were eating at Burger Stand and someone (we don't know who) paid in advance for our meal.

being cast in a TCT show

Performing at 1st Meth as part of "Music, Just What the Doctor Ordered"

Working with community and state leaders.

unsure

Leaving the city to go somewhere else

Kids graduating high school.

Met my husband here and we raised our daughter here.

The downtown festivals

Played Video Games

Downtown Topeka/Common Ground Mural at the LEC/BvB Mural

Development of downtown and improvement of trails

Moving here.

bar hopping downtown, bands and food trucks on Kansas Ave., country stampede

Moved to a new house in a better part of town

Leaving it to pursue a better life

Momentum 2022

successful small business expansion during the pandemic.

The light shows that are put up at Christmast

The way the community comes together during hard times.

Buying a house
 Visiting Historic Ritchie house
 Country Stampede
 my wife and I had a son
 My husband finding a Cartier watch at a thrift store.
 Nothing
 Evergy Plaza
 Helped to pass the updated Non-Discrimination Ordinance in the city code
 Riding my bike to work the first time. Learning to drive slowly enough to truly see the city and its residents.
 The plaza construction is special.
 The downtown improvements
 Housing is affordable
 a couple of comedians made fun of us that we are so desperate of people to move here that topeka would pay them 15k to move here. And then no one came
 Great medical help
 Revitalization of NoTo
 Collins Park 4th of July Parade, Downtown Topeka Festivals
 Working downtown and experiencing downtown renewal
 downtown development
 Having a book release party in NOTO
 Love the library
 I had an art tent at Aaron Douglas Art Fair and NOTO Second Saturday.
 Laura Kelly was elected & spearheaded an effective response to COVID; along with others, I got vaccinated at the Expocenter.
 Meeting and catering to popular bands and actors at TPAC.
 return of beloved sstudents
 Just one thing!?! Having my own art show.
 Large Downtown concerts!
 volunteering with Silverbackks Silver Suppers; seeing more local farms marketing fresh produce/flowers/meats
 Development of NOTO.
 History Museum Suffrage exhibit

Being healed of Colon Cancer.
 The creativity of the new small businesses that have popped up,
 I moved to Oakland and learned about that area.
 Downtown investment
 Juneteenth parade
 My husband became a council member and we had a Latina Mayor and the Latino community is represented on the council
 Being able to work on wonderful design projects
 TopCity Half Marathon
 Jesus has infiltrated my life
 met great people, Found a life partner
 More people living downtown, Kansas Ave, NOTO growth, murals, new flag
 national night out is a time when everyone seems to be happy and have open welcoming arms to all
 Evergy Plaza & Casinos.
 Fantastic friendships
 The beautification of public spaces and bike lanes
 kudos for bringing change
 getting grants funded ... been several years dry.
 Working with kids developing their confidence & talent
 Becoming more aware of the public school programs- beyond drumlines & showchoirs (although these are impressive). Also, the interactive programs to encourage arts interest in children- there was a children's ballet and a children's symphony program. And, when TPAC did a local musical production- some productions need a bigger stage than TCT.
 Renewal downtown
 It's hard to pick one - so many cool "people helping people" activities.
 Emerging downtown/Every Plaza; Cyrus Hotel opening; First Fridays; Stampede & Air Show; people starting to be proud to live here!
 I know there are more but wow, I loved seeing Kay's Garden at the Zoo. It was wonderful. Family pictures at Lake Shawnee and Gage Park - fun, memorable and beautiful.
 My church involvement

Perhaps the growth of the arts scene and the recognition of its importance in Topeka. Also, I have the opportunity to write about the art and artists in Topeka and I have so many to choose from!
 The warmth and generosity of those in my neighborhood of Potwin
 Earning Tenure at Washburn University
 Ways my work colleagues rallied around me when I moved to Topeka despite just meeting me
 Purchased beautiful home
 Downtown development
 Bought my first home (at an amazingly affordable price then)
 The "mural phenomena" that's burst out in topeka; starting with the brown vs board mural
 Revitalization of downtown
 Development of Topeka
 Updating parks
 Purchased a home
 Involvement with the arts
 Arty Awards
 Being asked by Michael Tombes & Sara Frizzell to grab a paintbrush & add a few strokes to the civil rts. mural
 My house was destroyed and the community was very supportive
 Brought mural artist Isiah Zagar from Philadelphia to lead a workshop to install a mural on a NOTO building I have an interest in
 Nothing
 Buying an affordable home. Watching the spread of murals across town.
 Excellent medical care a few miles from home.
 Dance off at the Juneteenth Parade
 Been here a year. With Covid, not much has happened
 the possibilities.
 Parks, lake gardens
 Finding communities to be a part of
 Working on the Brown V Board mural
 Coolest? Nothing in Topeka...
 I love the FFAW.
 emergency response teams in pandemic

Seeing downtown and NOTO being revived

Tap That Topeka.

Meeting Tim Allen at Tpac

The reception at the Blitt - there have been some memorable arty parties

NOTO First Friday

Walking at Lake Shawnee in the Spring

Noto

Evergy Plaza Events

Gathering of friends

Fireworks display

Kansas concert

Nice to have long time friends here

Being a part of the development of the NOTO Arts and Entertainment District. The people are amazing, and the city is finding out the jewel it is.

Our neighborhood helping a neighbor in need.

Creating The Awesomeness inside and In the Garden of The Learning for Life Center

Heartland park

Renovations of downtown

Touring the Capitol

Have been welcomed with open arms

Going to Washburn and meeting my future husband

Nothing

Evergy Plaza

Noting specific comes to mind.

Enjoying live acoustic music at Classic Bean or outdoor concert

If/Then at Helen Hocker Theater

As I stood giving Lawrence Gardner High School, July 2020 commencement address the essence of resilience, love and innovation ruled the atmosphere. I watched student, staff, and families refuse to let Covid win. I titled the address "History Maker Standup", everything about this day was a first for everyone involved. My heart was honored standing in the gates of Kansas Juvenile Correctional Complex sharing the light of words, while receiving light from the actions of them all.

All the great people who just go about their lives and still find the heart and the time to help others.

Nothing

I got nothing.

Tap that

Volunteering at TCT.

Splash pad

seeing early elements of what I enjoy abroad here

I started my business here and After hating for a while I have learnt to love it and grow roots here

Capital improvements at Lake Shawnee

Touch a truck with my nephew

the. Class of70 reunion at ths from Terry glenn

Getting my dog and finally meeting people because they like my dog.

Michelle became mayor

Topeka developed pride and fun - Downtown, arts, bikes, river, entertainment, diversity in restaurants

What are your favorite "best kept secrets" in Topeka?

Lots of amazing ethnic restaurants. Newest is Moroccan food at a place called Tagine.

Food, arts scene, culture, community cohesion

TupTim Thai

Mulvane, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church mosaic of Our Lady, the murals of Andy Valdivia and Jamie Colon. The number of Mexican restaurants - that should be highlighted, the work of the Tonantzin Society

Juneteenth Celebration

TCTA

Ease of living

Classic bean, disc golfing at shunts, genesis sw gym, farmers market, first fridays in noto, Topeka public library

HPHS, Lake Shawnee, ?

Sunflower Music Festival. Topeka Symphony Orchestra.

Topeka Civic Theatre. All our volunteer organizations like HCCI and CASA.

Shunga Trail, Gage Park, Blackbird Cafe, capitol

tours, Brown vs. BOE.

TSCPL, Monsoon Indian Restaurant; NOTO; Washburn University

The art scene is great!

true small town personality with modern amenities, and north star, the lake, coffee shops, music talent, great artist.

Ensley Gardens, NOTO, Topeka has some really nice architecture, good hiking trails

Topeka Cello Collective

I'm not sure right now. The pandemic has changed the landscape.

Not sure

I don't want to share them, then they wouldn't be best kept secrets. haha. I think NOTO is almost a best kept secret. I still run into Topekans who haven't heard or visited NOTO.

Lakes and Parks

Price of housing

Lake Shawnee

G's cheesecakes

Local dive bars and events

Truckhenge

Many performing arts groups being special people and nice audiences to the stages of Topeka; esp., Topeka Civic Theatre, Topeka Jazz Concert Series, Topeka Festival Singers, Topeka Symphony; also our Public Library is Fantastic.

Taco Als

The rose garden

The amount of parks and trails we have throughout the city

Blind Tiger

NOTO, Parks Trails, Farmers Market, 6th Street in East Topeka!

Betty Phillips Park

The business my grandmother started in 1942 and continues today Dorothy Thomas School of Dance and Theatre Arts, The oldest bar in town Brass Rail Tavern, WU, Cider Days, Festival of Trees, Bath House Players,

Outdoor experiences

NOTO is awesome but I do think it is a secret.

