INVESTOR MEETING EMPHASIZES DIFFERENTIATORS

In one word: Impactful. That's how the Partnership's quarterly Investor Meeting on June 4 was described.

Marty Cornejo, Partner of Cornejo Holdings, opened the meeting with inspirational words about Wichita's momentum and why he has personally increased his involvement with the Partnership.

"I want to serve for the good of this organization and our community," Marty shared. "I have learned so much about what the Partnership touches and the impact it makes on our region. I have a new respect for the vast initiatives this team is leading and the opportunities they are pursuing." Marty encouraged other leaders to get involved as well and help the region compete on a global scale.

President Jeff Fluhr addressed current and prospective investors in the historic Commerce Club at the National, which was once Union National Bank and the Commerce Bank Building. He noted the transformation this building renovation has brought to downtown, which is now home to many young professionals, such as those attending Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine. This asset, he shared, now offers not only residential options but also amazing spaces for collaboration. The regional momentum is especially strong in the downtown core, with more than $1.7 billion invested and nearly three quarters of a billion dollars in the pipeline.

Jeff then introduced the panel of national and global leaders who shared Wichita's differentiators when it comes to economic development, talent and quality of life. Paul Anderson, CEO of Novacoast, Inc., was not aware of the Wichita region and had never considered it as a place to do business or grow talent. But when the Partnership reached out in 2021 with the offer to learn more about the region and how we could be the perfect place to do business, he had to consider it.

"Restrictions were heavy during the pandemic and the offer came at a time that I was open to looking at options," shared Anderson. "I had been doing business in Santa Barbara (California) for 25 years and had never once met the mayor. I came to Wichita and the Partnership introduced me to literally every level of government from federal and state to city and county. It became quickly apparent that it would be easy to do business here." In addition to the ease of business in Wichita, quality of life, walkability, and safety all stood apart for Paul as he evaluated his needs and what our region had to offer. In the end, he moved not only one of his operations to Wichita but, one year later, he relocated the Novacoast corporate international headquarters to downtown Wichita.

Mary Beth Jarvis, President and CEO of NXTUS, originally moved to Wichita in 1994 to serve at McConnell Air Force Base. She noticed differentiators right away in the region.

"The culture of entrepreneurship is valued here and spoken about with great nostalgia," Jarvis said. "Wichita is big enough for growth yet small enough that people matter. Wichita leaders are accessible and it's easier for them to get established here." While her organization, NXTUS, is based in Wichita, it reaches worldwide as it creates an ecosystem for startups that are hyper intentional and growth minded. "We have to think of ourselves as growth-minded now- not just after we achieve all we want. If we want to be a global lynchpin, it must start here. Business leaders can engage differently if we are intentional."

President and CEO of JTM Foods, LLC, Monty Pooley, had choices. When his company first looked into Wichita, a place he had lived in for only nine months back in the 1980s, it was one of 10 places across six states he was considering. It was a very different city than when he was last here, but he felt immediately at ease.

“We truly felt like you cared. Our company focuses on advanced manufacturing where people can truly build their careers and we can add value; we wanted a community that understood and valued that,” Pooley said. “Private/public relationships are strong here. The talent workforce is strong. The Partnership made the connections for us, and it was very clear that we could succeed here.”

Other differentiators included:

- **Walkability** "This community is walkable, especially in downtown."
- **Incredible work ethic** "Truly a unique asset we should highlight."
- **Connections necessary to succeed in business** "People are willing to meet and connect and genuinely want you to be successful."
- **Being well-positioned for distribution due to central location** "Be aggressive in selling this central location. It's perfect for distribution throughout North America."
- **The Partnership team and elected officials** "They were responsive and helpful at every level."
- **The culture is different here** "This is truly unique and needs to be shared."
- **The river** "Not every community has a river downtown naturally. Water attracts people so continue to develop that."
- **Recognition such as being one of the best places to move to in 2024** "People need to know the accolades this city is receiving and everyone should be sharing them. Drive that perception."
- **Having amenities that showcase the city** (such as Wind Surge games, Tanganyika, Chicken and Pickle and Top Golf). "It matters that you have a way to do business and introduce your city in unique environments like that."
- **Think and act globally** "Let them know you are open to business from anywhere. Think and act globally; that connection to the world is why we are here."

Jarvis assured the audience they are in the right place.

"Innovation economy for exclusive growth is impactful," she stated. "If you are leaning in with the Partnership and you are in

this room, you are with a winner. We can't have million-dollar dreams with a $9 budget. We want to win so we want to continue backing the Partnership."

As our co-chairs Charlie Chandler and Aaron Bastion shared, today's environment feels different. We have always had great work ethic and a reputation for being "makers" but what has changed is the alignment in the room. Political will and business leaders who lean in while moving in the same direction will make the difference. We all want growth and a strong future; it takes all of us to build Wichita.