

2011 Greenville, SC Inter-City Visit Evaluation Responses

What was the reason you attended the 2011 Inter-City Visit to Greenville, SC?

Networking with other leaders and the chance to see how another city is doing things.
Taking good ideas home for the city and my business, and meeting other business leaders with whom I can build relationships. These relationships help me with community and business activities.
Downtown.
To learn from the experiences of another community and to experience a vibrant downtown.
To get to know Chamber folks better, see Greenville, and visit Greenville Tech.
To broaden my knowledge of what is happening outside our region and to bring back thoughts and ideas to implement into our community.
I was looking for some new kinds of things cities are doing with their downtowns (parks, old theatres, four lane street vs. two). How other cities are demonstrating new energy.
Education and inspiration. To see and learn from other communities what they are doing to address similar issues that we need to address.
To hear from another city on how they moved initiatives forward in order to create the downtown renovations, additions and atmosphere to change their city from a 'nothing to do perception' to a 'have to go there' word of mouth advertising.
Inspiration, learn new things, networking
Learn ideas to improve our community and build relationships with Topeka leaders
1 - Gain knowledge of other communities and hear directly the descriptions, context of reform, challenges, and planning needed for accomplishing mission. 2 - Strengthen/build relationships with fellow members of Topeka delegation. 3 - Gain insight on YP association development/retention and understand frameworks and foundations needed to succeed.
Learn about Greenville's progress.
To learn about their Downtown Redevelopment. Increase business contacts.
Learn more about how to revitalize downtown Topeka.
To see what and how Greenville transformed their city into the beautiful city it is today.
The learn more about, what steps Greenville took to infuse a growth mantra into the community
To learn about how they revitalized their downtown and to learn about how the reinvestment in their downtown has triggered economic growth for the city.

What are the top three concepts you are taking away that could be implemented in Topeka/Shawnee County?

Having social services at the table for all development conversations. Start somewhere . . . don't wait until the right moment. It will never come.
1. We need a destination....gathering place - bridge, arch, riverfront development, etc. 2. Take one project at a time until it is complete. 3. We are not doing a good job on residential development or attracting young professionals who are most likely hi-tech oriented.
Tech center recruitment, land banking by the city and long term development is crucial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> city officials and staff with a "we can do that" attitude really helps move things along...we should work on that signage downtown should be clearly visible and useful, they had signs pointing out what you could find in either direction of intersections just do something, once something tangible is achieved people will start to believe
Blueprint for a vital downtown area, industrial maintenance training processes, and importance of a determined (and

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perhaps long term [10 years or more]) sustained leadership model leading to change
1) Getting to the point where GO Topeka / JEDO / Shawnee County Commission / Topeka City Council members are seeing the same vision to move the community forward. 2) Creating a downtown environment that allows people to enjoy the evening with music, dining and socialization.
Topeka need to find a center place that will bring people downtown, like a ball park. We need to somehow convince the city council to support the downtown movement. Work closer with KU, KSU and WU
Public / Private partnerships; downtown redevelopment; economic development; workforce development
Ignore the naysayers. They will thank you in the end. Incorporate a plan and work the plan. Create a place people want to visit and you will create a place where people want to live and work.
--Public/private partnership created for tech education --Sending out "RFPs" to developers and giving the project to the best one to complete --Ensuring that all downtown development is multi-use so it creates (forces) a balance of living/working/playing downtown
Public/private partnerships Have one key downtown coordinator who is the guru of downtown redevelopment (dealmaker) Convince KU or K-State or both to have a branch research facility in Topeka that supports our business base
Re-development in a community needs a transformative project to capture public attention and support. Communities need a strong public planning/economic development complex that cohesively integrates ST & LT objectives, 3)Government/Authorities with differing constituencies need to FRICKING WORK TOGETHER and BE FLEXIBLE with PROTECTIONIST AGENDAS.
Downtown---the 2 lane streets worked Tech Ed---we really need to upgrade the image of technical education Research--it can be done!
Public & Private money/partnership needed. Start with one thing (everyone get on board) i.e. their hotel was the catalyst. Co-work environment; new for YPs and future style of business for self-employed.
All great downtowns are a public-private endeavor. You need small successes to gain traction to do bigger projects. Vision is first; planning is second, action is third. Rinse and repeat.
Mentoring leadership program that the YP's have in place there. Extra motivated that we can change this city with the right efforts and people. Quality of life is a huge retainer and recruiter for YPs.
1. The use of public policy to drive controlled development 2. It takes time, 30 years or more, so the concept/project time line will never be an immediate payoff or benefit. 3. We will have to "run over" some current stakeholders to make anything happen....
Downtown events to drive people to downtown Focus on one thing, accomplish it, then point proudly to it and keep moving forward. Downtown Farmer's Market
Strong private industry push Good Public Private partnership Proud of their community
Don't give up. It takes time to change/improve a City/Downtown. Get the public officials on board and if they are not on board elect different public officials.

