



eXplore Lawrence Board Meeting Agenda

Friday 4/25/25

1 P.M. Carnegie Building

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Financials:
3. Gateway Project
4. Staff Reports:
5. Executive Director Report:



Explore Lawrence

Board of Directors Meeting

March 28, 2025

Present: Drew Gaschler (chair), Kim Anspach, Executive Director, Heather Shull, Tina Tourtillott, Heidi Champagne, Kirk Goodman, Andrew Holt, Commissioner Amber Sellers

Present online: Luis Ruiz, Anthea Scouffas

Absent: Emily Peterson

Guests: Paul Davis, Paul Davis Law Firm, Julie Murray, Chancellor's Office University of Kansas

Staff: Allison Calvin, Director of Marketing, Laura Carbrey, Director of Sales, Ruth DeWitt, External Affairs and Sales Operations Manager (note taker)

Drew called the meeting together at 1:05 PM

MINUTES/FINANCIALS:

The board approved the minutes of the January meeting (there was no February meeting) without changes. (Kirk, Heather)

Kim and Tina have not had a chance to meet about the financials so there are no updates for January or February's reports. There are some adjustments to the year-end numbers due to an omission of some 401K payments, an ARISA compliance form was missing, and \$6,000 that was categorized incorrectly.

Kim is getting audit materials together and will get those to the city per requested in the city agreement.

Kim shared the old RFP for an accountant, will develop an update. If any board member has a recommendation for a good contact to send the RFP, she would appreciate it.

The board accepted the financial report.

GATEWAY DISTRICT PRESENTATION:

Paul Davis and Julie Murray presented the plan for Phase II of the University of Kansas Gateway District Project to the board. They requested a letter of support from the board to the City Commission.

Key takeaways from their presentation include:

- Phase I is nearing completion. The west and north sides of the stadium renovations and renovations to the Anderson Family Complex, as well as the 55,000 square foot conference center will be operational this fall.

- KU has contracted with OVG (Oak View Group) to manage the conference center and the David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium. OVG is already selling the space to groups, and is projecting around 200 conferences/year. They will also manage hospitality and food and beverage at all athletic facilities and conference center.
- Proposed in Phase II are renovations of the east and south side of the stadium, 443 unit student housing unit with retail, restaurant, and office space, a parking garage (1,000+ spaces), a 20,000 square foot plaza for outdoor events, and a 162-key hotel (Marriot Cascade), with 16 condo units on the top floors.
- They are projecting approximately \$2.5 million in net new transient guest taxes generated over the 20-year bond repayment period, and 7,500 new hotel room nights annually to non-Gateway district hotels.
- Key Timeline Points with the City of Lawrence:
 - April 1:** Public hearing at City Commission to approve resolution to set a public hearing to consider establishing STAR and TIF Districts.
 - May 6:** City Commission public hearing to consider and approve the establishment of the STAR and TIF Districts. (This would be where the letter from the EL Board would be included).
 - June 6:** City Commission public hearing to consider and approve establishment of the STAR and TIF Districts.
 - August 5:** City Commission public hearing to consider and approve STAR and TIF Project plans and establishment of the Community Impact District CID.
- Total project = \$759 million. KU is requesting – Tax Increment Financing, Community Improvement Districts, STAR Bonds, and IRBs – Sales Tax Exemptions for Construction Materials to combine with their private fundraising dollars to keep the momentum of the private sector participation.
- They are expecting a strong economic impact for the city and KU by addressing parking and housing challenges, increasing event spaces, and hosting more events for the community (ie concerts in the stadium). In addition, once the project bond repayments are made, the project will come on to the City’s property tax rolls.

Board Feedback/Questions:

Andrew Holt shared that Downtown Lawrence Inc. received this presentation at its last meeting, and had several questions. While they are not formally supporting the project at this point, they are behind it and support it with some conditions. Those include ensuring the retail spaces at the plaza do not take away from the shopping downtown, and that the district connects visitors to Mass Street.

The EL board received assurances that the project intends to connect downtown visually, promotionally (even with kiosks at the center), and perhaps even with a dedicated shuttle to take conference go-ers and visitors to hotels and downtown. The proposed restaurants will not be large enough to accommodate all the game day visitors and downtown restaurant options will still be necessary.

Kirk Goodman shared he has hired a director of sales who already is selling the conference center for 2026 and 2027. He noted that the conference center will be operational for at least two years

before the new hotel is completed, making it absolutely necessary for the conference center to develop relationships with the hotels and fill existing hotel rooms with conference attendees. When the new hotel comes online they will still need existing rooms, as the 162 rooms will not be sufficient to handle the size conferences they are booking.

The shuttle discussions also raise the issue that until Phase II is complete, there will be quite limited parking for the conference center, and they will have to operate off-site parking and/or run the dedicated shuttle between the center and hotels.

They are also working on concerts for the fall and 2026 and hope to book those in the coming months. The intent will be to bring entertainment that will appeal to residents and visitors alike and bring overnight rooms to Lawrence.

Commissioner Sellers asked if there was any way to consider negotiating the terms of the TGT collections so the City could realize some of that funding before the 20-year payment is over? Paul cited that the Department of Commerce wants the bond to be repaid as quickly as possible, but they are open to negotiation.

Drew recommended support (noting he works for KU Athletics) but stated this is a once in a generation opportunity for Lawrence to bring people here and that the project will bring benefits to the City and KU.

Heidi and Heather shared they were interested in the transportation aspect and said that was a “game changer” on their position on the project. Heidi mentioned how critical it is to connect that area to the downtown and that has been missing for a very long time.

Kim talked to Emily Peterson about the project earlier in the week, and Emily had concerns about the restaurant space at the plaza. Kim promised to check in with Emily to see if the new information from the presentation would change her position.

Luis shared he is in conversations with Craig Owens, City Manager, about the possibility of raising the TGT collection rate. Lawrence is currently at 6%, lower than our surrounding neighbors are and the rate hasn't been raised since 2011. Craig has asked Luis to put together a list of stakeholders to discuss the matter.

Board Action:

The board agreed to sign on to a letter, but similar to DLI, one that details some of the concerns/considerations discussed above. Drew and Kirk may stay off the letter as they have a stake in the project through their work.

Kim will present the letter to the executive committee and board for approval in time to be submitted in the commission packets for the May 6 City Commission meeting.

Sales Team Report:

The sales team presented its 2025 goals for board approval. We have adjusted previous year goals based on new classifications in Simpleview (our database).

The team has created definitions for leads, assists, and prospects (included in the sales packet). The director of sales has goals of:

- **15 leads/quarter** (this is business that would not be coming to Lawrence were it not for the work of the sales team – the but/for standard).
- **30 prospect/quarter** (business that was once here, and hasn't come back OR new contacts that haven't been to Lawrence before but whose meeting profiles are viable profiles for Lawrence). The targeted conversation rate on prospects is 10% for the year.
- A **four-day turnaround time with assists** (since we don't always know when these come in and we don't control the total annual number, we want to move these on to hotel or event spaces as quickly as possible and develop a reputation for responsive partners).
- Creating a target list for **use of bid fund opportunities**.
- **\$3 million economic impact** for the City through sales activity.

The board approved the new 2025 sales goals (MSP Heidi, Heather)

The next step for the sales team will be to update the monthly board reports to reflect these new goals and metrics.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

National Fishing League

Kim received an email from the National Fishing League's attorney, requesting the final payment of the bid fund. She has responded with a counter-offer to the League.

Freedom's Frontier

Freedom's Frontier is under threat of losing its funding with the DOGE cuts to the federal budget. They are facing an uncertain future. Kim has been asked to sign a letter of support on their behalf to the Kansas federal delegation and asked the board to approve her doing so. The board was supportive.

