

# 2020 VISIT KC ANNUAL REPORT



*Kansas City* **THE  
NEW  
MIDWEST**

*Igniting global passion for Kansas City*



## Friends and colleagues,

On behalf of our destination management team and its esteemed Board of Directors, we are proud to present to you our 2020 Annual Report.

Kansas City began 2020 on a winning streak—from a remarkable \$10-billion renaissance to our first Super Bowl victory in more than a generation. Then the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, dramatically impacting the ways we come together and conduct business. In a true testament to the Kansas City Spirit, our destination pivoted and once again displayed its trademark Midwestern grit and resiliency like it had many times before. James Beard chefs opened their doors to the less fortunate. Distillers began brewing hand sanitizer. And a destination on the rise rolled up its sleeves and got to work at home.

The same was true for our small but mighty organization. Despite a swift, dramatic hit to our budget and a 45-percent reduction in staff, the resourceful team at Visit KC persevered and still delivered several noteworthy strides on behalf of our destination. In that vein, here are a handful of the ways that Visit KC has turned its attention inward in 2020, working to support our neighbors during this time of collective need:

- Partnering with MMGY Global, we piloted a four-phased, **integrated marketing campaign** focused on crisis management, safe travel promotion and building consumer confidence. A modest media buy showcased the makers and doers of the New Midwest. Promoting staycations and road trips, the campaign was supported by social media, public relations and other cost-effective tactics put forth by our nimble, in-house marketing team.
- Launched the **KC Clean Commitment**, a program that united more than 100 regional businesses under a shared promise to reopen our economy through safe, standardized protocols.
- Utilized the Visit KC Foundation to support two new community initiatives—first collaborating with Chef Collective, Bank of America and other regional entities to launch **The Community Meals Project**. Tailored towards workforce preservation and food insecurity, the coalition fed more than 7,000 Kansas Citians in need every week during its peak.
- From a sales perspective, we successfully introduced a new **Safe Meetings** hub within VisitKC.com, arming our convention clients with a free suite of digital resources to help streamline event planning for this new normal.
- Looking ahead, we also successfully secured several new, lucrative pieces of businesses for the region. Yielding \$35 million in estimated future economic impact, we worked in close concert with the KC Sports Commission and local venues to secure three major **NCAA Championships** for 2023 and beyond.
- And finally, we collaborated with the Convention Center and the **Global Biorisk Advisory Council** to earn a global sanitation designation for KC's largest meeting space—an achievement instrumental to our future sales efforts.

These accomplishments—paired with Visit KC's recent **five-year contract renewal** with the City of Kansas City, Missouri—position us well to begin 2021 with momentum as our industry recovers.

In closing, we greatly appreciate your advocacy and stewardship of our organization, particularly during this everchanging and challenging period for our industry. Thank you for all that you do to propel our destination forward—we couldn't do it without you.

United with you in partnership,



**Cindy Circo**  
Visit KC Chair of the Board  
Senior Manager, Evergy



**Jason Fulvi, CDME**  
President & CEO  
Visit KC

# CONVENTION SALES & SERVICES

## [ 2020 Key Accomplishments ]

- Secured 108 **group bookings** in future business, generating 158,025 total room nights and \$126 million in future estimated economic impact.
- Assisted with the successful execution of **82 meetings and events** in Kansas City, for a total of 64,220 room nights actualized.
- Provided convention **housing assistance** for seven groups, accounting for 19,347 total room nights before shutdown.
- Attended 10 industry **tradeshows and marketplaces** in-person and exhibited at four virtual tradeshows over the course of the year.
- Launched the Visit KC **Safe Meetings Hub**, serving as a one-stop digital resource for planners to stay up to date on current state and local emergency orders, health/sanitation guidelines and safety protocols.
- Attended monthly City scheduling and parking meetings to discuss convention and event needs, uniting all City entities together for **streamlined communication**.
- Provided **convention services** to 13 organizations not directly booked through Visit KC.
- Planned and executed 34 in-person or virtual **site visits**, utilizing new organizational protocols and PPE kits to conduct business safely.
- Achieved a 100-percent rating for Visit KC's convention services through **client satisfaction surveys**.
- Collaborated with the Convention Center and the **Global Biorisk Advisory Council** to earn a global sanitation designation for KC's largest meeting space—an achievement instrumental to future sales efforts.







