



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



explore
LAWRENCE

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

2021 was a continued year of change and adaptability for the Lawrence tourism and hospitality industry. While COVID-19 continued to affect our stakeholders, the glimmer of recovery can be seen. Lawrence hotels are beginning to reach and exceed 2019 occupancy, rate, and revenue benchmarks.

eXplore Lawrence also underwent a transition in 2021. Michael Davidson retired in May, and after a national search, Kim Anspach was named Executive Director in June. We are very proud of how our organization adapts to the unexpected and continuously supports local stakeholders by attracting visitors, meetings, sports tournaments, and events to Lawrence, Kansas. Our industry stands ready to welcome travelers for the unmistakable experience that is Lawrence, Kansas.

This report will show growth and recovery, and we want to point out some successes the data might not show. In 2021 we were proud to:

- Launch a redesigned and reengineered eXploreLawrence.com
- Produce new Vibe Videos for Lawrence to be used as a community asset
- Distribute our first Visitors Guide since 2019
- Welcome Encountering John Brown to The Watkins Museum for its premier exhibition
- Create a comprehensive Sales and Service Plan
- Keep visitor dollars coming into Lawrence with youth sports tournaments
- Welcome meetings back to Lawrence
- Host the Belgium Waffle Ride for the first time in Kansas

We are committed to being a data-driven destination management organization that assures the greatest possible return on Transient Guest Tax revenue investment. We will continue to employ best practices in marketing and sales as we work together to recover and grow tourism in Lawrence and Douglas County.

In 2022 we are looking forward to unveiling a new campaign and series that will help answer the question, "Why Lawrence?" and articulate what makes up our unmistakable identity.

Mike Logan
Board Chair

Kim Anspach
Executive Director

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Logan
The Granada

Danny Caine
The Raven Bookstore

Ivan Simac
Country Inn & Suites

Heidi Champagne
SpringHill Suites

Fally Afani
I Heart Local Music

Porter Arneill
Ex Officio, City of Lawrence

Peter Bobkowski
University of Kansas

Sally Zogry
Ex Officio, Downtown Lawrence Inc.