TGT Conversation:

The board circled back to the conversation Luis raised earlier in the meeting. Ruth is working on research about other municipalities additional fees on rooms. The current idea behind the proposal is that the increase would be dedicated to funding the World Cup efforts.

Luis wants to convene a group of stakeholders to determine how that funding is used after the World Cup is over.

The process is fairly simple, the City Commission would approve the rate, and it can be implemented quickly. The money is remitted to the state, and returned to the City. In order to realize the rate increase in time for World Cup, the new rates would need to be in effect by third quarter.

ADJOURNMENT:

Drew requested a motion to adjourn (Heidi, Heather). The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Next meeting is April 25 at 1:00 pm in the Carnegie Building.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth DeWitt

EXPLORE LAWRENCE INC
Statement of Financial Position
As of March 31, 2025

	Mar 31, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1020 · US Bank Checking	184,464.92
1030 · US Bank Money Market	130,433.37
1050 · Reserve Fund	325,353.58
1060 · Petty Cash	215.00
Total Checking/Savings	640,466.87
Other Current Assets	
1420 · Prepaid Expenses	2,081.98
Total Other Current Assets	2,081.98
Total Current Assets	642,548.85
Fixed Assets	
2150 · Vehicles	29,000.00
2200 · Leasehold Improvement	107,174.01
2500 · Accumulated Depreciation	-62,491.94
Total Fixed Assets	73,682.07
Other Assets	
1225 · Deposits	3,100.00
Total Other Assets	3,100.00
TOTAL ASSETS	719,330.92
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
3000 · Accounts Payable	2,257.92
Total Accounts Payable	2,257.92
Credit Cards	
2109 · Credit Card - US Bank 2981	2,453.38
Total Credit Cards	2,453.38
Other Current Liabilities	
3100 · Payroll Liabilities	
3105 · Accrued Payroll	15,163.10
3110 · Federal & FICA Payable	1,159.98
3111 · KS Withholding Payable	576.00
3112 · FUTA Payable	284.23
3113 · KS SUTA Payable	258.72
3114 · Health Insurance Payable	-6,451.16
Total 3100 · Payroll Liabilities	10,990.87
3300 · Sales Tax Payable	74.21
Total Other Current Liabilities	11,065.08
Total Current Liabilities	15,776.38
Total Liabilities	15,776.38

EXPLORE LAWRENCE INC
Statement of Financial Position
As of March 31, 2025

	<u>Mar 31, 25</u>
Equity	
4100 · Beginning Fund Balance	1,035,188.86
Net Income	<u>-331,634.32</u>
Total Equity	<u>703,554.54</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>719,330.92</u></u>

EXPLORE LAWRENCE INC
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
March 2025

	Mar 25	Budget	Jan - Mar 25	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense					
Income					
5000 - Guest Tax	0.00	115,833.34	0.00	347,500.02	1,390,000.00
5100 - Visitors Guide	0.00	2,083.34	28,052.50	6,250.02	25,000.00
5200 - Merchandise Sales	0.00	833.34	798.06	2,500.02	10,000.00
5500 - DMI	0.00	1,250.00	0.00	3,750.00	15,000.00
5600 - Co-Op Marketing	0.00	833.34	0.00	2,500.02	10,000.00
5660 - DJN	0.00	500.00	1,432.00	1,500.00	6,000.00
5665 - Kansas Tourism Grant	0.00	3,333.34	0.00	10,000.02	40,000.00
5670 - Bid Fund	0.00	8,250.00	0.00	24,750.00	98,000.00
5700 - Miscellaneous Income	0.00	250.00	0.00	750.00	3,000.00
Total Income	0.00	133,166.70	30,282.56	399,500.10	1,598,000.00
Cost of Goods Sold					
6100 - Merchandise Cost	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
Total COGS	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
Gross Profit	0.00	132,750.03	30,282.56	398,250.09	1,593,000.00
Expense					
7000 - Payroll Expense					
7081 - Payroll	32,018.64	39,462.91	96,825.42	118,358.73	473,435.00
7083 - Accrued Payroll Expense	1,321.58		3,978.55		
7280 - Retirement Plan	1,578.30	1,916.67	4,177.22	5,750.01	23,000.00
7065 - Health Insurance	3,837.08	4,166.67	10,450.76	12,500.01	50,000.00
7070 - Incentive Program	0.00	1,250.00	500.00	3,750.00	15,000.00
Total 7000 - Payroll Expense	38,755.60	46,786.25	115,931.95	140,358.75	561,435.00
7100 - Payroll Tax Expense					
7100.1 - FICA Expense	2,550.57		7,749.79		
7100.2 - FUTA Expense	9.20		284.23		
7100.3 - SUTA Expense	61.44		258.72		
Total 7100 - Payroll Tax Expense	2,621.21		8,292.74		
7600 - Programs					
7601 - Advertising					
7601.4 - Public Relations	0.00	3,208.33	0.00	9,624.99	38,500.00
7601.6 - Visitor Guide Distribution	0.00	1,916.67	4,275.00	5,750.01	23,000.00
7601.8 - Digital	6,126.51	22,948.59	24,716.47	68,848.77	275,395.00
7601.9 - Partner Media Buy Program	250.00		250.00		
7601.10 - Magazine	0.00	1,750.00	4,015.00	5,250.00	21,000.00
7601.12 - Content	200.00	916.67	600.00	2,750.01	11,000.00
7601.14 - Outdoor	0.00		4,241.78		
7601.15 - COOP Marketing Expense	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
7601.19 - Publications	0.00	433.34	0.00	1,300.02	5,200.00
7601.2 - Design	85.57	3,250.00	393.33	9,750.00	39,000.00
7601.21 - Opportunity Fund	110.50	1,625.00	1,155.50	9,750.00	39,000.00
7601.22 - Tracking	19,500.00	1,625.00	19,500.00	4,875.00	19,500.00
7601 - Advertising - Other	0.00	1,787.92	0.00	5,363.76	21,455.00
Total 7601 - Advertising	26,252.58	38,254.19	59,147.08	114,762.57	459,050.00
7619 - Incentive Travel					
7619.0 - General Fund	0.00	166.65	0.00	499.98	2,000.00
7619.1 - Committed Incentives	0.00	583.34	0.00	1,750.02	7,000.00
7619.2 - New Business	0.00	1,250.00	0.00	3,750.00	15,000.00
Total 7619 - Incentive Travel	0.00	2,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	24,000.00
7625 - Simpleview Data Base	0.00	1,416.56	19,205.00	4,249.98	17,000.00
7641 - Promotional Materials	0.00	1,666.65	0.00	4,999.98	20,000.00

EXPLORE LAWRENCE INC
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
March 2025

