

City of Lawrence  
Outside Agency Annual Report  
For Calendar Year 2021

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at [dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org](mailto:dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org) by 5:00pm on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. To answer the following questions please refer to your [2021 application/agreement for funding](#).

**Reporting Period:** Calendar Year 2021

**Agency Name:** eXplore Lawrence

1. Refer to the program in which your agency received funding; provide a participant success story that helps demonstrate the accomplishments of the program.

See accompanying PDF Document

2. Refer to your 2021 agreement for funding; provide a brief narrative of the activities funded with City funds.

See Accompanying PDF Document

3. Refer to your 2021 agreement for funding; report what progress was made toward your proposed outcomes and comment as necessary.

Outcomes	List 2021 outcomes from agreement	Comment as necessary
Outcome #1	See Accompanying Report	
Outcome #2	See Accompanying Report	
Outcome #3	See Accompanying Report	

4. Refer to the line-item budget provided in your 2021 application for funding; is this accurate to how your allocation was actually spent? If no, what changed and why?

Budget Categories	Requested Amount	Actual Amount	Comment as necessary
Personnel	\$388,000	\$355,096	Due to budget instability, we were unable to rehire positions eliminated in COVID, and due to internal promotions.
Fees & Services			This is included in our operating expenses budget.
Estimates/Bids	\$45,000	\$21,688	EL was funded under projections through the summer as it was running \$344,000 under projections until December 2021. This is an area we cut back significantly to make-up the
Travel	10,000	5,501	We track travel under a general budget code and trade show code. I have separated it out for 2022. But both those budget lines include other costs. The only Travel that took place this year was for Sales activities related to trade shows. I

			have reflected that budget line in the requested VS actual fields; please be aware that includes staff travel and trade show registrations fees.
<b>Marketing</b>	\$156,000	\$99,283	EL was funded under projections through the summer as it was running \$344,000 under projections until December 2021. This is an area we cut back significantly to make-up the
<b>Cost of Materials</b>			
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	\$170,255	\$136,076	EL was funded under projections through the summer as it was running \$344,000 under projections until December 2021. This is an area we cut back significantly to make-up the
<b>Other</b>			
<b>Grand Total</b>			



