



Annual Report

2024





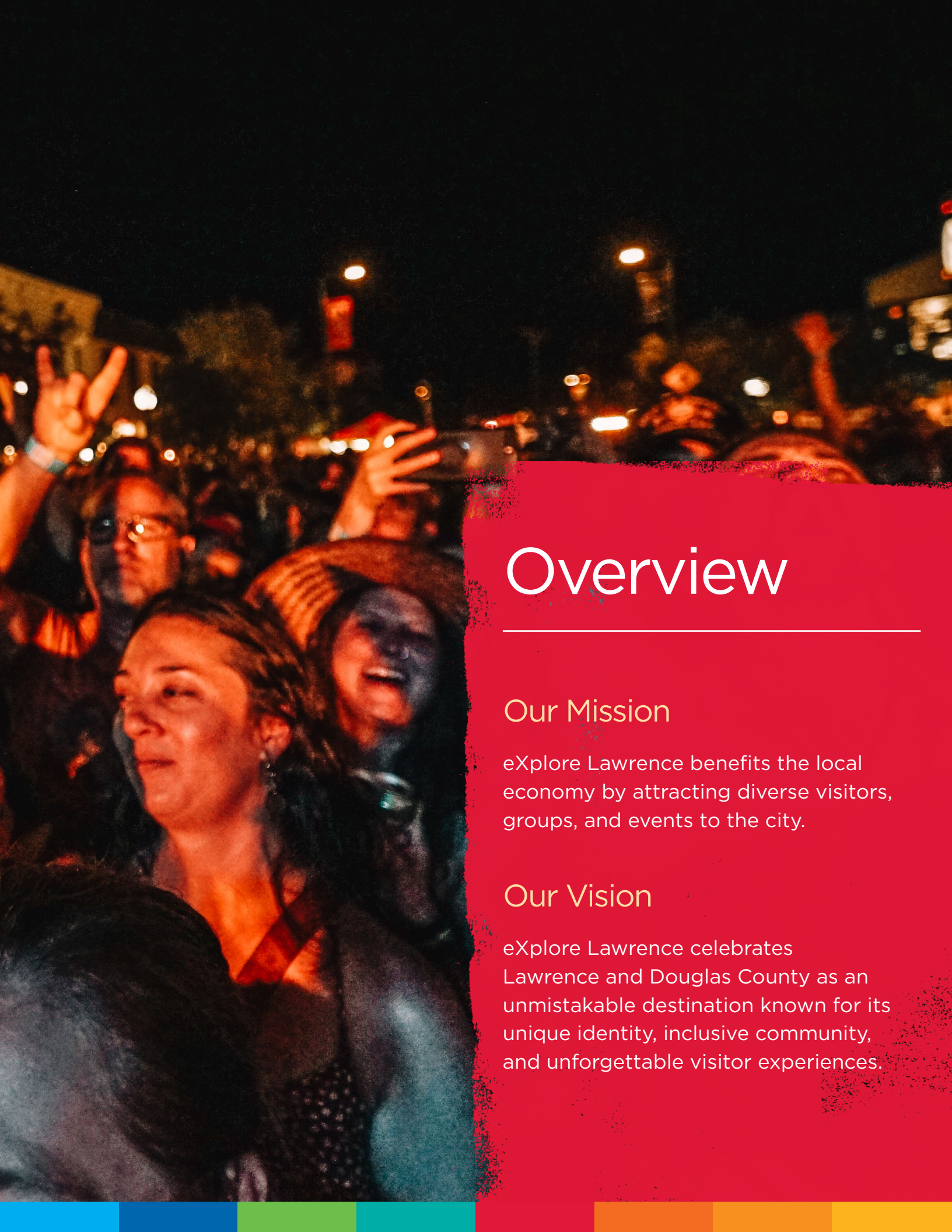
About Us:

eXplore Lawrence represents the travel and tourism industry for Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas. We are dedicated to creating economic development by attracting visitors, conventions, and events to our city.

At eXplore Lawrence, we pride ourselves on our hospitality - to visitors and residents alike. We are committed to ensuring that all people feel welcome in our community. We celebrate our community's authenticity, and we believe diverse perspectives make our work stronger and our community more attractive to all. We are proud to partner with the many

incredible community attractions, hotels, venues, restaurants, retail establishments, and planners that make Lawrence vibrant. eXplore Lawrence is proactive in meeting our partners' and travelers' needs. We collaborate with governmental, educational, and other community organizations to increase economic development.





Overview

Our Mission

eXplore Lawrence benefits the local economy by attracting diverse visitors, groups, and events to the city.

Our Vision

eXplore Lawrence celebrates Lawrence and Douglas County as an unmistakable destination known for its unique identity, inclusive community, and unforgettable visitor experiences.