	Mar 25	Budget	Jan - Mar 25	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
7642 · Trade Shows					
7642.0 · General Fund	0.00	583.34	500.00	1,750.02	7,000.00
7642.1 · Trade Show Travel	0.00	250.00	30.00	750.00	3,000.00
Total 7642 · Trade Shows	0.00	833.34	530.00	2,500.02	10,000.00
7643 · Website Hosting					
7644 · Printing and Reproduction	1,575.00	2,500.00	9,200.00	7,500.00	30,000.00
7645 · Special Projects	118.04	500.00	2,998.04	1,500.00	6,000.00
7648 · Bids					
7649 · Visitors Guide	0.00	8,250.00	0.00	24,750.00	99,000.00
Total 7645 · Special Projects	0.00	4,166.66	65,574.18	12,499.98	50,000.00
Total 7600 · Programs	27,945.62	59,587.51	156,654.30	178,762.53	715,050.00
7620 · Meeting programs					
7650 · Mobile Visitors Center					
7650.11 · Vehicle Reg and Licensing	3,197.97	166.66	3,197.97	499.98	2,000.00
7650.12 · Vehicle Insurance	0.00	166.66	0.00	499.98	2,000.00
7650.13 · Event Registrations	0.00	833.34	0.00	2,500.02	10,000.00
7650.14 · Travel Expenses	0.00	666.66	0.00	1,999.98	8,000.00
7650.15 · Vehicle Maintenance	0.00	333.34	0.00	1,000.02	4,000.00
7650.16 · Merchandise	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
7650.2 · Van Build and Purchase Expenses	0.00	7,333.33	29,126.15	21,999.99	88,000.00
Total 7650 · Mobile Visitors Center	3,197.97	9,916.66	32,324.12	29,749.98	119,000.00
8200 · Admin and General					
8202 · Accounting	600.00	1,250.00	1,800.00	3,750.00	15,000.00
8203 · Rent	2,500.00	3,447.08	14,783.56	10,341.24	41,365.00
8204 · Software	86.00	416.67	273.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
8206 · Hardware	0.00	250.00	0.00	750.00	3,000.00
8210 · Technology Repair & Maintenance	462.64	833.33	1,468.38	2,499.99	10,000.00
8214 · Bank Service Charges	27.95	83.85	83.85	249.99	1,000.00
8214.1 · Bank Fees - Square	0.00	24.40	24.40		
8218 · Cash Over/Short	-264.53		-360.15		
8225 · Board Expenses	34.75	333.33	209.20	999.99	4,000.00
8226 · Leased Equipment	0.00	250.00	744.10	750.00	3,000.00
8230 · Dues/Subscriptions/Memberships	2,628.72	1,666.67	3,975.19	5,000.01	20,000.00
8234 · Insurance	415.02	666.67	3,047.06	2,000.01	8,000.00
8238 · Utilities	364.74		1,265.78		
8242 · Legal	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
8244 · Janitorial/Cleaning	148.00	362.50	1,021.00	1,087.50	4,350.00
8245 · Retirement Plan Fees/Admin	200.00	183.33	654.59	549.99	2,200.00
8247 · Office Supplies	268.23	416.67	534.07	1,250.01	5,000.00
8248 · Postage and Delivery	195.76	258.33	714.19	774.99	3,100.00
8250 · Storage	196.75	208.33	590.25	624.99	2,500.00
8251 · Misc. Office General	225.16	416.67	225.16	1,250.01	5,000.00
8282 · Travel & Meetings					
8282.10 · Professional Development	0.00	666.67	0.00	2,000.01	8,000.00
8282.11 · EL Hosted Events	0.00	416.67	0.00	1,250.01	5,000.00
8282.12 · Staff Travel	23.75	750.00	26.75	2,250.01	9,000.00
8282.13 · Meetings	364.12	291.67	544.14	875.01	3,500.00
8282.14 · Staff Employee Benefits	0.00	208.33	205.13	624.99	2,500.00
Total 8282 · Travel & Meetings	387.87	2,333.34	776.02	7,000.02	28,000.00

EXPLORE LAWRENCE INC
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
 March 2025

	Mar 25	Budget	Jan - Mar 25	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
8283 · Telephone/Internet	1,182.94	583.33	4,058.81	1,749.99	7,000.00
Total 8200 · Admin and General	9,660.00	14,376.25	35,888.46	43,128.75	172,515.00
Total Expense	97,068.40	133,166.67	963,979.57	399,500.01	1,598,000.00
Net Ordinary Income	-97,068.40	-416.64	-333,697.01	-1,249.92	-5,000.00
Other Income/Expense					
Other Income					
9020 · Interest Income	1,175.72				
Total Other Income	1,175.72		3,402.37		
Other Expense					
9510 · Depreciation	446.56				
Total Other Expense	446.56		1,339.68		
Net Other Income	729.16		2,062.69		
Net Income	-96,339.24	-416.64	-331,634.32	-1,249.92	-5,000.00



<Letter from EL Board of Directors re: Gateway Project Phase II>

Is this addressed to the City Commission? The Gateway Project?

The eXplore Lawrence staff and board of directors have been working closely with the Gateway Project leaders at the University of Kansas to stay informed of the development's plans, timeline, and potential impacts on the Lawrence hospitality sector. We've been impressed with their responsiveness to our concerns, the transparency with which they've shared progress, and their willingness to collaborate with us as partners.

We are excited about the addition of the new conference center. For years, Lawrence has needed a venue capable of hosting large conferences with several hundred attendees. Attaching it to the new stadium makes it a unique offering in the region, and we have no doubt it will be highly attractive to meeting planners and visitors alike. We anticipate it will be especially successful in driving weekday overnight business – a vital need for our local hotels.

We look forward to partnering with the OVG sales team and management to ensure the project's success by assisting with lead generation and securing hotel rooms. We are generally enthusiastic about the plans for the hotel as part of Phase II. Although our preference is for the Transient Guest Tax within the district to be remitted to the City, we believe the potential economic impact from increased visitation – particularly on weekdays – can ultimately outweigh the loss of those collections.

To ensure the greatest benefit for the broader community, it is vital that the Gateway District be meaningfully connected to the rest of Lawrence. Enhanced connectivity between existing hotel properties, the conference center, and local attractions – particularly downtown – is essential to maximizing the economic return of the project. The Gateway Team's early discussions of a shuttle connecting the conference center to existing hotels is encouraging, and we see real promise in that idea. A reliable transportation solution would help ensure a seamless visitor experience, foster hotel-conference collaboration, and drive greater visitor spending throughout the community.

The Gateway Project represents a transformative opportunity for Lawrence's visitor economy. To fully realize its potential, conference attendees must have easy and efficient access to explore Lawrence's character-rich districts. This includes not only a hotel shuttle but also broader transportation options and improved pedestrian connections between the district and downtown. Enabling visitors to fully experience what makes Lawrence unmistakable will enhance the city's appeal, support local businesses, and ensure that the economic benefits of this investment are shared community-wide.

We appreciate the opportunity to share both our hopes and concerns, and we are confident that with thoughtful attention to connectivity and community integration, we can fully support Phase II of the project. The bottom line is simple: we need more people coming to Lawrence. Whether they come for a conference or a concert, they'll need places to stay and things to do. By



preserving the integrity of the Lawrence visitor experience and strengthening our hospitality sector through a well-funded, sustainable TGT fund, we can ensure this project leaves a lasting legacy – one that benefits our residents and keeps visitors coming back.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our position. We look forward to continued collaboration.

The eXplore Lawrence Board of Directors (some member's names are omitted due to a conflict of interest in the project).

List individual names?

DRAFT



MARCH 2025 MARKETING REPORT

MARCH MARKETING SUMMARY

Our March marketing campaigns focused on events, live music, upcoming spring and summer travel, the visitor guide, transitioning out of the Mass Street location, and more. We also focused on evergreen content, visitor guide orders, and marketing our events calendar. Our page hits align with our persona marketing strategy, showing we engage with the correct consumer.