Jamie Hays-Szelc
Kansas Athletics

Hugh Carter
Ex Officio, Lawrence Chamber

STAFF



Kim Anspach
Executive Director



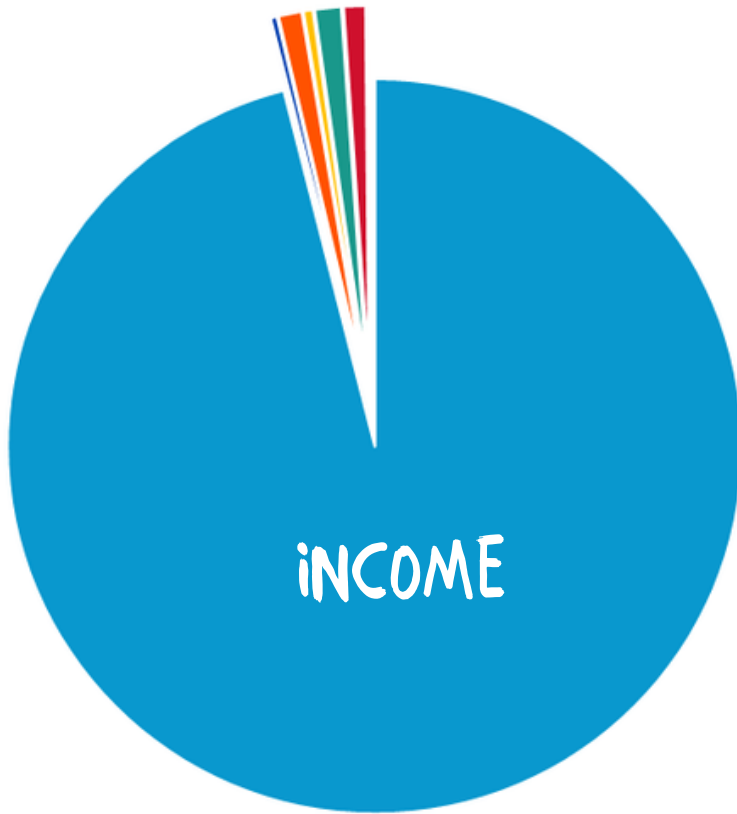
Kendra Brayfield
Director of Sales



Andrea Johnson
Director of Marketing & Communications



Caleb Deines
Visitor Services Manager

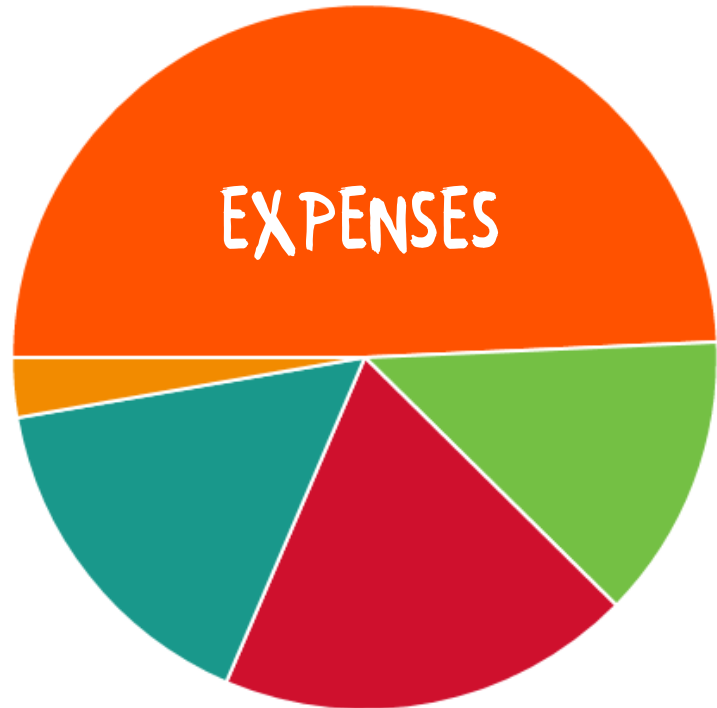


\$1,036,581 TOTAL INCOME

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX \$995,210	MEETING MAX \$10,665
STATE GRANT \$10,000	MERCH SALES \$3,002
DMI \$12,000	MISC INCOME \$1,414
CO-OP MARKETING \$4,300	

\$698,377 TOTAL EXPENSES

PAYROLL \$344,301	ADVERTISING \$91,337
ADMINISTRATION \$133,024	RETIREMENT \$19,093
SALES AND MARKETING \$110,622	



VISITORS CENTER



Lawrence Visitors Center

7,282
WALK-IN
VISITORS SERVED

7,434
BROCHURES AND
MAPS DISTRIBUTED

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

691 EXTRANET LOGINS
BY 99 PARTNERS

1,609
EVENTS ADDED TO CALENDAR

ECONOMIC IMPACT

VISITOR SPENDING

In 2019, visitors spent **\$272 million** in Douglas County.

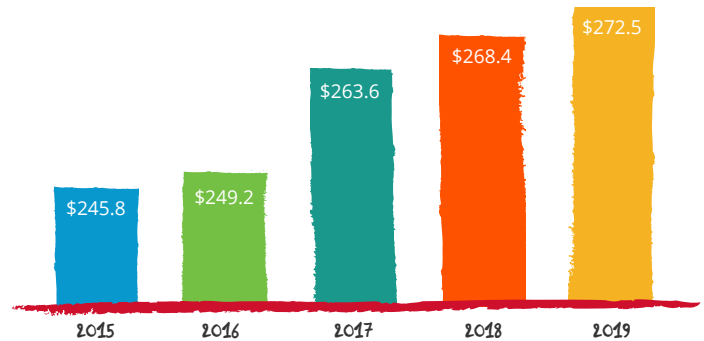
Visitor spending has increased by **\$27 million** since 2015, an increase of **11%**.

Douglas County's visitor spending ranks **5th** among all counties in the state.

