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TOPEKA, KANSAS ANNOUNCES PLAN TO BUILD INNOVATION CAMPUS, SITE SELECTION STUDIES BEGIN

To support Topeka's growth as a hub of innovation powered by Plug and Play, GO Topeka has kicked off two viability assessments led by nationally renowned developers specializing in innovation districts.

TOPEKA, KS – June 29, 2020 – GO Topeka, a part of the Greater Topeka Partnership, announced that two viability assessments are underway for Topeka's future innovation campus, the soon to be home of global innovation platform Plug and Play's Animal Health/Ag Tech Startup Accelerator program. Nationally recognized real estate developers, Clark Enersen Partners and BioRealty, Inc., have been contracted to lead the assessments; they are expected to present their findings in fall/winter 2020. River South and the Kanza Education and Science Park have been named as potential sites for the innovation campus.

"Once we secured the Plug and Play Animal Health/Ag Tech Startup Accelerator program, it became our responsibility to devise a long-term strategy that supports the infrastructure of Topeka's innovation scene; this means finding the best setting to develop our innovation campus," Katrin Bridges, senior vice president of Innovation, Greater Topeka Partnership, said. "The information yielded from the viability assessments will help us determine the right course of action to properly leverage our existing innovation assets, create new growth and, in turn, propel Topeka's status as the hub of innovation in the Midwest."

"Plug and Play is excited to see Topeka moving forward on building their innovation campus," said Stephen Fay, director of corporate partnerships, Plug and Play. "Startups thrive when communities provide intentional space for coworking and collaboration. Topeka's commitment to pursue this concept is precisely why we chose to partner with them, and we are excited to watch this project develop."

In August of 2019 it was announced that Plug and Play's Animal Health and Ag Tech Accelerator Program would be established in Topeka. The Capital City is located within the Animal Health Corridor and the home of multiple leading animal health organizations. The Accelerator Program will be hosted from an innovation campus and innovation center. These facilities will also offer office space, as well as lab and wet lab space, for startups and corporate innovation partners.

"It's exciting to take this crucial next step," said Duane Cantrell, chair of the Greater Topeka Partnership's Innovation Advisory Board. "These viability assessments will help us not only establish a first-rate innovation campus but will also allow Topeka to step out as a leader in animal health and ag tech innovation."

"The implications of this innovation campus will be far reaching," continues Cantrell. "This will not only benefit Topeka but our regional innovation partners as well. These partners will have the opportunity to utilize the campus' state-of-the-art technology and lab space."

Contracted real estate developers for this project are Clark Enersen Partners and BioRealty, Inc. Both developers are nationally renowned for their work in developing state-of-the-art scientific research facilities.

One of Clark Enersen Partners' most notable projects is the [Lincoln Innovation Campus – Food Innovation Center](#) in Lincoln, Nebraska, which won the 2017 Association of University Research Parks (AURP) Awards of Excellence: Emerging Research Park Award.

"We couldn't be more excited to assist with this effort," said Tom McVey, director of business development, Clark Enersen Partners. "The geographical location coupled with the unparalleled cluster of animal and human health companies in the region will position Topeka as a hub for groundbreaking discoveries."

McVey continued, "Solving complex real estate structures and creating spaces that foster innovation and connectivity will push Topeka closer to the ultimate goal of aligning academia, industry and work force needs. MAg Partners and The Clark Enersen Partners will draw on a collective portfolio that includes Nebraska Innovation Campus, University of Kentucky Coldstream Research Park, University of Nebraska – Kearney, South Dakota State University Innovation

Campus and EnterpriseWorks @ University of Illinois Research Park for sound framework and a tailored approach.”

BioRealty, Inc. is a leading life science real estate investment and development firm. “As part of its assessment, BioRealty and its alliance partner (CRB) will perform initial planning for two different site options and identify the key economic drivers and key elements necessary for a successful project of this type based on the current market demand in the region,” said Stan Wendzel, president of BioRealty, Inc.

“GO Topeka has a terrific vision to create an innovation campus focused on animal health and ag tech firms,” continues Wendzel. “We are very pleased to be working with GO Topeka and believe its vision and efforts to date, including its association with “Plug and Play”, have uniquely positioned Topeka to serve as a potential hub for innovation for the region. We hope to help GO Topeka realize that vision and foster growth of animal health and ag tech companies in the region.”

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