Staff



Kim Anspach
Executive Director



Allison Calvin
Director of Marketing &
Communications



Ruth DeWitt
Manager of External Affairs
& Sales Operations



**Laura Hiebert-
Carbrey**
Director of Sales



Laurel Nagengast
Marketing Content Manager



Sara Harley
Office and Sales Coordinator



Richard Smalley
Visitor Center Supervisor

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anthea Scouffas, Cultural Industry
(TREASURER 1/1/24-9/25/24)

Heidi Champagne, Hotel

Drew Gaschler, Sports & Recreation Industry
(VICE CHAIR)

Tina Tourtillott, Local University & Education Institution
(TREASURER EFFECTIVE: 9/25/24-12/31/24)

Ivan Simac, Hotel
(CHAIR)

Mike Logan, Service & Event Management Industry

David Hayob, Tourism Industry

Porter Arneill, Ex-Officio
(CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE)

David Hayob, Tourism Industry

Porter Arneill, Ex-Officio
(CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE)

Amber Sellers, Ex-Officio
(CITY COMMISSION)

Kathy Gerstner, Ex-Officio
(LAWRENCE CHAMBER)

Andrew Holt, Ex-Officio
(DOWNTOWN LAWRENCE, INC.)

Year-In-Review

We are pleased to present our 2024 annual report. eXplore Lawrence is proud to continue to support Lawrence, Kansas's unmistakable identity by promoting tourism assets to visitors and encouraging exploration of our community. 2024 was another record-breaking year in many of our efforts.

eXplore Lawrence welcomed a new staff member, Sara Harley, our Office and Sales Coordinator. Sara quickly jumped in, supported our team, and brought a wealth of knowledge to eXplore Lawrence.

Lawrence saw a significant growth in visitor spending, increasing 6% over the year prior while collecting 31 million in state and local tax revenues. Our sales team met with 73 rights holders in person at tradeshow, resulting in over 1,700,000 economic impact brought back into the community. Our marketing team doubled the engagement numbers on social media in comparison to the year prior, while also earning 66,000 more website users than the year prior.

We continue to be a data-driven destination management organization that increases economic development in Douglas County and ensures the highest possible return on investment in transient guest tax revenue.

We look forward to welcoming new and returning visitors to Lawrence and continuing to celebrate Lawrence's Unmistakable Identity!

ANNUAL SUMMIT:

We welcomed a sold-out crowd of over 100 attendees at our first annual tourism summit to celebrate our community leaders in tourism and learn from an array of speakers on industry hot topics.

Professor Misty Heggeness, KU School of Public Affairs and Administration, keynoted the day, sharing her research on the Taylor Swift effect on tourism and the entertainment industry. Bridgette Jobe, director of Kansas Tourism, also updated us on the state's tourism initiatives. Senior Vice President for Convention Sales and Services Nathan Hermiston from Visit KC gave us a World Cup update.

The day's highlight was honoring our first annual award winners – people in our community who have gone above and beyond to make Lawrence an Unmistakable place to live, work, and play. We also hosted our invaluable partners and sponsors.



“

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Economic Impact

Food and Beverage \$89,000,000

Transportation \$76,000,000

Retail \$46,000,000

Lodging \$46,000,000

Recreation and Entertainment \$40,000,000

Visitor Spending Total **\$296 Million**

8.1%

Lodging
Percentage
Growth

3,778

Tourism Supported Jobs

\$31 Million

Total State & Local
Tax Revenues



Sales & Service



4 Trade shows met
with **73** rights holders

- 39 Total Leads Booked
- 10,202 Booked Rooms
- 1,749,636 est. Economic Impact
- 32 Collateral for Groups



Community Engagement

16 AMBASSADORS
TRAINED

715 PARTNER PORTAL
LOGINS

69 NEW PARTNER
ACCOUNTS

1871 PARTNER EVENTS
ADDED



ART ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS THIS YEAR

11 MEETINGS

15 PEOPLE
AVERAGE

A W A R D
★ ★ ★
W I N N E R S



★ MIKE LOGAN ★

Tourism Champion



★ AU MARCHE ★

Hospitality Partner
of the Year



★ JEFF BOEVE ★

Hotel Employee
of the Year



★ PRIDE PARADE AND
BLOCK PARTY ★

Unmistakable Event
of the Year

Visitor Center

8,136
TOTAL WALK INS

\$7,943
NET SALES

TOP SELLING ITEMS:

T-SHIRTS, HATS,
POSTCARDS, STICKERS,
MUGS AND GAMES.