EXPLORELAWRENCE.COM

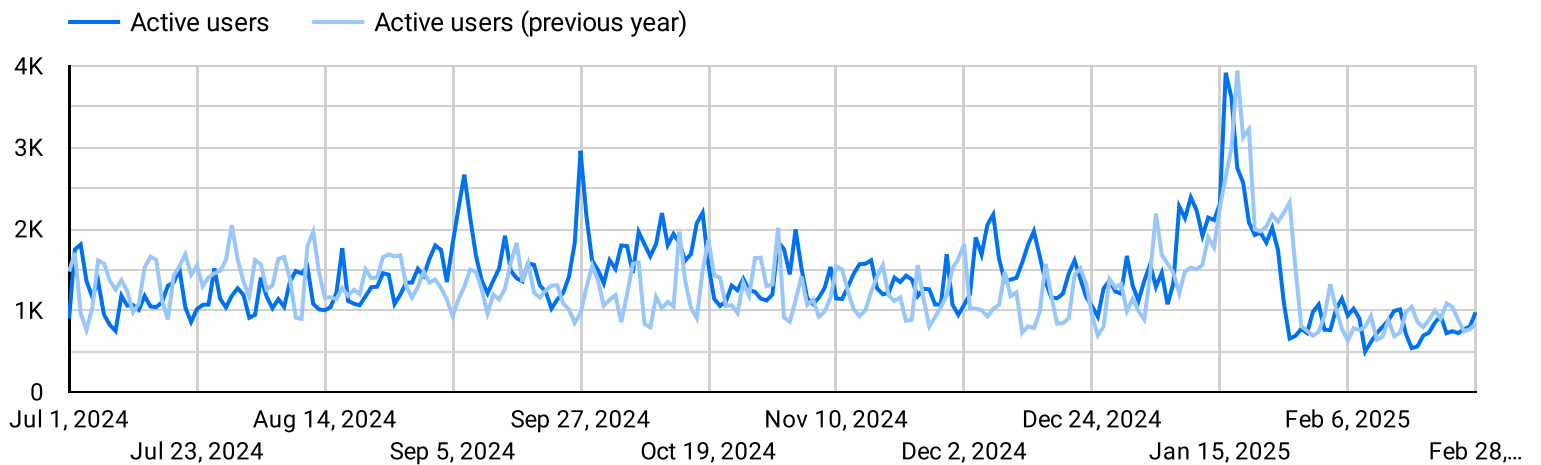
In March, the total number of website users was 25,012, an increase of 8% from March last year. Each user averaged almost 15 "events" on the site, including page views, scrolls, link clicks, video views, etc. Page views were up 2.5% from this month last year, totaling 90,065. This was about a 13,000 increase in users compared to last month. A great note for March, website acquisition from organic social content is up 95% compared to March of last year.

Total users
25,012
↑ 8.2%

Event count
366,325
↑ 6.1%

Event count per user
14.88
↓ -1.2%

Views
90,065
↑ 2.5%



PAGE PERFORMANCE

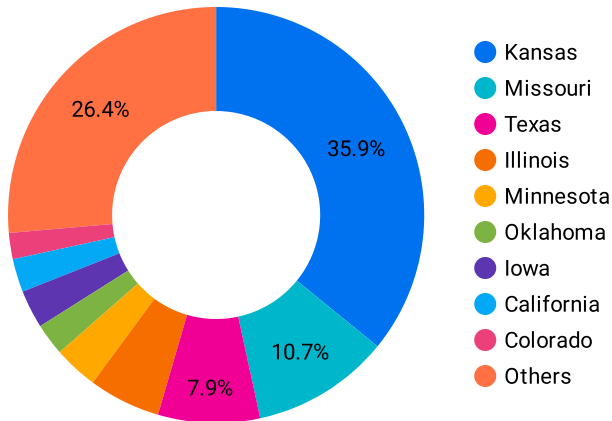
Page title	Views ▾	% Δ
Events Calendar - Unmistakably Lawren...	21,689	23.3% ↑
Eat - Unmistakably Lawrence	4,741	2.8% ↑
Explore - Unmistakably Lawrence	3,747	-4.7% ↓
Kiddos - Unmistakably Lawrence	2,898	-13.5% ↓
Concerts & Live Music	2,276	11.5% ↑
Downtown & Mass Street	2,276	3.1% ↑
Play - Unmistakably Lawrence	1,813	-12.9% ↓
Final Fridays in Lawrence, Kansas	1,701	-30.3% ↓
Top spots to grab a slice of pie in Lawre...	1,667	-
Visitors Guide - Unmistakably Lawrence	1,652	167.3% ↑
See - Unmistakably Lawrence	1,577	-28.5% ↓
8 Places to See Spring Flowers in Lawre...	1,302	-

ACQUISITION

Session default channel group	Sessions ▾	% Δ
Organic Search	21,329	17.3% ↑
Organic Social	4,484	95.3% ↑
Direct	3,452	5.3% ↑
Paid Search	2,291	-22.9% ↓
Referral	1,188	-29.5% ↓
Display	764	-4.5% ↓
Email	461	20.1% ↑
Unassigned	245	195.2% ↑
Cross-network	5	-

EXPLORELAWRENCE.COM

Monthly user demographics and traffic acquisition



Session source	Sessions	% Δ
google	22,503	11.5% ↑
m.facebook.com	3,819	113.6% ↑
(direct)	3,452	5.3% ↑
stackadapt	755	48.3% ↑
bing	630	3.8% ↑
Unmistakably Lawrence E-News	422	25.2% ↑
yahoo	293	36.9% ↑
l.facebook.com	269	-6.6% ↓
(not set)	225	251.6% ↑
ku.edu	219	-37.4% ↓

LEISURE ENEWS

Monthly tourism industry enews statistics

Recipients
8,569

Opens
3,584

Clicks
309

	Link	Clicks
1.	Bold Women Exhibit	152
2.	St. Patrick's Day Parade Annual E...	97
3.	March Live Music Blog	77
4.	Homepage	77
5.	Things to do with Kids page	74
6.	Events Calendar	56
7.	St. Patrick's Day Parade Regular E...	29
8.	Celebrating Women in Science Eve...	25
9.	Chicken & Biscuits Event	22
10.	Art of Local Event	19

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INDUSTRY ENEWS

Monthly tourism industry enews statistics

Recipients
1,330

Opens
570

Clicks
52

	Link	Clicks
1.	Travel KS Tourism Marketing Grants	28
2.	EL Homepage	28
3.	Bold Women Exhibit Event	24
4.	St. Patrick's Day Parade Event	14
5.	LJ World article about Codi Bates	13
6.	KU Powwow & Indigenous Culture...	12
7.	USA Today 10Best Brewpubs	9
8.	Lawrence Farmers Market Openin...	8
9.	AOL Best BBQ in Every State	6

1 - 10 / 10 < >

SOCIAL MEDIA

March's social media activity on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok resulted in an increase of over 360 new fans, over 230,000 impressions, 16,054 post engagements, and over 46,000 video views. Popular content included reels, athletic events, spring unmistakable events, and blogs.

Impressions
234,651

Engagement
16,054

Video Views
46,288

New Followers
368

Platform	Impressions	Engagement	Video Views	New Followers
Facebook	150,980	11,797	18,820	126
Instagram	77,397	3,640	16,551	192
TikTok	6,274	617	10,917	50

LAWRENCE PASSPORTS *Same report as January. No new passports to report.

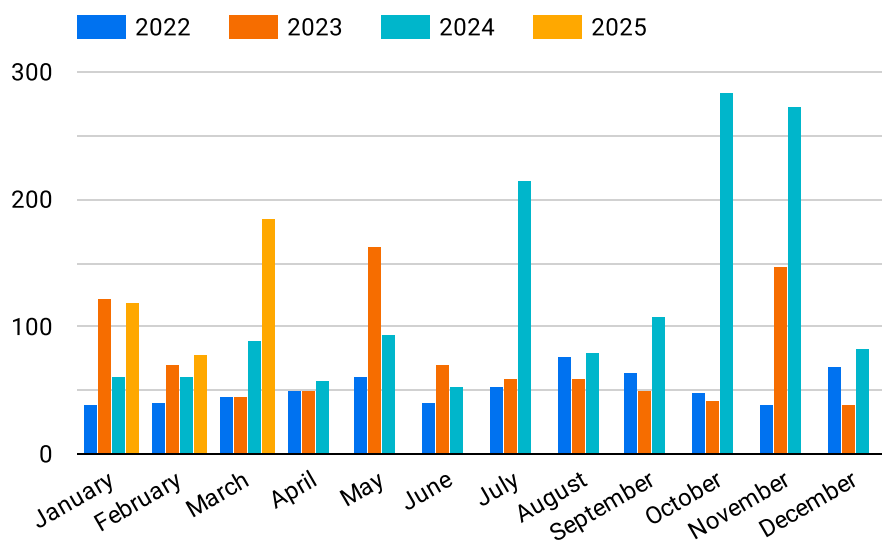
Pass	Pass Sign-ups	Check-ins	Offer Redemptions	Email Opt-ins
1.. Winter Wonder Pass	660	706	5	302
2.. MET&L Prairie Pour Tour	1229	null	null	null
3.. Cocktail Trail (LRA)	323	286	null	106
4.. Burger Battle	309	159	null	153

1 - 4 / 4 < >

WEBSITE INQUIRIES

The Visitors Center fulfills requests for Visitors Guides through the website. In January, there were 119 website inquiries for Visitors Guides and e-newsletter sign-ups. Visitors are asked about their interests when they request information.