Mulvane Art Museum/ArtLab/Rita Blitt Gallery;

Shunga Trail	cake and More	house
Sabatini Gallery, Mulvane Art Museum, Brown v. Board, hiking trails, locally owned restaurants	zoo	Every Plaza and Happy Basset
Tacos El Sol mexican restaurant has awesome guacamole and tamales!	Brew Bank and Hazel Hill are favorites	prize package
Old Prairie 'Town and Ward Meade Gardens	Bradley's/Lonnie's BBQ	Washburn University, Brew Bank, Luis' Place, 20/30 Gala, the Library
Speak easy poetry.	Well if I told you then they wouldn't be a secret anymore would they? :) The Barrel House has some great events	World Cup Espresso Cafe
Saigon Restaurant, Studio 62, Ward Meade	The many gardens at Lake Shawnee, great bike trails, gov. trails,	Fiesta, small business restaurants, Brown v Board, German Fest
Art of Murder, Blackbird Espresso Bar, Happy Basset, Tap That	Los Mandiles Rojas, Ward-Meade park	The supportive community
A ton of local restaurants, B&B Theaters, several hiking trails	TSCP Library is pretty wonderful	Some of the local restaurants are awesome.
Small locally owned restaurants, murals	NOTO, Capitol building	Lots of trails to walk/hike. Water fitness classes.
Evel Knievel Museum	Happy Basset; Shana Cakes; Every Plaza; Illif Commons; Ted Ensley Gardens; Adventure Cove	You can get anywhere in town on back roads.
There are so many amazing authentic Mexican restaurants. Not Tex-Mex, but authentic Mexican.	The highways leaving town	there is a lot of good Chinees / Mexican / BBQ / Greasy Spoons in topeka
City parks	Lonnie Q's Blackbird Cafe	Gardens at Lake Shawnee
Landon Nature Trail, Prairie Glass, Kansas Museum of History, Trombonopolis,	Best burgers in Topeka-Prize Package	I don't know any? Maybe Herman's
Nothing	Antique shops in the NOTO district	All the neighborhood parks, from the small ones to Gage Park
Local theatres (Topeka civic Theatre, Helen Hocker, Washburn University, etc); Sunflower Music Festival; Tiffany windows at First Pres; Aaron Douglas Art Fair; NOTO's arts activities	The number of breweries and wineries	KS National Guard Museum, Combat Air Museum
Zoo	Blackbird coffee	NOTO
The White Linen, walking downtown on the weekends	Josey Bakery/Topeka Zoo & all of Gage Park	The garden spaces
Jazz festival downtown, zoo Christmas lights	Vinewood, I wont share others las I want to keep them the way they are	Local restaurants, WU sports, parks, cultural events (India Fest, Mexican Fiesta, etc)
Silent Film Festival	Speck's Giant Speck Burger, driving around the lake with the family, Spangles ice cream days with the family	Until a year ago, I would have said Uncle Bo's; now it's young adults trying to make Topeka better--having confidence that they can do this by bringing new energy to downtown and NOTO, starting new businesses, raising their families here.
Jong's Thai Kitchen seems like such a little secret (though I think that's changing). Nevertheless, the building it's located in is very iconic too. It makes Topeka actually look like a city.	Used to be Row House :(, Brew Bank, Brass Rail, Blind Tiger, FFAW, Great Overland Station,	Architecture elements, ie, brass mailbox in Hotel Kansan, Tin Sunflowers in the alleys, the old freight elevator in the Gizmo/Thacher Building.
Gamer's HQ & Gatekeeper hobbies	The old alleys in down town Topeka are great for photoshoots	Topeka Art Guild
Shops on SW Huntoon and SW Oakley	Happiness comes from leaving it	Topeka Civic Theatre, Downtown's comeback,
Woman's Club of Topeka, Shawnee County Historical Society, Combat Air Museum	Govenor's Mansion Trails	Cost of living is low, affordable housing, a great Arts community
Truckhenge, Burnett's Mound	Food, Paisanos, Cooks American Grill, El Centenario, \ entertainment, Shawnee Choral Society, Topeka Symphony, community theaters	the view from Skyline Park atop Burnett's Mound, the hill walking at Grant Bradbury Preserve, chai lattes and fresh-baked peanut butter cookies at Judée's Coffee Shop (inside God's Storehouse thrift store); last December's lighted walk on Washburn U's campus, complete with fireplace window on Morgan Hall's west side; gorgeous murals, including new ones in NOTO (let's publish a mural map!)
G's Cheesecake	Lonnie Q's is pretty good	
The neighborhood parks	Charles Sheldon museum, NOTO, Governors Mansion trails	
Topeka Gage Park and the Carousel and the Gage park mini Train	The trails	
ethnic festivals	Im not telling my "best kept secrets"	
NOTO, Bobo's, Landon Nature Trail, G's Cheese-	Lots of small hole in the wall places to eat	
	Endsley Gardens at Lake Shawnee, Potwin Place Historic District, Ward Meade, Historic Ritchie	

G's Custard.

Kay's Garden

The Art Walk

Onyx Cafe, Shana Cakes, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, NOTO, Downtown Topeka

Downtown area (Evergy Park)

Blind Tiger, museums, arts, coffee

Aaron Douglas Art Fair

OLG fiesta, Ballet folclórico, renovated State-house, Topeka Zoo the perfect size for families with small children, Downtown topeka and Noto, Germanfest, Living the Dream weeks events,

Library

Willow Park

Washburn Tech, Hazel Hill Chocolate

the people

food festivals (indiafest, germanfest etc.), cool spots: owls nest, the toy store, amused, gate-keeper, boobie trap

alleys downtown - I think they would make great event, art, and music spaces

lonnie q's, soulfire food, Owls nest, giving tree

Live On Stage Concert Assn., private restaurants (not national chains),

Mexican food! Parks and trails!

Porubskys in Little Russia.

trails, small workspaces

Talented artists in the movement and musical areas staying home bound.

Those who live in the Topeka area know about the biggies: First Fridays, Murals, Mexian Fiesta, NOTO, Nutcracker, TCT, etc., but it would be beneficial to increast regional promotion/awareness. And, regarding perspective, Topekans might have more respect for the local arts if they are made aware that people from other areas make it a point to come here for those arts. Ex. There are dancers from K.C. that come to take part in Topeka's Nutcracker because they like it "best," and there are families from central Kansas that make it their traveling holiday tradition. I'm sure our local arts all have such examples.

Noto

Off the beaten path restaurants (ie Porubsky's), the public library, TCT

Downtown Topeka; Cyrus Hotel; Iron Rail; church festivals like the Fiesta/Germanfest/HolySmokinJamboree/RomeSweetHome; revitalization of 29th & Wanamaker area; Lake Shawnee; Governor's Mansion trails; Gage Park/Zoo

The virtual jump and "behind the scenes tour" at Evel Knievel Museum, climbing the Capitol dome.

On Stage Live

Topeka Civic Theater, Washburn University Theater, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library and its Sabatini Gallery, the Mulvane Art Museum and its Art Lab, the Kansas Museum of History, the Combat Air Museum, The Children's Discovery Center, NOTO, the many parks, Lake Shawnee, Sunflower Music Festival, KTWU Channel 11, Round Table Bookstore, our wonderful murals, and certainly, ARTSCONNECT!!

Ward Meade Park--Botanical Gardens

NOTO Arts District

Washburn University fine arts events and NOTO

Amazing restaurants - Jong's, Tacos El Sol

Cultural festivals (Germanfest, Fiesta, etc), murals all over town, Los Mandiles Rojas, Tulips at a twilight, karaoke at the Boobie Trap, Topeka Civic theater, cocktails at the Wheel Barrel, shows at the Brass Rail, Brown V Board

The Marlo cuevas- balandran activity center

Parks with walking trails and things to do.

Local restaurant

Certain parks

Undecided

Noto

Thrift Stores, especially God's Storehouse

Richie House on Madison St. & Richie Cemetery on S.W. 27th ---Their combined history !! WOW !!!

Echo cliff, noto, locally owned asian restaurants, illif commons

Tree canopy over some older neighborhoods example Macvicar north of 17th st

None

Our local talent. Our places and events are covered, but not enough attention is given to the individual musicians, artists and poets that make these events successful.

TSCPL

Cultural festivals (Fiesta Mexicana, Irish Fest, Juneteenth, etc.)

Trying to find these

The Arts District

Library, zoo, Ted ensley gardens, north community center, museum and their hiking trails

Two or maybe three restaurants that are acceptable to eat at

The gardens in and around Topeka

Topeka zoo , biking and hiking trails

Sunflower Music Festival

Sunflower Music Festival, The KS Book Festival

non-franchise businesses

Gage park, Washburn Theatre, Koi pond at WU, Mulvane art museum and art lab.

Governor mansion trails

Great local ethnic restaurants and breweries.

The zoo

Mulvane/Blitt, art galleries, art classes

Billard Airport Cafe

Wheel barrel, AJs Pizzaria,

The Brown VS Board of Education Museum, Mulvane Art Museum, and The White Linen

NOTO Arts District

Great little coffee shop, Steam Engine

Childrens Discovery Center

TCTA, TPAC, BALLET MIDWEST, GAGE PARK

Due to social media, lots of smaller non-chain businesses are no longer secrets which is great! I would say the fact we have rural and metro places so close together and blended with reasonable crowds at events!

Breweries

People, the arts community, and many aspects of Washburn University

?