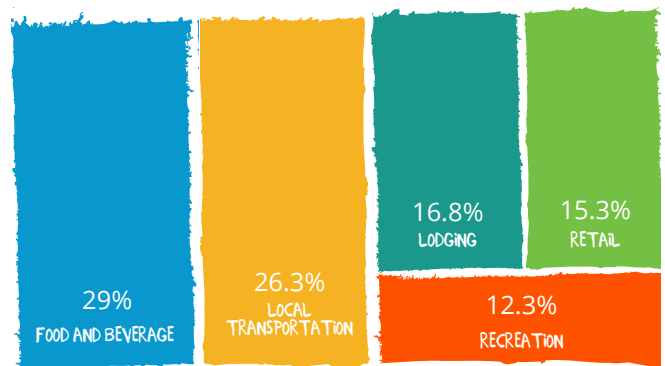
Spending at restaurants, bars, and grocery stores captures **29%** of each visitor dollar.

Visitor spending on recreational activities increased by **5.5%** in 2019.

Douglas County visitor spending (\$ millions)



2019 visitor spending categories and shares



EMPLOYMENT GENERATOR

Tourism supports **3,764** jobs in Douglas County.

Employment supported by visitor spending supports **7.6%** of all Douglas County jobs.

FISCAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Visitor activity supported **\$24.5 million** in state and local tax revenues in 2019.

SALES

60 LEADS GENERATED

26,301

ROOMS REQUESTED

\$3,892,002

ESTIMATED ROOM REVENUE

39 BOOKED LEADS

10,438

ROOMS BOOKED

\$1,659,642

ESTIMATED ROOM REVENUE

American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials
American Council of Engineering Companies in Kansas
Big Time Hoops Basketball
CSI North Central Region
Central States District of BHS
Country Travel DISCOVERIES
Gravel Grinders
JAG-K
K-State Research & Extension - Douglas County
KC Rising Stars

KU School of Public Affairs & Administration
Kansas Alliance for Wetlands & Streams
Kansas Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals
Kansas Chiropractic Association
Kansas Fastpitch Softball
Kansas Fur Harvesters
Kansas Occupational Therapy Association
Kansas Pharmacists Association
Kreidler Consulting Group
KS Dept of Aviation
Lawrence Art Guild

NACADA
National Christian Homeschool Championships
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Perfect Game
Prince Hall Grand Lodge
Reebok Tournament Series
Select Events Basketball
Sporting Kaw Valley Soccer
Sunflower Outdoor & Bike
Topeka Impact
Varsity Brands

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

WEBSITE

153,509 website sessions

117,606 new users

Average session duration: **1 minute 31 seconds**

SOCIAL MEDIA

25,081 fans/followers, **1,498** new

1.61 million impressions

34,216 engagements

10,855 YouTube video views

DIGITAL ADS

Search Engine Marketing

E-Newsletters

Digital Display

Social Media

3.2 million+ digital impressions

ROI: **\$148:1**

PRINT

KANSAS! Magazine

Kansas Travel Guide

University of Kansas Visitors Guide

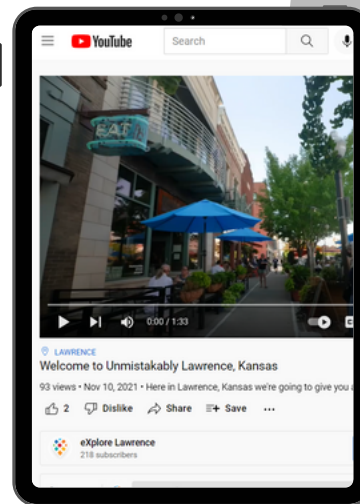
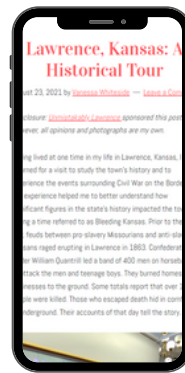
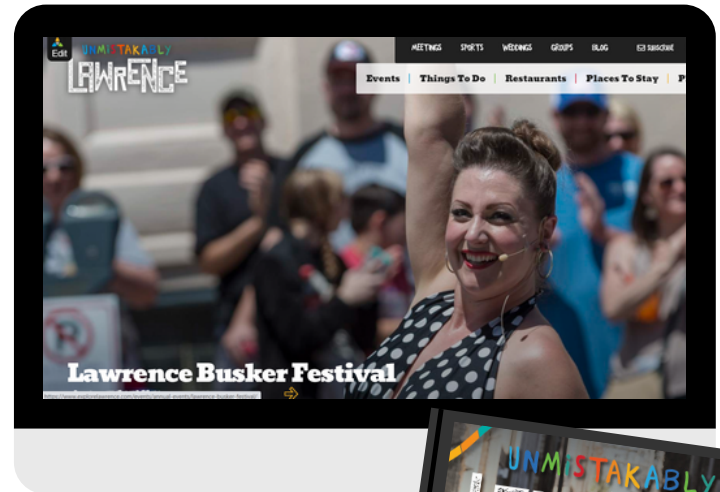
Midwest Living Best of the Midwest

