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MEDIA RELEASE

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Kenosha County Kickstart oversight committee to review recommendations for economic restart

An oversight committee charged with reviewing recommendations to reignite Kenosha County's economy in the wake of COVID-19 will convene for the first time on Thursday.

The initiative, called "Kenosha County Kickstart," strives to reopen the economy based on the foundations of the state's Badger Bounce Back Plan, understanding that a phase-in approach will be needed to bring back the economy while also preventing loss of life to the virus.

This plan will move through phases based on specific criteria used in the Badger Bounce Back Plan, as well as recommendations from the Kenosha County Division of Health.

"We sincerely recognize the strain that the Safer-at-Home Order has placed on businesses, schools, health care systems and families," said Kenosha County Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit. "In the Kenosha County Kickstart plan, we are providing a framework that will help us determine when we can get people back together and back to work."

"The shift we are making in this plan is going from 'boxing in' the people to 'boxing in' the virus," Freiheit added.

A draft of the plan — which is subject to modifications by the oversight committee — will be released to the public on Friday. Various sector groups will then meet shortly thereafter to hone the recommendations, with the goal of having a finished product in the near future.

The sector groups include government, education and child care; health care; agriculture; nonprofit and faith-based organizations; retailers; entertainment, recreation and health and fitness; lodging, dining and restaurants and bars; construction and



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development; personal services and pet care; finance and professional services; and manufacturing, distribution and logistics.

"We want this to be well-rounded, and well-thought-out," said Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser. "Kenosha County has worked together to overcome economic adversity in the past, and I have no doubt we will do the same in response to this public health crisis."

"The city looks forward to local businesses beginning to reopen for operation," said Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian. "It is important to open strategically, by following the guidelines set by the committee. We hope to see everyone operating at 100 percent by the end of Phase 3."

KABA President Todd Battle praised the plan.

"Kenosha County Kickstart provides a set of guidelines, both general and industry-specific, that businesses and organizations can work with as they plan for the expiration of Governor Evers' Safer-at-Home Order. The intent is to engage business, government and public health leaders in a collaborative effort to produce a roadmap that helps us navigate these challenging conditions."

Ultimately, Freiheit said, the goal is to prevent a situation in which a reopening of the economy causes an additional wave of COVID-19 that is so intense that health care and public health systems would lack the capacity to respond appropriately.

"Working together, strategically, we are employing public health methodology and bringing together various sectors of the community to ensure that we Kickstart Kenosha County in a responsible way," Freiheit said.

Together, we can and will slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.