

**POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
FIVE YEAR  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Prepared by**

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Corporation

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## Introduction

Pottawatomie County and the Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) began an economic development strategic planning process in 2011 with the hiring of Angelou Economics to complete a strategic planning and review the county's economic development strengths and weaknesses as well as conduct an assessment of the county's potential target industry.

After completing of the plan, it was decided by the board of PCEDC to strengthen its organization by enhancing its funding base.

- Commissioning Opportunity Funding and Growth Strategies to conduct an economic development funding assessment. The assessment launched the Advance Pottawatomie program which raised \$1 million dollars' worth of pledges in 2013.
- After the successful fundraising campaign, the architect of the Advance Pottawatomie campaign and document, Robert Cole retired in 2014, and a new director took his place in September 2014, Jack Allston. Mr. Allston hired capable staff with a long financial background, Jessica Venneberg of Onaga.
- Mr. Allston began the process of meeting with as many existing investors and industries as possible from September 1 to December 31. In those interviews many questions were asked about the local economy, the labor force, the services in each community in the county and the quality of life aspects of the county and how that impacts their company and future.
- The staff then prepared a Labor and Target Industry Analysis. *The report included a workforce development or labor analysis as well as a re-examination of the target industries suggested by Angelou Economics in 2012.* The analysis is designed to assess the area from a corporate site selector's perspective
- To prepare for the analysis the staff compiled information from its own databases, research from outside sources and detailed interviews with industries in the county. Those interviews were carefully selected to draw a composite of the industry that most truly represent the county's makeup as well as investors in Advance Pottawatomie.
- That analysis became the basis for modifying the Advance Pottawatomie plan into a new implementation plan. The implementation plan is the most critical step in the economic development process. **The plan incorporated all of the strategies in Advanced Pottawatomie. It merely consolidates the program into more measurable content.** Therefore, it combines the previous work along with the staff's labor and targeting study into a comprehensive and realistic work program for the future. This plan included:
  - Critical issues found in the labor and targeting study and previous work.
  - Goals, objectives and strategies.
  - The timelines for completion and balanced scorecard.

- In June of 2016, along with the help of over 50 volunteers and interested parties, **PCEDC completed a Strategic Workforce Implementation Plan.** The SWIP augmented the implementation plan and built in new and advanced goals, objectives and strategies. In addition, those strategies often overlapped into Riley County because of the commuting population going both ways.
- In 2017-18, the Pottawatomie County EDC staff conducted another **business retention and labor analysis.** However, this report also analyzed workforce issues in Manhattan as well as Pottawatomie County.
- In 2018, most of the Advanced Pottawatomie investment funds were accounted for and in the financial institution. The Board of Directors of PCEDC decided not to pursue another round of private sector funding since **Advance Pottawatomie had several hundred thousand dollars still in the bank.**
- Meanwhile, almost all the objectives had been completed in the Implementation Plan **except for the purchase of additional land. All utilities were installed in Sandy Hook Industrial Park and over 12 acres were sold to Bluestem Electric Cooperative** and 4.6 acres to Corteva Agriscience and one acre to D&K Seed in the Wamego Industrial Park. In addition, Custom Wood Products purchased 25 acres south of the railroad tracks in Wamego to serve as future development for their firm. Within 2 years of new staff arriving all the lots were sold in the Green Valley Business Park, including 4 acres to N Zone a laser etching and embroidery company employing 20 or more people. Other lots were sold to Alternative Air, Davco Trucking, Robert's Heating & Cooling and PCEDC gave a lot back to the county for a new emergency medical services building serving Blue Township. In St. Marys, Sarto Countertops and Fox Ceramic Tile purchased lots in the park and Sarto is expanding so quickly that that they have taken an option on two additional lots.
- In addition, PCEDC contracted with Olsson Associates to complete a comprehensive proforma and cost analysis for the east side of Excel Road & Highway 24. The proforma laid out a plan for the next 20-30 years which included a tax increment financing district. In the last five years, much of the western side of the county has developed organically without PCEDC's assistance, with the exception of the Valley View Cemetery, Paramount Wine and Spirits and Fox Home Innovations and childcare facilities through the Child Care Task Force's efforts.
- One of the main concerns of the businesspeople in 2014 was the lack of regionalization and many significant business owners felt that there needed to be some consolidation especially in marketing efforts. An initial effort to include Geary County failed and in early 2018, the Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership was formed. Therefore, the business attraction efforts for the two counties was combined in a new aggressive marketing program is being formed. The formal partnership was responsible for the eventual location of Corteva Agriscience since the lead came through the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. Planned efforts between the two groups will be very robust