Grounds of Washburn University

The Ritchie House

Slow pace living

Josies baking co. and blackbird cafe

NOTO

Local Theater

No secrets.	?	Empty buildings/spaces downtown and area along the Kansas River
Holiday Happenings at Ward Meade Park	The Kansas River and it's waterfront.	NOTO Arts District, the Zoo, the art space at the Mulvane.
Lake Shawnee, Zoo	The abandoned buildings in our downtown area. There are so many of them. Why not make them into affordable housing?	West Ridge Mall,
Heavenly Creations my quiet time and self-care with Lenora Williams. I get support, beautified and a word of encouragement. Anytime I have with youth is always awesome for me.	visiting the Capitol and History Museum; Forbes Field; Shawnee Lake	Old Prairie Town, the Great Overland Station, and the Kansas River
Gage Park and all the other wonderful public "green spaces." All the local restaurants and shops. The several Farmers' Markets. Craft fairs. The library. Art museums. Other museums. The Fairgrounds. I could list hundreds!	Focus on NOTO, DT Topeka, and around the Statehouse.	South side and highland park area.
Nothing	empty warehouses and vacant large buildings, alleyways, and rooftops, grassy areas.	Jayhawk Theatre
Small restaurants like The Wheel Barrel, Los Mandiles Rojos	hiking trails, green space	Downtown still has so many empty spaces, I would love to see financial support for small businesses, entrepreneurs, maybe even kids to rent out those spaces and try things like pop up businesses, etc. Wouldn't have to be permanent. Allow businesses to do window displays for the holidays so it doesn't look so empty, dirty and kinda sad. Also TPAC is underutilized.
East Topeka local businesses	Riverfront - plenty of space for recreation, entertainment, etc. Westridge Mall where it's time to reinvent it before it turns into another Whitelakes	Brown v. Board Historic Site
Topeka Civic Theatre	Again. Not sure right now.	I see a lot of neighborhood parks with play-ground equipment, but rarely see children using them.
Mom and pop restaurants	museum	Bike Lanes
Lake shawnee	Local trails, parks and NOTO. Plus I think any building with a large blank wall is underused if there is not a big mural on it.	White Lakes, downtown (getting better), Forbes Field and Heartland Park, Forest Park
neighborhood bars and gathering spaces, under the viaduct for community festivals and the riverfront as it sits	Lakes and parks	Empty buildings
The pennant, the burger stand	501 School Buildings	So many "big box" buildings that could be transformed into some wonderful permanent cultural spaces - both for the performing and visual arts - rather than being a continual blight on the community.
Shunga Trail; the art in the old, downtown churches esp. St. Joseph;s, First Presbyterian and Grace Cathedral	Brown v Board	Downtown including tpac
Cooks	Central topeka, East topeka and community parks events	East Topeka development
the zoo from Terry glenn	Truckhenge	Downtown on the weekends
TPAC	In general, our green park space seem to be underused; so much more could be programmed in all of these spaces;	Lake Shawnee, shunga trail, gage park, Burnett's Mound, winter solstice at cedar crest
Too many to count! Lots of people, places, stories, experiences	Gage park	nothing comes to mind
	Downtown	The area between downtown hub and the river appears deserted and on the opposite end, Topeka Avenue going toward the airport is deserted. Topeka and Kansas Avenues should be the central areas-not Wannamaker.
	Downtown	Community center at baseball diamond in Montara
What places/spaces do you believe are underused?	County Parks, Menninger Campus, White Lakes Mall,	Downtown shopping district
Planetarium/observatory at WU	Oakland/East Topeka	Not sure
?	Betty Phillips Park	KCDC
The Downtown Plaza	Gage Park Amphitheatre!!! It needs a facelift. But I had my dance recital there 2 weeks ago and it was soooo awesome. And the families loved the intimate and outdoor space. As we all visit Gage Park we tend to forget about the ampitheatre.	
NOTO, and empty buildings downtown	downtown	
Some small neighborhoods are under-utilized; places in East Topeka; places in SE Topeka.	TPAC has potential. Riverfront has more potential and I believe they have plans in the works.	
parks		
None		
Gage center, The mall,		

I think in general, there is way too much commercial property in Topeka. So it tends to just sit empty and endlessly.

Neighborhood parks

The Kansas River, Need a Trail that runs the Dyke parks

Kansas History Museum. Had the opportunity, years ago, to watch a live band out there and it was great!

KS Blvd

The empty buildings downtown

The River

Downtown still has a lot to be developed but I love the direction it is going. The spaces around the capitol buildings especially - what a great backdrop for events and businesses!

Shunga trail; Lake Shawnee; Library

Gage park amphitheater

WOW, tough to say, esp trying to remember pre-pandemic. Likely Shunga Trail and connecting parks, and Rail Trails. Kaw Riverside.

Downtown

Kansas river for kayaking, canoeing, and organized recreational activities.

Carroll Chapel, at Washburn esp for musical events

Shawnee Lake

Population growth has been sorely lacking for half a century

Area around and north of highway 24.

The downtown area

The downtown area

Downtown and Washburn/College Hill area

Every Plaza

Topeka Zoo & Gage Park/Burnets Mound

TPAC, Gage Park amphitheater, Downtown but getting better

Downtown and the parks

NOTO, Downtown, underutilized buildings at 29th and Wanamaker

White Lakes and West Ridge Malls

Anything highlighting the Underground Railroad, if there are any. I've heard stories of KS avenue buildings being places that were used for the

Underground. Also more of the train history.

Shawnee County Department of Corrections

NOTO/Downtown

Any vacant business property.

The Topeka Museums don't get enough recognition

NOTO!!!!!!

any place but wanamaker

Town down area

Historic Ritchie house, Historic sites, the Malls

Stormont Vail Events Center

expocenter, heartland park

Mulvane Art Museum, 45th street Grill, Top of the Tower/Townsite 16,

White Lakes Mall, West Ridge Mall, most of the buildings along Kansas Ave, the former Meningers building.

Parks, old school buildings could be used by neighborhoods for a variety of groups

Performing venues when it comes to a variety of entertainment, especially the larger options like TPAC or Stormont Events Center. The closest I get for the majority of acts I follow will be in Lawrence, and I would much rather spend my money here where I live.

All parks, roadway rights of way, parking lots

Parks at various times.

how about all of the abandoned properties in topeka

Gage park

Downtown

Downtown Topeka, Gage Park

Community parks across the city

out by white lakes

NOTO, we need this to build

All public parks

Not sure

Schools, churches, community centers.

Every stage and dance floor in old buildings or houses! Cafeterias in all the buildings downtown. The POST OFFICE.

Topeka Art Guild, High School musicals

OH M gosh - White Lakes Mall. It's an eyesore of

embarrassing proportions but could be turned into something fantastic.

parks, Downtown, NOTO, riverfront

Grant Cushinberry park for festivals (music, youth culture, etc.); our city's outdoor neighborhood swimming pools

Not sure.

Old Prairie Town

The local parks.

Downtown Topeka has so much potential and is growing every day

East side

Jayhawk theatre

Ag Hall needs an uplift and capability of being split into two spaces sometimes, TPAC prices are too high for lower income, 1000 to 2000 person event venues.

Warehouse districts

the galaries

noto, north topeka, overland train station, river front, hiking trails

Our riverfront but namely the kansas ave bridge is a link between NOTO, riverfront, and Downtown. I couldn't think of a less iconic public facility intersecting a place of highest visual potential.

under bridge/overpass- neighborhood fencing- bridges- sides of buildings in alleyways

Cedar Crest, Kansas History Museum

Small neighborhood parks or green spaces

over top of buildings, need to move workspaces and living spaces up and make more condensed spots to visit on street levels

Several empty buildings all over the city could open for artist studios and youth programming

White Lakes (can't we do something cool and unifying with it?), Gage Park (I've heard people from some cultures say they won't go further west and others that won't go further east), also Every Plaza became available during the pandemic, so many people don't yet think of it as a location for arts engagement.

Empty buildings

Many parks

Downtown Topeka!!! Gotta get more events going on the weekends downtown! And Lake Shawnee and the Capital grounds.

Definitely Evel Knievel Museum, Great Overland Station and our parks.

?

Sumner School needs to be purchased back from the entity that bought it and is now allowing it to fall into disrepair. In addition, the downtown post office needs to be acquired somehow. Both of these are historically important in the Brown v. Board case. Topeka should realize it was/is the flashpoint for that history-changing moment.

Unsure

Down town Topeka (Kansas Ave)

Washburn University as a community space

Gage Park

TPAC, downtown buildings unused

Oakland, East Topeka

?

Some neighborhood parks

The riverfront

Southeast topeka

Downtown Vacant Spaces

The Statehouse & Capitol grounds; Amphitheatre at Gage Park; Hummer Sports Park & football field & pool, Heartland Park.

Downtown

Are north of expo centers many vacant lots , degraded housing, area south east of water tower to 17th & Adams st, o downtown post office (good site for Topeka Art & History Museum,), Sumner School, old warehouse south of KS river east it Topeka Blvd, Menninger Tower building, Central Park area, east 6 st,,

Parks on the west side of town

Our smaller neighborhood parks and the plethora of vacant buildings. Many are in areas known for crime. More events could reduce same.

TSCPL & outdoor spaces

Gage Park band shell

Not sure

there are multiple empty buildings that are waiting for positive changes.

