

GREATER KOKOMO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance:

Serving Kokomo and Howard County through the combined efforts of the Greater Kokomo Downtown Association, Greater Kokomo Visitors Bureau, Greater Kokomo Chamber of Commerce and Inventrek Technology Park

WHO WE ARE

The Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance focuses on developing economic prosperity for our community by achieving goals and executing programs that benefit Kokomo and Howard County's residents, businesses, organizations and visitors.

The Alliance is the combined workings of the Greater Kokomo Downtown Association, Greater Kokomo Visitors Bureau, Greater Kokomo Chamber of Commerce and Inventrek Technology Park.

Together, the Alliance's vision, mission and values guide our strategic plan and define the ways in which we execute those plans to accomplish the goals within each organizational priority.



OUR VISION

The shared vision of these five divisions is to foster economic prosperity for Kokomo and Howard County through new investment, population growth, and the continued success of our area's current businesses and residents.

OUR MISSION

The Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance aligns, links and leverages resources to build community prosperity.

OUR VALUES

We are guided to act and driven to succeed by four sets of values:

- Integrity and respect
- Inclusiveness
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Continuous improvement

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our goals and actions align with five strategic priorities:

- ❖ **Leadership and collaboration:** Drive initiatives that lead to economic prosperity for the maximum benefit of current and future generations.
 - ❖ **Economic vitality:** Grow the local economy through quality job creation and business attraction and increase the number of residents to sustain the community.
 - ❖ **Talent attraction:** Develop, retain and attract talent for industry and cultural vibrancy.
 - ❖ **Innovation and entrepreneurship:** Spur an optimistic, persistent entrepreneurial culture and provide infrastructure for innovators to expand business.
 - ❖ **Quality places:** Promote and lead efforts to drive investments in quality, connected places for future workforce and family needs.
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ALLIANCE STAFF



Charlie Sparks
Alliance
President
& CEO



Mike McCool
Manager,
economic
development



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Manager,
Downtown
Initiatives



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Dan Giesecke
Facilities
Manager



Linda Wilson
Administrative
coordinator



Abby Evilsizer
Administrative
coordinator

ALLIANCE LOCATION



ALLIANCE OPERATES OUT OF THE INVENTREK TECHNOLOGY PARK

Since May 2017, all offices of the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance are housed inside the tech park located at 700 E. Firmin St., Kokomo.

ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP

2017 ALLIANCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Chair:** Susan Sciame-Giesecke
- DeAndra Beard
- Ryan Minick
- Greg Goodnight
- Jeff Hauswald
- Kevin Johnston
- Amber Jordan
- Jon Marley
- Cary Mawbey
- Charles Sparks
- Mike Stegall
- Michael Ward
- Jeff Griffin
- Steve Hartwig
- Rhonda Heytens
- Joe Hooper
- Margie Johnson
- Jean Neel
- James Papacek
- Michelle Simmons
- Robert Varsanik
- Steve Whikehart
- Paul Wyman
- Jim Courts
- Matt Collins

2017 GREATER KOKOMO VISITORS BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **President:** Kirk Daniels
- Bambi Roe
- Jim Calabro
- Monica Contreras
- Damon Johnson
- Amber Jordan
- Tammy Kearnes
- Marie Lindskoog
- Jennifer Ogle

2017 GREATER KOKOMO CHAMBER COUNCIL

- **Chair:** Michael Ward
- Peggy Baugher
- Jack Ingram
- Dorothea Irwin
- Joey Kimbrough
- Kim King
- Jon Marley
- Shannon Miller
- Tyler Moore
- Brad Priday
- Kim Tracy
- Blake Rollins
- Marla Miller
- Todd Moser
- Dave Dubois
- Marie Lindskoog
- Bambi Roe
- Randy Morris
- Brian Pier
- Noah Burket
- Raymond Zhao
- Karen McCoy

2017 GREATER KOKOMO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

- **Chair:** Jon Marley
- Jennifer Jordan
- Peggy Baugher
- Michael Ward
- Greg Aaron
- Roger Feldhaus
- Robert Hickman
- Dustin Lane
- Kevin Johnston
- Richard Moore
- Jeff Nelson
- Amy Pate
- David Rayl
- John Roberts
- E.P. Severns
- Greg Gordon