especially since the Avalanche Consulting Target Marketing Strategy has given GMEP a roadmap for business attraction.

- Like most of the communities around the nation, a major concern in 2014 was and still is lack of workforce and enhancing the employability skills of the emerging workforce. **Therefore, a Business Education Workforce Roundtable (BEW) was formed in late 2015 and two major ¾ day workshop/roundtables similar to strategic planning sessions. After the two sessions a Strategic Workforce Implementation Plan (SWIP) was completed in June of 2016.** The number one goal of the SWIP is to enhance the skills of the emerging and transitional workforce by implementing a program to be Certified Work Ready through the ACT program and ensure that all students in all four Pottawatomie County schools are testing on Work Keys and efforts are made so all youth are prepared to enter the workforce or college.
- By the end of 2016, Pottawatomie County became Certified Work Ready through ACT and all four schools attended Work Ready Academies including three school superintendents. With students testing on Work Keys for workplace skills and the National Career Ready Certificates (NCRC) being awarded, it gives PCEDC a data base to draw from of individuals workforce ready. **Afterward, the county became Maintenance Status in February 2018, and Double Maintenance Status in April 2019, only the 2<sup>nd</sup> county in the nation to achieve that award.**
- Meanwhile, PCED staff **continued** its work with the local SHRM affiliate, the Human Resource Management Network (HRMN) in developing programs for the chapter for two years and developing new professional promotion guidelines as well as dig deep in the issues of attracting diverse professionals to the Manhattan area. In addition, the staff was busy expanding Peer Chamber activities into Rock Creek, a Senior Interview Day at Rock Creek as well as Wamego, and Job Fair for seniors at Manhattan-Ogden High.
- **Even though it was considered Goal#5 in the 2015 Implementation Plan, Small Business and Entrepreneurship has been a major element of PCEDC's success.** Much of that had to do with the attention to details of the Executive Assistant of PCEDC who reworked three of the existing loans and set up all the new E- Community loans on a more palatable payment system. Since early 2015, 21 E-Community loans have been made and all of them are current. In fact, Network Kansas ranks the PCEDC program as one of the top five in the state. Coinciding with PCEDC's work with the schools, each year we have helped to sponsor and be active in the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) with Wamego High School.

### **What is Economic Development?**

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The International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the international association of the profession, states that economic development is:

- Creating wealth by mobilizing human, financial, capital, physical & natural resources to generate marketable goods and services.
- Benefiting the community by expanding job opportunities and the tax base.
- A professional practice whereby developers create results.

Therefore, the following applies for Pottawatomie County:

- The product is the County of Pottawatomie, its cities, its townships and its agriculture and resources.
- The market is target companies that may move or expand.
- The practice is marketing Pottawatomie County and using this implementation plan. Specialized marketing includes new and emerging issues such as workforce development, small business development, infrastructure and transportation.
- The result is new wealth in the form of new jobs and tax base.

### **Pottawatomie County's Economic Development Implementation Plan**

*"If you don't know where you are going then any road will get you there."* True in economic development, the process can become chaos unless concept and direction are clearly established.

The proper implementation plan will provide the right concept and direction. The plan will help you to economize scarce resources and place a greater emphasis on the team approach.

*Pottawatomie County has prepared the proper implementation plan.* With the Advanced Pottawatomie process the communities have set the economic development vision for the future. PCEDC now sets the strategy using the implementation plan as a roadmap.

