PARTNERSHIP PRESIDENT CALLS DOWNTOWN PROGRESS TRANSFORMATIONAL

By Emily Younger

Partnership President Jeff Fluhr delivered a presentation on the remarkable advancements in downtown Wichita to nearly 100 industry professionals, business leaders and community stakeholders at Visit Wichita's annual meeting on May 17.

In his opening remarks, Fluhr described downtown Wichita's progress as dynamic and transformational – pointing to the significant projects underway and the future opportunities.

"We are a city that is creating distinctive places for the community it serves. Alleys and parks are being developed as places to gather. Our arena is regularly hosting the men's and women's NCAA events," said Fluhr. "We are a city that is making the impossible, possible."

Since 2010, there has been more than $1.6 billion in downtown investment with another half a billion dollars in the pipeline.

Fluhr emphasized the recent economic development downtown, specifically WSU Tech opening its National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education (NICHE) in the former Henry's building, IMA Financial Group relocating its Wichita headquarters to Douglas and Emporia and Cargill electing to remain and expand its footprint in the core of the city.

"This was a major achievement for our community. We collectively fought above our weight class with Texas to keep Cargill in our community," he added.

WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education (NICHE)

Cargill

IMA Financial Group

Looking to the future, Fluhr said Wichita has a strong advantage, considering the proposed Wichita Biomedical Campus. The development would signify the largest single investment in the history of downtown Wichita.

The joint project between the University of Kansas, Wichita State University and WSU Tech is expected to bring 3,000 students, 200 faculty and staff and 1,600 related jobs to the area.

“This will be a catalyst in residential, commercial, and retail,” Fluhr said. “This project is remarkable for a number of reasons.”

Fluhr further highlighted the significance of the riverfront development, the expansion of Exploration Place and continued development surrounding Riverfront Stadium. He said transforming Wichita into a desirable destination for talent to thrive and flourish requires a visionary outlook and the collaborative efforts of numerous individuals.

“We must continue to be aspirational, tenacious, committed, and invest in ourselves boldly. We ALL build Wichita,” he said.

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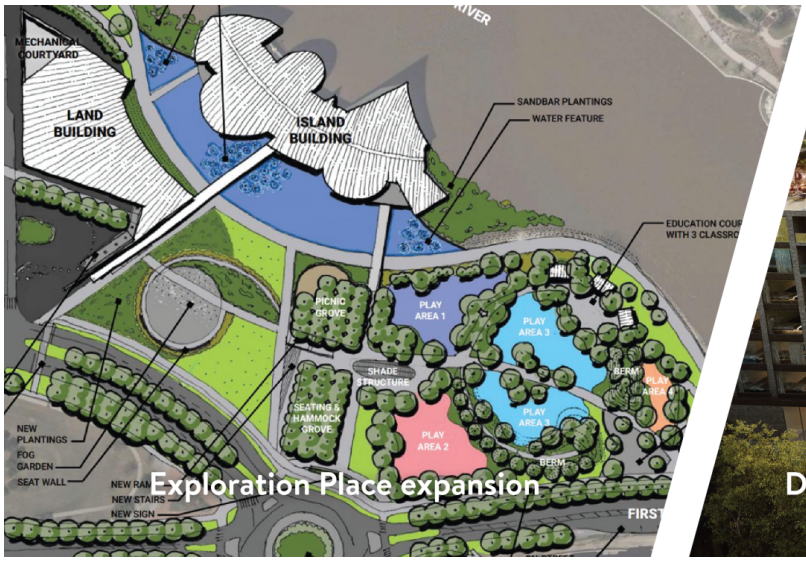

Exploration Place expansion

Development surronding Riverfront Stadium