

TO: TGT Committee
FR: TGT Funding Review Board
DT: August 18, 2015
RE: TGT funding recommendations for the additional 1%

In July, the TGT Committee put in place a formalized process to determine how funding would be allocated for the next 12 years. This is for the additional 1% TGT funding that will be extended beginning January 1, 2016, which is estimated to be \$4.8 million over the next 12 years.

The Committee called for applications to be submitted by August 15. The Review Board is comprised of six members--3 City staff members and 3 tourism industry representatives--and was selected by the TGT Committee. The TGT Committee gave the charge to the Review Board that recipients of TGT funds should demonstrate the ability to increase TGT funds (bring more tourists to Topeka) and quantify a return on the investment.

The Review Board reviewed 14 applications, requesting a total of over \$15 million. We used the following criteria to prioritize each project:

- Quantifiable return on investment
- Increase of TGT dollars and tourism
- Definitive plans of project and urgency
- Available funding from other sources
- Diversification in projects to allow for great expansion of tourism opportunities

First, the Board determined which applicants met the criteria. Second, the Board prioritized and ranked the applicants. Finally, the Board determined allocation of funds based on availability of funding and priority of project.

The following is what the Board recommends:

Applicant	Funding Request	Review Board Recommendation
Downtown Plaza	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 3,435,000
Evel Knievel Museum	\$ 500,000	\$ 300,000
Constitution Hall	\$ 935,000	\$ 355,000
Jayhawk Theatre	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 680,000
Planning Historic Grants (\$20k/year)	\$ 240,000	\$ -
Visit Topeka Research	\$ 100,000	\$ -
Visit Topeka Web	\$ 50,000	\$ -
Wayfinding Signs	\$ 325,000	\$ -
Chesney Park Mural	\$ 40,000	\$ -
Combat Air Museum	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Friends of the Zoo	\$ 2,480,000	\$ -
Great Overland Station	\$ 550,000	\$ -
Riverfront Park	\$ 2,300,000	\$ -
Topeka Horseshoe	\$ 200,000	\$ -
Total	\$ 15,225,000	\$ 4,770,000

Those that did not receive funding were still considered valuable tourism projects. However, we took several things into consideration, which made them lower priority for funds. We chose not to fund requests that were for maintenance and upkeep. We also considered which projects already have received funding. Some applicants simply did not meet the full criteria of adding TGT dollars back to the Topeka economy and have a clear return on the investment. Finally, it was the desire of the Board to diversify the funding allocation and fund a broad range of tourism attractions that can extend visitor stays.

While we wish we had \$15 million to fund all applicants over the next 12 years, these recommended allocations demonstrate the TGT Committee's commitment to growing tourism in Topeka. It would assist in establishing a world-class museum in the City, create a central downtown plaza for all to enjoy throughout the year, renovate a historical marker that will aid in the tourism of Topeka's national storied history, and renovate a theatre venue that has the potential to attract many to the City. We believe these projects will position the City of Topeka to garner more attraction for conventions, historical tourists, and many others.