

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Pottawatomie County
Economic Development
Corporation



ecodevo.com

(785) 456.9776

THANK YOU

2024 was a year of transition for Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation. Following former director Jack Allston's retirement in fall 2023, the board conducted a nationwide search, and I was honored to be selected. My first day, January 18, coincided with the Regional Growth Summit—a fitting start, as "regional growth" has defined my first year. Board President Lanny Bosse extended his term to ensure a smooth transition, and I'm grateful to our board, executive committee, Advance Pottawatomie investors, county commissioners, and community partners for their support and collaboration.

The year brought significant changes. The county commission expanded from three to five members, and we cohosted six candidate forums to ensure voters had access to key information. In June, Caterpillar's Wamego facility announced its mid-2025 closure, catching many by surprise. However, strong interest from prospective buyers gives us confidence the facility will be repurposed quickly and provide an opportunity for smooth transition for the employees.

Throughout 2024, we focused on identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges for both the organization and regional growth. Through surveys and discussions with investors, community stakeholders, and regional leaders, we gathered insights that guided the development of Advance Pottawatomie 2030, our strategic plan adopted in November.

Looking ahead, we're implementing key strategies from Advance Pottawatomie 2030, including collaborating with the Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership to attract and expand jobs, launching the "Buy Build Grow Pott. Co" initiative, and enhancing community engagement and local project collaboration.

With over a year in this role, I'm excited for what's ahead. A huge thank you to our county commissioners, investors, and partners—our collective efforts make us stronger. Here's to continued growth in 2025!



Shanna Goodman
Executive Director

3 PILLARS TO POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY-WIDE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY



Advocate
for community
collaboration and
growth.



Inform
on issues at hand
and opportunities
available.



Connect
vital resources,
people, and
partners.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kristin Brighton, New Boston Creative

Lanny Bosse, Kaw Valley State Bank

Casey Butler, Champion Teamwear

Dr. David Cancelada, Flint Hills Dentistry

Peter Clark, Bayer Construction

Amanda Childress, Green Dot Bioplastics

Chris Eichman, Midwest Concrete Materials

Chad Kinsley, Pottawatomie County

Terry Force, Force Land Surveying

Korey Klingenberg, ICON Structures

Josh Marquardt, Bennington State Bank

Dave Perry, Perry Electric

Pete Reilly, Sidekick Solutions

Patrick Schutter, BHS Construction

Mike Solida, Evergy

Jason Smith, Manhattan Area Chamber

INVESTORS

4th & Elm Bar & Grill

Alternative Air

Anderson Knight Architects

Axiota/ MS Biotec

Bank of the Flint Hills

Bartlett & West

Bayer Construction

BBN Architects

Benesch

Bennington State Bank

BG Consultants

BHS Construction

Blue Valley Technologies

Bluestem Electric

Blueville Nursery

Bruce McMillan AIA Architects

Capital City Oil

City of Wamego

Community HealthCare System, Inc.

CRs Tire

Custom Wood Products

Drippe' Homes

Ebert Construction

ESB Financial

Evergy

Farmers State Bank

Flint Hills Dental

Flint Hills Fitness

Foundation Realty

Fox Home Innovations

Friendship House

Green Dot Bioplastics

Hi-Tech Interiors

Howie's Recycling

Hutton

Icon Structures

Kansas Commercial Real Estate

Kaw Valley State Bank

KS State Bank

Landmark Bank

Larson Construction

Manhattan Surgical Hospital

Manko Window Systems

McCown Gordon

McKee Farm

Midwest Concrete Materials

Nelson's Ridge LLC

New Boston Creative

Olsson

Pepsi Cola of Manhattan

Perry Electrical Systems

Pugh & Pugh

Reed Company, LLC

Riley Construction Company

Shilling Construction Co. Inc.

Sidekick Solutions

Sink Gordon & Associates

SMH Consultants

Spirits of '76

SPS Companies

Stormont-Vail HealthCare

Sugar Creek Country Store

T&M Concrete

The Trust Company

Wamego Drug Store

Wamego Health Center

Wamego Inn

Wamego Self Storage

Wildcat Fitness & Fun

WTC

70
Investors

4
New
Investors

87%
Net
Promoter
Score

WHAT WE DO



**Attract & Retain
Businesses**



**Support
Enhancement of
Infrastructure**



**Promote
Organizational
& Regional
Cooperation**



**Aid in
Development
of Small
Business**




**Assist in
Development of
Workforce**

WHY WE DO IT




**County-Wide
Economic Prosperity
Through Partnerships**


HOW WE DO IT



Advocate
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available.



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PCEDC experienced a year of transition, growth, challenges, and opportunities. It has been especially rewarding to watch Shanna effectively transition into her new leadership role for the organization. The focus on clearly defined goals and improved collaboration with all our partners is setting us up for continued success. With strong leadership, engaged partners, and a clear vision, we are well-positioned for even greater impact in 2025!

