



## **TANEY COUNTY PARTNERSHIP**

### **City of Branson Quarterly Update, May 1, 2020**

Mayor and members of the Board of Alderman: Below is a topical review of the Partnership’s activities from my last update to you through April 2020. Please contact me with any questions or concerns and if you would like more information as a group, or individually.

**Partners:** Focal Point Outdoor Solutions and Kirbyville R-VI School District are new to the Partnership so far in 2020. The number of Public Partners is now 11 and Business Partners is 30.

**Projects:** (4/21 Project Activity Report) We had one housing project from 2019 secure funding from the Missouri Housing Development Commission and the Missouri Department of Economic Development. Fall Creek Townhomes has started site prep and look for construction to begin soon. We are currently assisting and tracking 22 active, 4 inactive (no activity within last 90 days) projects. Out of the 22 active projects, 11 are within the city limits of Branson. The cumulative industry breakdowns are as follows:

Manufacturing/Wholesale	2
Financial/Business Services	0
Medical Services/Healthcare	1
Supply Chain Management	0
IT/Innovation	0
Tourism/Retail/Lodging	15
Agriculture/Forestry	0
Housing	6
Infrastructure	2

**2018-2021 TCP Action Plan:** The formal Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) program was launched in the third quarter of 2019 in collaboration with Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce staff. Branded “The Business Pulse,” sixty-seven BR&E surveys have been completed with business owners or senior management staff. Goals of the program are to gather information and data from the business community on the issues they are dealing with in the market. So far, some consistent feedback has centered around access to labor and talent, which should not come as a surprise. We will be aggregating the data and reporting on the findings in 2020.

**CWRC:** Updated National Career Readiness Certificates and maintenance goals can be seen below, and more information accessed at <http://www.workreadycommunities.org/MO/213>.

### Maintaining Goals <sup>1</sup>

Workforce	Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	374	363
Current	74	161
Transitioning	359	349
	Goals	Actual
Improved Certificates	14	1

### Employer Supporting Goals

Employers supporting	144
<sup>1</sup> New and reaffirming employers support goal	96
<sup>1</sup> New and reaffirming employers support actual	80

**Site Selectors/Consultants:** Prior to COVID-19 and travel restrictions, we had completed one site selection consultant mission in 2020 with the Missouri Partnership and met with agencies and consultants in Los Angeles and Phoenix to educate them on the unique assets of Taney County and heighten their awareness of what our communities have to offer. The Mountain Complex, Branson Airport and Meadows Business Park are marketable assets that could compete for the right projects. We have met with 16 consultants representing 8 agencies and organizations to-date. We have not hosted any site visits so far in 2020.

**Workforce Development:** Due to COVID-19, the J1 Summer Work Travel Program is currently suspended with no guidance whether there will be students coming to the market in 2020. On March 20, 2020, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced the immediate and temporary suspension of premium processing service for all Form I-129 and I-140 petitions (H2B program) until further notice due to COVID-19.

**Housing:** The availability of affordable workforce housing continues to be a concern for the region. We fully expect this to be more challenging once the effects of COVID-19 fully materialize in the market. More to come on this throughout the next few months.

**COVID-19 Response:** During the week of March 9 TCP staff began focusing all attention on **Business Retention & Recovery** and **Employee Retention & Recovery** due to the Coronavirus as it was starting to become clear things were going to be very different. The TCP team and all Chamber/CVB staff began working remotely on March 16 and split into three working groups (Business Assistance/Dislocated Employee Assistance, Business to Visitor Engagement and Operations). TCP staff led the Business/Employee Assistance team. A **COVID-19 Resource** page was added to the Chamber website and the TCP launched a twice-weekly **COVID-19 BUSINESS IMPACT NEWSLETTER** to share timely and factual information and resources for the business community and employees, like the CARES Act, as well as collecting over 100 survey responses. A weekly conference call, broadcasted on KRZK 106.3, started the week of May 23 to share information with the entire community. The team made over 1,500 outbound calls to local businesses and handled over 1,000 inbound calls through the week of April 13. We had daily contact with our federal legislative contacts and worked with the Missouri Department of Economic Development to help provide as much information as possible to support their business support efforts. We are currently leading or participating in several task force groups to work on reopening the economy safely and as quickly as possible. The business community will need assistance with many known and unknown issues over the next several months.

**Data and Information:** The quarterly economic overviews are available through our subscription with Chmura Economics and their JobsEQ platform and are sent to the city administrator and planning and development director. We have access to local reports and analytics on economic development, education and workforce that we are happy to share with partners, prospects and community stakeholders. Those reports and some of the information can be found at [OnPointMO.com](http://OnPointMO.com) and [TaneyCountyPartnership.com](http://TaneyCountyPartnership.com).

Thank you for your continued support and participation with the TCP!

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