



City of Topeka

Community Priority Setting: The First Step to Outcome-based Budgeting

April 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Comparing Work Group Goals with Final Priorities	5
Next Steps	7
Appendices	8

Executive Summary

Topekans want their community to be:

- Clean and well kept, with codes, policies, programs and practices that support a beautiful city.
- Safe for all, relying not just on municipal resources but also on community partnerships.
- Accessible, with affordable housing and infrastructure that allows for connections.
- Good stewards of financial, natural and public resources.

That was the outcome of a community engagement process conducted during the first quarter of 2022 to further refine the Mayor and City Council's priorities with citizens' hopes for Topeka. It came after the Council adopted its 2022 budget in which the following five priorities were identified.

1. Investing in Infrastructure
2. Continuing a Commitment to Developing Neighborhoods
3. Continuing a Commitment to Public Safety
4. Selected Strategic Investments toward Quality of Life
5. Good Governance and Improving Fiscal Sustainability

Five work groups comprising about 25 stakeholders each were established for each. Those groups met virtually in four-hour sessions in which they envisioned what community success would look like in five years; what actions needed to be taken to make progress toward that success; and what the priorities should be. Over the course of each work group, 17 goals were established along with nearly 150 objectives.

Full reports for each of the work groups appear in the appendices. Themes that emerged from those discussions were that:

- Community appearance is important. The City should continue its focus on code enforcement, blight abatement, and other beautification measures.
- Safety is critical and requires a holistic approach involving not just a range of city departments but also community members.
- Partnerships are essential to community progress. The City should build on existing partnerships and develop new ones to make progress in each of the priority areas.
- Invest in young Topekans is essential. Discussions ranged from childcare to internships to activities to technology advancement.
- Continued community engagement is essential in building a community of belonging and in decision making, including addressing the needs of those without shelter,

supporting those with a range of disabilities, and recognizing the value of a diverse community.

- The availability of public transportation is essential to a strong community.

During the final workshop, all work group participants were invited to come together to review the results of each of the discussion, identify priorities within each category and ultimately determine priorities across all categories. (Goals within the fiscal sustainability category were not identified given a lack participation at the scheduled workshop.) The focus of the prioritization exercise was on the 17 goals; the following table shows the results of electronic polling in priority order.

Priority	Goal
1	Focus on Topeka as a vibrant and beautiful community.
2	Expand the stock of quality and affordable housing.
3	Ensure equitable investments across the community.
4	Enhance the safety of neighborhoods.
5 (tie)	Engage community partners to foster healthy neighborhoods
	Work toward sustainable infrastructure
6	Topeka is accessible to all.
7	Reduce the unsheltered population and provide the resources they need.
8	Implement innovative public safety programs
9	Foster partnerships to enhance public safety.
10	Topeka protects its investments.
11 (tie)	Topeka is a community of belonging.
	Topeka is a top city in technology,
	Develop businesses on a neighborhood scale.
	Provide resources necessary to public safety departments.
12	Expand transportation opportunities.
13	Become “the place to be.”

Comparing Work Group Goals with Final Priorities

The following table shows the goals identified in each of the four facilitated work groups and the top objective for each goal. The goals that are in bold are those that were the top five priorities in the final workshop. (In the event of a tie, both objectives are shown.)

Council Priority	Goal	Top Objectives
Neighborhoods	Affordable Housing (2)	Coordinate efforts with absentee landlords
	Business Development	Implement creative approaches for childcare
	Neighborhood safety (4)	Increase community policing efforts
	Expand transportation network	Collaborate with the Metro Transit Authority to provide full-service bus service
		Implement environmentally friendly modes
	Engage community partners for healthy neighborhoods (5)	Develop neighborhood strategic plans
Quality of Life	Community of belonging	Create opportunities for young adults to come to/stay in Topeka
	A vibrant and beautiful community (1)	Establish a comprehensive blight reduction program
	Top city in tech	Establish community access to broadband
	Topeka is a place to be	No one objective was a clear priority
	Ensure equitable investment across the community (3)	Eliminate food deserts
Infrastructure	Topeka is accessible to all.	Increase community engagement in infrastructure decisionmaking process.
	Move toward sustainable infrastructure (5)	Employ lifecycle planning when making infrastructure investments.
	Topeka protects its investments.	Continue to develop system master plans
Public Safety	Foster partnerships to enhance public safety.	Establish public information campaign to inform stakeholders how they can partner in community safety.
	Reduce the unsheltered population and provide resources.	Expand wrap-around mental health services and facilities
	Implement innovative public safety programs	Increase funding of the CIT program so teams can cover all shifts
	Provide necessary resources to public safety departments	Increase sustainability in department equipment and facilities.

As can be seen:

- Stakeholders understand the importance of neighborhoods to a vibrant community. Three of the top five priorities identified in the final workshop are goals established as continuing a commitment to investing in neighborhoods: affordable housing, enhanced safety, and pursuing partnerships.
- They want an enhanced quality of life, with two of the top final priorities identified as part of the QOL discussion – a vibrant and beautiful community and equitable investments across the community; and finally,
- Stakeholders understand the importance of infrastructure to support all realms of the community.

Next Steps

The Mayor and City Council intend to use the feedback generated through this process in its outcome-based budgeting process. What this means is that rather than starting from the previous year's budget allocations and either simply increasing or decreasing the amounts, the governing body will consider what matters most to its citizens. In other words, what do the citizens want for their community.

The following diagram illustrates what that might look like. It starts with the Council's priority to continue its commitment to developing neighborhoods (the blue bubble). The work group focused on that priority subsequently identified five goals, one of which was to enhance the safety of neighborhoods (the orange bubble.) Four objectives are in the yellow bubbles, and specific programs that could be funded are in the green bubbles. Ultimately the Council will be considering what resources are necessary to achieve citizens' desired outcome of safer neighborhoods.



Appendices

Topeka Community Priority Setting: Continuing a Commitment to Developing Neighborhoods

January 25, 2022

Participant Introductions

Participants were asked to introduce themselves, their position or affiliation, and share their hopes for this process.

- **Anna Walker:** Artisan. Has lived in the southeast side of Topeka for over five years and lived on the west side for more than 20 years. Loves her neighbors and wants to be better connected, perhaps through activism.
- **Michael Bell:** Current President of Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association, Member of Citizen Advisory Council, Board Member of Central Topeka Grocery Oasis, and Member of Topeka Alliance for Good Government. Hopes that the city prioritizes the people and low to moderate-income (LMI) neighborhoods moving forward.
- **Marcia Lessenden:** Concerned about the crime rate and hopes something can be done about it.
- **Jim Edwards:** Chair of the Board of Trustees for Shawnee County Library. Hopes to hear what others have to say about improvements that Topeka can make.
- **Laura Pederzini:** President of North Topeka West Neighborhood Improvement Association. Hopes to come up with goals to help drastically improve our neighborhoods relating to crime, maintenance, etc.
- **Lazone Grays Jr.:** President of IBSA Incorporated. Hopes to see better policies put together to help with the disparities in neighborhoods.
- **Christina Valdivia-Alcala:** City Council District 2 representative. Hopes to see the city make a real commitment to change and lift the oldest neighborhoods in Topeka; a real movement for LMI communities.
- **Bob Clawson:** Involved in the Rotary Club in Topeka. Hopes that every neighborhood in the city benefits from safety, a clean neighborhood, and better economic opportunities.

- **Karen Hiller:** Councilwoman for District 1. Is involved in DREAM program and works on inclusion and equity. Hopes to see the outcome and goals performance-based for the budget and planning to see where we end up.
- **Monique Glaude:** Director of Engagement for the City of Topeka. Hopes to identify potential ways the city can help assist.
- **Jessica Porter:** Born and raised in Topeka. Hopes to learn what the process is all about, to be more involved in the community, and learn how to make a difference.
- **Bill Fiander:** Director of Planning & Development for the City of Topeka. Hope to see the city represent and strengthen all neighborhoods in Topeka and learn how to be a stronger advocate for equitable investments.
- **Jonathan Sublet:** Servant Pastor for Fellowship Hi-Crest and Founder/Chair of the Board for Sent Topeka. Hope is to listen, learn, and add perspective when possible. Also hopes to see a solution that is not COVID response but long-term in thinking (not reactive to current circumstances).
- **Megan Dorantes:** Student at Washburn University. Hopes to learn more about the neighborhood and how to help.
- **Clark Duffy:** Public Budgeting Professor at Washburn University. Wants to listen.
- **Hannah Schumacher:** Citizen of City Council District 6. Hopes to learn more about her neighbors and different parts of the city. Also hopes to learn where to prioritize families and the people of Topeka in the most needed areas.
- **Debra Swank:** Realtor. Wants to see the neighborhood thrive. Hopes to see conversation surrounding equitable investment and what budget items we will be talking about. Looking at the city progressively can have more positive outcomes.
- **Michael Padilla:** Mayor of Topeka. Hopes to see how we can engage the community and help residents understand the process to show how we use the budget and funding.
- **Corrie Wright:** Works in the Planning Department in Housing Services. Wants to listen to people and what they have to say, especially the neighborhood folks.

- **Luis Estrada:** Hopes to see how we can create opportunities for minority neighborhoods. Also hopes to find ways to involve those that have a primary language other than English.
- **Reshon Moore:** Student at Washburn University. Hopes to witness a meaningful change in the community.
- **Kim Thompson:** Veteran. Hopes to see the planning processes but knows there are various tactics to get things done and hopes to get a more centric approach.

Envisioning the Future

In considering what could be achieved within Topeka's neighborhoods, participants were asked what headlines they would hope to see in the Topeka Capital-Journal in January 2027 (in five years) regarding community neighborhoods.

2027 Topeka Capital-Journal Headlines

- No additional NIAs in the City
- Reduce 2021 NIAs
- Expansion of DREAMS initiative
- Increase of affordable housing
- Small business development in LMI Neighborhoods
- Addressing food deserts and food insecurity
- Transition Topeka to be a SMART City
- Crisis planning
- A reduction in crime
- Streets in better shape
- Citizens treated well
- Good planning, zoning
- Growth
- Single family zoning needs to be enforced
- City of Topeka upgrade entire water and sewer lines
- Expands public transportation to round the clock – also expands to people to jobs across town
- All sectors in neighborhoods are flourishing
- Neighborhoods needs are being met by all
- City funds childcare for residents that are in intensive care and at-risk health rankings
- Crime rate is at all time low and staying low
- Topeka takes leap in engaging largest neighborhoods with traditionally non-English speaking residents to address property management and home improvement resources
- Proud, well kept
- Mixed incomes and thriving
- Families and singles of all ages report their neighborhoods are safe and fun
- First time ever health rates of all neighborhoods are healthy or outpatient
- City of Topeka LMI households decrease by 25%
- New parties and fun going on in town
- Topeka Capital Journal – We're still here!
- Topeka ranks highest in quality affordable housing in the mid-west

- Topeka poverty levels for minority populations drop to lowest levels ever
- Entire City of Topeka celebrates block party weekend
- Topeka now ranked as one of the best cities to live in
- There is high demand for housing in Topeka neighborhoods due to a high quality of amenities including ability to walk, bike, and be a part of a neighborhood
- The landbank increases property values in our NIA's and creates homeownership opportunities for those with low income
- Topeka improves neighborhoods through strategic housing development
- Topeka best place to live post-graduation
- Don't want to move back with your parents? Move to Topeka instead!
- Topeka – a great way to start your career and life after graduation
- Voters pass sales tax to fund housing trust fund
- City meets goal of creating or preserving 800 affordable housing units
- Topeka increases homeownership to 80% in LMI neighborhoods
- Topeka is ready for emergency preparedness in conjunction with city, county neighborhoods
- Topeka no longer has childcare deserts. We did it!
- Topeka develops a holistic plan for neighborhood renewal
- Topeka discovers a way for under resourced neighborhoods to partner rather than compete
- Topeka grows deep and wide
- Topeka is safe and welcoming
- Broadband access to entire city population

Considering the Possibilities

Participants were asked to identify what Topeka could start doing and continue to do to make continued progress in its neighborhoods.