Adopting the Advanced Pottawatomie plan was just the beginning. The county and PCEDC have worked to make things happen. "Buy in" from community organizations was critical. Considerable volunteer time and a team effort were essential to the plan's success. The Advanced Pottawatomie County plan was revised as economic conditions change and the challenges of the county and PCEDC as well as its cities players change. Therefore, the updated implementation plan of 2020 will give the county, PCEDC and its partners a new and current "roadmap or compass" to follow.

### **CRITICAL ISSUES AND THREATS FACING THE MANHATTAN/POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY AREA**

Some of the same issues that resonated four years ago are prevalent today.

#### **Labor Related**

- **The resistance to blue-collar training of the young** is leading to large shortages in skilled trade workers and a potential crisis in a few years given the average age of the skilled

workforce. This is kicking in with employers actually turning down work because they can't find enough workforce.

- **Employing military spouses and young Kansas State University graduates and interns is a plus** in relation to the recruitment of new workers and managers. However, employers generally don't understand the vehicles that are available to them such as Soldier for Life and the KSU Career Center.

### **Education and Training Related**

- **The technical colleges needed to enhance its programming and increase the number of students from the region entering the college programs, however, state budget problems greatly impacted the delivery of programs.**
- **Work Keys needed to be implemented in all school districts to be able to assess potential skills of students. It has been in Pottawatomie County with over 600 tested with ACT certifying Pottawatomie County as Work Ready. Geary County is now Certified Work Ready and Riley County is testing in the high schools as well as at Kansas Works. There are now five more counties in Kansas engaged in the Work Ready program and more need to be engaged in order to gain national attention like Pottawatomie has.**
- **The community needed to address the lack of skill training in mechanics, machine repair, machine tooling, CNC and PLC programming and other trade, and seek funding for the technical colleges. The issue remains and according to the scores appears to be worse. The technical and community colleges are making major strides but is hampered by the fights over school funding.**
- **A program needs to be implemented that tracks graduates.** The Pottawatomie County school districts are able to project whether their students will attend 4-year, 2-year, technical colleges or the military, or simply get employment after high school. Tracking graduates and ACT College Entrance and Work Keys scores provides business prospects with a strong understanding of the skills of the entry level workforce.
- **Strong work/career/school exchange programs are being implemented** in order to ensure that very young people understand the world of work before they enter high school. The Classroom to Careers program in Manhattan is an example of this as well as Peer Chamber in Wamego and Rock Creek.

### **Infrastructure Related**

- PCEDC has established a set of potential new industrial/office sites in the county. The concern has been over funding these sites. It does not appear that PCEDC has the funds to purchase land and develop the infrastructure for a new industrial park in Wamego.
- Related to the development of a new industrial park, **an Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed that demonstrates that PCEDC's three industrial park**

**contributes over \$1M in property tax revenue and almost \$900 K in sales tax revenue per year.** This helps to justify any city or county investment in a new industrial park.

- The future Pottawatomie County Comprehensive Plan helps determine where infrastructure needs to be developed in the county, especially in Blue Township. Furthermore, the plan should determine which areas need to be protected.
- Even though it is more of a quality of life issue, **housing is becoming a site selection factor.** More high-level planning needs to be developed to address short and long-term needs of workers and managers. This has been addressed in the Pottawatomie County Comprehensive Plan and there is discussion on multi-family housing in Blue Township continues. The Flint Hills Regional Council is also completing a housing demand study for each community.
- Pottawatomie County is projected to grow in population anywhere from 80% to 140%. **However, housing construction is not keeping pace with population growth and in 2018 new building permits were down from 155 to 132.** More alignment between the county is necessary with developers and builders. The lack of a second entrance or bridge into Manhattan impacts both counties especially because of the current and anticipated growth in the North Corridor.
- Significant redevelopment needs to continue to be made in all the communities in the county, especially in the downtowns of Wamego, St. Marys, Onaga and Westmoreland. These downtowns are central trading places for the agricultural community.

