City receives recognition from What Works Cities
What Works Cities

In 2017, the City of Topeka engaged in a comprehensive certification process with What Works Cities, a program launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies. The city has been actively working with the What Works Cities on open data and performance initiatives since being selected in June of 2016. The primary goal of this partnership is to improve data practices and processes, making data more accessible and transparent to residents, and improving the city’s ability to make more data driven decisions.

Throughout the past year, the City of Topeka collected detailed information from all departments on specific criteria outlined in the
process (e.g. how city leaders are using data and tools to measure progress and commit to driving results). The end result provided an overall picture of the city’s performance and practices in using data as evidence to make decisions.

Topeka ranked in the top 11% of the 117 cities that applied and received an Honor Roll Certification recognition for 2017, the only city in the state of Kansas, and one of five cities nationwide, to receive this designation. Specifically, Topeka received a 48 percent rating on the certification scale, just 4 percent shy of reaching the silver level. The certification process will aid the City in evaluating its performance and practices, and will outline short term and long term improvements that are needed.

City of Topeka staff will draw upon the process by building an action plan to work through necessary improvements and strive to achieve a silver level certification.
status in the 2018 certification process.

For more information on this initiative, please go to [What Works Cities Certification](https://data.topeka.org/stories/s/1-29-2018-Weekly-Report/45ij-8ktw/).

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**Sun Bears Introduced at the Topeka Zoo**

Cupcake and Ho-Ho, the two Sun Bears brought to the Topeka Zoo last month were introduced to the media last week.

The media had an opportunity to see the bears view their new home for the first time. This is the first time the sun bears have been in an exhibit with real dirt and trees.

Ho-Ho and Cupcake will not be available for public viewing until May because of Camp Cowabunga construction.
Stream City Council Meetings on Facebook!

City Council meetings will now be shown live on Facebook. A Facebook live stream will launch before every meeting and stream the meeting in its entirety. The meeting can also be streamed on the City4 page on the city's website and can be seen on YouTube.

Recent Updates

- The Topeka Fire Department Training Division staff completed a Train the Trainer course to certify them as Instructors for the National Association of EMT curriculum.

- For calendar year 2018: 270 cases have been opened and 1440 inspections have occurred for 2018.

- The Point-In-Time Count of homeless people was completed on January 24th. The results from the survey will be provided to the community within a couple of months.
Capital Improvement Plan
Open House

The City will be hosting an open house for the annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) on Monday, February 5th from 6:00 -8:00pm at the Holliday building (620 SE Madison St.).

This will be an opportunity for the public to see examples of current and past capital projects in the City, as well as the chance to interact with City staff. This informal event will be fun for all ages.

Visual Appeal Survey
The Planning Department launched an on-line Visual Appeal Survey (VAS) as part of a comprehensive update to the City’s sign code and commercial building design standards. This is the first update of its kind that would apply to new signs/commercial buildings on a city-wide basis beyond Downtown and historic districts. This survey will help with the City’s goal to enhance Topeka’s quality of place and community aesthetic while also creating a more user friendly sign code for businesses.

You can take the visual appeal survey here:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/COT-VAS

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Coming up

- January 31st - NIA Neighborhood Leaders Meeting.
- February 3rd- Topeka Police Department is participating in the Special Olympics Polar Plunge.
- February 5th- CIP Open House from 6-8 p.m. at the Holiday Building on 620 SE Madison St.

- February 8th- Topeka Police Department Citizen's Academy begins.

- February 13th- Volunteers in Police Service Academy begins.

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Brent Trout

This weekly report is presented to you from the office of City Manager Brent Trout.

For other weekly reports, visit the City's website.

This report was produced through our open data portal. We have several other open data portals to help connect you with the work we do, including portals that let you:
• **Visualize Topeka's $270M budget**

• **See Topeka's expenses, one check at a time**

• **Navigate our major infrastructure projects**

• **Track departments' progress toward our goals**