Goal 1: Expand Stock of Quality & Affordable Housing

- Housing trust fund
- Neighborhood infrastructure program
- Continue with code compliance and demolitions
- Maintain partnerships with existing communities
- Changing the culture of property maintenance
- Continuing the vacant property registration
- Expand and evaluate the TOTO program for affordable housing
- Make the TOTO program more user friendly
- Increase limit for TOTO housing to meet market increases
- Bring new money into the affordable housing trust fund
- Demolition of burnt structures
- Broader access to neighborhood money
- Accessory dwelling units as money maker for LMI homeowners also a way to expand affordable housing
- Encourage housing that includes garages
- Rent to own
- Educate community on programs – including programs outside of the city
- Community messaging for programs
- Help cut red tape in home ownership
- Find more community partnerships
- Streamline code compliance (increase budget)
- Embrace our renters – redefine what the ideal neighborhood looks like
- Better coordination of vacant properties
- CEO/business owner neighborhood roundtable
- Encouraging NIAs to find citizens to help with code compliance
- Adopt an active landbank
- Adopt landlord accountability programs, especially regarding out-of-state landlords
- Balance homeownership with renters/landlords' properties
- Understanding of the Community Reinvestment Act
- Tap more into historic tax credits

- Assistance (volunteer base) specifically for low to moderate income seniors to bring their homes up to code
- Training students (from the community colleges) to do community service to take care of code compliance issues
- Modernize housing HVAC systems, central air, chimney liners, etc.
- Tailor housing to age groups
- Establish more senior housing options
- Stoppage of forcing suburban/urban planning ideas on urban areas; stop asking inner city areas to be like suburbs
- Try to save as many current housing structures as possible/refurbishing abandoned spaces or uncommon places to find new homes
- Increase living wage to meet demands of housing
- Tiny housing or transitional housing

Goal 2: Neighborhood Business Development

- Establishing a forward direction with Spanish speaking businesses
- Expanding TIF districts and opportunity zones into more areas of the City
- Develop housing in areas where economic development is happening
- Development of alternate childcare solutions (for 2nd & 3rd shift)
- Providing childcare within larger corporations (Frito Lay, Mars, Reesers, etc.)
- GO Topeka Redeveloping downtown
- Neighborhood shopping areas run and owned by local people (Brookwood – get them to help teach other areas what they are doing to be successful)
- GO Topeka 10-15k for moving here (Rehab)
- Hold individuals accountable who oversee funds to help LMI
- Taking more risk with entrepreneurs and grants for entrepreneur start ups
- Focus on establishing incentives for people to stay in Topeka
- Continuation of development of downtown Topeka
- Marketing towards college areas to attract businesses (restaurants, cafes, etc.)
- Clear, strong, partner driven mission with a plan that supports small businesses
- Aligning greatest economic incentives with greatest economic need to the greatest extent possible
- Continue to provide technical support/education/financial literacy for small businesses
- A leader to coordinate new business (GO Topeka?) Or a group of people to work together
- What attracts people to Topeka?
- Tap into the “neighborhood atmosphere” that is here and that we all want

- GO Topeka 10-15k for residents that are already here that have business ideas
- What's missing that we could get excited about?
- More voices at the table as equal voices
- Allow for greater understanding and accountability of the agreements and partnerships to the general public
- Chamber of Commerce directly for City's NIAs
- Examine balance of people who work AND live in NIAs

Goal 3: Enhance Safety of Neighborhoods

- Community engagement blight abatement continue
- Reexamine bird scooters
- Neighborhood plans need more holistic approach as opposed to focusing on each stakeholders needs
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles
- Increase economic development
- Chronic unsheltered homelessness needs to be addressed
- Continuance of community policing (emphasis on improving community/police relations)
- Mental health resources in the community
- Trying to get people connected with one another; phone tree distribution vs. email vs. website to where not all are on same page leading to confusion; no standardization among neighborhood communication
- Return to old community policing model – getting CPO and others to walk the beat. Leaders and others
- Moving neighborhoods towards digital age; need to establish progress goals regarding technology within the City as well as in neighborhoods; establish lanes of communication
- Finding funding and prioritizing non-policing activities when we are sending police officers out on mental health related calls better to send out mental health workers – De-escalation
- Planning for autonomous vehicles of the future; can we use it in place of public communication?
- What code violation do we have within the city that relate to public health issues and prioritize those health issues. Define these issues better; establish standards of safety
- Define improvement for infrastructure; last longer or maintaining vs improving and does this bode well for future generations; understanding the life cycle and maintaining vs. new based off future needs

- Increasing crisis response officers – community safety officers
- Utilizing all the community resources available, police officers, community policing, community safety officers. team of CSO and regular officers
- Lighting assessment in high-crime neighborhoods
- Program that incentivizes community members to improve lighting in neighborhoods
- Accessibility for all in neighborhoods – sidewalks, ramps etc.
- Engage youth in productive and fun activities
- Goal of Zero – prevention in community policing
- Abandoned schools and community centers needs better programing that is more exciting. Gets young and older people in walking distance more engaged.
- Retrofit old buildings that are multi-purpose community centers, especially in LMI communities, including developing partnerships with the owners of these buildings.

Goal 4: Expanded Transportation Opportunities

- Continue funding of implementing the Bike Plan
- Continue to be more vocal with the Metro
- Continue to ask the City to support/make the metro and the needs of transportation a high priority when considering the budget
- Advocate for metro support with the elderly and disabled population
- Continue 50/50 split on the sidewalk plans
 - In LMI neighborhoods City needs to fully fund 50/50 program along with maintenance
- Make sure that new streets have sidewalks
- Continue sidewalk infill plan
- More bus stops
- Fix potholes
- Rideshare programs
- Ability to show VA card and ride for free
- City and County coordinate better with transportation, including city courts and other needs
- Transportation to jobs out in Forbes Field
- Veterans should have one day a month to ride for free
- Build more covered bus stops
- New subdivisions/new neighborhoods should include sidewalks
- Focus putting in sidewalks in lower income neighborhoods
- Recognizing specific neighborhood needs
- Ways to connect residential neighborhoods to commercial areas.

- Address lack of current bus drivers which leads to possible route cuts
- Bridges over railroad tracks in some places
- Not to exclude the options of unlicensed or unregulated vehicles
- Drone delivery for packaging/transportation
- Airplanes/railroads
- Autonomous vehicles relieve public transportation needs
- Looking into street design/planning
- Look into adding light rails (street cars)
- Add exit/entrance onto I-470
- Develop more environmentally sound means for public transportation
- Transit oriented development in neighborhoods (people within five-minute walk of public transportation)
- Rideshare incentives for neighborhood people to provide sharing in an area
- 24/7 access to public transportation
- Figure out a way to collaborate more with the Metro Transit Authority
- Include transportation plans when attracting new business
- Educating the entire community when increasing tax rates (Improves public transportation, schools etc.)

Goal 5: Engage Community Partners to Foster Healthy Neighborhoods

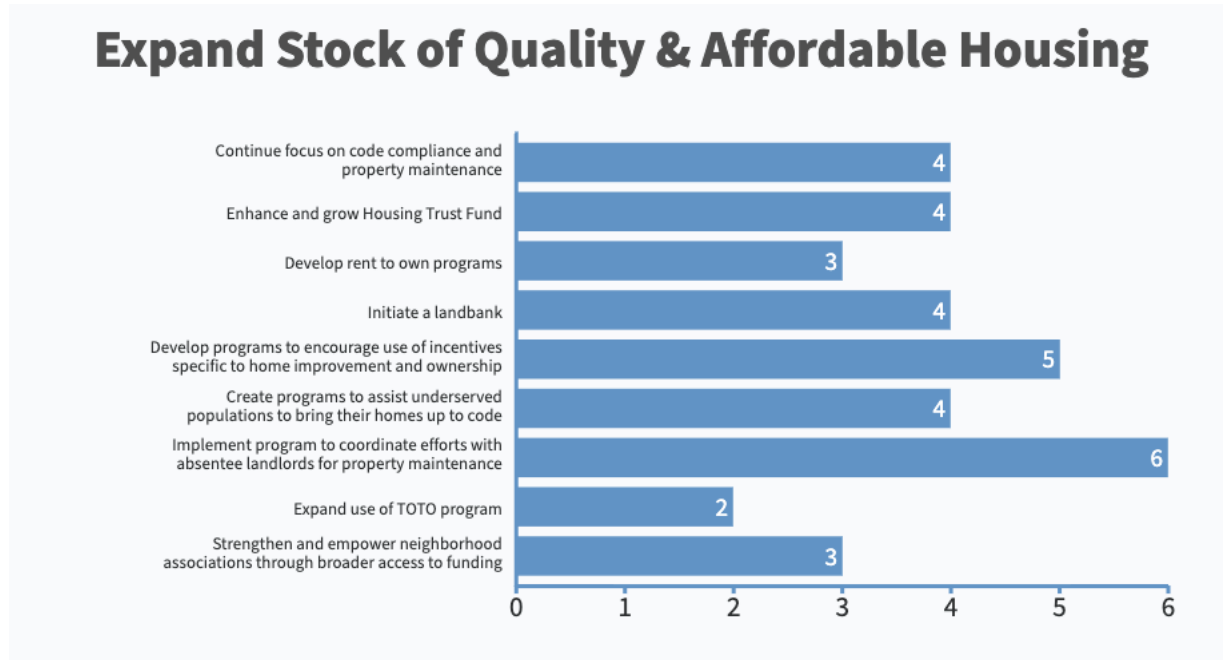
- Develop strategic plans for neighborhoods
- Partnering with childcare aware
- Develop landlord ordinances and continue to work with landlords to improve their properties
- Engaging community partners both public and private for ways to fund activities and educating those entities on what the needs are in the community
- Leverage community police officer in outreach efforts
- Continued engagement of CAC and NIAs with the City
- Continue to address food deserts and develop food oasis in these areas
- Community Centers (CRC, Community Action) provide more mental health services/facilities within the neighborhoods
- Developing energy efficient housing
- More community gardens
- Add youth/younger people representation to NIA meetings
 - Get additional information and awareness so that the younger people can attend those meetings

- Engage community partners ensuring that it is an equal partnership, authentic partnerships
- Take care of flora; trees and shrubbery in Topeka don't fit the community; forestry issues; address habitat of area as opposed to just structural issues
- Hold SNCO and the State of Kansas responsible regarding its parks and rec duties particularly in LMI areas
- More concentration on movement of water in and around the neighborhoods; flood issues; water is not flowing in a way to make it a healthy neighborhood
- Focus on celebrations that are more streamlined to healthy lifestyle living
- Education for financial responsibilities such as wealth building, loan education, savings, investing, budgeting, etc.
- Establish a living wage for the City of Topeka
- Increase coordination between major stakeholders i.e., VA, Knights of Columbus, etc. We exclude many stakeholders expanding a coalition
- Understanding how funds from HUD leverage other public funds so that larger impacts can happen on the health of our neighborhoods
- Banks and credit unions need to become involved in eliminating redlining and providing more investment in LMI areas
- Get more accountability for financial institutions investing into the communities in which they are housed
- More involved with youth groups, church groups, school groups, businesses. Call people to just get our neighborhoods taken care of
- Continuous improvement rather than one off projects