MEETINGS HELD IN KC	2018	2019	2020*
Conventions	290	344	82
Room Nights	354,113	364,764	64,220
Attendance	366,607	405,562	73,420
Economic Impact	\$275,099,523	\$269,618,720	\$49,675,755

\* Dropoff in conventions due to pandemic began in March 2020.

CONVENTION SALES ACTIVITY	2018	2019	2020
Meetings Booked	295	413	108
Definite Room Nights	444,763	452,381	158,025
Leads Generated	847	1,149	554
Tentative Room Nights	1,566,391	2,237,783	1,018,434
Site Visits	96	121	34
Convention Center Bookings	53	47	21
Convention Center Room Nights	329,274	298,232	110,032

MAJOR BOOKINGS IN 2020 – BY ROOM NIGHTS		
Organization/Meeting	Event Date	Room Nights
USA Volleyball	April 2024	27,502
Cerner Corporation	October 2021	11,885
International Association of Fire Chiefs	August 2026	10,625
Big 12 Men's Basketball Championship	March 2023	10,600
American Angus Association	Oct./Nov. 2025	6,123
Big 12 Women's Basketball Championship	March 2023	5,900
MultiMedia Animal Care	August 2021	5,150
National Association of Free Will Baptists	July 2025	4,205
Heart of America Volleyball	January 2024	3,850
Folk Alliance International	February 2023	3,595



# MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & FILM

## [ 2020 Key Accomplishments ]

- Partnered with MMGY Global to pilot a four-phased, **integrated marketing campaign** focused on crisis management, safe travel promotion and building consumer confidence. A modest media buy showcased the makers and doers of the New Midwest. Promoting staycations and road trips, the campaign was supported by social media, public relations and other cost-effective tactics put forth by our in-house marketing team.
- Promoted Kansas City's convention package to prospective meeting planners, amassing more than 20 million impressions in **convention marketing** through trade advertising, earned media, e-mail marketing, paid search and social media.
- Generated nearly 300 articles and stories about Kansas City through **public relations**, eclipsing 160 million impressions in earned media. Major coverage for Visit KC and its partners in 2020 included stories by *Travel + Leisure*, *AFAR*, *Fodor's* and *Lonely Planet*.
- Utilized Visit KC's official **social media** platforms as a key communications tactic during the pandemic, amassing more than 794,000 engagements and nearly 135,000 referrals to VisitKC.com.
- Assisted 193 new film productions through the **KC Film Office**, including feature-films *The Stylist* and *My Sweet Holiday* as well as commercial projects for Adidas and Tostitos. The local estimated economic impact of all projects filmed in 2020 totaled \$11.2 million (up from \$10.2 million in 2019).
- Conceptualized and implemented the **KC Clean Commitment**, an initiative uniting more than 100 regional businesses under a shared promise to reopen the KC economy through safe, standardized protocols.
- Launched the fourth season of **KC Tap Tour** using a new, all-digital platform. The self-guided experience drove visitation to 22 metro breweries for carryout deals and taproom specials. The campaign sold more than 1,125 digital passes and realized more than 4,000 check-ins.
- Garnered the organization's first **Mid-America Emmy**, partnering with Proximity Video and Ruby Jean's Juicery to tell owner Chris Goode's story through a video series which highlighted local doers and makers.





ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS	2018	2019	2020
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#### Leisure

Media Budget	\$1,300,000	\$1,277,601	<b>\$1,350,709</b>
Local Media Partner Investment*	\$590,962	\$514,162	<b>\$574,948</b>
State of Missouri Investment	\$217,075	\$327,499	<b>\$322,997</b>
Paid Media Impressions	165,645,436	171,068,471	<b>216,121,894**</b>

\* Contracted investment less membership dues

\*\* Impressions met due to MDT matching grant supplemental marketing efforts

#### Convention

Advertising Impressions	29,494,840	25,700,107	<b>10,937,240 ♦</b>
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♦ Convention media budget eliminated in April due to pandemic

INTERACTIVE MARKETING	2018	2019	2020
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Web Visits	4,082,033	3,797,741	<b>2,707,603</b>
E-mail Lead Generation	41,263	40,830	<b>9,782</b>

COMMUNICATIONS	2018	2019	2020
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#### Media Relations

Publications Assisted	410	352	<b>282</b>
Earned Media/PR Impressions	207,329,799	225,410,965	<b>160,165,587</b>

#### Social Media

Total Followers	404,772	416,424	<b>436,685</b>
Engagements	1,026,179	1,235,225	<b>794,647</b>