### **Organization and Regional Development Related**

- **Advance Pottawatomie originally raised funds from the private sector in 2013. Except for a few firms that entered Advanced Pottawatomie after 2014, all firms or individuals have fully exercised their five-year pledges.** As of this writing, there is over \$600K still remaining in the Advance Pottawatomie account. Part of this is due to the Board of Directors being good stewards of the money. The Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership was not formed until 2018 and didn't have a full marketing plan until now, there wasn't any business attraction programs to spend funds on. In 2020 and future years, there will be aggressive spending by GMEP which will impact the Advanced Pottawatomie account and PCEDC. The timing for that spending falls in line with more attention being drawn to Manhattan because of NBAF and enhanced research capacity at KSU.
- Since there is no media outlet in Pottawatomie County except for the Smoke Signal/Wamego Times and small weekly newspapers, PCEDC suffers from a lack of publicity that will accentuate the successes and accomplishments of the organization.

**PCEDC must continue to rely on our monthly newsletter, attending meetings in the rural communities and media as well as the TV commercials that we ran in the summer of 2019.**

- **Advanced Pottawatomie investors must be kept apprised of the organization's activities.** The Annual Investor Meeting is functional but more intensive communications are essential. The PCEDC board should look at new and unique methods of communication with investors.

### **Small Business and Entrepreneurship Related**

- **The small business and entrepreneurship programs inside the organization are a model of consistency, but outside the immediate staff and board it is not realized.** The E-Community program has made 30 loans and all are current and some have been paid. This reflects back on the above issues in the organization. In addition, the E-Community loan fund through Network Kansas has less funding beginning in fiscal year 2020 which impacts the volume and loan amounts the E-Community Financial Review Board of PCEDC can loan.
- **One Kansas Ice House program was run and six businesses from Westmoreland attended one Destination Bootcamp. Aside from that, there has not been much interest in Network Kansas certified programs.** PCEDC is successfully assisting with the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC), but more activity and/participation is suggested in order to build an entrepreneurship culture.
- **PCEDC needs to continue to emphasize programs and loans in the smaller communities.** Individual business in communities such as Onaga, Westmoreland, St. Marys, Olsburg and St. George is a plus for the overall organization and the acceptance of PCEDC.

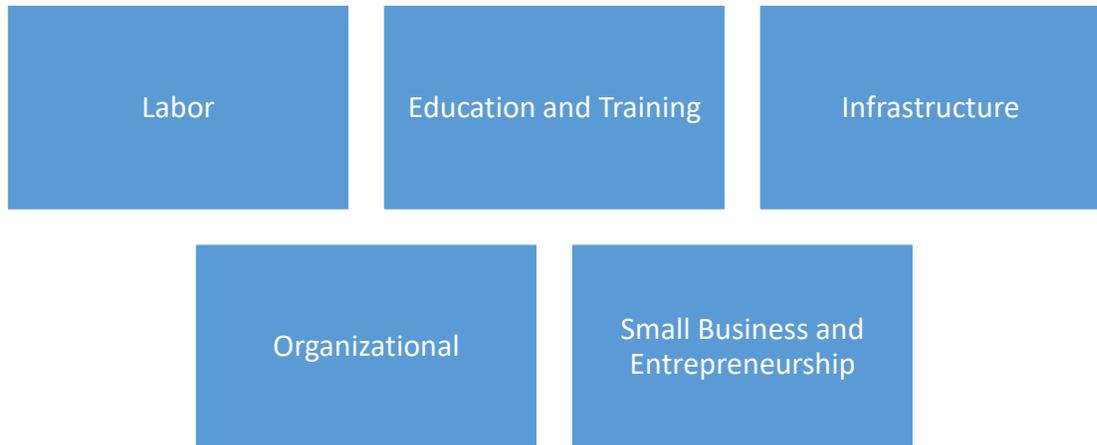
### **Business Attraction and Retention Related**