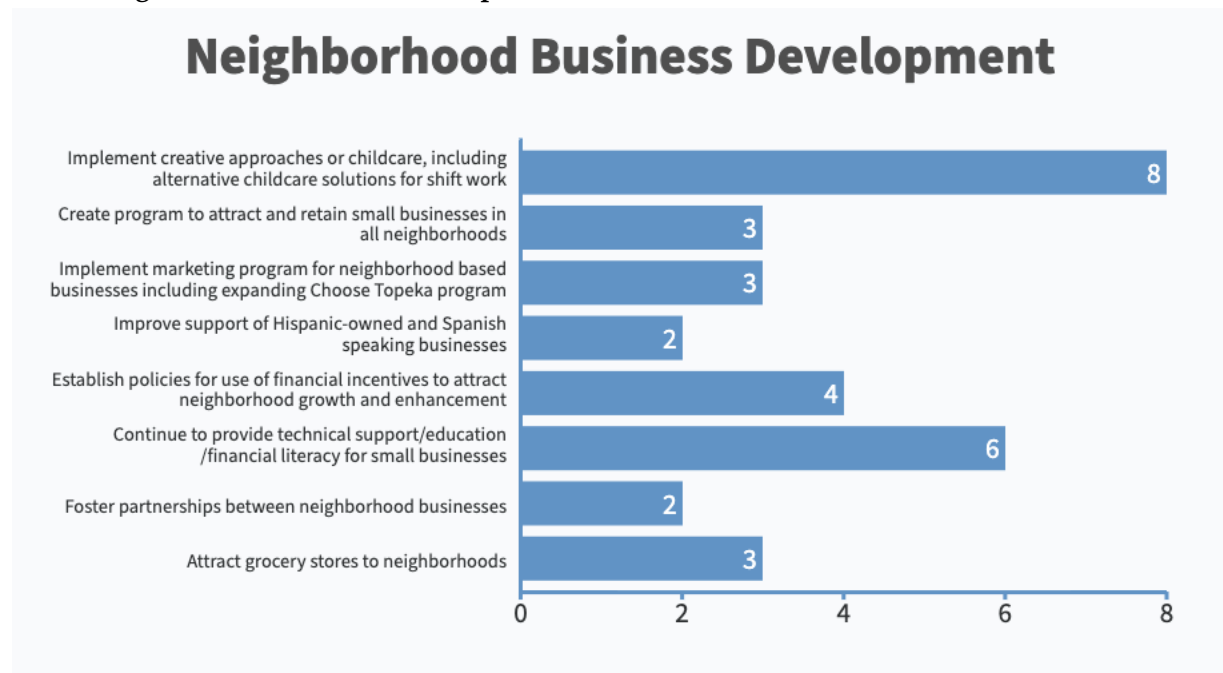
Identifying Priorities

Finally, participants took part in a polling exercise to identify priority goals. Below are the results of the objectives for each of goals identified.

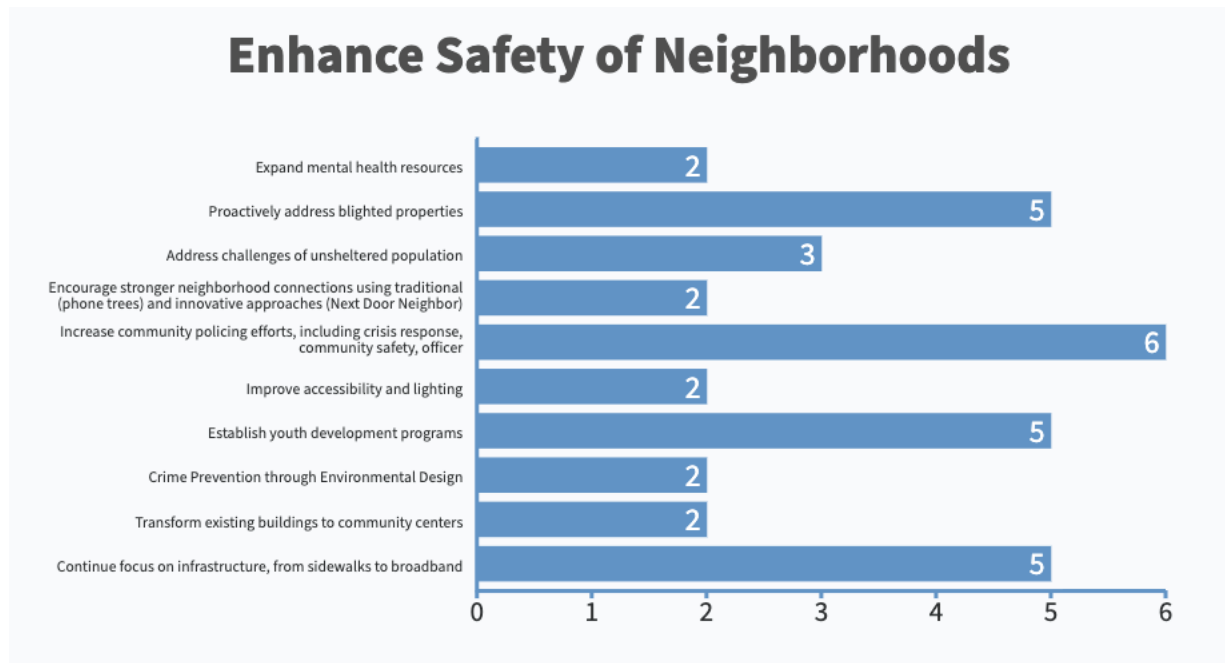
Goal 1: Expand Stock of Quality & Affordable Housing



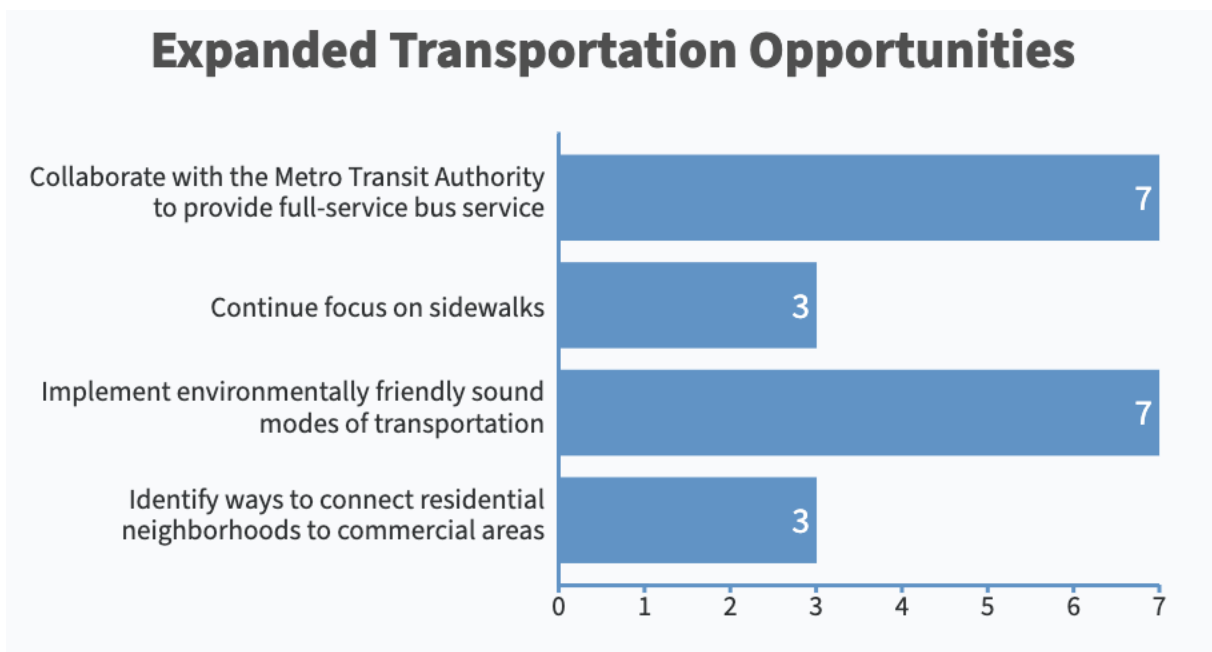
Goal 2: Neighborhood Business Development



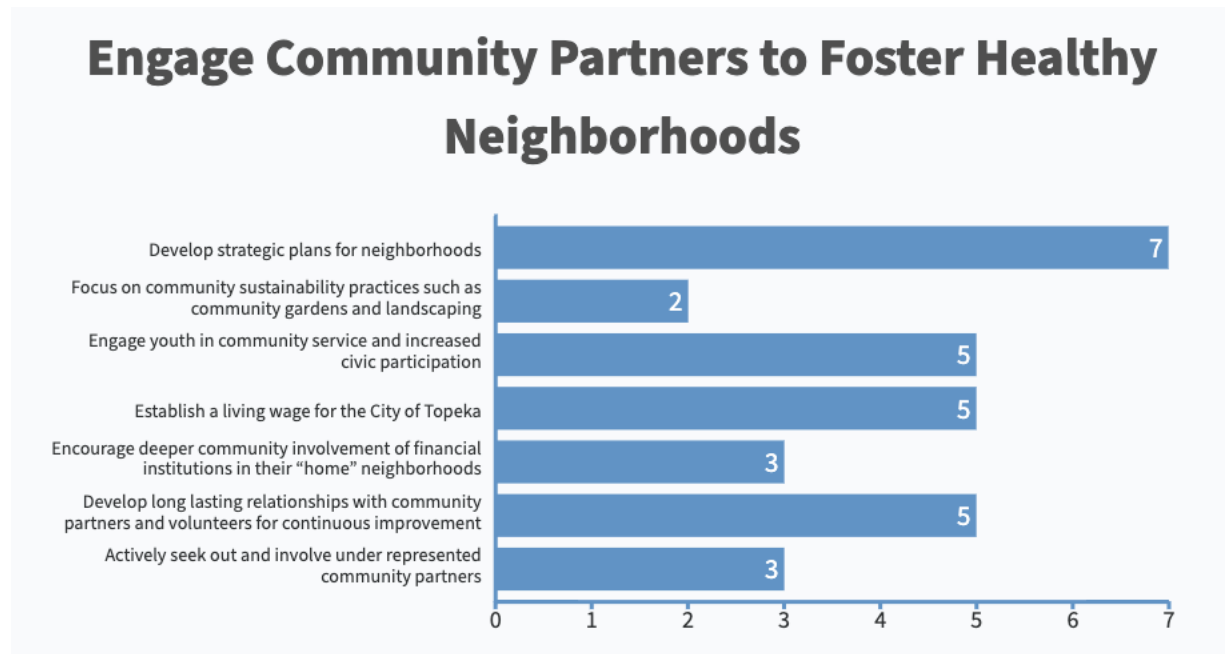
Goal 3: Enhance Safety of Neighborhoods



Goal 4: Expanded Transportation Opportunities



Goal 5: Engage Community Partners to Foster Health Neighborhoods



Topeka Community Priority Setting: Selected Strategic Investments to Quality of Life

January 31, 2022

Participant Introductions

Participants were asked to introduce themselves, their position or affiliation, and share their hopes for this process.

- **Jaron Caffrey:** Graduated from Washburn and works full-time in Topeka. He is looking forward to seeing how we can fix things in Topeka to get a positive spin and include younger perspectives.
- **Sherry Schoonover:** Recognizes how challenged neighborhoods are during COVID times and wants to hear what we can do better to provide information to citizens.
- **Kim Thompson:** Retired United States Air Force. Hopes to see what we can do for alignment o processes and improve homeowner associations.
- **Deborah Swank:** Realtor in Topeka. Quality of life is so many different avenues, finding a way to develop a community where people want to come live and then jobs will follow. Now that so many work from home, we need to influence young people to move to Topeka.
- **Clark Duffy:** Public Budgeting professor at Washburn University. Looks forward to the input.
- **Jill Rice:** On staff with Fellowship Hi-Crest. Hopes to see conversation surrounding access to jobs, transportation, and engaging events. Also hopes to find ways to connect people to what's going on in Topeka.
- **Tom Underwood:** Executive Director at NOTO Arts Entertainment District. Wants to see how NOTO's mission can enhance the quality of the life and spend some time thinking about what the metrics are. What are quality of life indicators? How can we be in alignment to work toward common goals?
- **Megan Dorantes:** Washburn University student. As a college student, hopes to see how quality of life can connect back to young people.