FILM OFFICE	2018	2019	2020
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Productions Assisted	222	210	<b>193</b>
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# PARTNERSHIPS & EVENTS

## [ 2020 Key Accomplishments ]

- Collaborated with a roster of more than 970 active **industry partners**, including 33 new partnerships and 26 advertising partners.
- Hosted the 11th Annual **Kansas City Restaurant Week** in partnership with the Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association and presented by Sysco. The event featured 10 days of special, multi-course menus at a record 219 area restaurants and raised more than \$380,000 for local charities, including featured beneficiary The Don Bosco Centers.
- Welcomed more than 650 industry partners to the **2020 Annual Tourism Outlook** in February, featuring an experiential reception of KC's makers and doers at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.
- Coordinated the Visit KC Foundation's participation as a launch partner for **The Community Meals Project**, an initiative that served more than 55,000 meals to those in need in the KC community.
- Hosted a **Virtual Partner Update**, outlining Visit KC's pandemic strategies and partner opportunities, to more than 100 members.
- Identified and secured a new **Downtown Visitor Information Center** along the KC Streetcar route, slated to open to the public in 2021.





PARTNERS BY CATEGORY	2018	2019*	2020
Accommodations	115	111	<b>113</b>
Arts and Culture	126	152	<b>153</b>
Attractions	189	29	<b>30</b>
Breweries	18	26	<b>31</b>
Casinos	5	4	<b>4</b>
Convention Services	181	95	<b>94</b>
Dining	249	231	<b>222</b>
Entertainment	68	24	<b>29</b>
Organizations	55	33	<b>38</b>
Shopping	124	39	<b>47</b>
Sports & Recreation	115	148	<b>141</b>
Tours & Sightseeing	37	41	<b>42</b>
Transportation	28	26	<b>26</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>970</b>

\* New CRM system launched in 2019, changing how partners were tabulated/categorized.



PARTNER REVENUES	2018	2019	2020*
Partnership Dues	\$401,869	\$511,989	<b>\$251,374</b>
Hotel Lead Share	\$349,083	\$341,108	<b>\$39,362</b>
Web/Collateral Advertising	\$123,106	\$137,183	<b>\$51,127</b>
Marketing Campaign Partners	\$799,921	\$645,217	<b>\$590,698</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,673,979</b>	<b>\$1,635,497</b>	<b>\$932,461</b>

\* Out of sensitivity to partner hardships during pandemic, all dues and invoices were halted April-Dec. 2020.





# FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

## [ 2020 Key Accomplishments ]

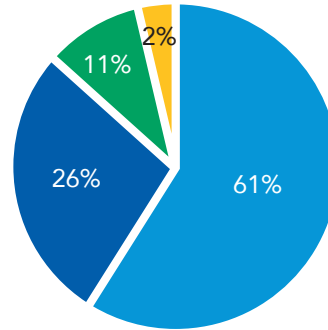
- Finalized a five-year **contract extension** with the City of Kansas City, Missouri, as its official destination management organization (DMO) with an additional one-year renewal option.
- Completed the **2019 financial audit** on time, garnering a “clean” audit opinion with noted improvements in Visit KC’s overall financial position including increases in cash, net assets and Board-designated reserves.
- Implemented a **tactical plan** to facilitate the furlough and subsequent downsizing of personnel by 41%—a necessary cost-savings measure enacted due to the pandemic.
- Modified the organization’s 2020 **financial plan** in response to COVID-19, including significant expenditure reductions and the adoption of new financial policies for all functions including budget, procurement and contracting.
- Revamped the 2021 **budget process** to increase transparency and accessibility to internal and external users.
- Assisted with the completion of an audit by the City of Kansas City, Missouri, focusing on the improvement of Visit KC’s performance and financial **contractual reporting requirements**.
- Converted all personnel to a **remote-work** environment for added safety, functionality and expense reduction.
- Worked with the **U.S. Travel Association** and other industry partners across the nation to expand Payment Protection Program eligibility to non-profits and quasi-governmental DMOs.
- Partnered with Sophic Solutions, LLC, to conduct an all-team discussion regarding **race relations** in America to coincide with local and national events.
- Improved organizational tactics towards **representation**, specifically through the establishment of goals and functions of the Diversity in Destination Management Committee.
- Relocated Visit KC’s administrative offices to the **Spark collaborative space**, allowing Visit KC to right-size its operating footprint, streamline overhead costs and continue its commitment to serve as good stewards of public dollars.