2017 INVENTREK COUNCIL

- Chair:** Andy Baker
 - Greg Aaron
 - Bryan Bitner
 - Jeff Griffin
 - Lita Rouser
 - Bob Hingst
 - Jennifer Jordan
 - Frank Lachenmaier
 - Commissioner Tyler Moore
 - Mike Stegall
-

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ALLIANCE UNDERTAKES POPULATION GROWTH INITIATIVE

For quite some time now, significant emphasis has been placed on ensuring that this community is a great place to call home. Quality-of-place initiatives have long been a driving force in our community's success. But now it's time to leverage those investments and turn the concept of residential attraction into action steps.

And leading the conversation of growing our community's population is the Alliance. We hosted a Population Growth Summit in July, which looked to gain input from our community's major employers and offer concrete steps forward in increasing our

Howard County Commuting Patterns: 2016

Commuters

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of people who live in Howard County but work elsewhere | 4,846 |
| Number of people who live in another county (or state) but work in Howard County | 8,912 |

community's population.

The Alliance then created a community website, ThisIsKokomo.com, to showcase Kokomo's many amenities and serve as a positive first impression for potential new residents and visitors.

ALLIANCE FACILITATES PROJECTS

Actively facilitating one industry attraction and three industry expansion projects with the potential for \$9.55 million in new capital investment and 320 new jobs. The Alliance has successfully secured state economic development incentives for three of the four projects and is currently engaged in efforts to secure an incentive package for the fourth project.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



MEMBERSHIP INCREASES, EVENTS SEE STRONG ATTENDANCE

In 2017, the Chamber of Commerce surpassed 630 members. That's an increase of more than 230 members since 2013 — a 60 percent growth rate.

Our increased membership gives our organization a stronger voice for the business community. It also helps achieve our mission of acting as a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity for our members and our community.

The Chamber hosted 62 events in 2017, with a total attendance of more than 3,000. The Chamber conducted 35 ribbon cuttings in 2017.



Two new events introduced by the Chamber in 2017 were well-received by membership and saw strong attendance.

Educate & Elevate: An interactive seminar series that featured local business leaders and innovators who addressed a variety of topics to help guide our Members to successfully improving their businesses.

Out of the Box discussion groups: Facilitated by local business leaders and innovators, the events are limited to just 15 people to ensure an interactive and enriching experience. Members walk away with new and innovative ways to approach their business needs and networking efforts.



CHAMBER HONORS YOUNG LEADERS

The Greater Kokomo Chamber of Commerce honored our community's young leaders during the 2017 20 Under 40 Awards on Feb. 22 at Superior V in downtown Kokomo. The awards honor young professionals in the Howard County community who have made an impact both personally and professionally.

The 2017 winners are Cary Mawbey, China-Nicole Antoine, Bambi Roe, Brittiani Gillem, T.J. Rethlake, Steve Whitehart, Ikea Prince, Abbie Smith, Warren Sim, Jeff Hughes, Lainey Sewell, David Tharp, Carman Toler, Isaiah Baker, Taylor Thompson Dicken, Madison Criswell, Natalie Guest, Nolan Born, Sarah Pitzer, and Emily Riddle.



2017 ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS

- **Business Person of the Year:** Brad Clark of Fiat Chrysler Automobiles
- **Volunteer of the Year:** Cassie Salinas with The Wyman Group
- **Chamber Ambassador of the Year:** Laura Hileman of Guardian Angel Foundation
- **Small Business of the Year:** Z92.5, Hoosier AM/FM Radio
- **Medium Business of the Year:** Martino's Italian Villa
- **Large Business of the Year:** Sam's Club
- **Public Institution of the Year:** Indiana University Kokomo
- **Impact Award:** Family Service Association of Howard County
- **Downtown Association's Downtown Champion Award:** Bryan Bitner
- **Greater Kokomo Visitors Bureau's FIRSTS Award:** Kokomo Speedway

CHAMBER LEADS CHARGE IN INDIANA HEALTHY COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

In an effort to help our community maintain healthier lifestyles, the Chamber continued the process of seeking an AchieveWell designation in 2017 and continued its work with a contingent of community leaders with a like-minded interest.