- **Shamecha Simms:** Has lived in Topeka for 14 years and is the Secretary for NIA. Has overlapping identities that really affects the perceptions of Topeka. Hopes to see a conversation surrounding what it takes to be able to live in Topeka comfortably.
- **Kathy Vu:** Washburn University student. Looks forward to hearing what everyone has to say.
- **Daisy Karimi:** Financial analyst & business consultant. Everyone has their own concept of what quality of life can be. What pieces include diversity and inclusion?
- **John Nave:** Executive President of AFLCIO. We want our young folks to stay here and come back if they decide to leave. A high quality of life requires access to quality income.
- **Marcia Lessenden:** Hopes to see low crime rates, citizens are treated well, good roads, and better water pipes.
- **Jacque Russell:** City of Topeka HR department. Hopes to listen and learn everyone's perspectives.
- **Sheldon Kern:** Washburn University student. Hopes to hear conversation surrounding quality of life for disabled citizens of Topeka.

Envisioning the Future

In considering what could be achieved within Topeka's quality of life, participants were asked what headlines they would hope to see in the Topeka Capital-Journal in January 2027 (in five years) regarding community quality of life.

2027 Topeka Capital-Journal Headlines

- Aquapark opens on the East side of Topeka
- Neighborhood improvements in the East side of Topeka
- Topeka and Shawnee county accomplish all momentum 2027 objectives
- City of Topeka population grows in census
- City of Topeka has public transportation and bus expansion and extends hours
- Topeka is more sensitive to LGBTQAI+ groups
- City of Topeka human relations increases ratings for inclusivity index for LGBTQAI+ Community
- City of Topeka expands public transportation services for disabled
- City of Topeka expands disabled services across the city
- City of Topeka restarts Free Day at the Park
- City of Topeka celebrates Juneteenth with City-wide celebrations
- City of Topeka Expands Commerce
- New Mall Owner revitalizes West Ridge
- Blight Eliminated
- Zero Road Hazards or defects for the year
- Outstanding landscape award nationally
- Expansion of River Front sees success
- City of Topeka increases opportunities of entertainment
- City of Topeka increases opportunities of entertainment for NOTO
- City of Topeka expands its homeless efforts
- City of Topeka offers relief to homeless in Tent City
- City of Topeka builds tiny homes for homeless
- Topeka – Setting the standard “Best in Class”
 - Collaboration
 - Access to internet
- Top City Success
- City takes risk it pays off!
 - Universal basic income
 - Green planning
- Topeka – The smart city of the Midwest

- Energy
 - Technology
 - Conservation
- Topeka – Top City to live in Kansas
 - Fewer instances of individuals experiencing homelessness
 - Lower Crime
- Creative solutions around food insecurity and transportation
- Code compliance helps to allocate money to more outcomes
- Topeka – Race to the top
 - Show other cities what we have done to get to the top of the State
 - Talk about the things that attract people to the City of Topeka
 - Effectiveness of marketing our City
- Citizens come together to invest in our City
- Topeka – This is our story
 - More stories from those we don't always hear about. Minorities
 - Stories about where individuals were and where they are now
- Thriving riverfront that was involved with arts and culture, recreation, etc.
- More entertainment options via shows or concerts; do more to promote those type of entertainment activities
- “Mom I’m bored.” “What do you mean? You live in Topeka!”
- Funding and resources evenly distributed across the City; sometimes areas get more attention than others do which is the perception from some citizens
- More pride of being a member of the Topeka community via efforts of quality-of-life initiatives
- More investments across all neighborhoods or areas of the community; diversity of those investments such as public safety, business investments, beautification of community, etc.
- Reduction of blight within the City
- Increase the perception/enthusiasm of the City of people outside the community not just within
- Topeka, a hidden beauty
- SMART City
- Bridging the language gap

Considering the Possibilities

Participants were asked to identify what Topeka could start doing and continue to do to make continued progress in its quality of life.

Goal 1: A Community of Belonging

- Increase Funding for Public Transportation in Topeka
- Publicize the Juneteenth Celebration in the community
- Partner with local Juneteenth celebration organizers
- Focal Points on focusing on completion of 2027 Momentum Goals
- Hosting more activities for LGBTQAI+ Community
- More celebrations for Pride Week
- Continuing the reconstruction of Topeka Blvd
- Improve MEI score (rating for public policy and local laws and inclusivity for LGBTQAI+)
- More open access of resources for disadvantaged communities
- Increase participation of disadvantaged communities in local government by 10% by 2025
- Set a standard of living – what is the base amount of money that families need to live here
- Digital inclusion and equity – ensure that elderly generations and disabled groups have the same access to technology that others have
- Collaborating to connect resources to those that speak other languages. Involving the youth to help bridge that gap
- Translate important documents into other languages
- Creating opportunities for young (high school and college) people to see themselves in Topeka. Internships, and other opportunities for people to see that they are invested in, and this is a place that they want to stay across all sectors
- Investing in Highland Park High School
- Exit ramp for the Hi-Crest community
- Emphasis on Brown v. Board of Education court case whether it is a celebration, press release, etc.
- More respect for our community-driven events; meant a lot to the people of East Topeka; keep events in the areas that they are cultural relevant as opposed to putting everything at an Evergy Plaza
- Attract and support veterans and opportunities for them

Goal 2: A Vibrant and Beautiful Community

- Infrastructure repair – especially when coming into the city corridors
- Transform empty buildings into housing or areas for start-up companies – Possibility of a landbank
- Public land for community and market gardens
- Public and private Investment in all areas for beautification efforts
- Smart waste management
- LMI grants for individuals to put towards beautifying their home
- Reviewing policies to improve proactive management of building disrepair
- Code compliance decentralized into neighborhood groups (NIAs) or other creative solutions to make it more accessible
- Get to the source of where blight is coming from and try to provide solutions
- Service dumpsters
- Form a dedicated unit to address blight
- Work to clean gutters
- Repair broken sidewalks
- Maintain sidewalks and edging of bus stops to better comply with ADA regulations
- Develop program to assist property owners in repairing sidewalks
- Install low maintenance landscaping/native grass
- Start a campaign for a city-wide recycling day
- Establish landlord policies; address absentee landlords via policy – rental inspection programs etc.
- Actually enforce code compliance
- Defer property tax for people who renovate blighted homes, economic development program
- Restore instead of replacing when it comes to building, houses, etc.
- Public and private collaboration of investment of beautification efforts
- Examine performance of forestry departments given they are funded more to do more than just remove trees
- Develop a scorecard of how funds are distributed for beautification endeavors

Goal 3: Top City in Tech

- Ensure there are community hotspots (Wi-Fi) where people can go to get access to internet particularly students
- Access to electricity; Low Income/homeless often do not have access to plug ins; availability of outlets in community/community charging stations
- Encourage more charging stations in community

- Topeka investing in Geocaching ways Topekans can get outside learn about history of the City
- Looking how to incentive coworking spaces for remote workers; making Topeka a destination for remote workers
- Economic Development: Better balance of targeting middle to higher paying jobs i.e., attract tech jobs to already established manufacturers (already established need to focus on greater)
- Promote a greener city to help attract more businesses of the future
- Add sustainability as a major criterion for government functions
- Push for more animal health and agriculture industries
- Continue expanding demonstration projects in LMI and AMI areas that are state of the art
- Create a water grid modernization for flood control and leak prevention
- Autonomous vehicles
- Street lighting controllers – including sensors that increase the light if there is foot traffic
- Cameras for streetlights to make it safer
- Greater Topeka tech show

Goal 4: Topeka is the Place to be

- Financial support from community partners because these events can be expensive in terms of money and staff time
- Distribution of TGT (possible overhaul going into the future)
- Look at a variety of venues for events as opposed to just a select few
- More education of what is going on in the community; we have a lot of entertainment that many people do not know about; dedicated/standardized way to have entertainment options reach the public; marketing plan Facebook; collaboration with local businesses regarding these events via poster, flyers, etc.
- Increase marketing and branding efforts on social media- improve reach by 10%
- Topeka uses influencers within Topeka
- Full use of the Evergy Plaza
- Ensure these enhancements are used to reach every area of the City of Topeka
- Better integration of community events among neighborhoods; lack of collaboration/inclusiveness among neighborhoods at these events
- More accessibility for community events; many individuals cannot make events due to the event being outside of their neighborhood

- Topeka events too centralized of where events are located; need to get citizens outside their comfort zone of where activities are at in the community; Create spaces where creativity can flourish
- Establish an identity of attractions that Topeka offers that differentiates itself from other communities such as Lawrence, Kansas City, etc.
- Main hub that offers a nightlife opportunity for individuals like Aggieville in Manhattan, Mass Street in Lawrence, and Power and Light in Kansas City; City offers economic incentive explore those possible incentives particularly involving restaurants
- Incentivize locally and minority owned businesses
- Access to public transportation – creative solutions. Free public transportation
- Public transportation to connect Topeka, Manhattan, Lawrence, and Kansas City
- Create an area for students and high schools to showcase their ideas. Creative environment for arts, gaming, and creative ideas. Looking at other areas for events
- Public service announcements and kiosks. Connection to the entire city

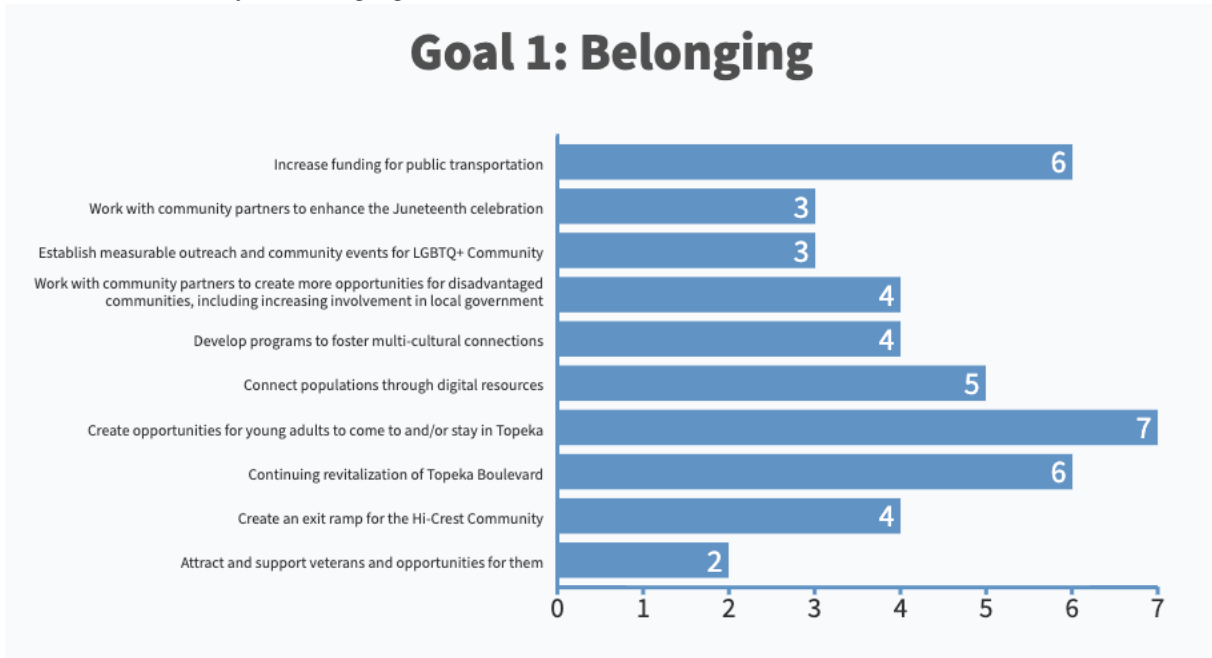
Goal 5: Ensure Equitable Investment across the Community

