



January 26, 2018

County Manager Michael Scholes
Sedgwick County
525 N. Main Street
Wichita, Kansas 67203

Dear Manager Scholes,

On behalf of the Greater Wichita Partnership, we want to thank Sedgwick County for the continued partnership to further the economic development of our community. We made notable progress in 2017 and are confident we will continue to experience such activity in 2018. Your investment provides invaluable resources to cultivate and maximize development opportunities.

In 2017, we had a number of significant benchmarks:

- 2,279 jobs were announced (750 were attraction and 1,529 were created through expansions)
- \$621(M) in associated capital investment to jobs announced
- \$99.7(M) in total new annual payroll
- The number of active projects increased from 35 in 2016 to 70 in 2017
- We saw an increase in private sector participation in global shows – 20 in 2016, 27 in 2017
- Targeted trips with Site Selectors increased from 1 in 2016 to 4 in 2017
- The number of businesses participating in BREG increased from 286 in 2016 to 347 in 2017
- The number of individuals participating in BREG increased from 518 in 2016 to 632 in 2017
- There were 4 engagements in non-aviation events to diversify our economy

Through the Partnership we are holistically approaching economic development. This is driven by purposeful local and regional engagement. We have six priority areas we are focusing on to advance the development of our community and region: primary jobs, entrepreneurship, workforce development, perceptions, talent and downtown vitality. These areas are not independent but are intentionally interwoven to drive success.

In 2018, we have a number of initiatives underway:

Analysis of **Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth (BREG)** will be underway in the coming weeks. The purpose of this analysis is to further focus and refine our initiatives based upon which industry clusters are positioned today for the highest probability of success. We are also conducting a Partnership analysis to determine how we may further evolve the Partnership to maximize success. The opportunity to strengthen the regional approach to economic development is imperative. Strong, collaborative regions result in growth. We are positioned to have tremendous advancement in this area. The Strategic Advisory Team is providing incredible leadership with this initiative; we appreciate the engagement of the County on this team.

Plans are underway for **Farnborough** (July 16-22nd) and **NBAA** (October 16-18th). Over the past few years the Partnership has been increasing Wichita's and the State's presence at these very critical shows. We are seeing increased private sector participation with these events. The Partnership is leveraging these opportunities to market the assets of our community, our talented workforce and the opportunity to increase the diversity of work for our suppliers.



Partnership 2018 Funding Request
Page 2

A growing opportunity for the Wichita region is the **Maintenance Repair and Operations (MRO)** industry. The past two years the Partnership has been actively pursuing opportunities within this growing industry. In 2018, the Partnership will be representing the Wichita region in Orlando at MRO Americas (April 9-12th). Our team will pursue opportunities that match our workforce and real estate availability.

In the area of **Primary Job Creation**, the Partnership has aggressive strategies. We believe it is imperative to approach this area through multiple avenues to increase our success.

Retention/Expansion/Attraction – our team conducts a series of Business Retention and Expansion calls on an annual basis. This helps us understand what existing companies may need in order to expand. A large percentage of a community's growth may be attributed to expansions.

In regard to attraction, we are working diligently to ensure Site Selectors know what our community has to offer – workforce, quality of place, innovation, education, housing options, etc. Through intentional engagement from visiting Site Selectors to hosting in Wichita, we are working to market and communicate the distinctiveness of our community. An avenue by which we have increased success in this area is by engaging the public and private sector in a very purposeful way.

Communications/Marketing – the Partnership's Communications and Marketing team is consistently providing updates on the announcements in our community and region. This communication is targeted locally, regionally, nationally and globally. In 2017, we utilized avenues such as national publications to market our community's and region's progress. We also utilized the national and international trade shows.

The Communications and Marketing team also allows us to provide specialized responses to companies exploring opportunities in Wichita. This is achieved through RFP responses, power point presentations, targeted collateral and brochures.

Talent – talent is the commodity in economic development; availability to workforce drives decisions to expand or locate in a community. The Partnership is approaching the cultivation of talent through: (1) dedicated staff (Talent Specialist) – who is coming alongside Human Resource Executives in their recruitment of talent, (2) education – working through our workforce development task force to further connect business to education, approaching from cradle to career, (3) marketing the uniqueness and distinctive of Wichita and the region and (4) legislation – working with numerous public and private partners – the Partnership is engaged in working with the state to increase our competitiveness of retaining and attracting talent.

Strategic Advisory Team – in 2017, we also saw the creation of the Strategic Advisory Team. This public/private team of leaders is providing strategic input and advice to the Partnership's economic team. Through their leadership we have deliberate strategies for intended outcomes. They are providing guidance from policies to how we pursue specific opportunities.



Partnership 2018 Funding Request
Page 3

Your investment and partnership will greatly assist in the continuation and acceleration of each of these and other initiatives. We will leverage your investment through additional private sector investment. In 2018, the private sector is investing over \$1.7(M) in Partnership initiatives. This will yield a 5 to 1 return on the investment we are requesting for 2018.

In 2018, we are requesting Sedgwick County consider a request of \$345,000. Again, these funds will be leveraged by private sector investment to maximize their impact in cultivating economic growth and jobs for our community and region. The allocation of funding would be as outlined below:

Analysis of Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth (BREG) - \$45,000. This is a one-time request and will allow for a greater focus on the development of our target industries. It will also provide insight of how we continue to position our community and region to attract the talent needed for current and future job opportunities.

Local Business Development/Research-Community Data-Statistics/Program/Marketing - \$300,000. This investment will further the following initiatives:

- International Aviation - Farnborough
Presence/Business Participation
- National Business Aviation Association - NBAA
Presence/Business Participation
- Maintenance, Repair and Operations - MRO
- Diversification of Wichita and Region
Diversification Trade Shows
- Site Selector Visits
Locally/Nationally
- Marketing/Collateral/Brochures/Communications
- Research Resources
- Data Collection
- Talent

This is a dynamic time in the development of Wichita, Sedgwick County and the region. We appreciate the County's consideration of continued investment and partnership to cultivate and maximize every development opportunity.

We are certainly available to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlie Chandler
Partnership Co-Chair

cc. Chairman Dennis

Jon Rolph
Partnership Co-Chair