- **The Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership (GMEP) will need continuous funding as its new Target Marketing program is rolled out and the need to attend events, trade shows, and sales missions increases. Cooperation between the boards of PCEDC and MACC will be essential especially as they both anticipate private sector fundraising initiatives.**
- **As taken from the Target Marketing report, Manhattan struggles with both lack of awareness and misperceptions, especially outside the state of Kansas.** Stakeholders cite that many potential residents, students, or businesses from out of state simply do not know what the region has to offer in terms of employment, business opportunities, or quality of life amenities. The region also struggles with misperception issues. Those familiar with Kansas may only think of the Greater Manhattan region as the home of Kansas State University or assume that because the region has a strong agriculture

industry that just means farmers and cornfields. The Partnership will have to work to dispel these myths by showcasing what it means to be an international destination for target industries as well as a vibrant place to live.

- **Business retention will continue to be a major element of the PCEDC economic development, but cooperation with the Manhattan Area Chamber will be essential as they move to formalize their retention program.** This will be even more critical as companies become more global in their posture (GTM to Champion, CAT, Custom Wood Products, etc.)
- **GMEP cooperation with partners will be essential and coordination with the Kansas Department of Commerce and Agriculture will be tantamount to success and job creation.**
- **More exposure by PCEDC with Knowledge Based Economic Development (KBED) will be needed in order to sustain investment in 2020 in KBED.** KBED must continue to involve PCEDC's staff. KBED has a number of significant leads for partnering, joint ventures, licensing, and early stage development as well as corporate projects. KBED will be a point of contact for the majority of future leads. PCEDC needs to be a part of that team.

## Pottawatomie County Economic Development Issues



**GOAL #1 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SITE DEVELOPMENT** – Develop a robust infrastructure network and seek to provide high-quality business and industrial parks.

**Objective A: Purchase and develop at least one new site and build an industrial park in phases, most likely in Wamego.**

- Strategy 1: Work with the city and county on the development of a new site in proximity to Highway 24 (40-60 acres) that can become the preferred economic development catalyst in the two counties. Ensure that the site has adequate drainage and all utilities are in place in phases.
- Strategy 2: Continue to assist in the marketing and promotion of properties on the west and east side of Excel Road directly off of Highway 24 for industrial, commercial and office development.
- Strategy 3: **Assist communities north of the 24 corridor** in identifying potential industrial/commercial sites, like Onaga and Westmoreland, as well as to assist in Wamego and St. Marys.

**Objective B: Work with county and city officials to enhance infrastructure in the county to further roads, water, sewer, etc.**

- Strategy 1: **Map existing and identify planned infrastructure;** roads, streets, water, sewer, gas, electricity, hi-speed broadband telecommunications related to both existing

and planned industrial and commercial development sites to determine if they meet the current and future needs in that sector by working closely with county staff using GIS where possible.

- **Strategy 2: Identify infrastructure needs related to industrial and commercial development sites** and work with public/private entities to identify necessary funds through USDA or other federal and state agencies to allow growth especially on Highway 24.
- **Strategy 3: Continue to support comprehensive planning efforts and implementation** in Onaga and Westmoreland, as well as encourage rural communities in the county to pursue comprehensive plans and assist with funding.
- **Strategy 4: Examine the feasibility of the passage in the county of a half cents sales tax** dedicated to infrastructure and in particular, infrastructure for a new PCEDC industrial/business park.

**Objective C: Continue to advocate for more housing, for both workforce and management throughout Pottawatomie County.**

- Strategy 1: Work closely with Workforce Housing Needs Study being completed by Flint Hills Regional Council as they finish completing housing study for Pottawatomie and Wabaunsee Counties.
- Strategy 2: Help to fund a study or report that demonstrates the financial benefits of residential housing and how it impacts real estate values and enhances sales tax revenues.
- Strategy 3: Examine, advocate and help to develop more senior housing in Pottawatomie County for the next 20 years.