- Ensure these enhancements are used to reach every area of the City of Topeka
- Changing code compliance for AMI and provide materials to help, and a provide residents with a plan that outlines the costs, materials required, and estimated time.
- Freeze (For the next 5 years we will allow x number of projects) new developments that are outside of LMI areas.
- Evaluate effectiveness of development strategies
- Outside third-party to evaluate how the city has invested its dollars and if it has invested equitably in all neighborhoods
- TGT – better transparency of funds, administration, where it is spent – currently there is a disconnect
- Public safety; small satellite police stations across the city distribution of resources regarding public safety
- Enhance code enforcement across the community
- Reexamine fair distribution of the hotel tax that goes just to Evergy Plaza
- Address the need for grocery stores within the city (Public Health) via incentives***
- Address the need for helping the disabled get to the grocery stores within the city
- Take more risks with small businesses

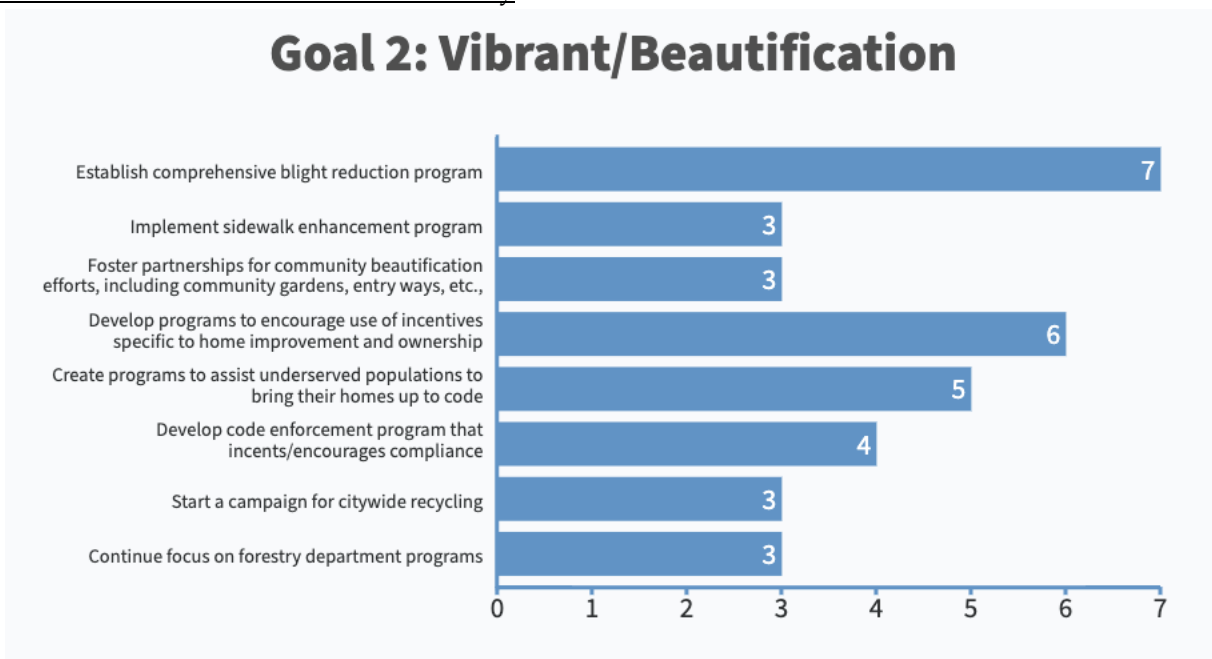
Identifying Priorities

Finally, participants took part in a polling exercise to identify priority goals. Below are the results of the objectives for each of goals identified.

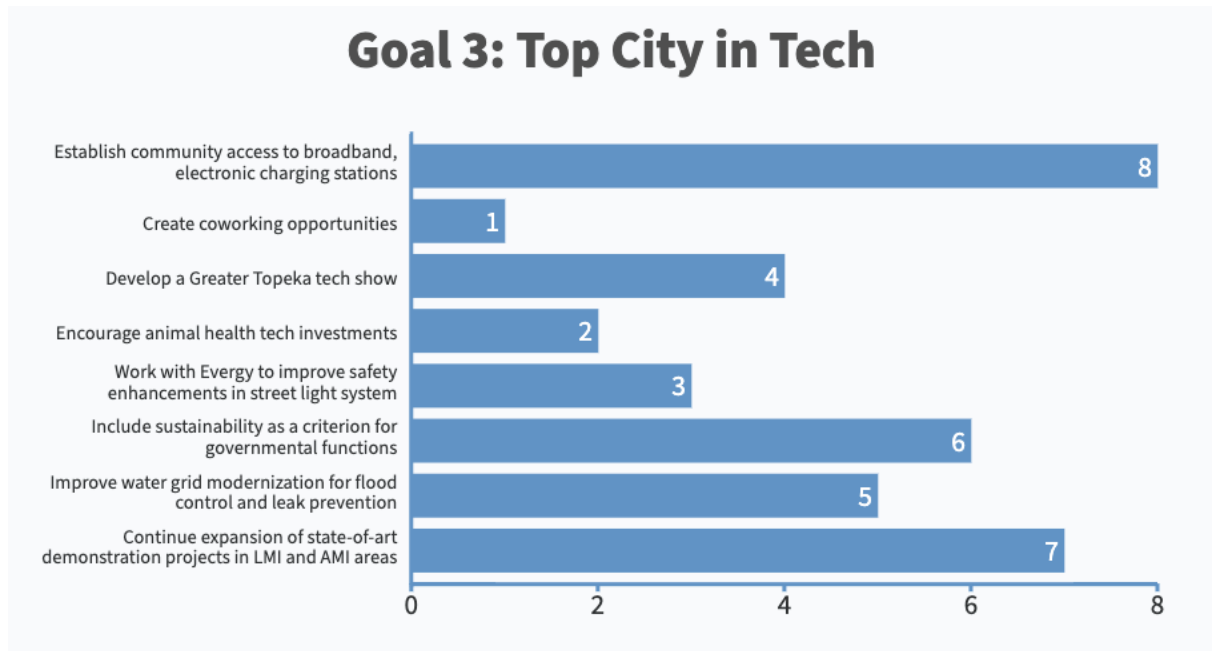
Goal 1: A Community of Belonging



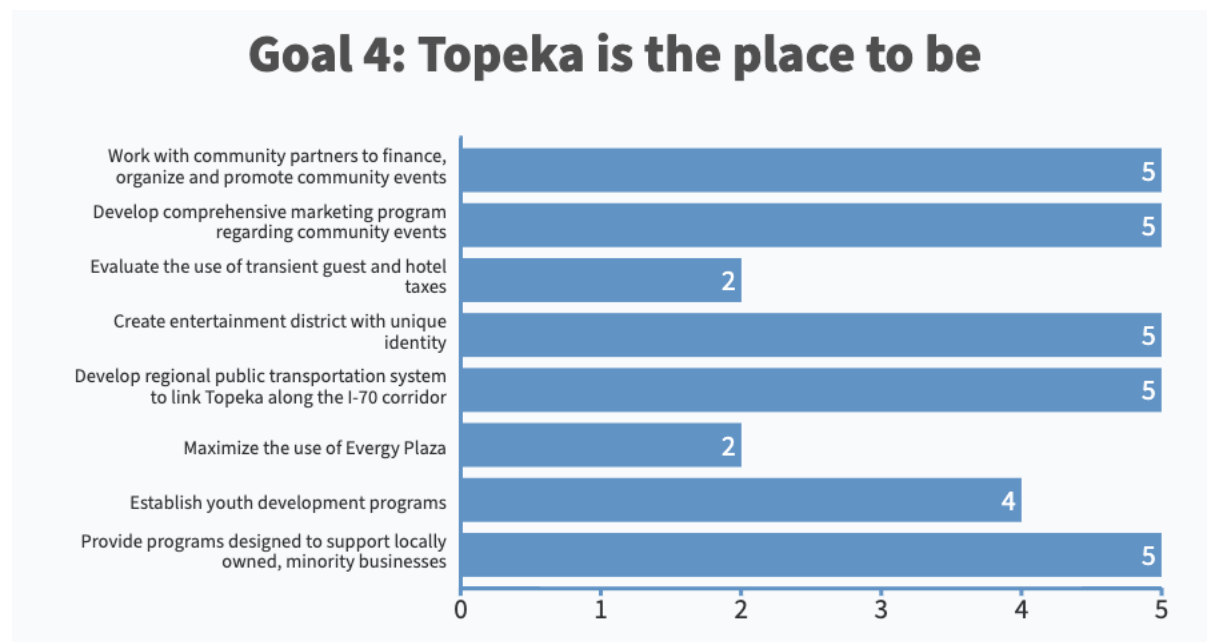
Goal 2: A Vibrant and Beautiful Community



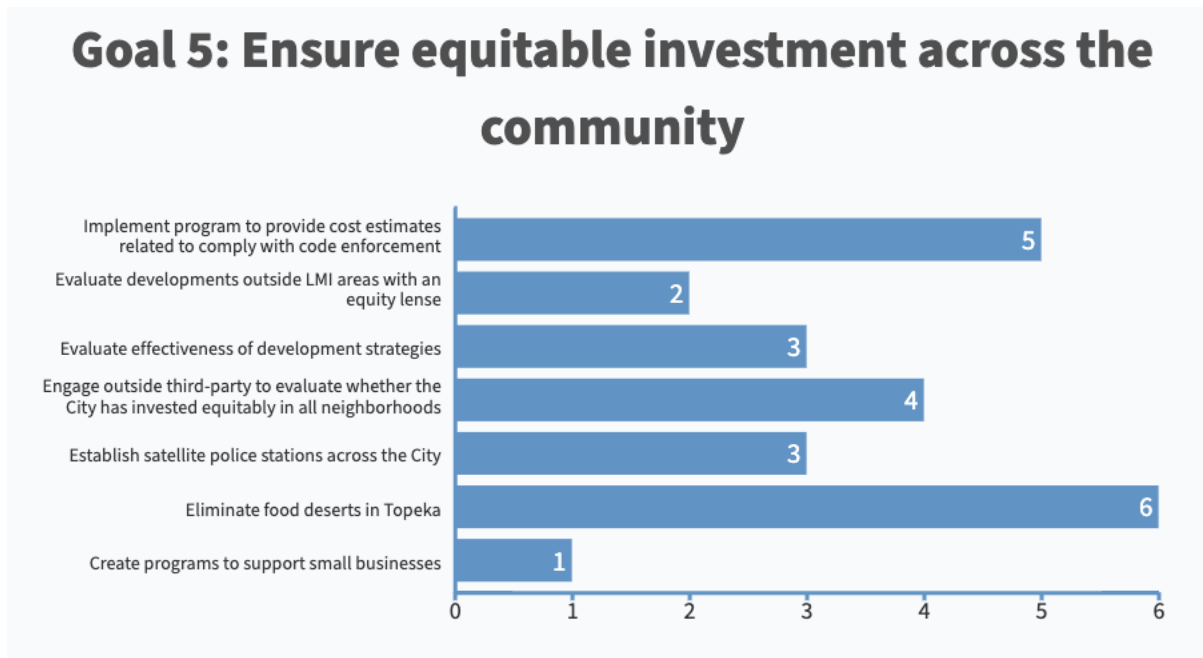
Goal 3: Top City in Tech



Goal 4: Topeka is the Place to be



Goal 5: Ensure Equitable Investment across the Community



Topeka Community Priority Setting: Investing in Infrastructure

February 3, 2022

Participant Introductions

Participants were asked to introduce themselves, their position or affiliation, and share their hopes for this process.