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In questions 3 through 9 describe the most valuable idea that you gained from each session.

Session 1: Downtown Greenville & Reedy River A Great American Main Street Panel Discussion

- **Downtown - 30 years in the making, Nancy Whitworth - Director Economic Development**
- **Art in Public Places, Nancy Whitworth - Director Economic Development**
- **Trails & Bikeways, Brian Graham - Greenway & Sustainability Manager**
- **Downtown Greenville - Selling Tourism & Conventions, Diane Wilson - Director Information Services**

While it doesn't happen overnight you must start as though it's the best thing ever and then grow and change as needed.
Long Term Planning, Land Banks work
Trails and bikeways are great for connects within the city and neighboring cities. It doesn't have to be done all at once to be successful.
The City was willing and ready to fund a vision. Trails and Bikeways, the bridge and amenities in general.
Topeka is our city and it's time we start doing the development we want. We can pay other people to come here to tell us what we need but it's ours and it's time to take charge. I think we are doing a great job with trails & bikeways we just need to bring our streets up so people that ride a bike can use them.
If you go for bold and do it right it can have a big impact.
The art placed in the downtown is a huge draw and complement to their downtown. We need to see the success from this and incorporate art in our downtown plans. Lots of art!
Narrow streets downtown, get everyone to focus on one project at a time and complete it, attract major anchors (i.e. hotel, baseball park, public parks, etc)
A progressive community planning department and code enforcement department with the strength and back-bone to lay a solid foundation for Eco Devo. Also, stability and competence of Eco Devo leadership provides stronger relationships for investment. "Green" isn't a catch-phrase but a foundational cornerstone.
Cohesiveness of design elements in downtown; one project at a time; it took a while to make it happen.
That it took time, patience and persistence.
Didn't really take off until they build the bridge.
The before and after pictures was the best part of the presentation. Seeing what it was and where they are now was fabulous to see.
Nancy Whitworth....30 YEARS
It may take 30 years for an overnight success in downtown.
Don't give up. It takes time to change/improve a City/Downtown. Get public officials on board and if they are not on board elect different public officials. Quality public green spaces DO make a major difference for a community.

Session 2: Public/Private Partnerships - Where Action Happens Panel discussion:

- **Steve Navarro - President, The Furman Company**
- **Ken Betsch, AIA - Managing Principal, Betsch Associates**
- **Paul "Bo" Aughtry III - Principal, President of Commercial Div., Windsor-Aughtry Co.**

Public/Private partnerships are critical to the success of any growth idea.
Get a partner and respond to requests for proposal for projects you want, you never know when your partner may show up at the bid openings.

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It is important to have individuals who are capable and excited to take a leap of faith and initiate something big, which will then get the ball rolling.
If a developer was not ready to move forward or there was a lack of private involvement, the City moved forward with the funding of the project. If I remember correctly, they then sold the project to an investor. The City is not a long term holder of assets.
I think Topeka is beginning to see both sides working together; we just need to get the city council on the same page.
Public /Private partnership. Learning from each other and listening to what each other needs.
We can't just wait for someone to show up with a handout. We need to coordinate and search for private dollars that are necessary for Topeka to grow.
Imperative to have public/private partnerships Let government drive their desire for partnership by utilizing master plan and conducting RFP's for desired elements of the plan, negotiate for what each role will include
Transformative projects need backers/developers who are committed to a vision and are willing to take a "reasonable" haircut on the risk/return approach to a project. Mixed-use projects and districts don't necessarily require direct public financial incentives, but instead can often be structured with companion projects that dovetail nicely.
They actually have investors that invested for the big picture.
Public and Private partnerships are a must. Period.
Public-private partnerships sometimes start with just the public making an investment to get the private developers involved.
It just emphasizes how the large corporations and individuals with money can really impact a city. It also made me realize the importance of having the leaders in government on your side working together for a better Topeka.
All of the developers helped develop public policy to drive development....Land-bank, RFP, etc.
Private investment FOLLOWS public investment.