WEBSITE INQUIRIES (Visitors Guide Requests & E-news Sign-ups)



WEBSITE INQUIRIES - INTERESTS

	Inte...	Count
1.	Wellness	52
2.	Universit...	68
3.	Shopping	101
4.	Recreation	73
5.	Other	31
6.	History	94
7.	Haunted	72
8.	Food	123

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NOTABLE UPDATES

We saw a 95.3% increase this month compared to this month last year in organic social content converting to website visits. Laurel has done a great job this year increasing our engaging content and web traffic.

We solidified a handful of fantastic sponsorships for TBEX (fall 2025) to increase our engagement and potential reach through travel writers, influencers, and media.

Allison attended a Destinations International Marketing Committee meeting and was placed on a subcommittee to plan the 2026 Destinations International Marketing & Communications Summit.

Allison was selected to be a judge for the Northeast Tennessee Tourism Awards.

Board Report – March 2025 – Sales

New LEAD/RFP's for March currently at 9 - YTD Goal of 15 60%

New for March

- National Association of Interpreters South Central Region – 2026 Conference (FEB)
- State Family – Community – Education Conference 2026 (October)

Assists 20 Assists YTD

New for March

- Under Armor Basketball Tournament – SPL 2025 (May)
- Roundball Classic – FSHS – JH Club – 2025 (June)
- Kansas Job's Daughter's - 2025 (June)
- Kansas Association of Collegiate Registrar's officer's 2025 (September)

Service Materials YTD Services provided : 2

New for March

- Job's Daugher's
- Kansas Forrest Services

Prospecting Opportunities Currently at 19 – YTD Goal 30 63%

- Meet Kansas Meet-up in Topeka at the Kay McFarland Garden, Topeka Zoo – Met with 30 members one on one from KSAE in Topeka – Meet Kansas Event – Kansas Look Book has been created to share at conferences.
- KSAE Roundtable Discussion – In Topeka, open discussion between Executives/CVB's? and Hotels. eXplore Lawrence Sponsored

Out and About

- Eldridge – Met Kim Randall, New Sales Manager
- Katie Vandervelde – OVG – Sales
- Stacey Singer – New Sales Manager @ Country Inn and Suites
- Paul's Better Bakery – Collab
- KSAE – Rondtable – KS Propane Association - Topeka
- Overland Park Limo – Collab

Definite Bookings March

- National Association of Interpreters – February 2026



April 18, 2025

eXplore Lawrence Board of Directors
200 W. 9th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Board Members,

I wanted to thank you for the professional development opportunity for me to be a part of the Leadership Lawrence Class of 2025. I have wanted to be a part of the program for a long time, but it never really worked out. I feel so lucky this was my year, and as all classes say, ours was definitely the best class!

I feel as though I've had a valuable year networking, familiarizing classmates with eXplore Lawrence, building working relationships, and partaking in the leadership learning models from KLC. Furthermore, touring and learning about all the assets Lawrence has in the non-profit and business communities has opened my eyes to the people who make Lawrence tick and the work they do.

I appreciate your investment in me. As we gear up our work for hosting visitors for World Cup, I know I will put my experiences from Leadership Lawrence into practice and represent eXplore Lawrence in the best way possible. I highly recommend the program to anyone, whether they are emerging leaders, or established community members.

Thank you again, and I'm happy to discuss my experiences if you're curious.

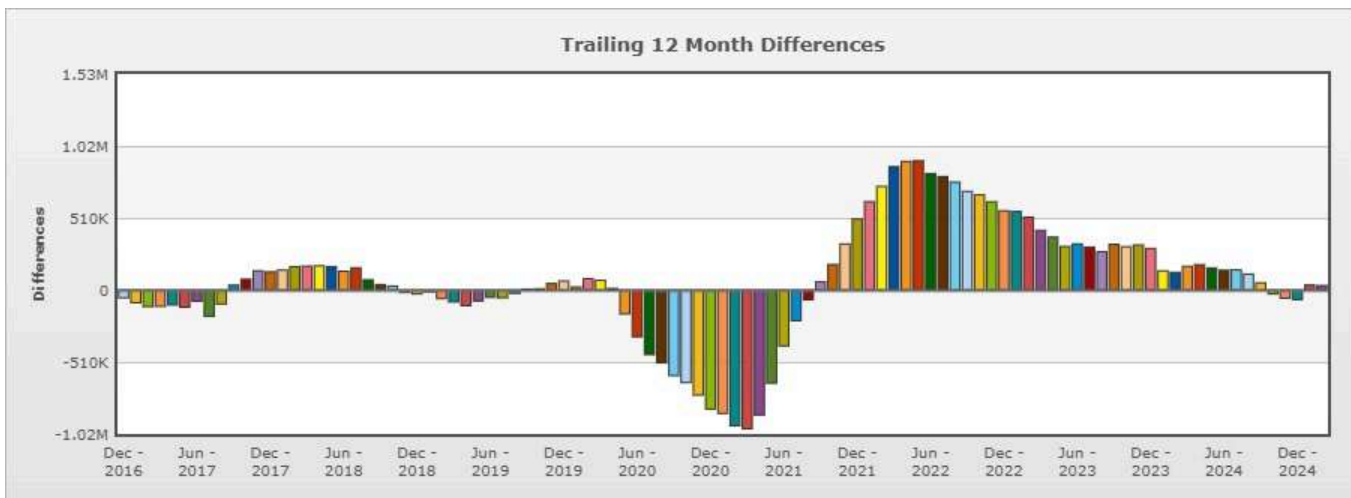
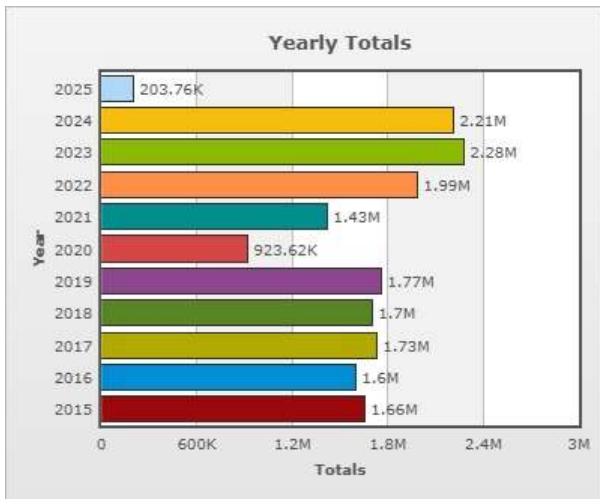
Ruth DeWitt