- **James Jackson:** Director of Public Works. Looking forward to watching the process unfold and for the residents to participate and give their expectations.
- **Kim Dietrich:** Topeka Independent Living. Hope is to make sure people with disabilities get fair treatment.
- **Hannah Uhlrig:** Hopes are to hear the priorities and get perspective from the citizens, so the city knows how to help better.
- **Sylvia Davis:** Utilities department. Hopes we can gather expectations for the budget process to be able to apply it to everyday operations.
- **Nicole Mallot:** Utilities department. Interested in how the community perceives the budget and how it is presented and tracked.
- **John Williams:** Hopes to be a positive contribution for the desired objective to understand what the needs are for the citizens of Topeka.
- **Darren Brennan:** Managing partner for ABC Supply. Interested in affordable housing and public transportation.
- **Samuel Pollom:** Washburn University student. Attending to have a better understanding of how the budget process works.
- **Mary Bisbee:** Public administration student at KU and intern at the City of Topeka. Excited to engage in the process.
- **Mike Spadafore:** President of historical NIA and transportation planner.
- **Deb Miller:** Director of the KU Public Management Center and has a background in transportation.

- **Joe Ledbetter:** Attorney. On the board of the Metro Transit Authority. Is very interested in the budgeting of the City of Topeka.
- **Debbie Wright:** Works at Topeka Independent Living Resource Center. Here to represent disability issues during the meeting.
- **Braxton Copley:** Very interested in the comments of our community so we can be responsive to the needs of customers.
- **Terri Roberts:** Chair of Shawnee County Parks & Recreation. Is looking forward to hearing the input from others.
- **Robert Bidwell:** Current acting interim city engineer. Hopes to find the work of the engineering department is in line with the needs of the public and stakeholders.
- **Tony Trower:** Deputy Director of Operations. Interested in hearing what the citizens of Topeka have to say.
- **John Moyer:** President of the East Topeka North NIA. Wants to learn more about the budget process for infrastructure and be an advocate for the neighborhoods.

Envisioning the Future

In considering what could be achieved within Topeka's infrastructure, participants were asked what headlines they would hope to see in the Topeka Capital-Journal in January 2027 (in five years) regarding community infrastructure.

2027 Topeka Capital-Journal Headlines

- Water infrastructure at 100% functionality using ARPA Funds
- Improve accessibility for people with disabilities across the city (sidewalks in many areas within in the City that have intersection but no sidewalks)
- Improvement of emergency or arterial routes across the city based on PCI (low PCI need reconstructed with City) also along residential areas
- Improvement of overall PCI across the City
- Infrastructure investments within NIA area boost home values by 15%
- Street lighting improves in neighborhoods and brings down crime rates by 15%
- New position filled for ADA accessibility compliance officer within the government that helps provide captioning of all meetings on all platforms
- Handicapped accessibility for ADA when there is no sidewalk beyond
- City completes first ADA recreational trail
- City completes improvements to North Topeka Wastewater treatment plant to ensure regulatory compliance
- City provides incentives to build or develop and to rehabilitate to include 25% of all units (housing) for physical access
- City trains employees and public facing service people in disability sensitivity training and accommodations for when they are working with disabled patrons
- Increase to mill levy to provide additional funding for Topeka Metro Transit Authority
- Repairs for sidewalks, streets, and curb cuts to meet accessibility standards and curb cuts
- sustainability is the focus for infrastructure development
- City moves toward sustainability and green infrastructure
- City making headway towards 100-year replacement cycle -- for utilities
- City funding half of all infrastructure improvements through alternative funding sources
- Infrastructure investment has resulted in decrease main breaks over the past 5 years
- Bumpy roads now smooth sailing
- Street maintenance leads the nation in citizen satisfaction survey
- Infrastructure in place to allow for more affordable accessible integrated housing
- City increases temporary housing by 50%

- City of Topeka sets standards for safe and healthy work environment for all employees
- City sets sights on higher PCI goal
- City hires more people with disabilities
- A year without a water-main break. Our investment has paid off!
- Input of the citizens is highly valued and appreciated by City of Topeka staff!
- City of Topeka exceeds the Pavement Condition Target of 70!
- Topeka has made the right policy choice, fund maintenance and protect our investments!
- Public Transportation running 5am – Midnight 7 days a week
- Water main breaks reduced by 20%!
- Water main breaks at national average
- Our taxes and water rates are lower than five years ago
- City's use of half-cent sales tax has reduced maintenance cost by over 50%
- 5G internet available throughout the entire city!
- City's winter maintenance costs reduced by 50% over 5 years!
- City infrastructure makes Topeka look prosperous and well-functioning
- City of Topeka in the top-5 places to live in the country!
- Public transportation gets every citizen to their jobs
- Airport traffic increases

Considering the Possibilities

Participants were asked to identify what Topeka could start doing and continue to do to make continued progress in its neighborhoods.

Goal 1: Topeka is Accessible to All

- Regular more focused citizen surveys
- Training for law enforcement officers for mental health
- Coordinating with existing mental health agencies for better interactions within the city
- Sensitivity training for law enforcement
- More accessible parking downtown
- Technology based ways of sharing available public parking
- Captioning at every city council meeting
- Making sure that NIAs have neighborhood plans that are updated
- Adding sidewalks in neighborhoods that do not already have sidewalks
- Ask neighborhoods without sidewalks if they want sidewalks
- Requiring sidewalks improvements whenever street repair is done; require sidewalks or pedestrian lanes for whenever streets are done
- Intersection improvements including curb cuts including adequate signals and signage
- Adequate funding for TMTA to increase its fleet/service area to serve more people
- Include curb and gutter repair for proper drainage
- City has specific budget for ADA coordinator; where they would be located within organization; ensure proper job description
- Provide forward facing staff with training to improve interaction with disabled customers
- Housing First initiative in the City as an alternative to encampments or homeless shelters
- Require new developments of multi-unit housing to provide x % of affordable and accessible units in order to receive tax credits
- Increase residential street lighting 10% each year
- To establish a fund for emergency response for LMI or disabled individuals across the city to provide assistance in crisis situations
- Topeka Metro provides zero fare transit service for all
- Continue to develop arterial and collector corridors using the complete streets protocols/policies
- Get public input before taking on major projects – including sidewalks
- Using different platforms to get that public input (using zoom, committees, advisory groups)

- Assess reach of public transit and hours when it is operating
- County partnership with Metro Transit Authority
- Ensure we can provide basic affordable services to everybody
 - Lead and copper mandates. Make sure we can assist those that can't make improvements themselves
 - Sewer lines
 - Clean water
- Readable street signs

Goal 2: Moving Toward Sustainable Infrastructure

- Installing fiber for internet access
- Alert the public of what we have in place for 5G, housing, infrastructure
- Section 8 voucher program for more affordable housing
- Increase funding for the accessibility modification fund
- Allow for more indoor modifications for rental properties
- SORT Program, focusing in LMI areas, and neighborhood improvement areas; along with DREAMS program
- Educate the public on what green infrastructure means
- Solar powered transitional/temporary housing
- Making sure we are accounting for future upgrades, life cycle planning
- Ensuring that our codes are in support of sustainability initiatives
- Implementing educational programs for LMI that provide internet access
- More pilot programs of emerging technologies
- Job training for green infrastructure employment coming to Topeka
- Start putting distribution lines underground
- Fully funding the affordable housing trust fund annually
- Remove a lot of curb and gutter and go back to vegetated swale to convey stormwater
- Co-mingling of installation of water and internet infrastructure
- Free internet for low-income households
- Provide incentives for infill development over new greenspace projects
- Install internet boosters on all publicly owned property
- More sustainable pavement – sustainability view to maintenance and new projects - life cycle planning, cheapest option for the long run
- Keep affordability factored into analysis on going green
- Enforcement of housing codes
- Make sure that we are funding the long-term maintenance of green infrastructure
- Zoning to allow for 5G towers closer to residential neighborhoods
- Study to assess broadband access and quality in the city

- Campaign to reduce the amount of water that is consumed by the citizens of Topeka overall

Goal 3: Protect our Investments

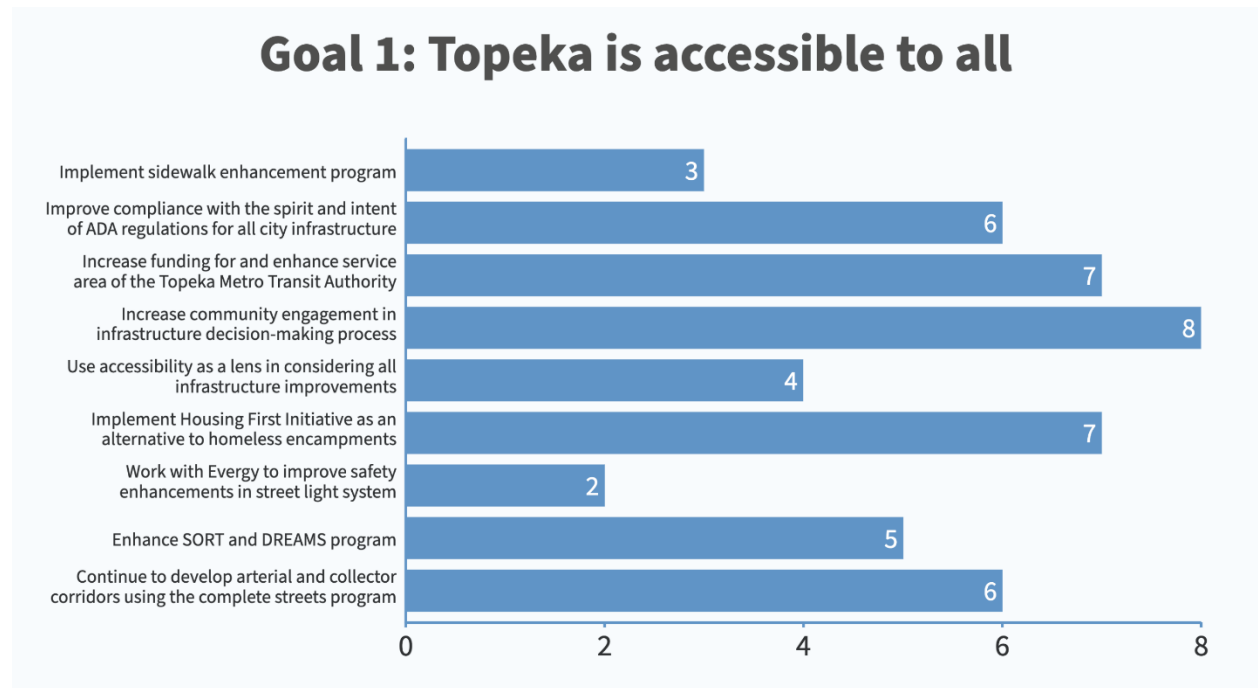
- Life cycle planning
- Continue to improve upon existing master plans to map out and address maintenance plans for the future and add where they don't exist
- Keeping abreast of emerging technologies with materials and project development
- Design build options for larger projects
- Make sure we do not fall into the mindset of "we have always done it this way"
- Making sure everyone understands what funding requirements for the expected level of service
- Getting understanding of all the infrastructure currently there when large scale projects come through, like Polk-Quincy
- Educating the public on large projects and its impacts (financial, access, daily routines of citizens)
- Utilize half-cent sales tax to improve infrastructure
- Notification of how half-cent sales tax is being used
- Larger investment in water mains
- Larger investment in distribution lines
- Leadership to improve the rate of water main breaks. Accountability and productivity for the money
- Outside party assessment on water main breaks
- Identify low PCI and high priority areas and program them.
- Continuing to prioritize maintenance of existing infrastructure
- Ensure that assessments (PCI etc.) are accurate and done in a timely manner
- Coordination of Utility and Public Works projects
- Investment in staff and equipment – ensure we are using all resources that are available to us. Doing more with what we have
- Doing half-cent sales tax projects faster - provide incentives for contractors to complete projects quicker and enforce them
- Make sure we are also talking about sidewalks and curbs - Just make sure it does not get lost when we talk about maintenance.
- Develop a plan for lead service line replacement including identify grant or other funding to assist
- Increase staffing support for see-click-fix program to deal with incidents more swiftly