-Lanny Bosse, President of the PCEDC Board of Directors 2022-2024



Advocate

CONNECTED COMMUNITY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Caterpillar announced the facility closure to employees on June 6, 2024. Unsure whether the company would transition the facility and workforce to a new buyer or leave the building vacant, we immediately engaged city and county officials and the Lt. Governor's office to ensure state-level attention. Our top priority was to retain the workforce and connect workers with regional opportunities to keep them in the area. Moving quickly, we led a local working group to identify critical priorities and bring key stakeholders together. We worked closely with public officials, Caterpillar executives, and partners to advocate for workforce retention. A local task force of business and community leaders was also formed, with one member aptly stating, "Nothing would be an overreaction." To attract potential buyers, we maintained regular communication with listing agents and actively promoted the facility. Since then, we have consistently engaged with interested prospects and remain optimistic that the facility will be filled quickly, creating opportunities for the existing workforce.

Westmoreland Tornado Relief Resources Available



By: The Potomac County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) | 5,724

On the evening of April 30, a deadly EF3 tornado whipped through Westmoreland with 140 mph an hour winds. The tornado killed one person, injured another three people, destroyed 22 homes and damaged many more.

Governor Laura Kelly requested SBA Disaster loans for people impacted and information will be available soon on how to access those funds.

On July 15, 2024, President Joe Biden approved major disaster recovery assistance for the area. Jennifer Mancini of Potomac County Emergency Management Services worked with the appropriate parties on damage assessments and cost accumulation, then submitted those to the state. Since the President signed the Declaration, they are now submitting all costs into the federal database, as well as the City. This allows for government owned property, personal hours, equipment hours, emergency protective measures, recreation, emergency, etc to be submitted for reimbursement.

Resources Available for Individuals

SBA Disaster Loans

U.S. Small Business Administration provides low interest disaster loans to help businesses and homeowners recover from a declared disaster. Businesses of all sizes, homeowners, renters, and private nonprofit organizations can apply. You must be located in a declared disaster area and meet other eligibility criteria depending on the type of loan.

Applicants may apply online and receive additional disaster assistance information at sba.gov/disaster. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 639-2985 or email disaster@smallbusiness.sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance. For people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please call 711 to access telecommunications relay services. **The deadline to apply for property damage is July 15, 2024. The deadline to apply for economic injury is February 16, 2025.**

Read the news release from U.S. Small Business Administration.

Read the SBA Disaster Loans Fact Sheet.

On the evening of April 30th, a tornado struck Westmoreland creating EF-3 damage with hail 1-2" in diameter and wind gusts exceeding 80 mph. By 8 a.m. the next morning, we were at the city office, assisting with phone calls and coordinating resources.

We collaborated with local organizations to organize and promote fundraising efforts and worked with government officials to secure access to state and federal recovery programs. The tornado destroyed 35 homes, making rebuilding a significant challenge.

We remain committed to supporting and advocating for Westmoreland throughout its recovery process.

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Caterpillar Transition Update January 2025



By: The Potomac County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) | 1,215

We want to provide the community with an update on the ongoing efforts in response to the closure of Caterpillar's Wamego facility. The impact of this closure on our community cannot be overstated, and we are dedicated to helping every affected employee and family through this transition.

The Wamego Caterpillar facility is officially on the market, with the listing going live in mid-November through Colliers, the commercial real estate agency hired by Caterpillar.

Caterpillar has announced that operations at the facility will cease in mid-2025, likely around June or July. Since the closure was announced to employees last June, we've partnered with community organizations to provide support. A key initiative was the Community Career Fair in late August, where 34 employers showcased diverse regional job opportunities. Our "Rapid Response" team was on site in December to help employees navigate the next few months, answering questions on unemployment benefits, medical assistance, retirement and health care coverage.

Categories

- Advocacy
- Challenges
- Community News
- Featured Sites & Buildings
- Housing
- Workforce

Related Posts

- Caterpillar Transition Update
July 10, 2024
- Wamego Caterpillar Facility To Close in 2025
June 10, 2024
- Potomac County Economic Update Quarter 2 2024
August 5, 2024

FOSTERED COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

In the summer of 2024, we collaborated with communities across the county and co-hosted **six candidate forums**, providing a platform for county commissioner candidates to share their vision for Pottawatomie County. They were well attended with a **total of 422 attendees**. These forums also included candidates for sheriff, county attorney, (and where applicable) state House and Senate seats. The PCEDC website became known as a central hub for county candidates as we shared Q&A submissions from candidates and routinely shared key dates, links, locations, and maps.