External Affairs and Sales Operations Manager



Month	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024/2025 % change
January	73,828	101,382	93,738	98,184	118,323	95,446	41,690	111,162	174,977	80,181	88,003	9.76%
February	77,086	99,205	94,007	113,533	84,797	115,542	58,116	108,425	119,220	119,371	115,753	-3.03%
March	95,280	105,298	116,791	132,019	123,763	103,118	61,061	158,537	162,399	208,819	0	
Qtr 1	246,194	305,885	304,536	343,736	326,883	314,106	160,867	378,124	456,596	408,371	203,756	2.11%
April	124,152	124,594	134,997	147,412	133,185	61,358	87,896	151,582	167,214	194,623	0	
May	126,642	147,762	152,491	152,041	184,797	37,870	116,471	199,887	217,061	210,991	0	
June	183,250	161,930	183,216	171,487	185,634	38,022	154,237	180,085	224,361	252,388	0	
Qtr 2	434,044	434,286	470,704	470,940	503,616	137,250	358,604	531,554	608,636	658,002	0	
July	37,085	138,574	133,188	152,087	168,245	58,308	127,254	174,977	200,428	228,298	0	
August	211,166	164,378	204,992	161,411	149,099	78,147	154,104	190,619	193,987	168,231	0	
September	235,022	128,957	155,957	148,506	170,578	102,374	161,468	154,860	200,813	184,465	0	
Qtr 3	483,273	431,909	494,137	462,004	487,922	238,829	442,826	520,456	595,228	580,994	0	
October	197,756	156,868	157,890	148,412	140,822	83,871	150,112	191,637	216,140	161,879	0	
November	177,325	142,512	167,915	147,600	164,907	93,603	167,993	193,553	231,109	238,950	0	
December	119,115	131,421	136,028	130,316	142,582	55,963	145,672	171,800	173,543	165,318	0	
Qtr 4	494,196	430,801	461,833	426,328	448,311	233,437	463,777	556,990	620,792	566,147	0	
Year Totals:	1,657,707	1,602,881	1,731,210	1,703,008	1,766,732	923,622	1,426,074	1,987,124	2,281,252	2,213,514	203,756	2.11%

** Transient Guest Tax increased from 5 to 6% in January of 2010





March 2025 LODGING REPORT

eXplore Lawrence has contracted with STR, Inc., a leading lodging industry research company, to provide monthly and annual lodging data for Lawrence, Kansas. The following report provides an analysis of the city.

There are six major areas of analysis contained in this report:

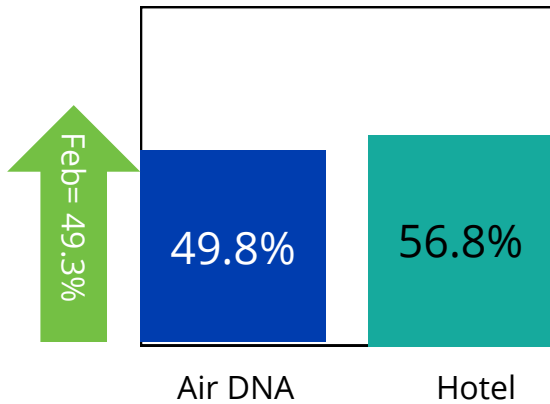
- 1) Occupancy Percent: Reflects the percentage of rooms occupied
- 2) Average Daily Rate (ADR): Reflects the average rate paid for rooms sold
- 3) RevPAR: Reflects the revenue per available room
- 4) Room Supply: Reflects the number of rooms available
- 5) Room Demand: Reflects the number of rooms sold
- 6) Room Revenue: Reflects the amount of revenue collected