In Kokomo, the Chamber is serving as the driving force for obtaining this Wellness Council of Indiana status because we understand the success of an economy is directly tied to the overall quality of its workforce. While Indiana ranks high on national rankings of job growth and best places to do business, the state is near the bottom in regard to the health and well-being of its population.



INDIANA HEALTHY COMMUNITY

THE CHAMBER IS
SPEARHEADING THE
PROCESS OF SEEKING AN
ACHIEVEWELL
DESIGNATION AND HAS
RECRUITED A COUNCIL OF
COMMUNITY LEADERS
WITH A LIKE-MINDED
INTEREST.

GREATER KOKOMO VISITORS BUREAU

VISITOR GUIDE OVERHAUL

In 2017, the Kokomo visitors guide underwent a major redesign.

A joint project of the Visitors Bureau and the Alliance marketing staff, the new design was clean, colorful and photo driven. Staff worked with local photographers and institutions to acquire higher-quality photos of the community to better tell the story of Kokomo to potential visitors.

As a result, demand for the publication increased over years past. With 25,000 ordered annually, a year's supply was distributed in just 8 months. To better meet expected demand in 2018, 30,000 guides were printed.



KOKOMO COMMUNITY SEES TOURISM GROWTH

In an effort to measure the impact of tourism in Kokomo and Howard County, the Greater Kokomo Visitors Bureau again commissioned an economic impact study on tourism and travel.

The findings show that travelers' impact on the area has grown since the previous study completed in 2013.

Conducted by Certec Inc., the study found that visitors to Kokomo and Howard County contributed \$135.4 million to Howard County's economy in 2016. Of that, direct expenditures by visitors accounted for \$97 million. That's a 15 percent increase from the 2013 study period.

The spending came from the nearly 1.3 million destination and pass-through travelers in Howard County in 2016, the study reports. Primary expenditures went toward food and beverage, shopping and lodging purchases.



SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT KOKOMO

The Visitors Bureau promoted Kokomo and Howard County to dozens of travel writers and bloggers during the 2017 Indiana Media Marketplace in Indianapolis, providing potential story ideas and personalized media kits to attendees.

As a result, we hosted travel writers from Indianapolis Monthly, Visit Indiana, Around Indy, and WISH-TV in Kokomo this year, as well as multiple members of the Indiana Office of Tourism Development.



For the foodie ...

The Wildcat
The chef and owners here pride themselves on being a farm-to-table restaurant. The Wildcat features only meat and produce from local, Indiana producers. The restaurant, in conjunction with the high-end cocktail bar upstairs, recently opened a nano-brewery and was tagged by Indianapolis Monthly magazine as offering a "Brunch Worth the Drive."

Martino's Pizza Hall of Fame
If you're eating pizza at Martino's Italian Villa, you've got handmade crust and sauce on your plate. It's a big part of why the eatery was recently inducted in the national Pizza Hall of Fame. You'll find pizza here that's ranked among some of the biggest names in pizza in America.

Bind Café
Named the Coolest Coffee Shop in Indiana, Bind Café is so much more than just coffee. Accompanying those amazing cups of fair-trade coffee and tea are international menus that rotate monthly. The eatery has featured handmade in-house selections from the Caribbean, Germany, India and more.