9 FINAL FRIDAYS

Marketing

WEBSITE



Total Users 405,000

Actions taken on site 6,151,761

Total New Users 401,000

Actions per user 15.17



SOCIAL MEDIA



DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Impressions 13,040,089

Clicks 156,008

ENEWS (LEISURE)

Emails Sent 12

Event Users 33,397

Clicks 3,251

PASSPORTS



3,229 PASS SIGN UPS

2,679 CHECK INS

4 TOTAL PASSES



Financial

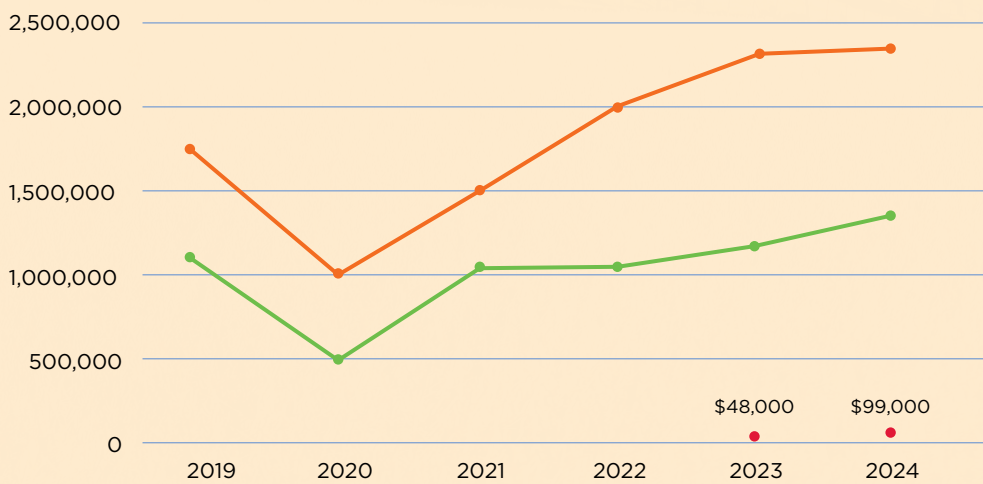
TGT Operating Fund	\$1,391,000
TGT Bid Fund	\$99,000
Visitors Guide	\$25,333
Merchandise	\$7,267
DMI	\$12,000
Coop Marketing	\$12,663
DTN	\$3,590
Misc	\$9,084
TOTAL	\$1,599,937

TOTAL EXPENSES

Payroll and Benefits	\$511,395
Admin	\$269,513
Marketing	\$503,346
Sales	\$72,266
Bid Fund	\$8,333
TOTAL	\$1,364,853