**GOAL #2 – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT- Develop long-term programs designed to enhance partnerships between business, education, and training officials and commit Pottawatomie County to the current long-term program to enhance the availability, quality and characteristics of the current and future workforce.**

**Objective A: Develop creative strategies to prepare young people for the workforce essentials of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**

- **Strategy 1: Reestablish the Business Education Workforce (BEW) Roundtable.** The Roundtable should consist of the education and training community, human resource

managers (SHRM chapter), and other industrial leaders. Could be done in junction with Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce.

- **Strategy 2: Build upon the develop of the consensus developed through the Workforce Development Roundtable to plan workforce direction for the next five to ten years and continue with Workforce Crisis Summits.**
- **Strategy 3: Continue to work with Highland Community College, Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC) and/or Washburn Tech to develop additional programs for targeted industry, including welding and instrumentation training as well as allied health services.**

**Objective B: Continue to enhance the employability skills of the emerging, transitional and current workforce** through the promotion and the **development of the ACT Work Ready System**, which offers a common language to identify skills gaps and provide training to improve scores and **enhance employability by leveraging the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)**, issued by ACT. The certificate is a portable, evidence-based credential that certifies essential skills needed for workplace success.

- **Strategy 1:** Continue to **test all high school juniors on ACT Work Keys through Kansas Department of Education** so students can earn the NCRC by taking three Work Keys assessments and, also conduct testing for current and transitional workers when requested.
- **Strategy 2:** Ensure that all students who earn NCRC are registered with Kansas Works and with ACT.
- **Strategy 3:** Continue to strive towards enhancing scores of all students with options in the Work Keys Curriculum, which provides a self-paced curriculum to help individuals fill their skills gap.
- **Strategy 4: Continue to promote Work Keys and the NCRC so that business and industry know exactly what foundational skills they need for a productive workforce** – and to easily communicate their needs and individuals understand what skills are required by employers – and how to prepare themselves for success and that policy makers consistently measure the skills gap in a timely manner at the national, state and local levels.
- **Strategy 5: Promote NCRC, Work Ready Communities and Work Keys** to industry both inside and outside the county so that they recognize the state of Kansas program through Kansas Works and the local Work Keys initiative of PCEDC and its thrust in maintaining a Certified Work Ready Community.
- **Strategy 6: Continue to work with other counties in the state of Kansas in their efforts to become Certified Work Ready** and build a significant data base of work

ready individuals not only at Kansas Works but also on the ACT Work Ready Communities data base.

**Objective C: Continue to develop long-term programs of enhancing youth awareness of careers and world of work.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue to encourage dual credit as a program for high school students and other programs in career technical education in all schools.**
- **Strategy 2: Support and assist in the development of internships and youth apprenticeships as well as other initiatives to enhance career viability for client youth.**
- **Strategy 3: Encourage and develop funding for teacher internships with Wamego industry and other teacher continuing education efforts working closely with the Wamego Chamber and human resource managers.**
- **Strategy 4: Enhance existing 4<sup>th</sup> grade Classroom to Careers “Adopt a School Classroom Program” and ensure that every school has exposure and potentially reach out to 8<sup>th</sup> grades.**
- **Strategy 5: Continue to support programs such as Senior Interview Day at both Rock Creek and Wamego High Schools as well as Peer Chamber initiatives.**
- **Strategy 6: Support all job fairs including Manhattan High School effort in concert with Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce.**

**Objective D: Continue efforts to develop programs and initiatives by working closely with the Human Resource Management Network (HRMN, SHRM affiliate), the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce’s Region Reimagined talent attraction efforts, and Kansas Works.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue to support human resource managers and their firms across the board in their efforts to recruit and retain workforce.**
- **Strategy 2: Support and promote diversity and inclusion initiatives with HRMN and Kansas State University to assist in talent recruitment.**
- **Strategy 3: Use KSU Occupational Practical Training (F1) student visas to bring foreign base students into the workforce for up to two and a half years or more. Emphasize visa extensions in science, technology, engineering, and math careers.**