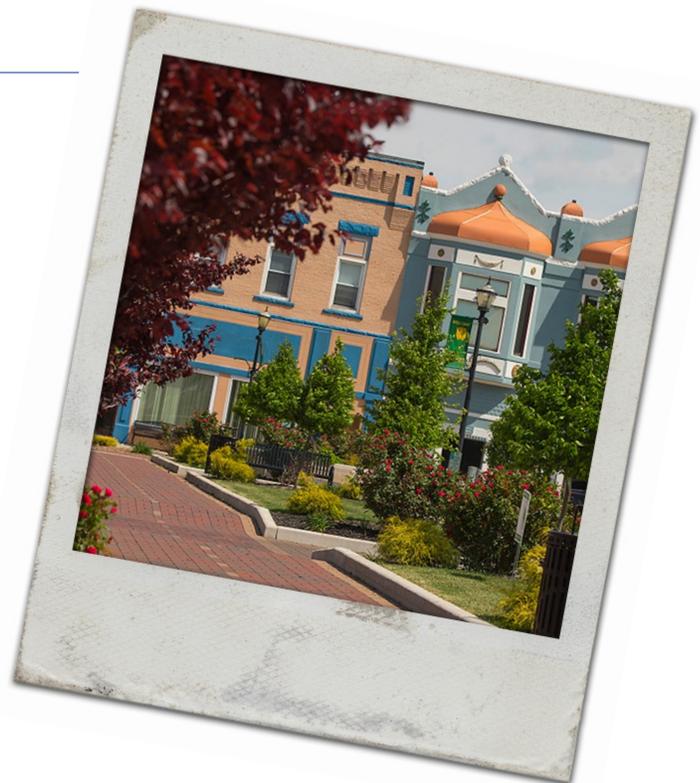
Creating "one-pagers" for travel writers resulted in more media coverage

CHANGING THE WAY WE TELL THE STORY OF KOKOMO — THROUGH IMAGES

The Visitors Bureau undertook a major photography project in 2017.

With social media pushing the demand, images are extremely important in marketing efforts. In an effort to improve the Visitors Bureau's database of available images to promote the community, staff partnered with a local professional photographer to capture stunning images of the community — its attractions, its events, and its people.

The images will be used on our website, on social media and in advertising efforts.



INVENTREK TECHNOLOGY PARK



INVENTREK TECH PARK REOPENS AFTER TORNADO

Inventrek Tech Park officially reopened on May 11 with a ribbon cutting ceremony by the Greater Kokomo Chamber of Commerce.

After the facility was heavily damaged by the August 2016 tornadoes, Alliance staff undertook a \$4 million restoration project that spanned several months.

The forced closure left 27 businesses and organizations displaced. Many of them returned to the facility, with some taking the opportunity to graduate the Alliance's business incubator program.



TOP STORY: Several Indianapolis-based TV news stations covered Inventrek's grand reopening in May. The event also received coverage from local and Lafayette-based media.

A MAJOR RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

REBUILDING INVENTREK

The East Firmin Street facility suffered extensive damage when tornado-producing storms moved through Kokomo on Aug. 24, 2016. The roof partially collapsed during the storm and the rains that followed caused extensive water damage to the building's interior.

With an estimated \$4 million in damages, it took contractors close to 26,000 hours to rehab the 98,000-square-foot-building.

The major project saw the entire roof replaced, new walls, carpeting, wall coverings, lighting, a new HVAC system, and nearly 100 windows replaced.

An average workweek in the building was 568 hours. From demo to completion, more than 26,000 work hours were accrued.



By the numbers

56,939

Square footage of new wall covering

1,970

Gallons of paint

27,840

New ceiling tiles

64,285

Square foot of carpet

146,135

Square feet of drywall

REBUILDING OCCUPANCY

NOT JUST SURVIVING THE STORM

In 2017, we witnessed the rebirth of Inventrek Technology Park with a May grand reopening celebration which highlighted \$4 million in building renovations at this vital community asset.

The importance of the facility to the community was evident by how quickly it regrew occupancy after the storm.

Thanks to the building's comprehensive updates, staff and programming, Inventrek is positioned to lead new entrepreneurial growth in our community and pave the way for new partnerships at the facility.



| DATE | # OF TENANTS | OCCUPANCY RATE |
|----------------------|--------------|----------------|
| August 2016 | 27 | 94% |
| May 2017 | 14 | 35% |
| December 2017 | 32 | 80% |

STATE TECH PARK

Inventrek Technology Park was recertified as a state Certified Technology Park in February 2017.

A tool to support the attraction and growth of high-tech business, the state-issued designation is given to communities that partner with a research institution and meet certain criteria.

AT&T FIBER READY

AT&T and local officials from the Kokomo area announced in May 2017 that the Inventrek Technology Park was certified as being AT&T Fiber Ready.

The certification sends an important message to both entrepreneurs and longtime business owners – that Kokomo is ready with the very latest technologies.



