

February 21, 2020  
Volume 1, Issue 3



# DUNCAN

## City Council

SERVING DISTRICT 8 & TOPEKA

### UPDATES & INFO

It's been a busy few weeks, and budget discussions are beginning. Let me know any suggestions you have for our 2021 budget. Thank you for being engaged!

#### CIP Discussions

Capital Improvement Projects encompass many infrastructure projects in the pipeline, along with department spending. This plan is part of an ongoing discussion that will continue through March, with approval likely in April. You can see these projects at <https://www.topeka.org/finance/capital-improvement-projects/> Take a look and let me know your thoughts. I am scrutinizing closely to make sure we spend tax dollars in areas of real need.

#### DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The 2019 report had interesting data promising for Topeka:

- Building permits were up to 472 from 447 in 2018
- Commercial permits were up to 219 from 179 in 2018
- Building permit value in 2019 was \$215 million, an increase of \$113 million from 2018

Two of the most valuable permit projects in the Top 10 in 2019 were in District 8: B&B theaters and the Marriot Hotel in Wheatfield Village

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

Keeping citizens safe is a primary function of government. It is a top priority for me as an elected official. We have work to do in our city, but 2019 did see decreases: Overall, there were 521 fewer reported crimes than in 2018 and property crimes were down by 662. There is a ways to go, but these numbers are positive.

I attended the Topeka Police Department Community Meeting held at Crestview Community Center. There were good questions asked, and the answers were forthright from the Department. There will be another meeting in District 8 in the near future, and I encourage you to attend. I will let you know when it is occurring.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Transient Guest Tax Committee** Feb. 24 9 a.m.  
Holliday Building

**Crestview NA**  
Feb. 25 7p.m.  
Crestview United Methodist Church

**Policy & Finance Committee**  
Feb. 28 10 a.m.  
City Hall 3rd Floor

**Council Meeting** March 3  
6 p.m. Council Chambers

**Council Meeting** March 10  
6 p.m. Council Chambers

**Council Meeting** March 17  
6 p.m. Council Chambers

**Contact me with comments & questions. Your input matters!**



[sduncan@topeka.org](mailto:sduncan@topeka.org)



[@SpencerLDuncan](https://twitter.com/SpencerLDuncan)



[duncanfortopeka](https://www.facebook.com/duncanfortopeka)



785-207-8985



[@SpencerLDuncan](https://www.instagram.com/SpencerLDuncan)

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## CITYWIDE HOUSING STUDY

A consultant is conducting a housing study to analyze the types of housing need we face in Topeka. While I am wary of how often we do studies, I was encouraged by a presentation given by the consultants on where they are in the process. This study has the opportunity to provide constructive data on our housing deficiencies, allowing us to make informed decisions on the kind of structures built. This is important to economic development and attracting new residents. The study should be completed later this year, and I will let you know what it says.

## ABOUT STUDIES

I am a strong believer in listening to experts we bring in! We have a history in Topeka of commissioning studies and then failing to follow through on recommendations. Either we need to stop spending money on these studies or ensure the money we do spend is put to use by following the recommendations. That will be my goal as your council representative.



[sduncan@topeka.org](mailto:sduncan@topeka.org)



[@SpencerLDuncan](https://twitter.com/SpencerLDuncan)



[duncanfortopeka](https://www.facebook.com/duncanfortopeka)



785-207-8985



[@SpencerLDuncan](https://www.instagram.com/SpencerLDuncan)



## **TALK WITH SPENCER**

Thursday, March 26,  
5:30 to 7 p.m.

Crestview  
Community Center

Come and go as you can.

This is an opportunity to speak with me about any issue on your mind, ask questions and provide your thoughts on how we can continue to improve Topeka.

**SEE YOU THERE!**

## TRANSIENT GUEST TAX COMMITTEE

I serve on the Transient Guest Committee, which oversees how tax dollars are distributed to organizations for tourism growth and development. We meet Monday, February 24th in the Holliday Building Conference room. We will take a look at the status of projects receiving funds and how your dollars are being spent. I plan to take a close look at these efforts to ensure there is progress being made on these projects.