



Office of Recovery

Office of Recovery Newsletter | October 29, 2021

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This week's edition of the Office of Recovery Newsletter focuses on recent updates from the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Executive Committee. This week SPARK appointed Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the four advisory panels. The taskforce will also hold another regional meeting November 4, in Dodge City to gather feedback from Kansans.

The program spotlight highlights the Kansas Main Street Affiliate Communities program, which is a self-help, technical assistance program that targets revitalization and preservation of downtown districts through the development of a comprehensive strategy. This section also provides an update on the distribution of funding for the Frontline Hospital Worker Retention program.

For the latest information about resources available to Kansans, see the "Updates to Services and Support" section of this newsletter.

For the most up-to-date information, please visit the Office of Recovery website at:

SPARK Updates



SPARK Executive Committee to Hold Regional Meeting in Dodge City

The SPARK Taskforce Executive Committee will hold a regional meeting in Dodge City at 3 p.m. Thursday, November 4, 2021, to gather information and feedback from Kansans.

SPARK will use that input to prepare proposals for the most effective statewide distribution of federal coronavirus relief funds allocated to Kansas through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of March 2021.

Members of the public are encouraged to attend. To watch the meeting online follow this link: [SPARK Regional Meeting](#). If Kansans would like to submit written testimony to the SPARK Executive Committee, please send a copy of your testimony to ethan.s.belshe@ks.gov.

If attendees would like to provide verbal, in-person testimony, sign-up sheets will be available at the meeting on Thursday, November 4. Testimony will be limited to two minutes to allow for as many voices to be heard as possible.

What: SPARK Taskforce Regional Meeting

Where: Theatre

Dodge City Community College

2501 N 14th Ave

Dodge City, KS 67801

When: 3 - 5 p.m. CT Thursday, November 4, 2021

The SPARK Executive Committee will hold future regional meetings as shown

below. Details regarding how to attend will be released prior to each meeting.

- **November 15**, Kansas City Community College
- **December 10**, Virtual

SPARK Appoints Advisory Panel Chairs and Vice-Chairs

The SPARK Executive Committee met on Monday, October 25, 2021, to discuss the four advisory panels: Health and Education, Economic Revitalization, Connectivity, and Efficiency and Modernization. During the meeting the SPARK Taskforce approved the nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair for each panel. The nominees are as follows:

| Advisory Panel | Chair Nominee | Vice Chair Nominee |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Economic Revitalization | Rep. Sean Tarwater | Tien Huynh |
| Health and Education | Sen. Renee Erickson | Robyn Chadwick |
| Connectivity | Sen. Mike Peterson | Stanley Adams |
| Efficiency and Modernization | Rep. Troy Waymaster | Mark Hutton |

If you have any questions about the SPARK Executive Committee, the Office of Recovery or ARPA, please visit <https://covid.ks.gov>.

Program Spotlight



Funding Begins to Flow to Hospitals through the Frontline Worker Retention Program

In September, the SPARK Executive Committee approved \$50M in available funding for frontline hospital workers. Qualified facilities may use the funding for either premium pay as defined in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or for funding a custom program designed by the facility to improve the retention of nursing

resources and support personnel.

As proposed by the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Executive Committee, hospitals have been allocated funding based on the number of licensed acute and intensive care unit beds in each facility. The full list of allocations can be found [here](#).

Today is the deadline to apply to receive funding. As of this week, the Office of Recovery has received over 100 applications from Kansas Hospitals with a number of hospitals beginning to receive their allocations.

“We are very grateful to the SPARK committee and to the Office of Recovery for all of their work developing and executing a program that recognizes our Kansas frontline health care workers who have been working so hard over the last 19 months,” said Chad Austin, president and CEO, Kansas Hospital Association.

This funding will help ensure that Kansas hospitals are adequately staffed and frontline workers are compensated for their tireless and courageous work throughout this pandemic.