- Increase inspector staffing to routinely investigate property maintenance and code violations proactively
- Don't automatically do projects solely because they are next on the list
- Continue to develop data-driven asset management strategy for project selection based on consequence of failure and likelihood of failure

Identifying Priorities

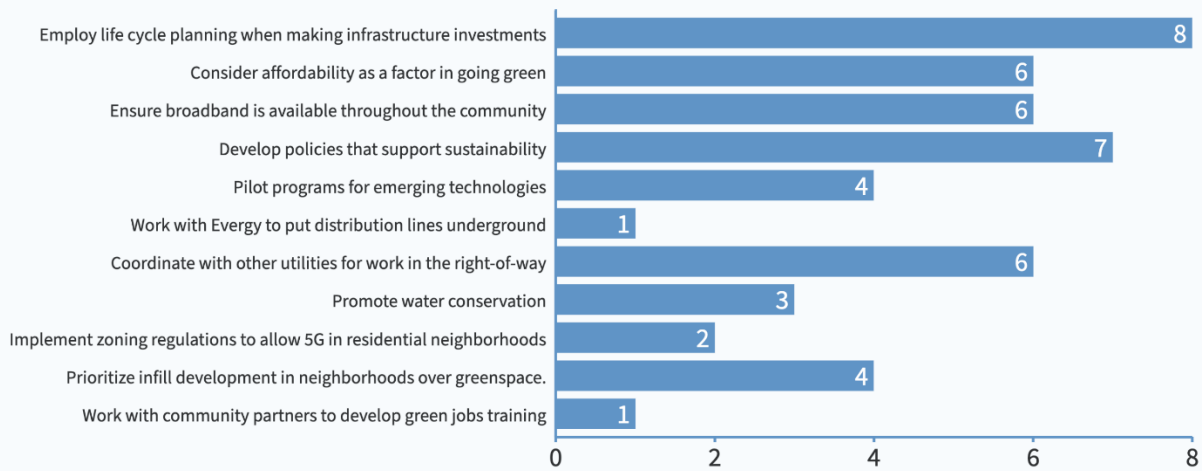
Finally, participants took part in a polling exercise to identify priority goals. Below are the results of the objectives for each of goals identified.

Goal 1: Topeka is Accessible to All



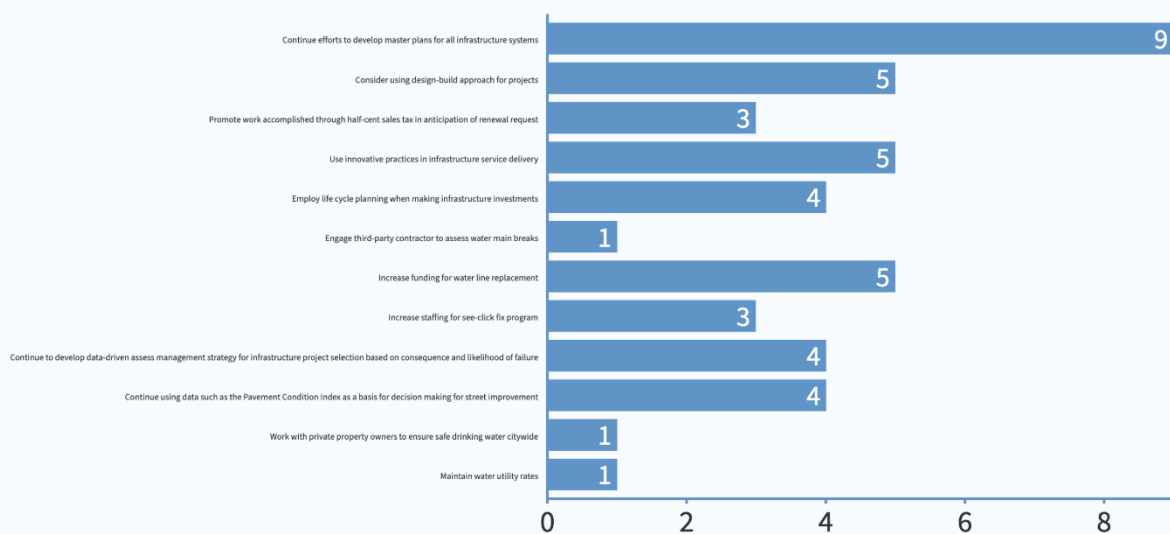
Goal 2: Topeka Moves Toward Sustainable Infrastructure

Goal 2: Topeka moves toward sustainable infrastructure



Goal 3: Topeka Protects its Investments

Goal 3: Topeka protects its investments



Topeka Community Priority Setting: Continuing a Commitment to Public Safety

February 7, 2022

Participant Introductions

Participants were asked to introduce themselves, their position or affiliation, and share their hopes for this process.

- **Christina Valdivia-Alcala:** District 2 City Council representative. Really excited about listening and being present.
- **Hannah Schumacher:** Resident in Council District 6. Hopes to get some questions answered and work toward a path of positive actions for the entire community.
- **Police Chief Brian Wheelles:** Looks forward to getting some feedback and learn what the community sees as priorities.
- **Danielle Twemlow:** Educator in the community. Hopes that everyone can come to solutions that help the community as a whole.
- **Fire Chief Craig Duke:** The goal is community service; to make sure they are doing what the community wants and needs.
- **Jessica Porter:** A child wellness advocate. Here to observe and understand what public safety entails.
- **Connie Hood:** Newly retired from Shawnee County Health Department. Have big problems in North Topeka and hopes that new ideas can be brought to the table on how to make Topeka a better place to live.
- **Earl Mckintosh:** Sells insurance for a living. Excited to meet new people in the community and hear new opinions. Here to learn and expand on other's ideas.
- **Judge Karan Thadani:** Ensures the court runs in an equitable fashion. People rely on the judge for community safety. Has invested in the community and excited to hear what others have to say.
- **Isabel Huckins:** Currently working toward a master's degree at Washburn. Studies have been focused on policing. Hopes are to understand public safety better and get questions answered.
- **Sheldon Kern:** Has always lived in Topeka and is here to learn.

- **Meg Gammage:** 22-year citizen and volunteer with the Topeka Police Department. Hopes to learn how to make certain locations in Topeka safer.
- **Judy Wilson:** With the Safe Streets program for 17 years and is a part of Neighborhood Watch. Hopes to continue with great partners and others who reduce crime.

Envisioning the Future

In considering what could be achieved within Topeka's public safety, participants were asked what headlines they would hope to see in the Topeka Capital-Journal in January 2027 (in five years) regarding community public safety.

2027 Topeka Capital-Journal Headlines

- Topeka crime at a historical low!
- Crime at all-time low
- Topeka breaks record low for property crimes!
- Community policing reimagined and working in Topeka. Crime reductions continue to all-time lows
- Community partnerships being built between law-enforcement and community members
- Police department fully staffed
- Chronic unsheltered homeless population reduced to zero in Topeka.
- Homelessness on the decline in Shawnee County
- Increased use of citizen review boards and community meetings have built a bridge between community members and police
- Neighborhood watches across the city of Topeka tout many successes in community building
- Those who need mental health services know where they can get help
- Vulnerable communities successfully complete training for on-hazard risk protocols (Near the river, railroad tracks, near interstates, along the Shunga, etc.)
- Topeka Police Department offers free self-defense and conceal carry courses
- Budget surplus helps (all the issues!)
- Topeka city, county, and private entities show their commitment to affordable housing. We've done it!!
- Topeka religious community works with city officials to bring about change by raising money
- Symbiotic relationship between police and community leads to higher clearance rates
- Former Menninger clocktower turned into apartments for the homeless
- Public Safety improves with deployment of tiny homes
- Safest Capital City in America
- Topeka voted best City to live in
- Upstream approach to public safety Increase of quality of life for all
- More services for the disabled & inclusion for disabled
- Public safety improves as a result of successful mental health programs

- Topeka sets aside differences to come together as one community
- Investment in wraparound services such as Impact Avenues has reduced the unsheltered population
- Enforcing landlord code to address urban blight
- Common sense gun safety education promoted across the community has decreased violence
- Washburn declared safest campus in Midwest
- Police department partner with community of citizen review boards
- Homeowner numbers improve and the number of abandoned or dilapidated homes decreased, especially in lower income areas
- No more fires in abandoned homes for an entire year
- Rescue Mission moves to the edge of the city and the metro is helping get people back and forth to it.
- CIT Program expands to cover all service areas in Topeka
- CIT Program expands to 24/7 coverage, TFD and EMTs to be CIT trained as well
- All emergency calls responded to within 4 mins
- TPD used innovative technology to solve cold case homicides
- TFD delivers the advanced life support to all districts in Topeka
- City of Topeka touts public education program with decrease of crime
- City of Topeka becomes a pulse-point community
- Neighborhoods reduce crime by 75%
- Community activism program prevents the burning of abandoned homes in Topeka

Considering the Possibilities

Participants were asked to identify what Topeka could start doing and continue to do to make continued progress in its public safety.

Goal 1: Foster Partnerships to Enhance Public Safety

- Engage the entire community and help them to know what is available in the community. For example, we need neighborhood watches throughout the community.
- Add more neighborhood watches
- Create a local religious coalition to work together to invest money back into the community
 - Help every community stakeholder to know there are issues that need investments from community partners
- Provide low-barrier options for individuals in the community seeking help
- Involve the officers that are patrolling areas in community events, not just the officers assigned to community policing
- Help to ensure that our community partners receive the funding they need. (Not necessarily directly from the city, but help to encourage proper funding sources)
- Encourage private groups to invest in the community. (GTP, large corporations) Create a partnership that is intentionally going to make progress in these areas
 - Focus on how racism is a public health crisis within our systems
 - Disenfranchisement of communities; we need to move to more equitable outcomes for all racial groups; data driven choices to achieve equitable outcomes
- Outreach from internal city departments to reach and involve community members
- Promote trauma informed care training
- Ensure comprehensive public education program to all sectors of the community
- Look at having a public safety tax to pay for programs
- Continue and expand communication from city departments such as police, fire, and others, through all platforms
- Continue to reach out neighborhood watches via social media, zoom, and other platforms
- Classes on animal safety and on animal control
- Create Citizens Review Board
- Continue Partnership with Helping Hands humane society on animal control
- Make sure we are including drug addictions in our conversations

Goal 2: Reduce the Unsheltered Population and Provide them the Resources they need

- Invest in programs such as impact avenue at broader levels such as providing in house services: shelter, mental health services, drug treatment, job training, etc. All under one roof
- Partnership with Topeka Rescue Mission
- Look at strengthening the ability the City has to temporarily provide assessment services to individuals in crisis
- Increase the mill levy (sustainable funding source) to increase capacity for services
- Utilize portions of ARPA Funding (one-time funding source) to increase capacity to agencies or services
- Address compounding issues such as affordable housing, lack of childcare, lack of a living wage, lack of grocery stores, etc.
- Address landlord/tenant issues to reduce vacancies along with vacant commercial buildings (white lakes mall)
- Investing to increase the capacity of facilities within the community that can provide services
 - Stabilization Facility before mental health analysis
- Decrease the mill levy to help strengthen home ownership
- Consider low-barrier options to support those experiencing homelessness
- Built for Zero program – Increase in social services/mental health workers. The workers meet each individual and know them by name to help get them the resources and services that they need. Housing-first approach <https://www.joinbuiltforzero.org/>
- “One Stop Shop” where all the resources that someone experiencing homelessness needs in one place.
- Listening sessions and tours with councilmembers, members of the county, state officials, and administrators on what people are seeing and experiencing.
- Media release to educate the broader community on the encampments and issues that are happening throughout the community.
- Build, renovate, repurpose current buildings for long term sustainable public housing
- Continue partnerships such as Impact Avenue