PCEDC played a key role in regional discussions on **housing and childcare**, leading task forces to set strategic direction and prioritize actions for maximum impact on these complex issues.

Following Caterpillar's announcement to close, in addition to engaging a regional taskforce, we collaborated with local employers and KansasWorks to host a **Community Career Fair** in August. This career fair featured **39 local employers**, in partnership with the Wamego and Kaw Valley Chambers.



PROMOTED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY AND GROWTH

We supported business growth by helping existing companies expand and attracting new ones to Pottawatomie County. We meet with business leaders and collaborate with partners like the Kansas Department of Commerce to connect with potential businesses. Through the Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership (GMEP), we promote the region to new industries. Our partners highlight success stories like HydroGraph Clean Power, recognized by the state for innovation this year.





Connect

CONNECTED ENTREPRENEURS WITH E-COMMUNITY LOANS

Our organization partners with Network Kansas to promote and administer E-Community loans, providing crucial financial support to local entrepreneurs and small businesses. Since 2010, we have helped facilitate 61 loans, empowering businesses with the capital needed to start, expand, and thrive. Through this program, we connect applicants with funding opportunities, guide them through the application process, and ensure they have access to valuable resources for long-term success. By fostering local economic growth and supporting business development, our E-Community loan efforts align with our mission to enhance county-wide prosperity through strategic partnerships.

Business Funding Programs Available



By: The Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) | 5.11.24

A recent roundtable luncheon hosted by the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, Spink, and SECC, shared new loan programs available for small business in the region.
[Read the full overview of these funding programs.](#)

Business Funding Available

E-Community Loans

The Pottawatomie County E-Community program has been modeled through the Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship (doing business as Network Kansas) in a cooperative effort with the Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation. **The purpose of the program is to encourage entrepreneurial activity in Pottawatomie County.** Funding can be used to purchase or retrofit business, purchase equipment, inventory, or real estate, to provide working capital or cover existing inventory. **Loan terms include a \$5,000 minimum and \$50,000 maximum at an interest rate of 4% for 1-5 years and 6% for 6-10 years.**
[Connect with Jessica at PCEDC to learn more and apply.](#)

GROWKS Loan Fund program

The program offers matching loans of \$100,000+ to cover typical business expenses and serve a variety of populations including women, minorities, economically disadvantaged, and rural and other distressed populations. Funds can be used for startup costs, working capital, franchise fees, acquisition of equipment, inventory, services used in the production, manufacturing, or delivery of a business' goods or services. GROWKS Program are funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Small Business Credit Initiative. The programs are overseen by the Kansas Department of Commerce and Network Kansas. Eligibility criteria applies.
[Connect with Jessica at PCEDC to learn more and apply.](#)

Categories

- Advocacy
- Childcare
- Community News
- Featured Sites & Buildings
- Housing
- Workforce

Related Posts

- Updated Vision and Priorities for Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation
August 6, 2024
- Current Housing Needs in Pottawatomie County
November 6, 2023
- Pottawatomie County Economic Update: Quarter 2 2024
August 5, 2024

Since 2010	Amount Loaned	Loans Disbursed	Average Loan	Avg. Loan Rate
	\$2,436,461	61	\$39,942	2.84%

FOSTERED BUSINESS EXPANSION AND RETENTION

Through conversations with local businesses, stakeholders, and partners, we connect leaders to vital resources, such as real estate, financial support, workforce development, and research tools. This included facilitating headquarters expansion discussions for two Wamego-based employers. In partnership with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, we co-hosted an Exporter Roundtable with the Department of Commerce in December to help local businesses expand their exports, with several Pottawatomie County businesses participating.

At any given time throughout the year, we managed 6-8 business retention and expansion projects, addressing issues like facilities, workforce pipelines, and more.

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STRENGTHENED THE STORY

Building upon what already existed, we pulled together elements to improve our story telling and how we interact, engage with, and provide value to the community. This allowed us to get really clear on the message and the calls to action to create maximum impact. This encompassed solidifying PCEDC as a recognizable brand and being able to clearly communicate the objectives of the organization.

In order to do this, we updated our logo to incorporate our vision-based tagline, "Prosperity Through Partnerships", and developed a set of brand guidelines, including specific fonts and a brand color palette, to build a uniform style for our communications. Additionally, we developed a new strategic plan, Advance Pottawatomie 2030, to define our goals and actions for the coming years. We also launched a format for regular quarterly reports on county economic data, and refreshed our website. The updated website is now fully equipped with analytics tools, and frequently updated with new news posts to help us understand and attract our audience.