I still feel they should create a arts and eating and recreation classy area along the river with cool lighting, fountain shows, music etc but at this point I feel it would have to be further out of

town possibly in the county near town because it doesn't appear there are safe and clean areas to handle such a place north or south of the river east of topeka blvd in town. Ideally near north to south is ave downtown and NOTO arts district would have been a great river walk area but I don't see it being remotely possible at this point. Lake Shawnee might be able to handle more such as a musical lighted fountain area but it has no place for variety of eateries along the lake. Topeka also lacks quality hang outs and activities for teens through 30 year olds to meet mingle socialize and have fun. Topeka is great for families with young children if living in the suburbs. They need to dedicate more money and resources into law enforcement and clean up a few areas that should be safer

All of them. The entire town shutters at 8 PM.

Downtown and North Topeka Art's District

Don't know

Downtown, Jayhawk Theater

Lake Shawnee

vacant building sites

WU theatre and Mulvane art museum and lab.

Empty buildings downtown

Downtown, NOTO, Jayhawk Theater.

Tpac

most art spaces, historical

Washburn Univ

West Ridge Mall

Abandoned buildings/ malls

River Front and Downtown

Gage Park, Sabatini Gallery

Community centers

SV Events Center, although I hate the name

Used to say NOTO and Downtown but working together that is rapidly changing for all! Riverfront project will be an amazing asset

Downtown south of the river

The trails and Noto

Downtown

Neighborhood parks

The Expo Center

NA

Our downtown district and white lakes mall

NOTO

Gage Park band shell, TPAC

East Topeka

Everg Plaza, Hummer, West Ridge Mall and our community parks

I don't know.

The newly remodeled downtown Topeka for the fourth time.

The Topeka Performing Arts Center - but it is BADLY in need of refurbishment. TPAC needs to start bringing in quality acts.

I think there is too much emphasis on building out on the fringes instead of infill in already vibrant neighborhoods all over

Local parks.

White Lakes Mall

Library

the remaining neighborhood grocery store buildings that could be reinvigorated

The statehouse and grounds, TPAC, Topeka High auditorium, Kansas Riverfront, trails, concerts, etc., at WU that are free. Most facilities in this town are superb but lack programming money to make them really sing, so they are maintained and the doors are locked.

Mall

The mayor from Terry glennthe

Downtown buildings

Too many to count, again - historic sites, especially

For many reasons, this is a natural time for change to happen. Where do you see new opportunities for community development that weren't possible before? What is one thing Topeka can and should invest itself in changing?

Topeka seems ready for change. We should invest in support for the arts through a "percent for the arts" kind of program.

Downtown

NOTO, Downtown, Topeka Blvd

to start really engaging young folks, orgs like GTP and businesses to embrace GREEN. To understand climate change is HERE and how to use art, education, businesses to turn the tide of looking away and MEET this challenge for future generations. ALSO the racial divide. Discussion is mostly topical and does not address the need to deal with white fragility and real change in our schools.

Along the riverfront, some of the small neighborhoods mentioned in the previous question.

braking out of clan mentality

Listening to young people

A bar and club district like aggieville, white lakes mall building,

So much blight--old buildings, horrible parking lots, and bad roads need to be dealt with--not bandaged, but truly fixed with a long-term vision.

Continue to develop the River - the new weir park and water plant bypass is a good start. Promote downtown and NOTO. Both have physical connections with the River which should be expanded and promoted.

Affordable housing. If people can live here, they will work and play here. We need to make sure people have access to housing, food, transportation and good paying jobs.

Racial and gender equality. The legislature.

Clean up, add amenities, and open Burnett's Mound again.

Quality of life facilities like the historic Jayhawk Theatre.

artwork tied to economic development - if a building goes up so should be the addition of art and developing the Riverfront

infrastructure: better roads, water

We need to make rebuildign residential areas of

the city core cool.

Places fir poets to gather and read their poetry to each other.

Downtown nightlife

Topeka needs to change its attuite. The people need to be more supportive of small businesses and they need to change this idea that "there is nothing to do in Topeka". Apparently they are still hiding under a rock because there is a TON of stuff to do and a TON of events to attend.

There are always opportunities to help the under served in our community and I feel we can invest in that.

High real estate and property tax

more stores downtown to shop at -- if Emporia can, so should Topeka

Noto, east topeka, parks and recreation

Topeka is doing just fine keep nit up

We are still a space with silos of neighborhoods that don't interact very well (sometimes at all) across diverse neighborhoods. The investment I would make would be in developing a plan to better integrate these neighborhoods with events that would attract the diversity that already exists and develop language and messages that would effectively introduce these groups to one another.

Low income housing

Expanding attractions

Making investments and improvements on the East side of town

Kansas Avenue and surrounding streets. It would be awesome to walk, shop, and eat or have enough to do all day.

Small affordable housing, artist housing,

Oakland! It's culture should spread and also investing in housing for the community is much needed.

Hi-Crest, There is a lot of development going on on the SE side. If the city partnered with the residents something really beautiful could take place where one of the historically most impoverished areas could become a highlight for the state.

Stop tearing down old beautiful buildings for parking lots! We need more outdoor things for kids/families. NOTO and Lake Shawnee, Everyg an Topeka Zoo are doing better with that

internet access for all

Adopt or finalize master plan recently presented and create the 3, 5 and 10 year plan to complete it.

Downtown & riverfront development

Better coordination of street repairs. I see the same areas being worked on over and over. Then the sidewalks. Then the street again. Just fix it right one time. Plow the snowy streets in the winter. There is no reason Topeka can't do this.

Make the plans for the Riverfront Development that have been in the works for some time actually happen.

River front development

Stop investing in downtown. People that arent rich have next to no interest. Give the people who are actual life blood the money and watch what real builders can do

Topeka should reinvest in the arts. We are a growing city and need to reflect our community artistically.

As someone who has tried to start a small business one of the biggest hurdles is space to try out your ideas. It's a prohibitive start up cost so finding ways to enable entrepreneurs to try their ideas would be cool. Also continuing to add more youth and diversity to leadership. There are so many awesome family-friendly events and places around Topeka but for the 20's-40's no kids crowd it is harder to find things to do (especially for people that are new in town and don't have friends yet)

River walk entertainment

I think we need to see subsidized apartments for young adults moving to Topeka for employment. Some Topeka businesses spend so much time and money recruiting employees away from other Topeka organizations, and we need to direct that energy toward drawing employees to Topeka.

Topeka needs to reduce property crime and make people feel safe. In addition, the city lacks beauty. Fix the potholes, beautify the medians, have the city take pride in how public spaces look.

River revitalization

investing in more youth soccer infrastructure to pull some of the enormous league play market away from KC and use that effort to find and

develop more players who can't afford to participate under the current structure.

Many things

More governmental financial support of performing arts. Businesses are not going to come here without proof of a good quality of life available for its workers.

Must revitalize downtown with activities that bring crowds downtown after dark

East Topeka development

Definitely around the downtown area, it could have some more art inspiration and night life going on especially on the weekend maybe some more live music, or art festivals/shows

New park on the west side of town

As new venues are developed (like the Riverfront project), parking should be kept in mind in order to allow older Topekans to participate as fully as possible.

Right now, Topeka has a reputation as being dirty/unkept. While arts and culture are great, people will avoid it if the area is not clean. Our city needs to do more to regulate downtown upkeep, such as strictly enforcing nuisance ordinances and patrolling litter and pet waste.

Area around 37th & Topeka area is embarrassingly rundown

A vibrant and more expansive downtown district.

Passenger air transportation. A passenger airport will allow Topeka to become a more thriving city

The eyessore of the old abandoned hotel you see on I -70 downtown

Reparations. If you want the city to change. Make it easier for Black and Indigenous citizens to not only own homes but to keep up with its care. Attend college for free or nominal fees at Washburn University. Provide fellowships for artists by providing housing, utilities, and stipends so they can just create. Help citizens reduce debt and watch the city spring forth would new life.

Attitude

The crime problem. Blame the Gangs and the liberal thinkers not the police.

refresh the east side especially Highland Crest, Highland Park and Oakland

Much less commercial space and much more community spaces!

riverfront

Downtown. And we need someplace to dance.

The image of East Topeka

The area around Washburn University is sad. What a beautiful campus but the areas surrounding it are in sore need of upgrades. More restaurants/bars/coffee shop. The dilapidated houses could use a fixer upper! So many people walk and run around the campus, it'd be great to see this area poured into by our city if possible.

Riverfront development

add more sidewalks for pedestrian safety and accessibility

Improve opportunities for East side. CRAZY building yet another pool/park on Westside! Need yearround ice rink.

Continue re-inventing and enhancing the downtown area. Bring in more businesses and restaurants. Railroad history.

NOTO has lots of potential. Local music ensemble need development and support

Having more things for kids; Ice Skating Rink, Dave & Busters, more to do on the south east side of town.

Perhaps we stop relying on a group of part-time amateurs to govern us. They haven't really proven useful by this point. The best predictor of future behavior are past acts. We can't keep letting them steer this ship.

Would love to see clean up and renovation radiate from the center of town.

There definitely have been some changes for the better downtown, but there are still several ways to improve. One is I-70 through downtown Topeka. The ramps on to the highway are extremely dangerous. There are also several buildings downtown that are not being put to use, like the Post Office, or the Docking building.

Downtown, Riverfront, I-70 corridor in general Oakland

East Topeka, I think there is great opportunity around 29th and California area and S Topeka Blvd area.

Find a way to finish off development in 600-900 blk. Kansas quicker, Rail system to K.C. for sporting and concerts. AMTRAK should be able to find a way to run on Chiefs Sundays, then shuttle to arrowhead or to concerts and shuttle to Sprint.