The Stars Align

- **The Honorable Knox White, Mayor - City of Greenville**

We need visionaries at every level, but a champion in a prominent position is very important. Someone willing to stay the course.
Don't give up, and do the right thing.
Never announce a project that appears negative until after you have been elected.
Loved the Mayor, he was a "can do" guy who is very well respected by the community and works to create change.
The importance of a vision and community progress to align with the vision
An idea person with the confidence and drive to make the idea/vision happen no matter what.
He fits the saying – “from the top down.” We need to have leadership leading the way not putting up brick walls.
Sometimes you have to make decisions you know will be unpopular for the common good. I wish all our elected officials were willing to take some risks for the common good.
Dynamic leader. Waited until beginning of second term to complete potentially controversial project (riverfront pedestrian bridge) Would make a good speaker here in Topeka.
A weak mayor council government structure; still requires a <u>strong</u> mayor. Not for decision-making purposes, but as a wheel-greaser that focuses everyone's eye on the ball. Public/Private partnerships have a lot of layers that are hard to navigate.
Learned that he got a lot of flak from community (blogs/paper/etc) about projects. i.e. the park. He just timed it right and moved forward with the vision. People applauded later. Also learned about - the strength of a community when they know, respect and trust their leaders...
A great leader-mayor can make all the difference.
Public land bank concept was interesting. It has worked well
Get public officials on board and if they are not on board elect different public officials.

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Tour of Greenville

- **Joe Smith - Project Manager, Community Development Division, Greenville**
- **Hank Hyatt - Vice President Economic Development, Greenville Chamber of Commerce**

Very impressed by their affordable housing and the partnership with social services.
The thing I got out of this session was the attitude of positive actions. Also different organizations coming together.
Nothing on that one.....
It was VERY interesting that the city gives property owners 30 days to make something happen with boarded up homes or they are demolished. I think this proactive approach could be very beneficial to our community; we have too many blighted areas. In Greenville the land was put to use to build home of hope on, helping clean the city's appearance.
City purchases of old properties and new construction on those sites
If the house or building was boarded up then 30 days to clean up or the City had the ability to accomplish the task on their own. Important piece with the next step of building new homes and apartments within the same part of the community. Created beautification and housing.
If the house or building was boarded up then 30 days to clean up or the City had the ability to accomplish the task on their own. Important piece with the next step of building new homes and apartments within the same part of the community. Created beautification and housing.
Great tour, the Hyatt is what held the down town together until the city start to add other things like the park, shops ball park and small business.
if a residence is boarded up then the city does what it needs to do to keep it from becoming a problem for the neighborhood.
The tour helped bring out the areas that still need work. It was good to see the comparison of some of their blighted areas and to know they still had plenty left to do. However, they built the area first that brings in people and the sales tax that they pay in order to tackle the next phase.
I was impressed with their work for affordable housing. It's attractive; meets design standards and make sure that all citizens are getting attention.
enjoyed this. They have been able to clean up the areas in central Greenville and do a variety of housing projects...both style and costs.
Went to Co-Work space. Learned a lot about the rehab of the building, the co-work environment and how we might implement this in a downtown space for YPs.
There were so many non-profits revitalizing affordable housing after the city flexed its muscles to force landlords and owners to meet codes or get their properties condemned.

Mechatronics Technology Training Tour, Greenville Technology College - Brashier Campus

- **John Davidson - Department Head Mechatronics Technology, Greenville Tech**
- **Duane Anderson - Instructor Mechatronics Technology, Greenville Tech**

Critical to have the right people teaching current practices and skills.
Thought it was great that they recognized that staff that had field experience were best suited to teach/train the students. Hope WU Tech is doing the same and recruiting for strong faculty.
Attracting qualified people from B&I to lead in training efforts. Importance of approaching B&I to contribute equipment to educational efforts.
Outstanding partnership with the manufacturing companies in the area. They could not produce enough graduates to meet the demand.
Washburn Tex can learn a few things form John and Duane. We have a long ways to go before Topeka can fill some of the technology jobs that are in the market now.

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Talking with and listening to the local industry as to what they need. How important it is to be building on previous program and advance with the technology.
All the tech tours were amazing in that they all seem to fit together like pieces of a puzzle and the end result is job training in an area that they can claim title to.
I was struck with the fact that Greenville Tech could take more students: they have a challenge marketing the program to prospective students. Employers already know it's valuable.
Hire recent training managers from private companies to work at tech school as they have the best contacts to get donated equipment from companies and to place students at private employers.
Rapid adaptability to curriculum that suits needs of employer base.
Tech schools aren't just putting out plumbers and welders these days.
The timing was good because Washburn Tech's new robotics. This is a great opportunity if we plan

Advanced Technology Research Tour, Clemson University - International Center for Automotive Research

