

WICHITA'S EMERGING MARKETS: BUILDING THE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE FUTURE

What will define Wichita 10 years from now? It may be something the region is only beginning to imagine today.

At the Partnership's 2026 Annual Meeting, more than 200 business and community leaders gathered at the B-29 Doc Hangar to explore Wichita's emerging markets and what it will take to turn new possibilities into reality.

The conversation focused on two growing areas, biomedical and entertainment, and how both could create new businesses, attract talent and strengthen the region's economy and quality of life.



Partnership President Jeff Fluhr opened the Greater Wichita Partnership's 2026 Annual Meeting.

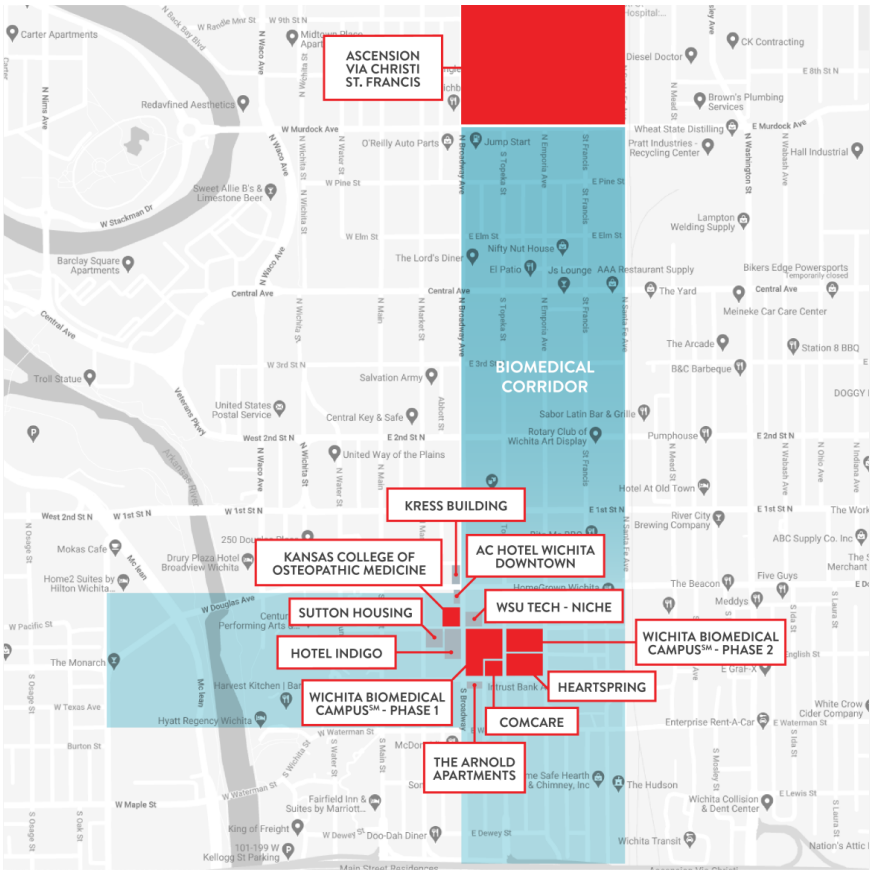
A Foundation for What's Next

Partnership President Jeff Fluhr opened the evening by reflecting on the progress made since the Partnership was established 11 years ago.

The team's work has helped expand Wichita's aerospace strengths into advanced manufacturing, space and defense, while building relationships with global companies, federal leaders and institutions.

The region's prospective economic development pipeline exceeds $8 billion, with companies expanding or choosing to locate here and new projects advancing across multiple industries.

Progress is also taking shape in talent and quality of place. The Downtown Wichita Action Plan has been adopted. The Wichita Biomedical Campus℠ is nearing completion, and more than $500 million in development is underway around the biomedical campus, including Heartspring, COMCARE, Hotel Indigo, the Arnold Apartments and AC Hotel Wichita.



He also highlighted Movement Musick, a Wichita-based organization founded by Chase Koch that leverages the power of music, creativity and community to drive positive social change. Through downtown development and placemaking, Movement Musick is building a vibrant ecosystem where people come together, connect, discover, develop and apply their unique gifts.