I think that Topeka would benefit by offering more family-oriented businesses and events.

More casual nightlife for younger crowds, more family friendly festivals, bringing in outside entertainment outside of the stampede

Addressing the homeless and drug problems, invest in the Topeka Shelter

Being culturally aware. Celebrating the moments of greatness in the Bleeding Kansas history, the Exodus, as well as owning the mistakes made.

Stop wasting money and invest in infrastructure.

Downtown district develops into round-the-clock entertainment, art, and eateries/nightlife

This city needs to change its mindset from whatever it is that has never worked to being a premiere city in Kansas. As the capital city we should strive to present ourselves as a place other cities want to emulate. Even if it means we have to spend more money. Implement policies to be the best, instill that attitude, then offer training opportunities for other city officials to attend to help offset costs to maintain that level of excellence.

the aging infrastructure

Redeveloping, improving, re-imagining south Topeka BLVD 29th-45th. Heartland Park area with the Stampede provides a great business opportunity.

the surrounding area of NOTO. NOTO is great but there is blight and strife all around it.

Any place but wanamaker

Electric vehicle support and downtown culture night life

Bring in more businesses and entertainment.

City Council needs to make more deals with employers to invest in change.

The White Lakes Mall and Westridge Mall are both opportunities.

Topeka has often stifled itself and resisted change and growth. There is very little for younger people to do in Topeka. With plenty of TLC the old Meningers Clock Tower could be restored, turned into a psychiatric museum, a ghost hunting attraction, or both. Kansas Avenue could be developed into a thriving business district with small, locally owned shops, bars, and restaurants. 501 School District is a joke and could use lots of help.

It's attitude. Quit focusing on what we don't have. Build on what we do have. Get more participation from the community that involves various perspectives. What would impact YOU the most?

Highlighting the many different experiences in Topeka rather than have everyone bet on the white middle-class family experience.

Every place/space in town should be a person scale - not a building scale or a vehicle scale. Every space should be meant to be experienced by humans.

The increase of affordable housing to get more people in our community.

Develop riverfront!

Climate Change and renewable energies. Topeka had a master plan and no where in it did it mention using renewable energies. They built Evergy Plaza, but failed to outlaw plastic straws and bags, which should be outlawed city wide. They have no vision. They could reinvent this town if they would just think outside the box. From solar roadways, to outdoor concert venues (much larger than downtown), to using wind and solar in every city building and office. They have given all this money to JEDO, who has done absolutely nothing to show for it. They should invest that money in much different, better ways.

the 1/2 cent sales tax seemed to only serve Wanamaker and west of there. Nothing was done in Highland Park where there is still no curbs, sidewalks, gutters and streets that are not wide enough for 2 cars to pass one another

Understanding the value of visitors

Invest in local businesses and create incentives for them

Increasing the walkability/bike-ability of the city, adding recreation trails, improving safety of roads for pedestrians, cyclists

Downtown Kansas Avenue

more locally owned restaurants

We need a NOTO Theatre. Jayhawk is okay, but we need a space to have plays and show independent and classic films. My dream!

More programming available for older adults

Invest in downtown merchants

We have to pull more people in from outlying cities. The labor market is short. Very short everywhere. There's a fantastic Fire Museum in

Memphis that would be great here at the Post Office, or civil servant museum...Police, EMTs. etc. The Emergency Services Showcase was always a hit and they are stopping. There's even a little money there if someone would show an interest in keeping it.

political climate

Downtown. There are too many owners letting their buildings sit and mold. They should either develop them or sell them. Get out of the way of people who want to make all of Downtown spectacular.

Riverfront

Add a library branch to Topeka's east side, then later another library branch on south Wanamaker Rd near WaRu High School

Racial equality and LGBTQ awareness and inclusion, as well as expression.

Get Downtown viable and let NOTO soar

Fixing the potholes, repurpose those empty office spaces downtown, bring more culture to Topeka.

The mall should be converted into a multi-use space rather than becoming an albatross of wasted space.

Bring in more music/entertainment opportunities and develop our riverfront.

Music

More culturally diverse activities

working on the entrance to the city from the east. East Side needs to be improved. Lots of traffic comes in from KC and Lawrence and that needs to be cleaned up and made more attractive to people coming and going.

Diversity

More extensive use of Evergy Plaza

A single, centralized entertainment district. A la Lincoln's Haymarket, Omaha's Old Market.

downtown Topeka

river front development, homeless camps everywhere, relocate the rescue mission (poorly ran, questionable use of resources), beautification! more trees and public art (murals, sculpture,), noto needs greenery and more lights, more visible ways of showcasing what Topeka has: better PR

housing Downtown; affordable housing

(non-single-family housing types) in general stop putting energy into hate- put energy into learning about each other

The schools for sure

reinvention, in work and space. Community investment by the people to create change, sustain change, and to make change more stable.

East side and North side community development, Stop going west

There seems to be a focus on funding arts that show cultural differences in Topeka, this is interesting and valuable, but it ultimately promotes separation. Why don't we promote/fund inclusion arts that show the talented people of many cultures, races - even disabilities, (many of which aren't visible)? Also, places across the nation offered arts via technology- links that worked only certain times, etc. Help our local arts learn to use technology to build their audience; maybe a flat fee to a retirement community that can show it in a gathering space at a set time? Or links that people in western Kansas or across the country can use over a few days? Teach local arts how these can be "tickets sold," and scrambled so the receiver can't record it. This can become a new version of "tourism," can a Topeka Arts package offer three performances- theater, symphony, and dance? The location could show them each at a different time.

Senior communities for socializing

Infrastructure and aesthetics of main entry points from the interstate into town. Between road closures and neglected areas of town, it's a little embarrassing to show off central T sites like WU and Gage Park

NOTO and Downtown Topeka are huge opportunities, along with the coming Riverfront development. We also really need to clean up the old White Lakes Mall area/south Topeka Blvd. Topeka is a great place to work and live - we need to be proud!

I love that our community pride has elevated substantially and that Topeka is ready (I think/hope) to take things to the next level. This needs to continue to improve, realizing a bigger picture vision and that Topeka deserves to NOT be three decades behind other communities. It's time to restore the Jayhawk Theatre.

Making effective use of Westridge Mall

As I mentioned, the acquisition of the two prop-

erties. However, in addition, the ARTS should be front and center in any discussions of change and development. When people visit our State Capitol, unless they have a political agenda, they come to see its architecture, murals, sculpture, etc. The ARTS in the place are what give it its powerful symbolism in our government! I see change happening as people spruce businesses and homes and as the city and county are keeping up and enhancing our parks and green spaces. Pride in our city is growing. However, there are a few problems: homelessness (could we build tiny houses?), violence (could we put people to work in the ARTS where they could channel their problems in a positive way?), and finally, could we encourage more education in the ARTS which teaches people to value it as essential and not a luxury?

Invest in bike and walking paths, public beauty/landscaping, river access continued

The aggressive use of the visual arts (public sculpture, temporary installation projects). Working with Washburn's art students.

Multicultural fine arts events

Affordable mid-size performing arts venue that allows drinks - Find a way to unify different neighborhoods to work together - Westboro helping Hi-Crest for example

Take care of the City core better, stop the sprawl or make those who sprawl pay more for infrastructure since they cost the rest of us more money. Add a major sports venue/team, and bring in spaces for more dancing

How we include and serve those less fortunate.

Good urban planning to prevent nonunion building.

Cleaning up certain areas of town, revitalize those places by removing debris, weeds, and providing general maintenance

A vibrant riverfront park. When I first moved here from another river-side city, I was shocked that a city the size of topeka, especially being the capital, had no cultural, artistic, park area at the riverfront.

Diversity thinking

More Arts funding and affordable spaces for art studio's.

Renovate homes in high crime areas, especially those close to Capitol, Ward Meade, Topeka High, Brown V. Board, East Topeka, Hi-Crest.

Topeka Blvd. from 2nd. to 53rd. Open more good & affordable day cares,

So many vacant/dilapidated buildings in South Topeka need to be demolished. College hill and downtown need more local business that are open late. More affordable access to mental health and drug treatment programs.

Get rid of the viaduct turn that reach of I-70 into an on grade business route. People that wish to not stop in Topeka they can drive 2 extra miles on the south bypass

Stop copying off of other towns and find a niche of our own

Eliminate food deserts. Develop creative cottage industries through education. By education, teaching low income people creative skills and how to market them both locally and online. Catch up with the rest of the world in tech.

Making sure everyone has opportunities

More diversity in entertainment

Not sure

I diefnatly believe Topeka can bill itself as a destination. In addition to being artist we alos own a vintage store focusing on the unusual. I have a background in producing Art Shows and booking music. Coming from the Austin area I had a variety to choose from that enhance my skills.

Safe appealing young adult attractions. Also overall safer and less crime and drug issues which may include better mental health attention

Opening up past 8pm, connect downtown to NOTO.

Cleaning up the blight of abandoned buildings the neighborhoods which will reduce crime as well.

Bringing in quality shops so we don't have to go to Kansas City to shop

Getting rid of the Phelps brand

Downtown Topeka is starting to thrive.

work schedule friendly events

Invest in Washburn University and include the community at WU.