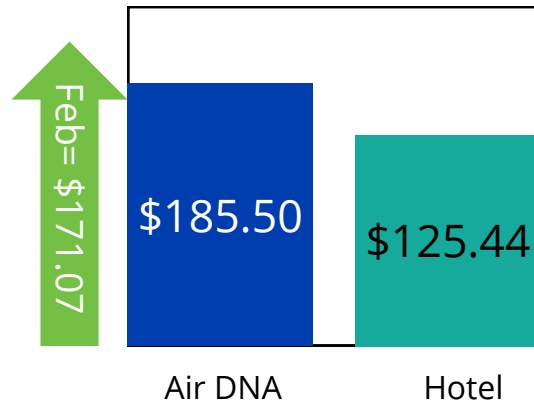
March Air DNA Report

A comparison of hotel vs short term rental data

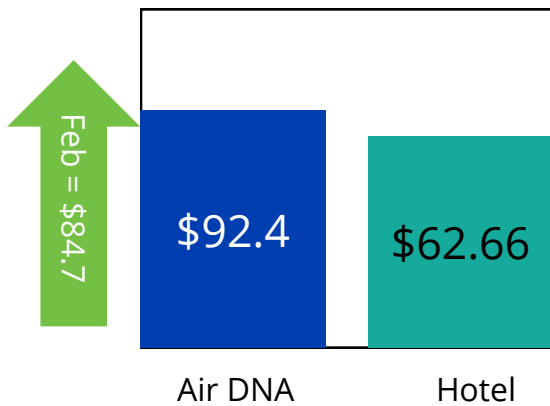
March Occupancy



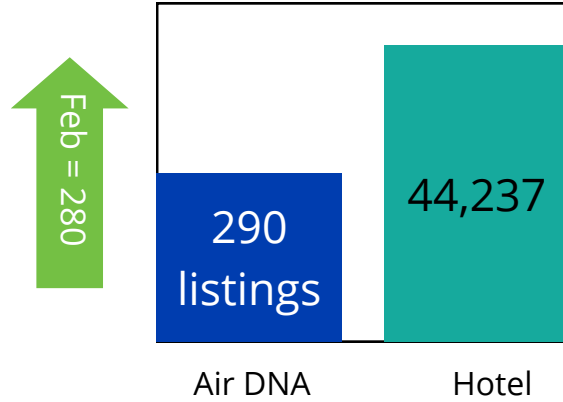
March ADR



March RevPAR



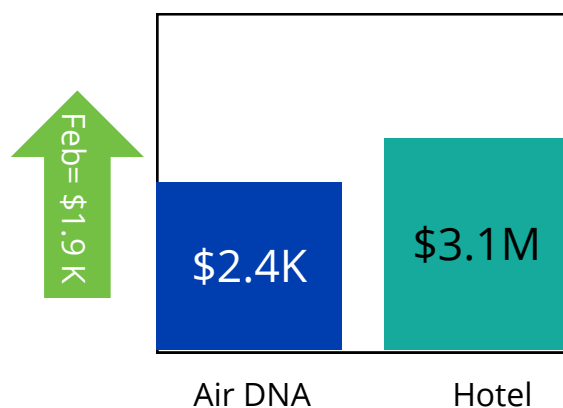
March Room Supply



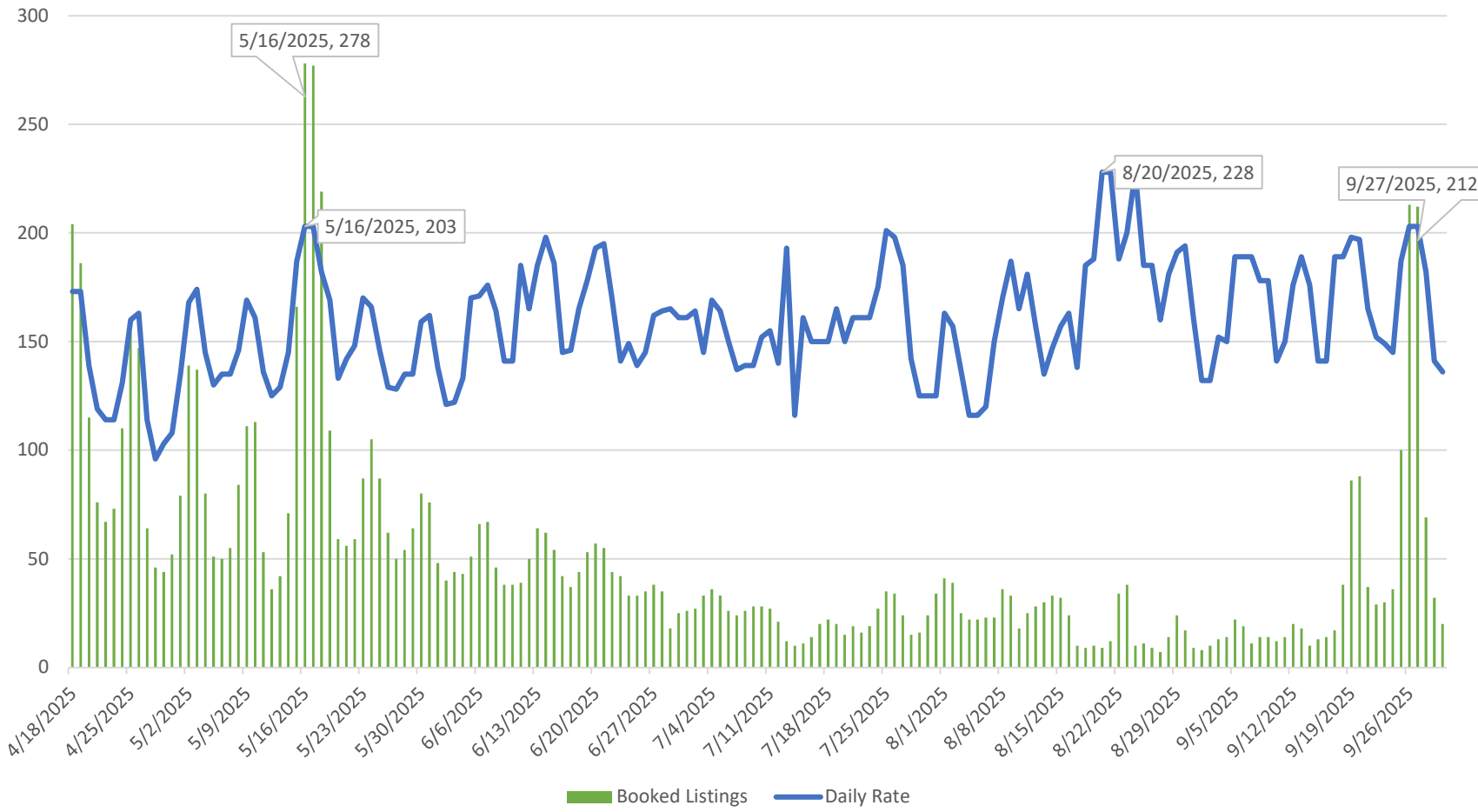
ADR/Bedroom

- 6 br \$357.30
- 5 br \$611.7
- 4 br \$406.70
- 3 br \$224.40
- 2 br \$142.80
- 1 br \$113.90

March Revenue



Air DNA Futur Bookings/ADR





Annual Report

2024





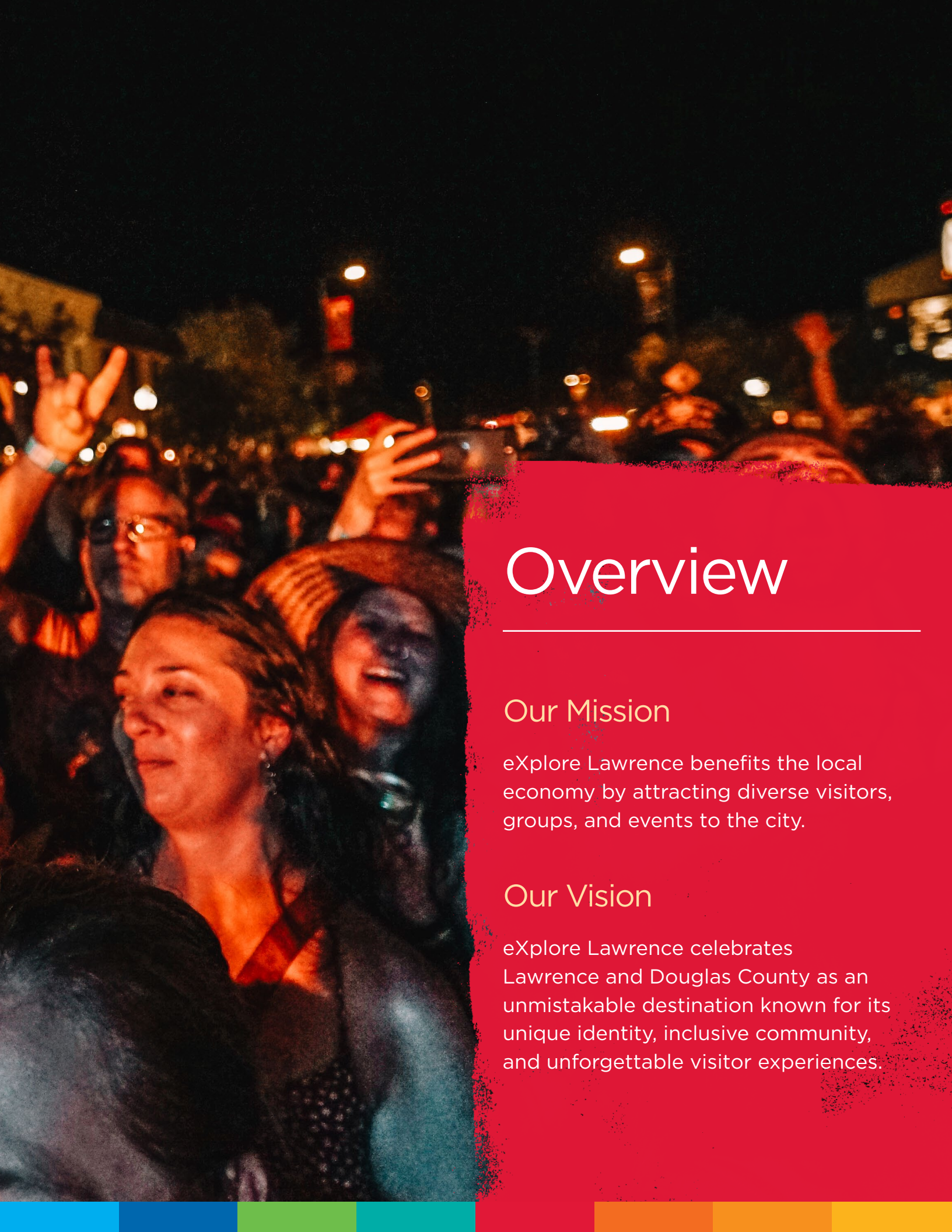
About Us:

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 tradeshows, 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.



We continue to be a data-driven destination management organization that increases economic development in Douglas County."