# 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



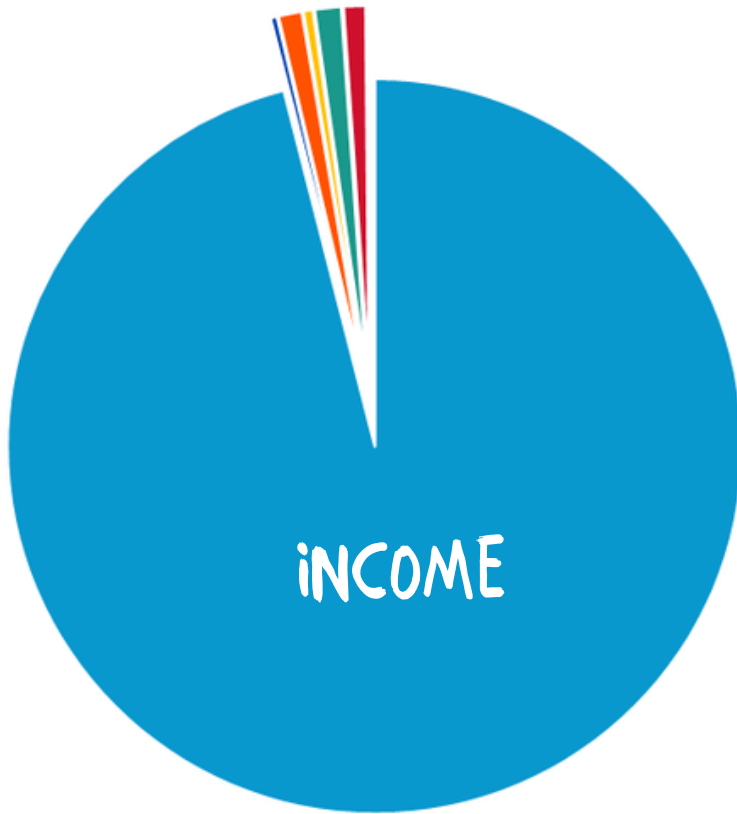
Kendra Brayfield  
Director of Sales



Andrea Johnson  
Director of Marketing & Communications



Caleb Deines  
Visitor Services Manager

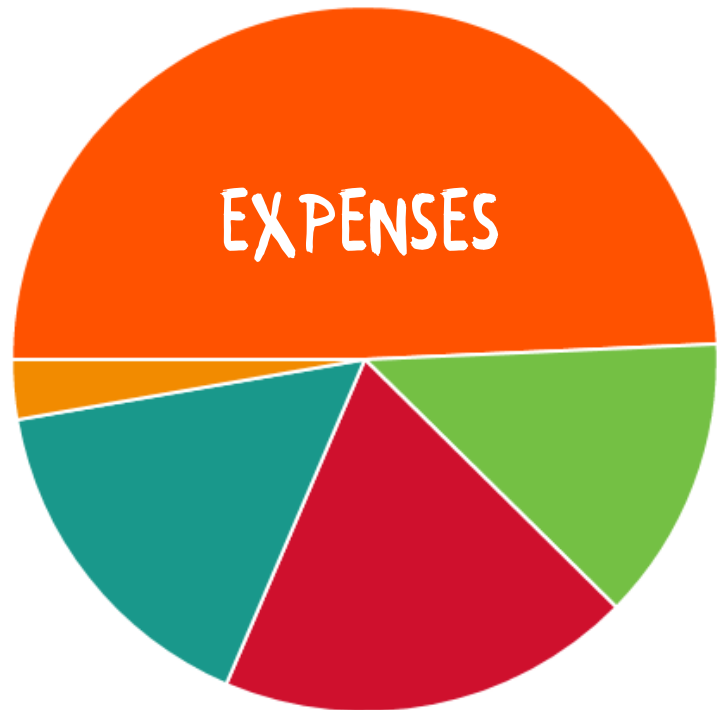


## \$1,036,581 TOTAL INCOME

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX \$995,210	MEETING MAX \$10,665
STATE GRANT \$10,000	MERC 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

7,282

WALK-IN  
VISITORS SERVED

\$2,754  
MERCHANDISE SALES

7,434  
BROCHURES AND  
MAPS DISTRIBUTED



Lawrence Visitors Center

## 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.

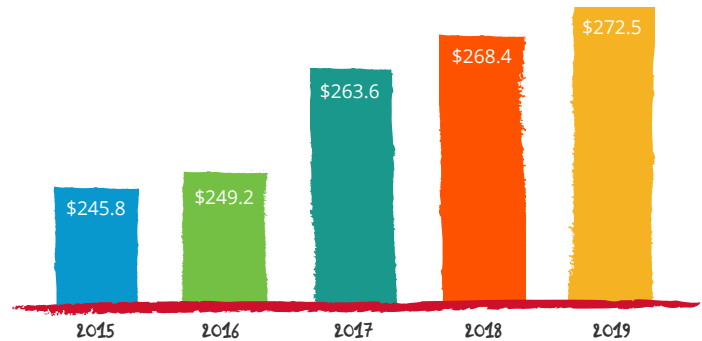
Visitor spending has increased by **\$27 million** since 2015, an increase of **11%**.

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

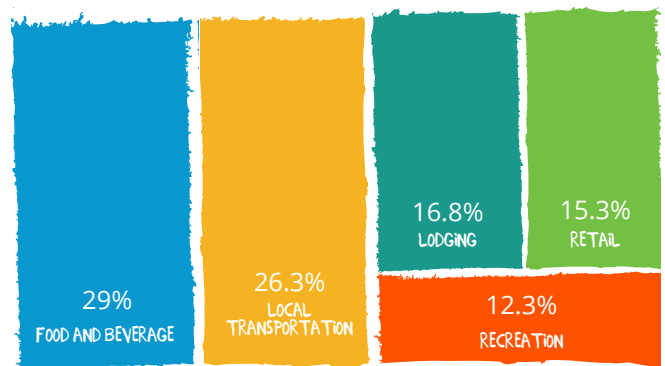
Spending at restaurants, bars, and grocery stores captures **29%** of each visitor dollar.