Music venues and bringing big names to town

Downtown and NOTO revitalization needs to continue. Fine arts need to better supported.

Improve ada access for Tpac

mindset = create new experiences (small and large)

Stop thinking we can make downtown more like Mass Street in Lawrence and put an end to the Riverwalk plans.

Self image

More family friendly affordable activities, more things to go and do other than shopping

Performing Arts...we have beautiful venues but no reputation for high quality talent or productions.

Haven't given this much thought.

Revitalize central topeka

Emphasis on our history as a city in our State

Love the recent business support/entrepreneur development, and new business push occurring. Important to continue. Beefing up crime control would be helpful to attracting new people. Our crime rate over the years has not been attractive.

Affordable Touring Live theatre and music

Reaching out to create my kindness and fun in the community

Restaurants downtown and parking

Dealing with vacant buildings

Downtown

Night life

Improving the downtown district to care for and bring in local businesses

Keep working on downtown

Making Downtown a shopping and entertainment hub for the city

It's important to attract young people, but also important to remember people are aging. More options for semi-independent living, like a place with common kitchen and other areas but separate suites with bath and sitting rooms. I'd move to a place like that with friends. With easier delivery and Uber, etc., it's going to be easier to live at home as you age, but group living might be better socially.

Places for people of all ages to dance

Expand business offerings in East Topeka

Entrepreneurship/ Youth mentorship/ Community Restoration Projects

I don't know how to answer.

Casino where White LakesMall was.

Not sure I have a concrete answer, here. Topeka needs to find a reason to be proud of itself and at the moment it doesn't have much of a reason to be.

River recreation. I think we could become an outdoor recreation attraction that would be uncontested until Colorado or Lake of the Ozarks

Roads

More no cost or small cost activities.

changing city policies to make it easier to have events in "non-traditional" event spaces. Also allowing neighborhoods to hold events with less paperwork if it's off major arterials

1. Clean this place up - mow the common areas, get rid of blight; 2. return to the strong mayor-commissioner form of government and return to accountability; and 3. either annex Sherwood or combine city-county government. We quite frankly have created a city infrastructure we can no longer afford to maintain.3

White lakes needs redeveloped

the i70 Terry glenn

More parks for people to enjoy the outdoors!

Minor league baseball team

Telling its story.. and engaging people in advancing inclusion, equity, opportunity and welcome for all, in all sectors of our community

I am primarily engaged in the following artistic/creative disciplines:

Acting, Painting, Sculpting

Dancing, Film, Painting, Public Art, Music, Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Acting, Dancing, Film, Painting, Public Art, Music, Sculpting, Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing, Other: visual art (painting and sculpting are not the only two visual arts - there are many other media)

Painting

Music

Writing, Other: Drawing

Writing

Painting, Sculpting

Acting, Dancing, Music

Film, Painting, Writing, Other: Zines

Painting, Sculpting, Writing, Other: I have a lot of artistic disciplines.

Painting

Painting, Music, Traditional/cultural crafts

Film, Painting, Music, Sculpting, Other

Acting, Music

Painting, Public Art, Other: Graphic Arts, Photography

Acting, Dancing, Music

Other: Photography & History...Humanities

Other: Photography, museum work

Other: public landscaping/parks

Music, Other: Poetry. Mental health

Acting, Dancing

Music

Other: Directing

Acting, Dancing

Music

Painting, Public Art, Music, Other: Theatre music directing; glass artist

Acting, Film, Sculpting

Writing

Dancing, Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Film

Acting, Writing

Music

Music

Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Music

Music

Writing, Other: photography

Music, Writing, Other: wood working, wood turning, repurposing items.

Writing

Painting, Writing

Writing, Other: Unusual ideas from a different perspective

Acting, Painting, Writing, Other: Sewing, cosplay, mixed media

Film, Writing

Film, Painting, Public Art

Public Art, Music, Traditional/cultural crafts, Other: Creative Food

Painting, Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Acting, Dancing, Painting, Music, Writing

Painting, Music, Writing

Other: Design and photography

Dancing, Painting, Writing, Other

Painting, Public Art, Other

Dancing, Music, Traditional/cultural crafts

Music

Painting, Writing

Writing

Sculpting, Other: Printmaking and Sculpture

Music

Painting, Public Art, Other: Murals, paintings, drawings

Other

Other: Installation Arts

Acting, Painting

Public Art, Other

Painting, Public Art, Traditional/cultural crafts, Writing

Painting, Traditional/cultural crafts, Other: Fiber

Writing

Other: Visual Arts and teaching

Painting, Music, Other: Film photography,

Acting, Music

Music

Painting, Writing

Acting

Painting

Music

Music

Other: Art on furniture. Support venue for artists.

Acting, Public Art, Music, Writing, Other: Community connections that create kindness

Music, Traditional/cultural crafts

Painting, Traditional/cultural crafts

Other: Photography

Writing, Other: Spoken Word

Painting

Acting

Painting, Traditional/cultural crafts

Painting, Other: jewelry making.

Painting, Music, Sculpting, Writing

Please check the box(es) that best describe the field in which you work:

Culinary Arts, Event Management, Film/TV/Media, Graphic Design

Event Management, Film/TV/Media, Performing Arts Production

Venue Management, Other: Property Development

Film/TV/Media, Performing Arts Production, Technology

Other: Writing and publishing

Architecture

Other: local history and culture

Cosmetology

Other: NON Profit Arts Sector

Performing Arts Production

Interior Design

Other: Engineering

Performing Arts Production, Other: Mental health

Film/TV/Media, Graphic Design, Venue Management

Film/TV/Media, Performing Arts Production

Film/TV/Media

Other: Music

Event Management, Film/TV/Media

Architecture, Culinary Arts, Graphic Design, Interior Design

Other: Tarot/Oracle Services

Technology

Other: N/A

Graphic Design, Other: Video and Photography

Other: Classical musician; employed also as church musician

Other: Washburn University

Culinary Arts, Event Management, Venue Management

Venue Management

Other: Advertising, branding, marketing

Landscape Design

Venue Management

Other: tattoo

Film/TV/Media, Graphic Design

Other: I write for Topeka Magazine about food and people in Topeka, and I maintain a Kansas Collection of Books at Mabee Library, Washburn University

Other: Art Education (Washburn University) and studio art production. I'm surprised this wasn't in the choices.

Other: Government

Technology

Other: Mixed Media

Graphic Design

Graphic Design, Other: Fine arts

Other: Art Gallery

Other: Education

Venue Management

Film/TV/Media

Performing Arts Production

Other: Resell

Other: Retail

Performing Arts Production, Other: Education/life coaching / in service training about compassion

Graphic Design

Culinary Arts, Graphic Design

Industrial Design, Technology, Other: Wood working

I work for an arts organization or business that is primarily focused on the following discipline(s):

Visual Arts, Community Arts

Public Art, Community Arts

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Public Art, Commu-

nity Arts

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Public Art, Community Arts

Performing Arts

Visual Arts

Community Arts

Other: Concerts

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Public Art, Community Arts

Performing Arts

Visual Arts

Visual Arts

Performing Arts, Community Arts, Other: Mental health

Performing Arts

Performing Arts

Other: Performing arts

Visual Arts

Visual Arts

Visual Arts

Performing Arts

Other: body art

Performing Arts

Performing Arts

Visual Arts

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Public Art, Community Arts, Other: Washburn's Art Department is engaged in all (and more) of the above...

Other: Several area of the arts - Washburn University

Performing Arts

Visual Arts

Visual Arts, Public Art, Community Arts

Visual Arts

Performing Arts

Performing Arts

Public Art

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Other: Education & expressive arts

Performing Arts

Performing Arts

Other: Art Licensing

The arts/culture community in Topeka is really good at....

Being tenacious.

Connecting with the message of the history of Topeka

promoting white artists or as with Aaron Douglass using white folks to say how important the whole celebration is. Not a good look.

talking about the arts--not so much about doing and supporting the arts. A conservative political view is adopted. If the arts costs, then let those who enjoy them pay for them.

performance art

First Fridays

Collaboration.

Handling big projects like murals

Allowing expression from all cultures

Arts Connect and it's Executive Director have done a good job of highlight the arts in Topeka.

creating new ideas: chocolate festival, music week, NOTO, etc

music, theater, and dance all have well-established organizations and support

Promotion

Not sure

Persevering

I am not very familiar with this

Creating art/culture events

No idea

Producing and maintaining performing arts at current levels...continuing to do the same things; needs to be able to continually elevate and improve existing while creating new experiences for both artists and audiences.

supporting each other

Showing up for events. But it is very hard to get the word out about events.

mmmmm

It is really good but it is not cohesive. It is not communicated will to the community and it is siloed by individual specialties sometimes

working together and self-promotion

Supporting each other. Supporting local artists. Taking pride in our own talent.

First Friday Art Walk is awesome in introducing attractions to new audiences.

First Friday/ NOTO/Historical Sites

Fostering the next generation

encouraging each other

Supporting each other

Encouraging other artists, most everybody realizes they are on the same team no matter what kind of art they do and cheer each other on. Also First Friday Art Walk is great.

thinking creatively and offering a wide array of events.

Putting on events that are selective to certain groups. Try to broaden the exposure and appeal to more people.

Creating

Niche development -- NOTO

Producing and promoting local artists, whether it be music, or artworks

Painting

...knowing one another.