Transient Guest Tax



TGT TOTAL COLLECTIONS

2024: **\$2,213,520**



TGT OPERATING FUND

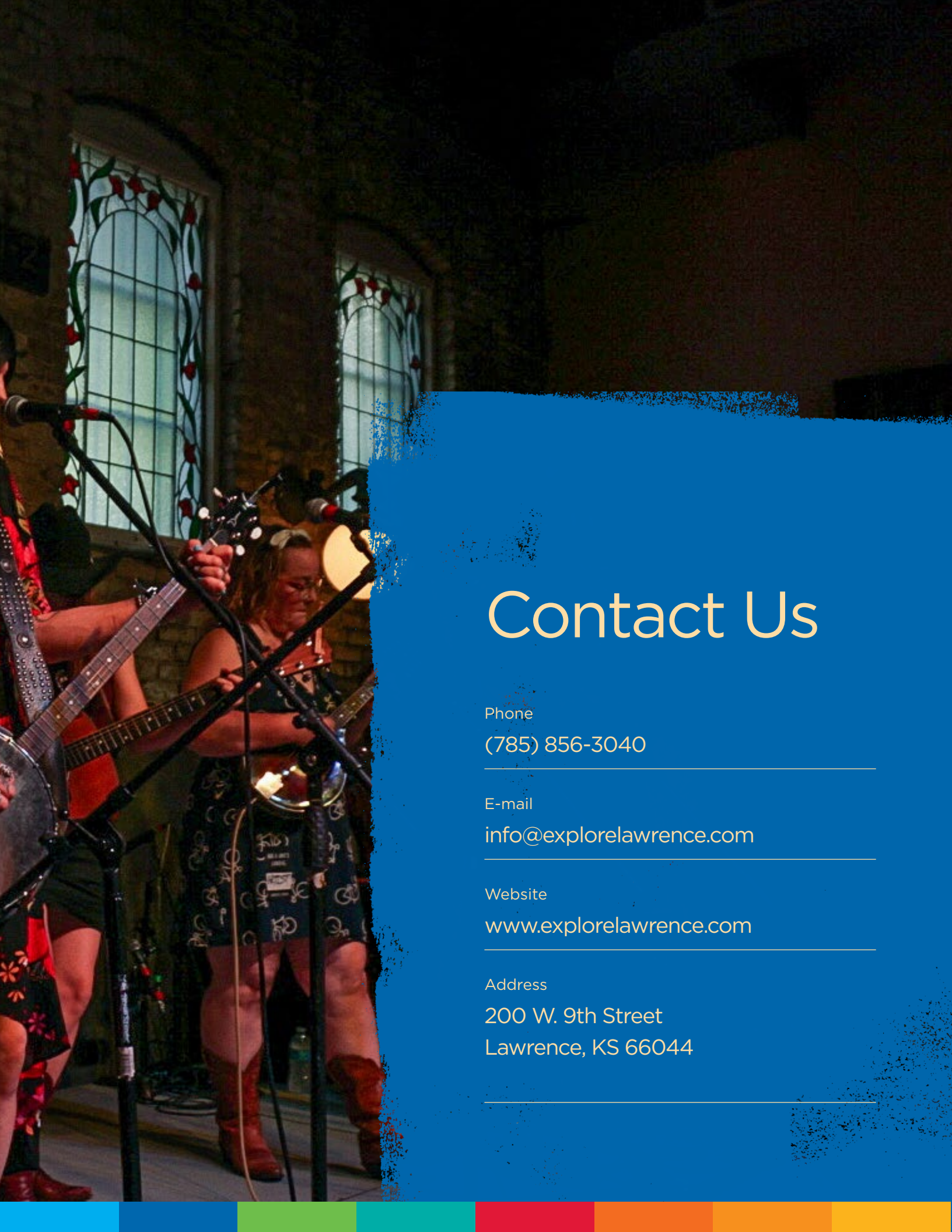
2024: **\$1,391,000**



EL TGT BID FUND

2024: **\$99,000**





Contact Us

Phone

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E-mail

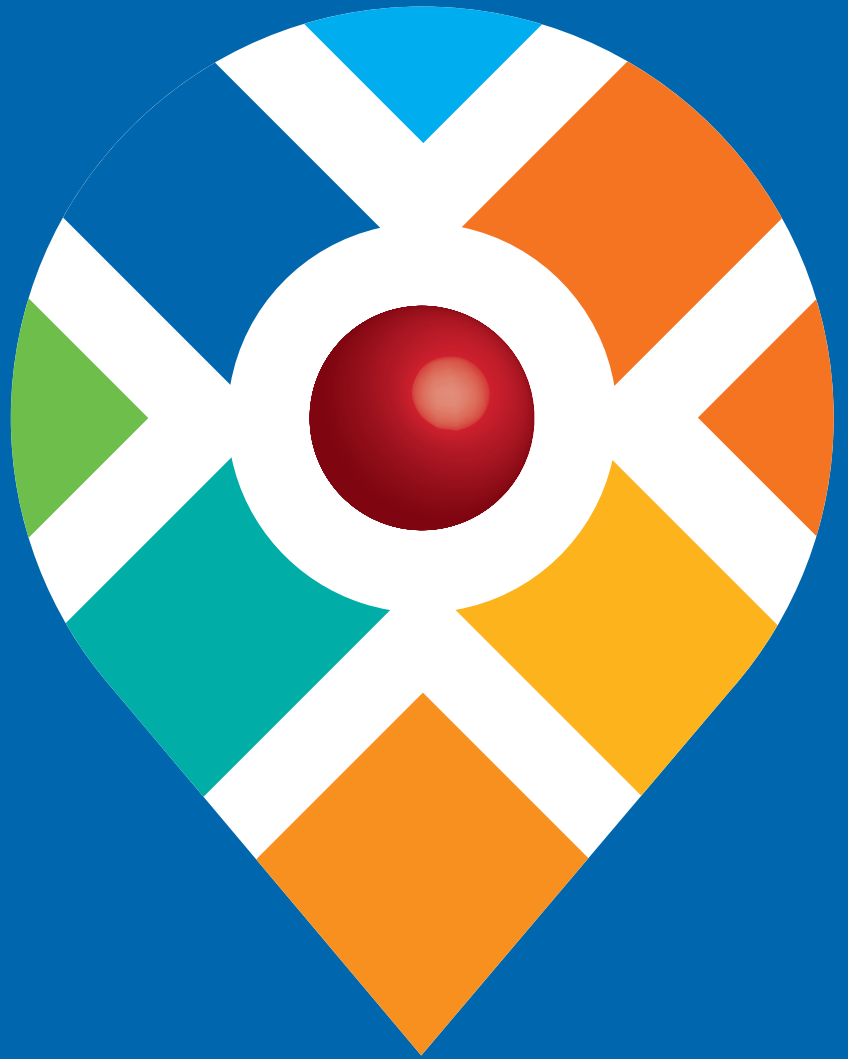
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Lawrence, KS 66044



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