For more information on the Frontline Hospital Worker Retention Program, the SPARK committee, or about the Office of Recovery, please visit <https://covid.ks.gov>.



Kansas Main Street Program Helps Communities Revitalize and Preserve their Downtown Districts

The Kansas Department of Commerce (KDC) offers the Kansas Main Street Program, which is a self-help, technical assistance program that targets revitalization and preservation of downtown districts through the development of a comprehensive strategy. The historic preservation-based strategy is based on organization, design, promotion, and economic vitality. Kansas communities interested in learning more about how to revitalize their downtown are encouraged to sign up as Affiliate Communities.

The Kansas Main Street Affiliate Communities Program was created to bring successful downtown revitalization tools to more Kansas communities. Affiliate Communities can attend the same quarterly trainings normally reserved for Designated Kansas Main Street communities. Anyone – including individuals, businesses and civic organizations – may join the Affiliate Program by [clicking here](#) to register. Once the form is filled out, you will have the option to submit payment online or by mail. For more information, please email Scott.Sewell@ks.gov.

Communities may be able to use local American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to implement downtown revitalization projects and strategies. According to the U.S.

Department of the Treasury, ARPA Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (LFRF) dollars may be eligible to support strategies that support their efforts to revitalize and improve their downtown (see FAQs 2.9 and 2.18):

- Aid to tourism, travel, and hospitality industries in response to negative economic impacts of the pandemic
- Investments in parks, public plazas, and other outdoor recreation spaces
- Assistance to small businesses, which could include enhancing outdoor spaces for COVID- 19 mitigation (e.g., restaurant patios) or improving the built environment of the neighborhood (e.g., façade improvements)

Communities should work with their city and county governments to determine local ARPA funds available for these projects. The Kansas Main Street Program is not directly distributing ARPA funds to communities but is willing to help guide you and offer assistance about how you can use ARPA funds.

Examples of potential projects include (potential ARPA eligibility met):

- Restorations of retail and office spaces (improving the built environment of the neighborhood)
- Providing funds for small businesses to support their downtown marketing and promotional initiatives (assistance to small businesses)
- Construction of town squares or public outdoor gathering spaces in downtown districts (investments in public plazas)
- Promotion of gift certificate program for local shops to encourage tourism and shopping at local businesses (aid to tourism and small businesses)

Scott Sewell, Kansas Main Street Director: Scott.Sewell@ks.gov

Shelley Paasch, Kansas Main Street Business Specialist: shelley.paasch@ks.gov

For questions about ARPA, please contact the Kansas Office of Recovery [here](#).

Updates to Services and Support



Webinars and Q&A Sessions

The Office of Recovery would like to share the following scheduling updates for the

Local Government Webinars and Lunch and Learn Q&A sessions:

Local Government Webinars

- November 17, 2021, at 11 a.m.
- December 15, 2021, at 11 a.m.

Q&A Sessions

- November 3, 2021, at 11 a.m.
 - You can join this session by registering here: [Register for Q&A Session](#)
- December 1, 2021, at 11 a.m.

Details on topics and how to register will be released prior to each scheduled session.

American Rescue Plan Act

- The latest version of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on ARPA can be found [here](#).
- Local Governments and State Agencies can find a checklist to use before spending ARPA funds [here](#).

CRF Investment Dashboard

For the latest on how **2020 COVID Relief Funds** are spent, please visit [the Investment Dashboard](#). The Investment Dashboard has been updated with August 2021 data, showing Kansas has allocated \$1,015 billion and expended \$1,001 billion in total CRF funds.

Contact the RO

The Office of Recovery is here to offer support and coordination, and you can submit a question or inquiry via the [Contact Us form](#). Please visit covid.ks.gov for up-to-date information and resources on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for Kansas residents, businesses, and communities.

[Question/Request Form](#)

Warm Regards,

DeAngela Burns-Wallace, Ed.D. Secretary, Kansas Department of Administration

On behalf of the Office of Recovery, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly

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