Showcasing local artists

Murals and celebrating differences

offering a wide range of events

promoting NOTO and forgettable crafts. Flea-market quality, ugh.

Creative art.

The Sunflower Festival each summer. Topeka Symphony has made significant strides in last year.

not sure

Festivals

Providing experiences at TPAC

Displaying art. However, it is not so good at sharing events on social media. Here lately with the Every Center, there have been events that were not shared but it is getting better

pushing the city to waste money on things most people don't care about.

Networking with other artists.

NOTO was a decent success, the mural on the PD parking garage was a good project. Beyond that the community is good at secluding itself.

Weekend events like the Apple Festival. I call it

shelterhouse entertainment.

Traditional activities

Installations downtown

Coming together when the call is made

Local events

Trying new things.

First Friday promotion

Working together to do amazing things on a large scale

Grassroots

Showing work

showing visual arts

Providing some entertainment

Celebrating diversity

networking

??? support within and lacking support from outer community

Figuring it out as we go. Tenacity. Keeping on with the vision in spite of many tough challenges. The arts/culture community in Topeka truly cares.

Family entertainment

Creating fabulous productions in the form of performing, visual and literary arts! In addition, we respect the works of our fellow creatives which is a nurturing environment, but it is preaching to the choir.

Creating connections

The very small community of artists are great at moral support and encouragement.

Unsure

providing a variety of opportunities in Topeka

Reaching out to all cultures, styles

Showcasing their talents in certain locations

Providing for an elite group of people

Organizing and friendly people.

Hosting events that involve the public somewhat closed minded & egocentric

Persistence and enthusiasm as the rest of the community slowly wakes up to the benefits of what we do.

Supporting each other

Supporting one another

Still trying to find the community	cultural opportunities; artistic recognition; poli- cies/practices that promote the arts	pay a living wage, ; long term/ongoing projects that focus on the arts
Off to a good start		
Providing spaces for people to show off, build networks, connect with communities and citi- zenry	follow-through on the part of leaders of cultural activities, more patrons who appreciate profes- sional art, more intentional curation	Higher pay. More time to make art. Better services for the handicapped (my husband is disabled). Plow the snow off the streets.
Maximizing investments in the arts	More class opportunities	NA
Volunteering	News outlets focusing more on the arts. Topeka leaders focused more on the arts that includes better funding. Taking the arts to neighborhood associations through collaboration with the NA's and NIAs.	Stages, funding for larger events, city support they same way they do mediocre downtown restaurants
You got me. There's great product, when you hear about it.		more arts focused businesses
Promoting local artists	1. A central group or location where I could get information. 2. A way to find out where my art could be for sale. 3. Clear and repetitive instruc- tions on how to get involved... all in one place... not on Facebook.	A larger space. More arts funding. Marketing help.
Brightening dim areas	An artistic "incubator" space; local government/ community support of all artists; publicity for artists/art	Financial help getting back on our feet after Covid, help connecting with (and financially compensating) venues and musicians, a simple way to get the word out to the public when we have an event coming up (publicity is not streamlined in Topeka and it takes a lot of time to figure out who to contact, who will actually promote the event, etc.)
advertising NOTO, Community theatre and TPAC.	1, 2, & 3 = Support from the political leaders of Topeka. They need to value "quality". We deserve more!	A safer community. People won't go out if they think the community isn't safe.
Supporting each other	time, time, time	Continuous Community support; governmental funding
Being segregated	And art space to create (public studio). Support from cafe or gallery owners for us to hold poetry events.	A public place to go to explore ideas with other likeminded people, art gallery's for more than just artwork, and a larger art museum that not only shows historic art of the area, but also new art or a rotating art gallery, sort of like the mulvane art museum, but larger, something that will bring people from all across the US that are interested in art
Not sure	1. Community support. 2. Community support. 3. Community support.	Research center, community activities, local projects
Visual arts	vision, opportunity and sponsors	Reparations; Fellowships; Communities outside of Topeka/Kansas with a similar focus.
Striving for diversity, and continually educating city leaders about importance of art.	Community support	1) Studio space (to rent by the hour). 2) Creative printing services. 3) Lectures/workshops led by professional artists
First Friday Art Walks	No idea	1. affordable, flexible venues for theatre 2. a cen- tral hub of info for local theatre opportunities 3. support for playwriting/filmmaking contests
Ideas	While TPAC has been a wonderful addition to our community, I think it's time is over and we need a new performing arts center that is not a makeover of an existing building. TPAC currently has significant constraints that need to be fully recognized and funded to be able to fulfill it's role in Topeka. If the Expocentre can be funded by the county to best support their mission, why not also TPAC?	Media typically reports on events that HAP- PENED, so I hear about it AFTER occurrence; needs more pre-event publicity.
Creating new opportunities for creative people to gather	NON Chain Arts Supply Store, Art Consulting Op- portunities, Continuing Education Opportunities w/in a range of expertise	Performance space for small music ensembles that are not church venues.
Wanting more	publicity, it's impossible to do anything without volunteers (love them!), cheaper/ more reason- able venues. To pay \$5-6K for a 2 nights at TPAC is crazy.	not sure
Under construction	Funds at the government level to create public art and focus on humanities, commissions that	More promotion of local music events, continued
?		
Keeping on.		
Nothing		
Na		
Unknown		
I'm not familiar with Topeka's art community to answer this. I've been with one gallery since I moved here.		
Dance		
List the top three things that would improve your ability to create/produce art in Topeka?		
Higher wages, more art buyers, younger audi- ences.		
Help by orgs of the events we are holding. More collaboration. More helping getting the work out of what we do.		
Welcoming and understanding audiences; varied		

use and expansion of outdoor event and indoor event spaces

More information/communication.

community art space

Roads that allow me to get from point A to point B with my vehicle intact

Advertisement and support of other artists.

Places to be inspired, quiet places to produce art, places to people watch.

Topeka is very small town in how it operates. If you don't know someone to have an 'in', you could be out of luck. It needs to be more open and accepting of new people and new ideas.

Private meetings with budget people to express unusual ideas for Topeka

Connection to other artists, public fairs and showings, galleries and exhibition spaces

More money for advertising such events, money to bring events, I wish I could co-own NOTO Theatre

Bigger market, more market places

Finding the art events! Do you watch the TV? Read the paper? Social Media? It's hard to find them! 2. Changing the attitude of the naysayers. 3. A maker space similar to The Repair Shop (British TV), with retail sales space too!

More exposure, more support, more financial backing

1) Tax incentives, 2) city planning staff that say, "how can we help you make this happen?" instead of NO. 3) More patrons of the arts

Art collectives

Encouragement. More show venues. Collaboration

its fine the way it is

affordable workspace, local supply store, more buyers

Larger studio space ... partnerships with musicians and visual arts stage programming

Advertising, being able to serve coffee in White Concert Hall

More financial support in the form of purchases of my work is the topmost thing! In fact, it is the only thing.

Better partnership between cultural institutions, better information about local events and oppor-

tunities in the newspaper,

1-Grants, 2-Access to public display locations and venues. 3-Community awareness.

Art studio space, community funding, mid-size performing arts venue

Financial support, working space, free reign to create

Inclusivity participation from trained artist reliable clearinghouse instead of multiple factions

Affordable or free studios, public art calls and a contemporary art gallery downtown.

Childcare

Good quality art supply store

Promotions that reach out beyond the local community, utilization of empty buildings for studio and gallery space as was done in NOTO, money

Publicity of opportunities

A place to sell my books, share my words, finding others like me

accessibility, advertising. building a brand.

More spaces for use, rent; evening events that extend past 8pm, events across town that connect to one another, rotate weekends in diff parts of city

Sponsorship support from businesses.

More community vocal groups, more promotion of the Topeka chapter of. The American Guild of Organists

allow everyone to partake that has has something they would like to offer

Recognition of WU Theatre, more collaboration with community theatre, more diverse auditions. WU want more BIPOC for WU productions.

More reasonably priced gallery and indoor vendor spaces

Groups need to work together

I don't know

Increasing our visibility as a destination city for travelers.

Support for connecting with community via workshops, In-service training and individual support to facilitate more individuals and organizations who use compassionate communication and consensus as their mode of working together! yes

Centralized locations, available hours

More open spaces for public studios, better advertising for art classes and groups, better inclusion to first Fridays for other business in Topeka

A community studio,

Culturally Diverse entertainment Venue, and better advertisement of local events

?

\$. Communicating happenings; PR

Na

Artist Co-op or public studio space to rent, produce and display art but be able to lock up when not there.

Location access, crime prevention, time

Where do you see hidden potential for the arts and culture sector in Topeka?

Connecting WU students in a more meaningful way; so many opportunities to simply connect people with one another. Not as many people know each other as it would appear on the surface.

Topeka Blvd

in Black and Brown communities

It is hidden in the business community.

more collaboration and cooperation between arts venues and sectors - less competition and competitiveness

?

Making better use of the facilities we have. For example, TPAC and White Concert Hall are great spaces for the performing arts.

Artists who just don't know how to get involved.

Partnering with History Museum, Burnett's Mound; Forbes Field; Lake Shawnee; Washburn University, TSCPL, etc.

The Topeka Arts scene is spread out and we need to consolidate where arts events are held.