KSAE Member Directory

KCSAE Member Directory

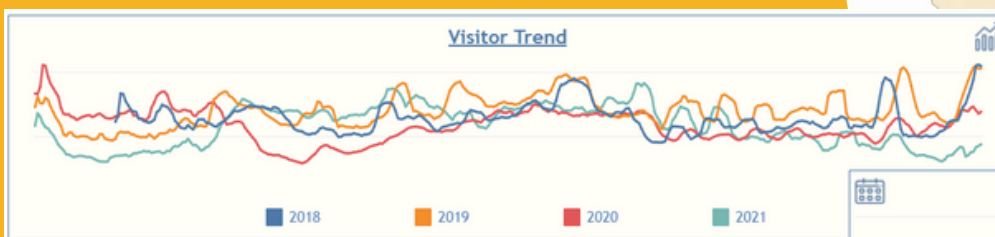
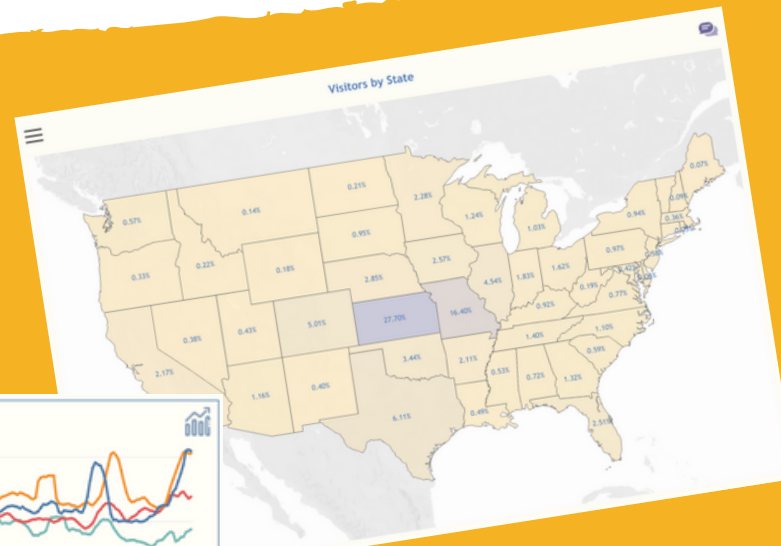
EARNED MEDIA

hosted **17** travel influencers virtually and in-person resulting in **10** blog posts reaching **70,000+** readers, and hundreds of thousands more on social media.



VISITOR DATA

Data provided by Datafy. Datafy (formerly SeeSource) is a data tool that uses cell phone geolocation data, household demographic and behavioral data, and consumer spending data to help us understand our visitors better.



ABOUT EXPLORE LAWRENCE

eXplore Lawrence develops and coordinates resources to create an exceptional visitor experience for both leisure and business travelers, resulting in increased overnight stays, direct visitor spending, and repeat visits.

MISSION

The mission of eXplore Lawrence is to broadly market the area as a year-round visitor destination thereby positively impacting the region's economy by retaining and attracting visitors to the City of Lawrence and Douglas County.

VISION FOR THE DESTINATION

- Be recognized as the premier visitor and convention destination in the State of Kansas
- Foster partnerships amongst area tourism facilities and businesses contributing positively to area economy and environment
- Be the catalyst that helps create an ample and available workforce comprised of motivated, well-trained, and customer-focused individuals
- Generate enthusiastic public and private sector support and investment in the tourism industry and its activities
- Create an atmosphere where the area's tourism industry is cohesive and works collaboratively on all efforts and issues

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