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

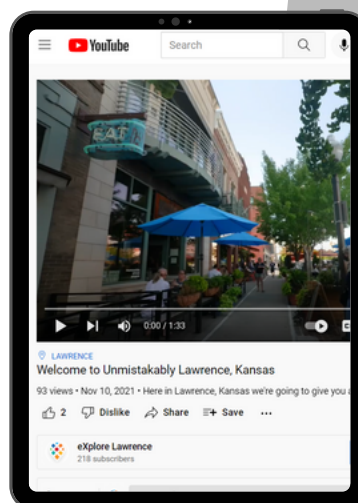
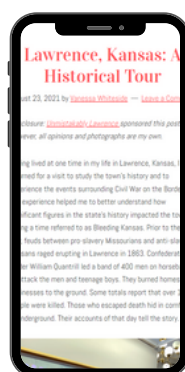
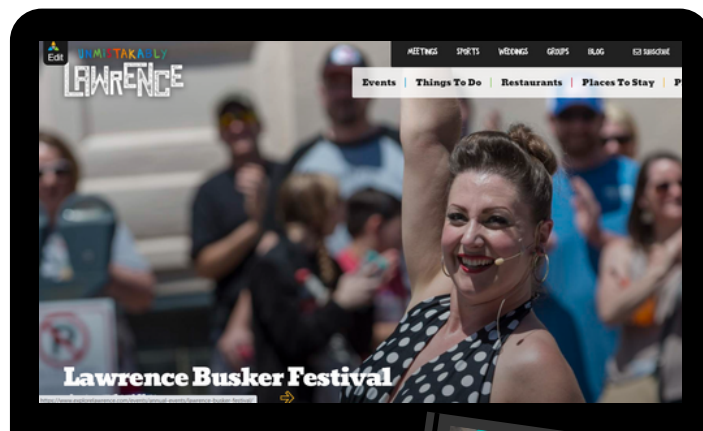
Midwest Living Best of the Midwest

KSAE Member Directory

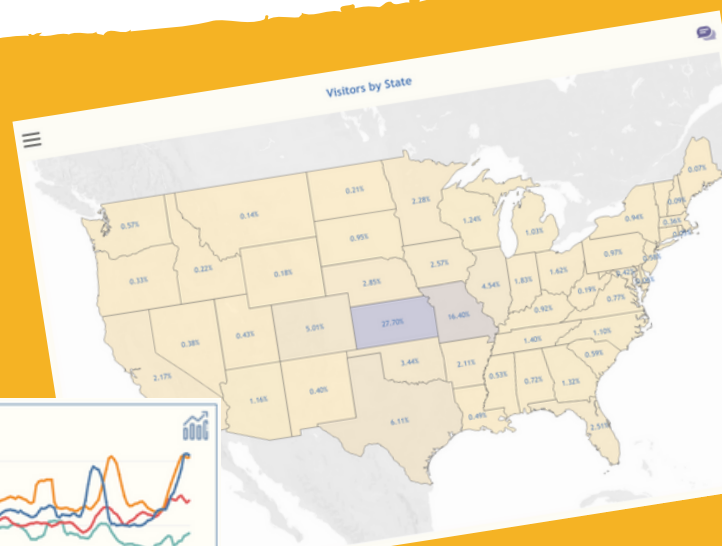
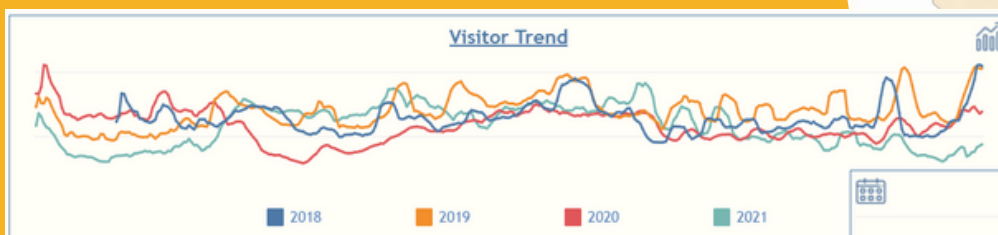
KCSAE Member Directory

## 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



# 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

200 W 9TH ST, LAWRENCE, KS 66044  
EXPLORELAWRENCE.COM