HOME

NEWS

VIDEO

GERRY DICK

SUBSCRIBE

Inventrek Lands Another Certification

Posted: Jul 27, 2017 5:26 PM EDT
Updated: Jul 27, 2017 5:26 PM EDT

By Alex Brown, Multimedia Journalist

CONNECT



WORK ONE BECOMES INVENTREK TECH PARK'S LARGEST TENANT

In September, Work One began operations in its new home, Inventrek Tech Park.

The organization occupies 9,000 square feet of space and brings with it 30 employees. The space was remodeled from classrooms to a more open floorplan to fit the agency's needs.

Working with those who are seeking employment or better employment by preparing them for the workforce, WorkOne's addition to the facility aligns perfectly with the mission of both Inventrek and the Greater Kokomo Economic Development Alliance.



A HEALTHY ADDITION: Thanks to a generous donation from Planet Fitness in Kokomo, tenants of Inventrek Tech Park and members of The Shared Drive have access to on-site fitness equipment. Improving the health of the community is a core mission of the Alliance.

KOKOMO DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION



PROJECT REHABS DELIPIDATED BUILDING

The Monroe Street building sat empty for over three years and required significant remodeling to accommodate the makerspace.

In addition to the work of volunteers, the renovation included an Eagle Scout project from Thomas Bragg, member of Boy Scout Troop 527. Bragg coordinated a building façade renovation that benefited the makerspace as well as the whole neighborhood as the property had become overgrown.

The project also saw the construction of a 10X40 outdoor deck.

This deck will allow for a gathering space and outdoor workshop, providing the necessary social aspect that creates thriving makerspaces.

SHAK MAKERSPACE RELOCATES TO DOWNTOWN

SHAK Makerspace celebrated the opening of its new downtown location with a Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting on Sept. 27.

SHAK Makerspace first opened in February 2016 on the northside. Looking for more space in a central location, the facility relocated to 210 W. Monroe St.

“There’s an arts movement building downtown, so naturally it’s where SHAK Makerspace needs to be,” said Susan Alexander, manager of the Greater Kokomo Downtown Association and board member of SHAK Makerspace.

“Being downtown and in the heart of the city would also make us more accessible. We hope this move will increase awareness of this valuable community amenity.”

The Makerspace opened in its new facility in August and quickly added a number of new initiatives, including public maker and teacher events held monthly and a Maker City book club. Also, an exhibit of work from SHAK makers was soon on display at the IU Kokomo Union Street Gallery. Also, Geek Street planned to film new shows at SHAK Makerspace.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH DOWNTOWN EVENTS



FIRST FRIDAY

The monthly First Friday events continued to build momentum for Kokomo with engaging themes like Techno Night, Artsapalooza and Main Street Mystery, a nod to the game of Clue. The events continue to be a partnership between the Alliance and organizations and businesses throughout downtown and beyond.



BIKE NIGHT

Returning for another year of throttled action in downtown Kokomo, the 2017 Kokomo Bike Night series proved popular. Held monthly from April to October, the event features a juried show with prizes monthly. Each month, the event hosts biker games such as slow drag and roadkill, and there's free reserved parking for motorcycles.



NEW YEAR'S EVE BALL DROP

The Kokomo New Year's Eve tradition continued into its 20th year as the ball dropped in downtown Kokomo despite frigid temperatures. The event remains a partnership between the Downtown Association and the Kokomo High School Technokats robotics team that ensure the maintenance of the ball and its track systems.



STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

For the third year, the Strawberry Festival was held in conjunction with First Friday. The 2017 event saw great attendance and set a new income record. Visitors to downtown had the opportunity to enjoy a summer dessert and festivities during the lunch hour and then stick around straight into evening hours for dinner and First Friday activities.

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT BRIEFINGS INVITE COMMUNITY INTO THE CONVERSATION, PLANS FOR DOWNTOWN

The Downtown District Briefing meetings hosted by the Downtown Association are an opportunity for anyone interested in downtown Kokomo to get involved, be heard or just learn what's happening in downtown. Held three times in 2017, the events had good attendance and featured quality speakers. Among the speakers was Jim Walker, CEO and lead artist of Big Car Collaborative, a public art advocacy group based out of Indianapolis.