## 2020 EXPENDITURES BY TARGET AUDIENCE

● <b>Operational</b>	> 61% / \$5,580,843
● <b>Destination Marketing Audience</b>	> 26% / \$2,398,295
● <b>Sales Audience</b>	> 11% / \$995,976
● <b>Local Audience</b>	> 2% / \$162,324
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	> <b>\$ 9,137,438</b>



## 2020 REVENUES

Convention/Tourism Tax	\$4,991,567
Arena Business Fees	\$863,164
Marketing Campaign Partners	\$590,698
State Co-op Funding	\$2,633,043
Partnership Dues	\$251,374
Hotel Lead Share	\$39,362
Convention Services Revenue	\$100,780
Web/Collateral Advertising	\$51,127
Film Office	\$141,667
Other	\$527,640
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$10,190,422</b>
TIF Expenditures	(\$523,269)
<b>REVENUE (NET OF TIF)</b>	<b>\$9,667,153</b>





# 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Leadership

CHAIR – **Cindy Circo** / Senior Manager, Customer Solution Business Center, Evergy\*

VICE CHAIR – **Jeanette Prenger** / President & CEO, ECCO Select\*

SECRETARY – **Jim Snow** / Complex General Manager, Westin Crown Center/Sheraton KC Hotel\*

TREASURER – **Randy Wisthoff** / Executive Director & CEO, Kansas City Zoo\*

## Members (in alphabetical order)

- **Vic Allred** / President, Jazz, A Louisiana Kitchen\*
- **Rodney Bland** / General Manager, Staffing Impact, LLC
- **Mike Cappel** / Associate, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP
- **Carla Chavarria** / Senior Vice President of Human Resources, AMC Theatres
- **Alan Dietrich** / Chief Operating Officer, Sporting Kansas City\*
- **Brian Johnson** / Managing Director, Loews Kansas City Hotel
- **Bob Kendrick** / President, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum
- **Steve Klika** / Commissioner, 3rd District, Johnson County, Kansas
- **Teresa Loar** / Councilwoman, 2nd District-At-Large, City of Kansas City, Missouri\*
- **David Lopez** / General Manager, Manny's Mexican Restaurant
- **Riccardo Lucas** / President & CEO, N.STRIDE Consulting, LLC
- **Pat Macdonald** / Senior Philanthropic Advisor, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation\*
- **Kevin O'Neill** / Councilman, 1st District, City of Kansas City, Missouri
- **Stacey Paine** / President, Crown Center Redevelopment Corp.
- **Kevin Pistilli** / President, Raphael Hotel Group\*
- **Nia Richardson** / Assistant to the Director for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, KC Bizcare
- **Kris Riddell** / Legal Administrator, German May PC
- **Melissa Robinson** / Councilwoman, 3rd District, City of Kansas City, Missouri
- **Earnest Rouse** / Acting City Manager, City of Kansas City, Missouri\*
- **Maria Salcedo** / Partner, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, LLP
- **Philip Strnad** / General Manager, Hilton President Kansas City
- **Lyllette Utz** / Managing Partner & President, Global Green Solutions, LLC

\* Denotes members of Executive Committee

## Ex-Officio Members

- **Gregg Givens** / Chief Financial Officer, Park University
- **George Guastello** / President & CEO, Union Station Kansas City
- **Amy Jordan Wooden** / President & CEO, AJW Consulting, LLC
- **Pat Klein, Director** / Aviation Department, City of Kansas City, Missouri
- **Kurt Mayo** / Executive Director, Hotel & Lodging Association of Greater Kansas City
- **Oscar McGaskey** / Director, Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department, City of Kansas City, Missouri
- **Kathy Nelson** / President & CEO, Kansas City Sports Commission and Foundation
- **Rosemary Salerno** / Community Volunteer
- **Bill Teel** / Executive Director, Greater Kansas City Restaurant Association

## Executive Committee Ex Officio Members

- **Bill George** / President, KCTG\*
- **CiCi Rojas** / (Immediate Past Chair), President, Tico Productions & Tico Sports\*
- **Troy Stremming** / President & CEO, AdAstra Strategies\*
- **Brenda Tinnen** / Senior Vice President & General Manager, AEG-Kansas City, T-Mobile Center\*

# Kansas City

## THE NEW MIDWEST



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