Option 1: Make Topeka Safer

- Bad Areas are Street to Street
- If we don’t take care of it, it looks bad.
- “Iffy” streets
- Bad people can be anywhere
- More police stationed out in the community
- Stations added where there could be crime
- Reduce speeding
- Will make people feel personally attacked
- Intimidating
- Feel they’re being watched
- More police – what does it mean?
- More security cameras
- More officers means more money to pay them
- More angry people
- More cameras – people feel watched
- Can people/perpetrators be caught?
- Crime can be moved
- Good spots turned to bad
- “targeting”
- Some people in “bad areas” being stereotyped by condition of home
- Unnecessary
- Place look nice, have high rates of crime
- Can’t only focus on crime high areas
- Who decides where cameras go?
- Safety depends on where you live
- What the community is like
- Law enforcement
- Schools – gun control
- Guns are still being brought into schools
- Security checks at schools
• A lot of work/inconvenience to have bags searched
• Overwhelming. Violation of privacy
• Anxiety about extra searching
• Weird to be checked before school
• Some interventions cause unintended consequences in students who are searched feeling more anxious
• If there was an incident regionally it would be nervous/scary
• Any violence would be bad
• Don’t think it would happen here
• Several adults in the room spoke about their own experiences with Metal Detectors in schools after shootings, Topeka Collegiate is a different world
• Officers are in schools in 501, not all kids in this discussion have been in a public school with officers in the schools
• No, Topeka is not safe enough
• Social emotional learning in schools could help
• Anxieties – learn about
• Public speaking
• Make families safer
• Home alarms, security alarms - Not everyone can afford
• Can city/state provide?
• What if we had a big grant for alarm systems/security cameras
• Unintended consequences/tradeoffs:
  • Robberies go down
  • Very costly
  • Privacy violations – watched 24/7-uncomfortable
  • Multiple alarms triggered at once
  • Shortage of alarms
  • Easy to disarm because of familiarity
  • Other areas unsafe because we’ve bought them all for here
  • People could hack cameras/alarms to steal information
  • Increase in violent crime instead of property crime
  • Balance good and bad things
  • what about homeless people?
  • Make sure we have safe housing/safe places for them to go
• Streets aren’t always safe.
Option 2: Make Topeka More Successful

- More jobs above minimum wage
- Replacing struggling businesses with new/exciting businesses — expand successful businesses, more locations open, nothing new if small businesses leave, Keep us more interesting
- Lower prices/rates for small businesses to start
- Make Topeka a more attractive place to live/be
- Instill opportunities for citizens to keep Topeka clean
- Tradeoff - People will still litter
- Fill empty spaces with attractions, with small businesses
- Public Transit, easier to get to jobs, denser neighborhoods
- More support for homeless
- Less repeat/branches of business — too many mattresses firms
- Raising minimum wage — if raise minimum wage, have to raise other wages so people don’t take jobs at minimum wage (McDonalds)
- More summer jobs for youth
- Life guards
- Lawn mowing
- Could you be paid for what you already do? Things you enjoy? (i.e umpire?)
- Sports referee
- Farmer
- Baking
- Kids don’t like getting paid less than adults, but feels fair?
- Person by person, case by case
- Should jobs be paid by $ or skill or passion or choice?
- Fix the mall
- Bring in Business from other cities
- Better hotels (except one nice one in plaza)
- Have higher expectations — people like to travel, better hotels bring economic success and support tourism
- More vending machines — more convenient snacks to support
- More sanitation in hotels and stricter health code roles — less gross, less likely to get sick
- “Clean Green Parks” — open spaces to do what they want
- Strip Store Centers, raise codes to make appealing, shop at small businesses for aesthetic appeal
- More fun, family things to generate tourism
- Ferris Wheel as a destination
Option 3: Make Topeka More Fair

- More opportunities for homeless
- Shelters
- Is this solution working? (some don’t want to go?)
- too many negative stereotypes
- more opportunities
- Reward based service projects – get to help and get a reward (i.e. lunch or bag of food/supplies)
- Reduce/eliminate gender/orientation discrimination in hiring
- Add more small businesses (give more opportunities to make fair)
- Wage disparities
- What is fair – equality vs equity
- Equity helps people get what they need, not the same things as everyone getting equal amounts
- School lunch – kids shouldn’t be denied food
- Observation: better food, healthier options at independent school
- Others describe the public school lunch as “Government Rations” – you eat what you get, no options, can’t even tell what it is
- Get multiple perspectives
- Bring things to Topeka – more employment – more opportunities for people who need employment and money
- More opportunities for unhoused people who need power, food, shelter
- More accessibility
- More equal opportunity employers to offer jobs to more marginalized, diverse and less just the same people
- Public transportation
- No more food deserts – grocery stores in population dense areas
- Equity versus equality
Option 4: Make Topeka FUN

- Need more for 12-16 age group
- Have to drive an hour to get to any fun things in KC
- The Pennant is too busy
- Not targeted to their age as tweens
- Activities are targeted above and below ages of middle schoolers
- Other places (besides Topeka) being more fun, would provide influence to Topeka to be more fun
- Virtual Reality things for separate age groups
- General fun things on birthdays
- Paintball
- Escape rooms
- (Not asking for roller coaster. But something fun!)
- Business owners don’t take tweens into consideration
- Group them above and below – but they aren’t little kids or teens.
- They feel like they have no voice
- Mall is dead – NOT A MALL –
- Suggestion to condense it together into one shopping area
- Add more things kids like
- Adding things like shopping centers for this age group – like the Five Below shopping center
- More hotels, more people visit
- Upgrade hotels – most visible ones are run down
- Put hotels closer to things
- More competitions/celebrations
- Touch-a-truck was fun when they were kids
- Sports tournaments have them traveling out of town every weekend
- Children’s museum for teens (like CITY museum in St. Louis)
- Discovery Center for Teams
- Krispy Kreme would be awesome!
- More opportunities for sports
- Several go to Kansas City every weekend for sports
- More parks with Basketball and soccer
- More options for kids/teenagers
- Braum’s Ice Cream is a destination also
- Theme parks with rides
- Community centers with stuff we want to go to
- Gyms
- VR with friends, in a room (adults can come too, we guess)
- We want the mall to “get itself together”
- Somewhere accessible to go with a group of friends to have fun
- Shopping – better options
• Winter fun – ice skating and more
• Video game lounge
• Social meetups
• Escape rooms targeted at teens (better ones)
• Downtown – more stores, more activities
• Restaurant experiences (like the Dinosaur café at the Legends in KC, was an example)
• “Been there, Done that.”
• Paint ball/airsoft
• Unique businesses
• Festivals/fairs – Winterfairs – concerts, carnivals
• Places to make art
• Cat café (ANY animal café)
• Revamping old businesses – use them
• Remodel Expocentre
• Sports teams
• Nice complexes
• More family activities
• Bring back nostalgic hangouts/businesses (RIP Toys R Us)
• Movie Theatre VR (go into the movie)
• A place to go with a variety of restaurants and stores
• Nostalgic experiences

Another Option: Make Topeka Ours

Some topics came out of an opening discussion students promoted, building off a poverty discussion

• Poverty levels –
• Different place to place
• Difficult situations
• Homeless
• Not enough food
• Not as nice things
• Struggle to pay bills
• Not enough money
• More opportunities for well off (financially) communities and neighborhoods