IN THE PROGRAM'S THIRD YEAR, THE COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION EFFORT:

- Featured 8 events
- Engaged 350 volunteers
- Planted 1,100 baskets
- Planted more than 100 garden areas
- Removed nearly 1 ton of garbage from Wildcat Creek and walking trails

WORKING TOGETHER: Keep Kokomo Beautiful is a partnership with the City of Kokomo, Dave Lybrook of The Garden, Howard County, Wildcat Guardians, Howard County Stormwater District, Hawg Heaven, and Discover Howard County Trails

IN 2017, THE COUNTY-FUNDED AND ALLIANCE-ADMINISTERED DOWNTOWN RENT ABATEMENT PROGRAM HAD 2 NEW PARTICIPANTS, BRINGING THE LIFETIME TOTAL TO 40



FARMERS MARKET REPORTS SUCCESSFUL YEAR

In 2017, in addition to increasing access to fresh food for all Kokomo residents, the Kokomo Downtown Farmers Market provided a sustainable avenue for 40 small farmers and business owners to market their products and increase their clientele and success. The market hosted 25 local nonprofits and 20 different musicians, bands and entertainment groups.

Also, the market forged ahead as a leader in the local food movement, providing three farm-to-fork meal experiences.

NEW ALLEY PROJECT EARNS GRANT

In 2017, the Downtown Association created a new public art project, All Alleys Lead to Art.

The \$40,000 project was awarded partial funding by the Community Foundation of Howard County and Courthouse Associates.

The creative placemaking project will build art amenities that enable many art exhibits and performances as well as learning opportunities for many years. It will see the installation

of accessories in four alleys to highlight local talent in a specific art forms, including painting, sculpting, mixed media, live performance, audio and video.



MARKETING INITIATIVES

ALLIANCE FACEBOOK PRESENCE SURPASSES 2,000,000 REACH

The Alliance’s social media presence continued to grow in 2017 and surpassed a milestone of 2,000,000 reach. Our reach has increased by 104 percent since 2015. A strong increase in following on Facebook has helped contribute to the reach increase. In 2017, the Alliance gained 2,327 likes — a 53 percent increase since 2015.

Additionally, the Alliance’s total reach through Twitter profiles was more than 200,000.



| PAGE | 2017 LIKES | 2017 REACH | 2016 LIKES | 2016 REACH | 2015 LIKES | 2015 REACH |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Greater Kokomo Alliance | 778 (+120) | 77,640 (+28,135) | 658 | 49,505 | 508 | 58,617 |
| Downtown Association | 4,702 (+538) | 631,215 (+176,980) | 4,164 | 475,045 | 3,530 | 454,235 |
| First Friday Kokomo | 6,414 (+833) | 598,465 (+108,095) | 5,581 | 490,370 | 4,701 | 352,315 |
| Chamber of Commerce | 1,298 (+226) | 213,537 (-75,790) | 1,072 | 289,327 | 546 | 62,932 |
| Visitors Bureau | 2,413 (+863) | 511,735 (+243,630) | 1,550 | 268,105 | 913 | 73,738 |
| *Total Activity | 15,622 (+2,327) | 2,147,812 (+570,460) | 13,295 | 1,572,352 | 10,198 | 1,001,837 |

** Total reach includes all Alliance pages, including Inventrek, Young Professionals and Women’s Business Council*

VISITOR BUREAU ON INSTAGRAM

In an effort to keep up with social media trends, the Visitors Bureau is now on Instagram. Linking the account with our visitors app allowed us to end usage of an outdated Flickr account. The Instagram account reached more than 300 followers by year’s end.



WEBSITE TRAFFIC CONTINUES TO GROW FOR GREATERKOKOMO.COM

Efforts to fully populate the Alliance’s website continued in 2017 and saw the addition of significant content throughout the site. The result was a continued increase in traffic to the site over 2016, when the project to complete the new website began.

| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| USERS | 25,019 | 24,733 | 26,744 |
| NEW USERS | 24,645 | 24,250 | 26,307 |
| PAGEVIEWS | 76,651 | 79,488 | 81,031 |

WWW.GREATERKOKOMO.COM

WWW.VISITKOKOMO.ORG

WWW.FIRSTFRIDAYKOKOMO.COM

WWW.THISISKOKOMO.COM