I like the idea of enhancing the riverfront

I-70 corridor. Most "visitors" to Topeka never actually stop. What can we do that draws people off the highway?

Again. Not sure.

On buildings

I think every part of Topeka could have hidden potential for more art!

In the southwest part of Topeka.

Topeka is big, the biggest issue is getting people evolved, but that can come with time. I, Topekan, have a stigma about the city that needs to change bit once it does. Topeka pride should hopefully flourish.

Truckhenge

Many neighborhoods and cultural groups in Topeka just don't seem to cross lines with each other to enjoy performing arts. We need to find a way to break these barriers through programming and/or facility creation or use.

Housing development opportunities w/ North Topeka and Oakland, Youth and teen arts programs

The Women's Club. I hear their theatre (my grandmothers first recital space) is gorgeous and very well kept and now fixed up.

governmental support

I feel the arts are done by a whole bunch of groups that don't talk to each other so we hent is the best possible way. In a way less in more.

The key is the event that are presented are epic and highlight all the talent in the best possible way. Great art all presented at the same time and not highlighted to its fullest potential. It is a very crowded space and it is again not cohesive. If it could be organized in a way to bring a spot light to all the talent. I have no idea if I got my message across.

It would be great to have a city-wide annual arts festival to bring all of the arts segments together.

People often ask us about art lessons for kids. These are parents who want real art, not tempera on a paper plate. Learning how to draw, paint with artist's paints of good quality, how to sculpt and work with clay. Something more sophisticated than the "easy cheap crafts" we often seem to do for kids.

More historical programming to share our past.

Yes

In embracing and celebrating the actually unique in redeveloped areas

Collaboration among entities. TPAC working with TCT, working with Sunrise, working with Hocker, working with Jayhawk, etc.

I think there's a lot of great art happening, but when you're a newbie it's hard to figure out how to connect to existing artists in the community or find a mentor or just someone to go to with questions. Maybe a mentorship program for artists that people can apply to have a mentor, then have gatherings where they all meet up (so the newbie knows their mentor, it's hard to be brave and go to something when you don't know anyone there.) Or have existing artists talk about the business side of their art. So much of the talk in the arts community is about the artistic process, but so often what people actually need help with is not creating the art, but the logistics of getting it out there (managing money, renting space or equipment, publicity, finding musicians, writing grants, etc.) That's what intimidates me, and I don't know who to go to for help with those questions. So also maybe a clear place to ask questions like that with someone who can hook you up with another artist in town that could help.

I think people are craving more interactive opportunities to get together and test their skills and learn.

If Topeka would reduce crime, things will thrive.

Underwriting to bring in more professional performing artists

Downtown

Definitely NOTO, downtown, and maybe Westboro would be a cool little area.

Community activities for artistic projects

Pushing the political envelope. Impactful art doesn't come from complacency. And Topeka prides itself on quietly getting along. Can't have any art or cultural revolution without pushing comfort zones.

Showcasing local or regional artists' work

Empty buildings/grain elevators

I think Topeka could support several community theatres, giving people options to see modern plays and musicals, classic shows, works by KS playwrights, family-friendly fare, improv, and more.

I have little insight; I just recall the massive effort and community support of the Czars exhibit years ago. That was big.

Expand the display and celebration of artwork. Step up performing arts.

Not sure; I primarily perform in Kansas City area..

not sure

The riverfront area.

Advertisement of events for the youth! Must branch out to the youth for the future to be bright!

I believe, and have for a long time, that children and young adults need to be celebrated and supported in their creative works. They should be able to explore (think of the old Adventure Center only in artistic venues) their creativity. There should be a center like the magnet schools where underprivileged children can learn the art that inspires them, whether it is a violin or a paint brush. There should be a place where volunteers can invest in possible prodigies who have been brushed over due to their lack of income. This volunteering could be done to teach all forms of art to the younger generations, as well as have an outlet for adults as well. Locals who do volunteer should have incentive whether it is a sunflower (Hollywood star) with their name on the walk for so many donated hours, or applied credits to higher education, like Washburn etc.. I have thought the writing, and the sharing of teenage stories is important. Their voices need to be heard. For example, Dear Martin, is a book about a teenage boy living black. I think it would be awesome if teens throughout Topeka could share their voices of what it is like to be a Topekan no matter their race, gender or sexual orientation. The youth are our future. They have a wealth of creativity, thoughts and ideas to share with the world. The elderly are our past and have a wealth to share.

I think the city will continue to waste money wherever it can.

High School Seniors. The artists that do not move away to college but lose the opportunity to work in studios, venues, and with teachers as soon as they graduate so they just stop doing what they love. They need opportunities presented to them so they know they can still participate as adults.

Menninger Clock Tower building as stated previously. Forbes Field has lots of history that could be embraced. The History Museum could be invested in and expanded, the Zoo could be invested in or even have more land just outside of TOPEKA dedicated to it to increase its size and build a more hospitable and healthy environment for the animals.

In having and offering more hands on approach to art. Invite people in, without lectures teach them an artistic medium, at least to get them interested. There are SO many cool things they could do and choose not to. For instance, Topeka for some reason still uses concrete medians at intersections. Paint them! Allow people to paint and decorate and maintain these medians so they don't look so overgrown and unmaintained. Have a contest! Anything!

Improving the tax base so more activities and sites could be improved. Where are the international arts displayed as they used to be or Smithsonian displays

Downtown looks good with sculptures and things, but the storefronts themselves are trashed

NOTO Theatre and we need a NOTO coffeehouse!
Not sure

Old Schools! Rent out the rooms to individuals who create or manufacture. Include a space (like the gym) for retail space similar to an antiques mall. This way, people can create without making a mess of their home. They can leave their "studios/classrooms" locked when they leave and sell their stuff whenever they have it made.

Downtown and Fairlawn Plaza

We need more patrons of the arts. It starts young. We also need better publicity networks: how many people say they "don't know" about something huge like Sunflower Music Festival or events happening at NOTO? If we can get them engaged, they will attend, spend and sponsor.

Online commerce

Collaboration with business for displaying local art

at the Topeka Art Guild

Live On Stage has potential but can't get the word out.

Partnership between businesses and artists more interactive art, and different forms of art that the public can participate in even if they are not initially comfortable

International community groups in Topeka.

Embracing diverse audiences. More cool/weird/soul-filling programming & artists. Jayhawk Theatre would be a great venue for emerging artists, unique voices, mid-size/intimate setting for performances.

On Stage Live performances

The hidden potential is to be found in the acceptance, appreciation, and Financial Support of the ARTS by the citizens of Topeka. Why not start a campaign to encourage at least one purchase of a book, a pair of tickets, a painting, or a workshop opportunity each month? Somehow, the word "FREE" or "Cheap" is attached to the enjoyment of the ARTS, and it is entirely unfair and unrealistic. Artists are generous, but we are a business like any other.

NA

Government buildings and institutions.

Unsure

Find a way for Topekans to spend their money here instead of neighboring cities/states

If there was a way for the "common" person, not the "known" artist from all neighborhoods: Mexican, German, Black, Indian, Russian could submit a piece of artwork, poem, music, event. I think we would find a diamond in the rough.

In parks

Highland park high school

With all the abandoned or vacant spaces, more studios would be nice. Open Studios every first Friday with residencies maybe. Charlotte Street Foundation has a great Open Studio program that I took part in, and it was very community based.

Live music and performance art, opportunity to create art in a public space

Community engagement - find the hidden artist in everyone

In our youth. So cutting school budgets that would eliminate arts & crafts would kill the amazing skills they have and provide no reason for them to stay after graduation.

A way for different ethnic traditions to share with each other.

Cross promotion

I am not even sure what there is. I generally go to Lawrence.

The empty buildings

The potential is everywhere. It's the corporate sales in the handshakes with government that prevent getting anything done because we have to put a corporate label on everything or gets so many bureaucratic layers of approval just to get something off the ground years later

Sponsoring more cultural events that bring in

visitors from the state and the Midwest.

Bringing in nationally known entertainers.

Downtown and NoTo - specifically if there was performance/theater space in NoTo.

Utilizing the TSCPL for concerts, more concerts offered at Washburn University

virtually everywhere

Washburn is a hidden jewel. How do we include these students in our community arts practices? WU gets dissed a LOT. Not recognized by CJ. Very few community patrons. WU does GOOD work!

More outdoor venues that combine food, music, drink and visual art

Asian culture

Not sure

I think we have to cultivate a new perspective or approach.

Everywhere! Creating and supporting mindset for supporting the arts.

Servant Leadership Training and compassionate communication workshops in all families, schools and businesses

Don't know

Many areas in the downtown district are under utilized and could have more art installations or more effort put into existing studios

Financial support

So many musicians here who travel to share their gift. A jazz spot/ spoken word/ cultural arts venue would be a game changer for me. We must progressively meet the needs of all factions of citizens in Topeka.

None

Not present.

Downtown

I don't like the fact that north topeka only is focused on arts. I live in the SW area and I would love more opportunities for artists on this area

Don't know

I do not get downtown so I'm not sure. If there are empty buildings at least one should be made into artists studios to be rented out and be open to the public. Each individual artist should have their own space and be able to have their space be able to be secured when they are not in that space. to also have space to display their art.

Downtown

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Learn more at <https://www.vocaltype.co/history-of/ruby>

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