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

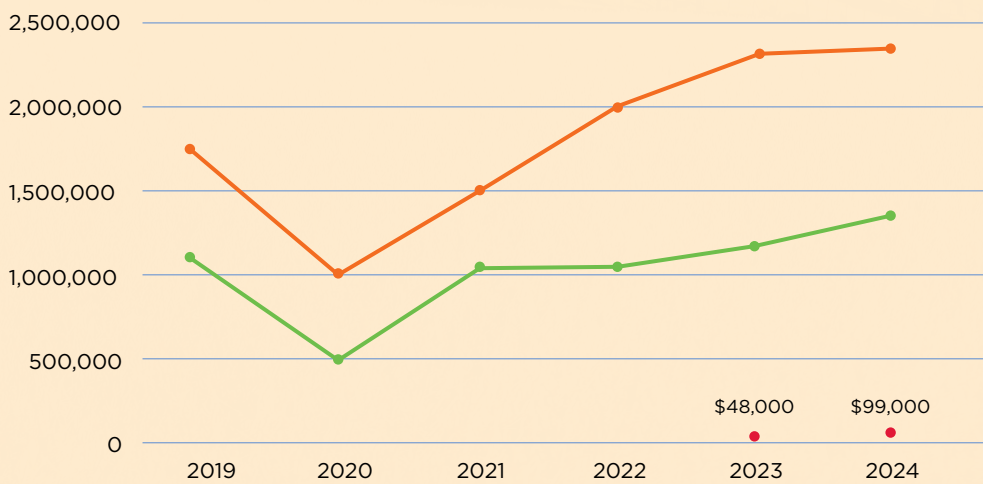
TGT Operating Fund	\$1,391,000
TGT Bid Fund	\$99,000
Visitors Guide	\$25,333
Merchandise	\$7,267
DMI	\$12,000
Coop Marketing	\$12,663
DTN	\$3,590
Misc	\$9,084
TOTAL	\$1,599,937

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

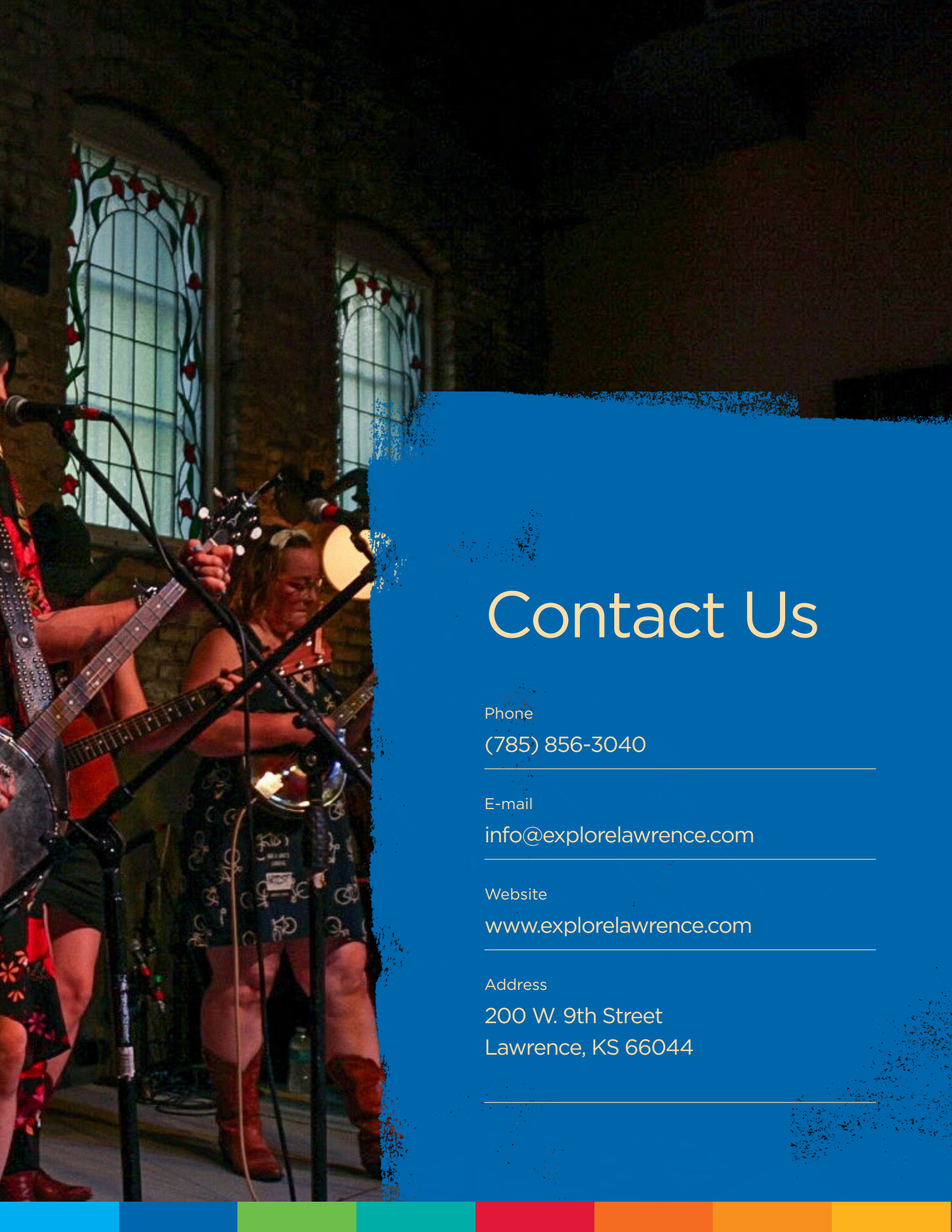
2024: **\$1,391,000**



EL TGT BID FUND

2024: **\$99,000**





Contact Us

Phone

(785) 856-3040

E-mail

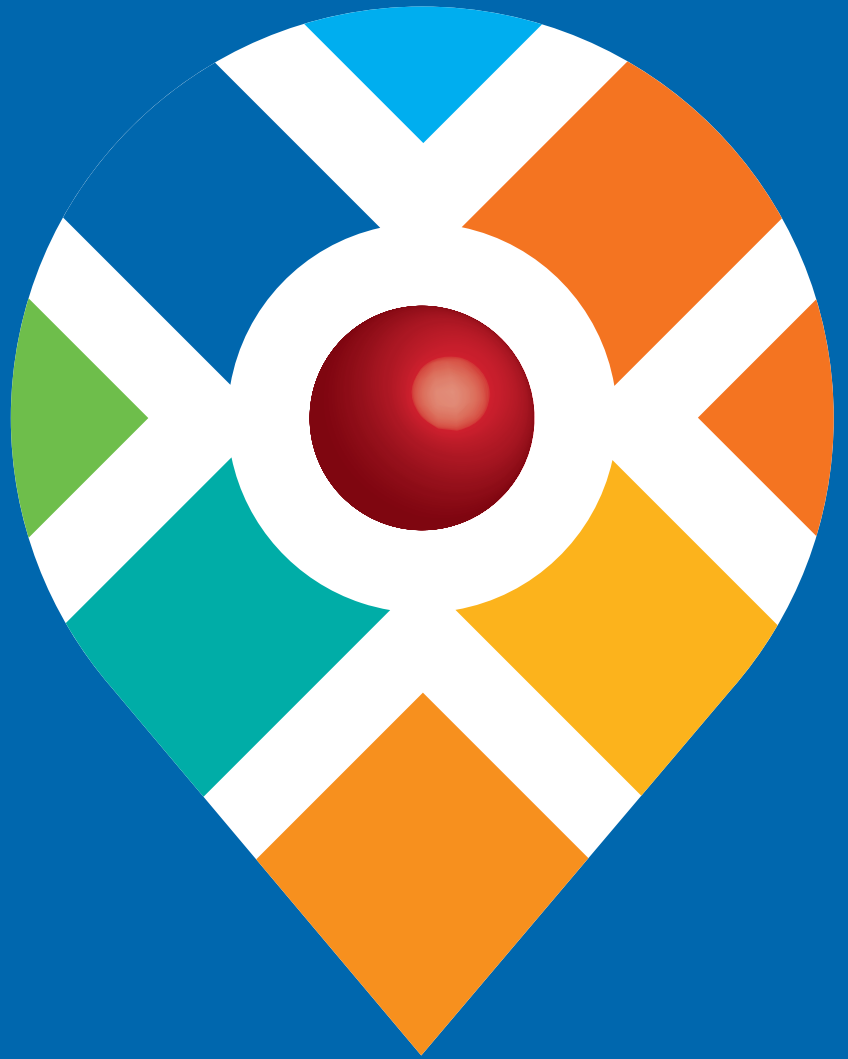
info@explorelawrence.com

Website

www.explorelawrence.com

Address

200 W. 9th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044



Annual Report 2024