"As you think about biomed and Movement Musick, both are going to be catalysts for new businesses, talent, technology, and more people choosing to call Wichita home," said Fluhr.



Left to Right:
Partnership Co-Chair Aaron Bastian, Christian Kanady, CEO of Echo and co-founder of Wheeler Bio, and Chase Koch, executive vice president of Koch, Inc. and founder of Movement Musick.



Power of What We Can Build Together

Fluhr's remarks set the stage for a conversation moderated by Partnership Co-Chair Aaron Bastian, featuring Chase Koch, executive vice president of Koch, Inc. and founder of Movement Musick, and Christian Kanady, CEO of Oklahoma City-based investment firm Echo and co-founder of Wheeler Bio.

Although their work spans different industries, both shared a belief in Wichita's potential and the importance of building the right ecosystem around major developments.

For Koch, the motivation behind Movement Musick began with confidence in Wichita and its people. He described the community's culture, talent and willingness to help one another as reasons his family and businesses have remained here.

"I love this place. I love Wichita," Koch said. "We want to retain all the best people in Wichita and attract more people here."







Movement Musick's plans include a new music and entertainment venue, artist services, housing through the renovation of the historic Shirkmere Apartments, a grocery store and community gathering spaces. Together, these elements are intended to create a more connected downtown environment where people can live, work and create.

"This isn't Chase's project. This is Wichita's project. We are building it together, and it is informed by the needs of the community," he said, underscoring the importance of shared ownership and participation. Plans for the district will continue to be shaped by what residents want and need.





Kanady discussed Wichita's potential to help strengthen domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing and supply chains, pointing to vulnerabilities exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on his experience with Wheeler Bio in Oklahoma City, he described how communities can leverage research, technical expertise and institutional partnerships to support emerging industries.

He noted the Wichita Biomedical Campus℠, which brings together Wichita State University, the University of Kansas and WSU Tech, can build on the region's established manufacturing strengths to create a foundation for future growth and innovation.

He also challenged the region to think beyond city and state lines. Wichita has opportunities to connect with emerging biomedical and biomanufacturing activity across the I-35 corridor.

"The time is now for this region to rise up together," Kanady said.

Stronger, More Competitive Community

While biomedical and entertainment represent very different industries, both contribute to a stronger, more competitive community. Research and manufacturing capabilities create jobs and expand the economy, while investments in music, arts, housing and public spaces help attract and retain the people who make that growth possible.

Bastian challenged the audience, "Nobody is going to do this hard work for us." Moving these efforts forward will require people to raise their hands, share ideas, make connections and invest their time, expertise and resources.

The speakers encouraged attendees to become ambassadors for what is being built, help connect people and organizations, and look for ways to contribute. As Kanady put it, "If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together."





Partnership Co-Chair Charlie Chandler joined Aaron Bastian on stage to close out the evening.



The Next Chapter Requires All of Us

As Partnership Co-Chair Charlie Chandler closed the evening, he reminded investors that progress is never a solo effort. It requires participation, relationships, expertise and a willingness to step outside familiar roles.

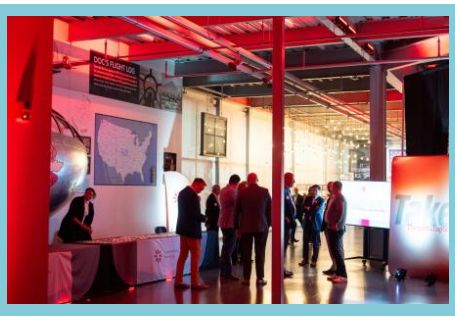
With other regions advancing quickly, he challenged Wichitans to act with urgency and conviction.

The Partnership brings people together to turn ideas into action. Its investors open doors, make connections, share expertise, and bring the right people and resources together to move priorities forward.

Wichita has spent years building the relationships, capabilities and confidence to compete. Now is the time to put that foundation to work and help shape what this region becomes.

The next chapter is ours to build.

Businesses and community leaders who want to help shape Wichita's future are encouraged to email Becca Newman to learn more about the Partnership and explore opportunities to get involved.
















TAKE NOTE



TAKE NOTE
The next chapter is ours to write













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