Goal 3: Implement Innovative Public Safety Programs

- Continue community policing through community education increase funding *
 - Youth Outreach programs
 - Equity, Inclusion, Diversity Programs to bring groups together including LGBTQ community
 - Increase and utilization of Neighborhood Police (walk and talks)
- Continue Code compliance, talk with neighborhoods
- Continue fire prevention, such as smoke alarm installs
- Educate the community on burn permits and acceptable burning
- Educate the community on the city's policy on squatters
- Educate the community on code compliance
- Expanding the CIT by funding and hiring teams that can cover all shifts
- Train those TFD who want to, for CIT
- Start back up the program with hospitals - community paramedicine programs
- Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design programs within intensive and at-risk areas*
- Better promotion of programs that exists because there is some disconnect of what programs exists
- Reduce militarization of police and reevaluate equipment being spent in budget
- Develop citizens review board to build trust and communication with the police department*
- Promotion of gun safety education program
- Put community police officers in a specific place in the neighborhoods throughout Topeka (
- Separate policing and mental health job roles
 - Lesson burn-out
 - Define their roles and other community roles
- Include foot patrol
- Bring back the bike patrol (E-bikes, Segway, etc.)
- Diverse deployment of police officers
- Community policing implemented department wide
- Have basic services (CIT, Police, Paramedic) connected to shelters

Goal 4: Provide Necessary Resources to Public Safety Departments

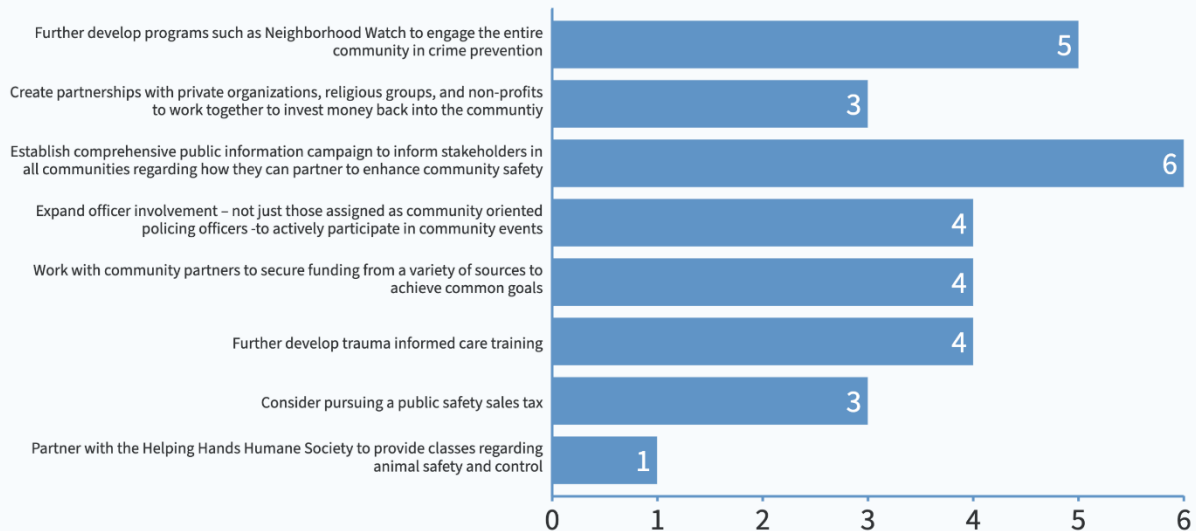
- Evaluate fire station locations within the community, standard of cover
- Ensure Topeka fire and police are fully staffed
- Find ways to increase sustainability in department equipment and facilities (hybrid vehicles)
- Recruit quality candidates for staff for code compliance
- Expansion of innovative recruitment efforts in city staffing
- Increase paid internships across the fire department
- Increase funding for CIT programs to help hire qualified mental health professionals
- Increase the mill levy (on-going funding source)
- Competitive wage packages for all employees to continue to make the City of Topeka an attractive place to work (set standard of living wage); Benefit packages including housing vouchers, childcare opportunities, tuition, etc.
- Pause the idea of growing Topeka population and use the money to bring the community to a flourishing level (If you build it, they will come) *
- Expanding services, we have within the city emphasis on mental health services
- Decrease the mill levy to homeowners
- Improve and update the fire stations (ensure that we will not lose services in areas when making improvements/changes)
- Ensure that the pay for our code enforcers is above a living wage and designate them as first-responders at the code enforcement level

Identifying Priorities

Finally, participants took part in a polling exercise to identify priority goals. Below are the results of the objectives for each of goals identified.

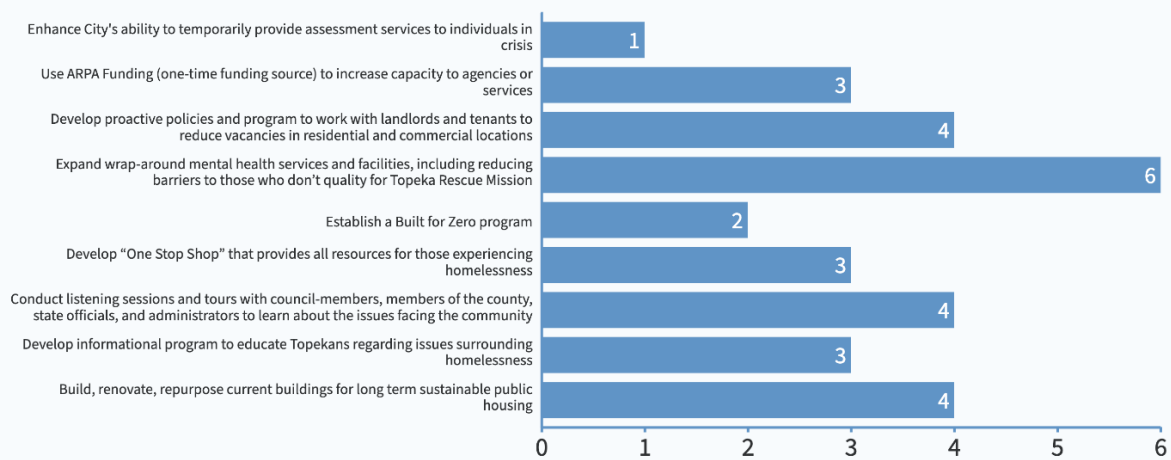
Goal 1: Foster Partnerships to Enhance Public Safety

Goal 1: Foster partnerships to enhance public safety



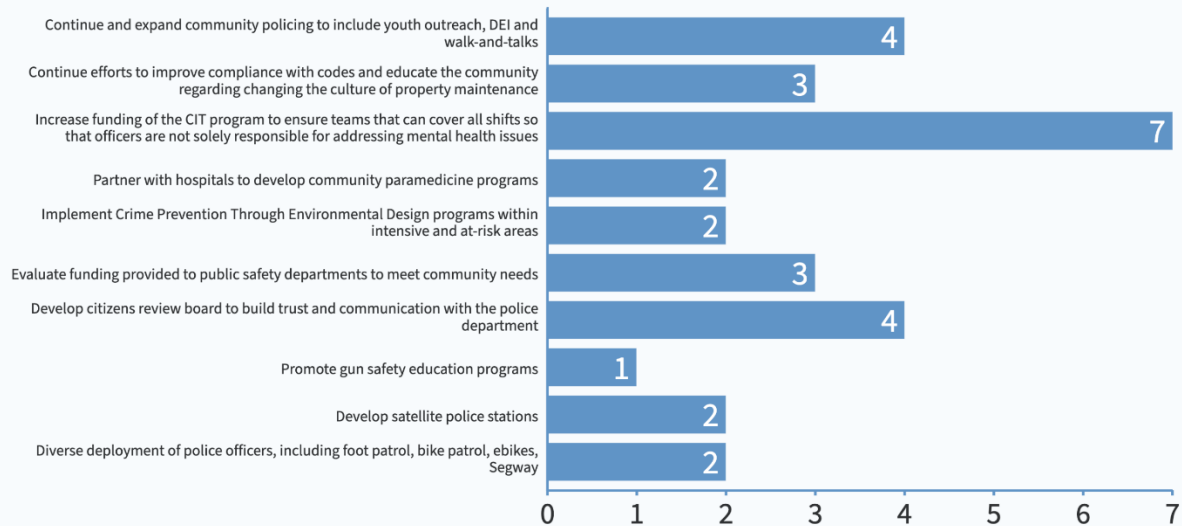
Goal 2: Reduce the Unsheltered Population and Provide them the Resources they Need

Goal 2: Reduce the unsheltered population and provide them the resources they need



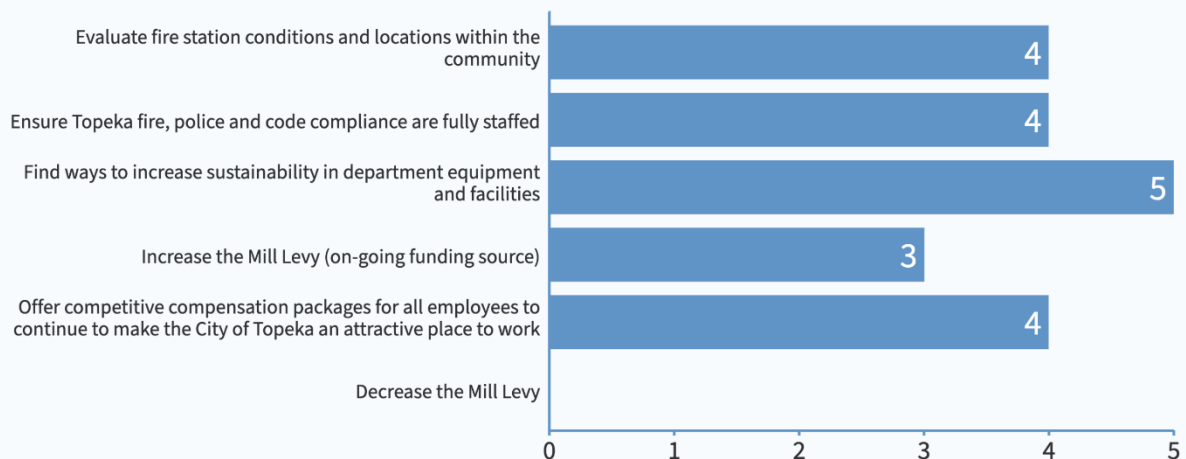
Goal 3: Implement Innovative Public Safety Programs

Goal 3: Implement innovative public safety programs



Goal 4: Provide Necessary Resources to Public Safety Departments

Goal 4: Provide necessary resources to public safety departments



Topeka Community Priority Setting: Fiscal Sustainability and Good Governance

The fifth of the five priority-setting workshops focused on fiscal sustainability and good governance. However, because of very limited attendance, the full priority setting process was not facilitated. As with the other four workshops, the process and its purpose were reviewed, and the environmental scan was presented.

Thereafter, stakeholders were given the opportunity to ask city staff questions about the budget process and fiscal policies and practices.

One participant did subsequently provide suggestions via email. While they were not discussed or considered by the stakeholders, they are listed here to provide a record of them just as all other suggestions were captured in other work groups.

1. Capital Improvements Expected Life Review – Ensuring life expectancy for capital improvements have been assessed based on actual performance and are reflective of future performance with a periodic review of no less than five years.
2. All government infrastructure contracts must have claw back clauses (if infrastructure fails to reach the initial expected life (at completion). This requires that all outsourced work adheres to the planned scope and life of the project.
3. Establish a rental property inspection position that is charged with all code compliance for the city and fully fee funded (with a per rental unit fee structure).
4. All government contracts over \$50k must be approved by the governing body (city council). This ensures an elected official is ultimately responsible for oversight, which is consistent with citizen expectations.
5. The city council shall have input, in conjunction with the city manager, in establishing the agenda for all council meetings. However, city council members must have the ability to call meetings by a simple majority.

It should be noted that because these suggestions were not vetted by a larger group, they will not be included in the priority-setting process at the March 10 workshop.