- **Strategy 4: Support continual and new creative methods to employ trailing spouses (Dual Career) of Fort Riley, KSU faculty, researchers, and administrators as well as HRMN member companies.**
- **Strategy 5: Continue to support efforts in mental health training as well as the employment of individuals with disabilities and ex-offenders.**

**Objective E: Continue the development of new and creative programs to enhance the availability and affordability of day care for children from birth to five years so there is growth in the labor force participation rate by young parents.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue the Child Care Task Force and its close association with Kansas State University Extension office to assist the childcare community and continue to educate the communities on the importance of childcare.**
- **Strategy 2: Continue to explore financing methods of enhancing training for childcare workers through potential state and federal funding.**
- **Strategy 3: Analyze and explore the feasibility of an Early Childhood Learning Center for low to moderate income families without financially impacting existing centers.**

**GOAL # 3: ORGANIZATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT- Continue to develop Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation by enhancing private and public sector collaboration, building local partnerships and working closely with Manhattan Regional entities and chambers.**

**Objective A: Maximize Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation's visibility and funding and enhance public relations programs.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue to inform Advanced Pottawatomie investors** about PCEDC accomplishments and strategies with newsletters, social media and frequent one on one meetings.
- **Strategy 2: Establish mechanisms to inform the general public with news releases** and joint venturing with the Manhattan and Wamego Area Chambers of Commerce on various programs to enlighten others about PCEDC, including 30 second commercials through Prime Media.
- **Strategy 3: Continue to hold annual investor** receptions to inform investors first-hand on PCEDC developments and strategies and seek input. The events should take place in Manhattan and Wamego or St. Mary's.

- **Strategy 4: Continue working with Westmoreland, Onaga and St. Marys Chambers of Commerce on a regular basis** and to become involved in their redevelopment efforts in order to promote growth in the rural areas of the county.
- **Strategy 5: Purchase new office furniture in the future to demonstrate a more look and feel for the organization.**

**Objective B: Embark on a new private sector fundraising campaign or a program that demonstrates the \$2 million/year tax revenue that the PCEDC industrial parks generate for the county and select cities each year.**

- **Strategy 1: Conduct a feasibility analysis with a reputable economic development fundraising firm to decipher the amount of money to be raised.**
- **Strategy 2: Establish a capital campaign committee with top business leaders and respected current and previous elected officials.**
- **Strategy 3: Develop rate of return on investment information as well as using the economic impact assessment completed on the industrial parks to demonstrate to investors the high value of PCEDC**

**GOAL # 4: BUSINESS RETENTION AND ATTRACTION: Through the Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership implement a strong business attraction target marketing program utilizing the Avalanche Consulting methodology and a local creative agency and continue working with existing industry to create new employment and retain existing jobs.**

**Objective A: Design and implement the targeted marketing program that effectively communicates the Greater Manhattan area's assets to business leaders outside of the area in order to attract new industries in the following sectors:**

- 1.) **Animal Health and Science**
- 2.) **Crop and Grain Science & Milling**
- 3.) **Biosecurity and Food Science**
- 4.) **Computer Science & Information Technology**
- 5.) **Metal Fabrication and Machinery & Equipment**

- **Strategy 1: Rebuild the GMEP website** making the information on its website more concise and compelling with bold headlines and bylines, impactful imagery and infographics will help communicate key messages in a more visual way.
- **Strategy 2: Include more information on each of the region's five target industries on the GMEP website.** Be sure to include a mix of content like text, visuals, infographics, charts, maps, photos, videos, and more.