- **Mike Davis, Associate Director of Facilities Planning & Management Property Manager**

Great facility!
Building on existing assets is necessary. They capitalized on the fact that they had a BMW plant and were able to collaborate with them to create new programming that would bring students from all over the WORLD.
Again, amazing hands on training to meet the demands and needs of the manufacturers. Technology that was state of the art going forward.
Once again I just think we need to work with the three Universities that are within 60 miles of Topeka.
What an awesome partnership with a company and staying ahead to be a leader in the industry
This has become a community asset and a worldwide distinction. It's their "Menninger."
What is our business need, that we could encourage an area university to help develop our research need perhaps at Hummer or Kanza Bio-Science Park? Animal research?
Research/Institute complexes may not incubate direct economic benefit (except to their Sponsor - a University/Corporate Entity), but they do incubate the development of human capital and ability for new ideas to be spun off or developed in the normal course of frictional employment.
Very innovative and interesting. I love how Greenville is great at making lemonade when life gives them lemons.

Why Greenville? Why Topeka? A Site Selector's View

- **Mark Sweeney - Senior Principal, McCallum Sweeney Consulting**

Very positive, with lots of great food.
It is amazing how many team members they have planning the next big project.
Keep doing what we're doing with GO Topeka building strong relationships with Site Selectors.
Use the assets of your community as the building blocks for attracting investment and growth
Outstanding. We have opportunities and we have heard it directly from the people that basically would represent our community to a manufacturing client for example. We need to sit up and listen and take note. Places like Greenville are our competition. Let's learn from them and more importantly - implement.
Mr. Sweeney said it best - work with business, city council and the people of the city.
It takes a commitment to want to attach people and companies to your community. It just does not happen on its own.
Excellent choice of a venue and wonderful way to say goodbye to Greenville. If we don't see why Greenville has

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been successful and one year from now see the difference we have made in Topeka because of what we saw and heard, then we shouldn't take any more intercity visits.
Mark could have been tougher.
Build relationships with site consultants.
Whether realized or not, a community is always being watched -- even by power players not yet considered. It is a closely knit industry, and missteps have a pronounced and lasting effect on attractiveness.
What a community must have to bring large businesses - and it boils down to quality of life. The importance quality of life has on all economical impact items.
Quality of life is a rising factor in community attractiveness to companies and organizations looking to expand or relocate.
Quality of life is a major factor that companies consider when locating. Downtown is the anchor of any town and where quality of life begins.

Please choose the answer that best describes your views

1 = N/A, 2 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Meals						21	4.8
Trip Communications						21	4.5
Transportation						21	4.3
Overnight Accommodations						21	4.8
Overall Organization of Visit						21	4.8
Location						20	4.7

What would you like to see more of in future Inter-City visits?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Technology/Industry			9	47.3 %
Downtown			12	63.1 %
Economic Development			13	68.4 %
Public/Private Partnership			15	78.9 %
Education K-12			5	26.3 %
Higher Education			3	15.7 %
Housing			6	31.5 %
Transportation			4	21.0 %
Other			1	5.2 %
Totals			19	100%

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Do you have suggestions for future Inter-City visit sites?

Take a media person just to report to the public and business what we did and what we saw and why we did that.
Maybe offer a mini-visit to a local city (Kansas) so that those who can't make the extended trips will still get to learn from other communities. Even as small/close as Hutchinson or Wichita.
Outstanding job.
Somehow we need to find an airline to come to Topeka.
Richmond VA Spokane, WA
Grand Rapids, Madison
I like when a location can be relative to our town (demographics / size / etc.) Helps that apples-to-apples better.

Any additional comments?

It is nice to see more young people on these trips. I look forward to the trips every year now, so I can see positive developments and positive relationships with everyone.
Great trip. The real movers were one the trip. It is too bad that the media has spooked the elected officials into not going. I really think we should gain a sponsor to pay for one of the two at WIBW 580 talk radio to go and see these are not junkets.
Really great trip, thanks for all the work that went into it!
This was all new to me two years ago and it has been an eye opener for me. I love Topeka we do need assistance from all citizens, business, city council and universities.
We need an intra-city visit. Let's be tourists in Topeka and take some time to show ourselves what's been accomplished.
Notwithstanding above feedback, overall an AWESOME trip. In my personal opinion, more productive, insightful and well-rounded than Oklahoma City (which was insightful in its own right).
Great opportunity and I hope to be able to attend in the future.
We need a good way to communicate what we learned and saw to the community. Too bad our newspaper is SO WEAK or we could have a reporter along to chronicle events.