- **Strategy 3: GMEP should have a social media presence it can share positive regional news with other partners or externally audiences easily and quickly.** In addition, always seek media and develop a formalized news release system.
- **Strategy 4: Working with creative agency develop target industry brochures** for GMEP that are usually one or two pages and generally include minimal text with visually appealing infographics and pictures of the region.
- **Strategy 5: Develop custom pitch decks for GMEP tailored to each target industry** which are a useful and concise way to introduce prospects to the region. Custom pitch decks are best shared in person when prospects visit the region as an interactive presentation
- **Strategy 6: Participate in state and regional organizations like Team Kansas with GMEP** which gains maximum exposure for the state. Keep membership at the highest level and attend multiple sales missions.
- **Strategy 7: Continue active participation in the Industrial Asset Management Council (IAMC)** participating with site selectors and corporate real executives (including CAT and Hanesbrands) at the two IAMC conferences per year and continue to maintain strong site selector lists and contacts.
- **Strategy 8: Identify geographies with a high concentration of target industry firms.** Schedule strategic mission trips to these destinations to meet directly with businesses in these sectors.
- **Strategy 9: GMEP should develop a set of metrics that include:**
  - Prospect inquiries by target industry
  - Leads by target industry
  - Visits by target industry
  - Project wins by target industry
  - Job growth and capital investment by target industry
  - Number of project materials distributed to prospects
  - Number of inquiries from site selectors
  - Number of referrals from regional partners
  - Success regarding existing target industry business growth
  - Any awards, positive rankings, or recognition received by the community
  - Number of new marketing materials or tactics developed each year
- **Strategy 10: Stay active and invested in Knowledge Based Economic Development (KBED)** and further promote the group to become more active in projects that will impact Pottawatomie County and stimulate further growth and development.

**Objective B: Continue to develop the strong business retention expansion program by actively continuing building relationships with existing industry in Pottawatomie County.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue existing business one on one in person calls at the company place of business and discuss key competitive issues impacting the industry and community.**
- **Strategy 2: Continually refresh the existing industry survey updating with new items and working closely with the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce on overlapping companies and PCEDC relationships.**
- **Strategy 3: Work with the Manhattan Area Chamber to develop a “triggered hot response” system.** This system is designed to immediately assist an industry when a “red flag” economic development need arises.
- **Strategy 4: Attend and stay active with industry associations,** including the Human Resource Management Network (SHRM affiliate), the Flint Hills Area Builders Association and others.

#### **GOAL # 5 SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**Continue to develop programs for small and new business as well as supporting their efforts for legislation and advocacy and working closely with existing resources.**

**Objective A: Continue to work closely with Network Kansas on their programs and participate in loan programs and small business development.**

- **Strategy 1: Continue to develop use of the E-Community Revolving Loan Fund** which is available to start-ups and other small businesses for gap financing. In addition, utilize the Startup Kansas loan fund as much as possible and continuously inform financial institutions about our lending capacity.
- **Strategy 2: Promote other Network Kansas programs such as Kansas Ice House and Destination Bootcamp** where entrepreneurs gain significant knowledge about an entrepreneurial mindset and marketing development.
- **Strategy 3: Continue to support and administrate the Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) with all high schools in cooperation with Network Kansas.**
- **Strategy 4: Continue to examine the feasibility of developing a fab lab/maker space in Pottawatomie County.**

- **Strategy 5: Continue the financial support of the Washburn Small Business Development Center having them developing more seminars and workshops to benefit small businesses in Pottawatomie County.**
- **Strategy 6: Continue to promote the “Value Builder” program through the Small Business Development Center for business succession planning.**

**Objective C: Support programs to assist tourism, history and agriculture that will benefit small businesses and target new retail opportunities that will enhance the tax base in Pottawatomie County.**

- **Strategy 1:** Financially support tourism/visitor opportunities in Pottawatomie that demonstrate economic value for a community by examining rate of return for each event. Events such as the Wamego Tulip Festival, Shakespeare Festival, the Westmoreland Barbeque and the Pottawatomie County Fair qualify.
- **Strategy 2: Support eco-tourism programs, such as the Kansas River bicycle trail by seeking more funding and reviewing grant opportunities with the Flint Hills Regional Council and ag-tourism businesses such as the 456 Winery and Bluestem Orchards as well as ag-tourism events.**