387,000
Web Impressions

4,370
Clicks

ecodevo.com
Feb. 2024-Jan. 2025

Main Website Traffic Sources
(by # of sessions):

1. Google
2. Facebook



PCEDC Brand Guidelines

Heading Type
PT Serif Bold
Letter Spacing 10
Line Spacing 1


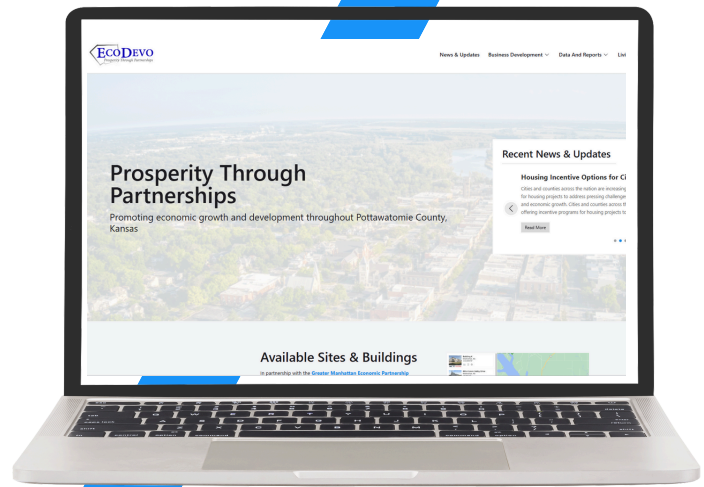
Body Type
Source Sans Pro or PT Sans
Letter Spacing 1
Line Spacing 1.4

Sample

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet...
Consectetur adipiscing elit. Donec sed massa mauris.
Nullam eget sapien at risus tempus tincidunt at non nisl.
Maecenas pulvinar elit faucibus, consequat nisi et, cursus erat.

Colors

- #0705B6
- #076B9F
- #F3F7FA
- #1893F8
- #4C4956
- #B4B4B9
- #FFFFFF



This word cloud reflects key themes from our Annual Investor’s Meeting, capturing the group’s vision for Pottawatomie County 50 years from now.

GATHERED INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS

We interviewed and surveyed a comprehensive group of partners, stakeholders, and investors to get ongoing perspectives on county-wide development, and help connect these groups with relevant new and existing resources. Using much of this feedback, we also conducted a county-wide SWOT analysis, which was integral within our new strategic plan.

DEVELOPED NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Utilizing resources at hand and expertise in strategic planning, the PCEDC developed a new 5-year strategic plan, which was presented and adopted in November of 2024. This plan, Advance Pottawatomie 2030, includes a full SWOT analysis for the county, and outlines our strategic objectives, including:

- Business Attraction and Retention
- Infrastructure Enhancement
- Regional and Organizational Cooperation
- Small Business and Entrepreneur Support
- Workforce Development

The full strategic plan includes activities and performance objectives aligned to each of these objectives, and integrates insights from key partner documents, such as Plan Pottawatomie 2040 and the regional Economic Growth Plan recently completed by the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce.

**Advance
Pottawatomie
2030**

**Pottawatomie
County
Economic
Development
Corporation**

Presented 11/21/2024

DEVELOPED QUARTERLY ECONOMIC REPORTS



In order to provide consistent updates on the Pottawatomie County economy, our team now publishes quarterly economic updates on our website. These reports gather and synthesize data regarding key economic indicators such as home sales, building permits, sales tax revenue, and workforce data in an easy to digest format. Reports are provided alongside regular news and informative posts with PDF/printer-friendly versions available

[Read Q1 Report](#)

[Read Q2 Report](#)

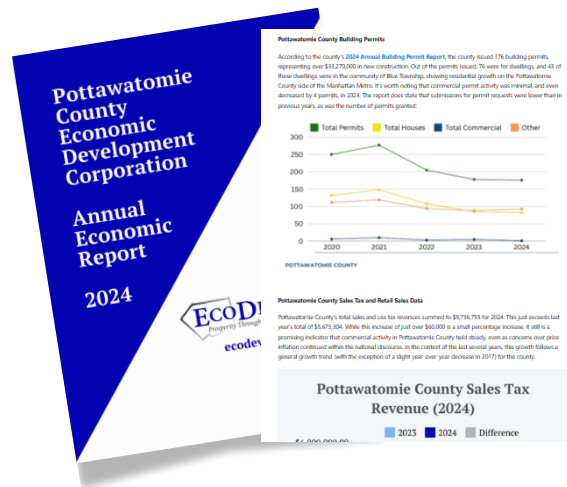
[Read Q3 Report](#)

[Read Q4 Report](#)

PUBLISHED ANNUAL ECONOMIC & HOUSING REPORTS

Along with quarterly economic data updates, our team posted an annual economic review recapping data trends and major news for the county in 2024. Additionally, we are posting regular data-driven articles on crucial development topics, particularly housing, to help inform the community and stakeholders on needs and ongoing development activity within Pottawatomie County.

[Read the 2024 Annual Economic Report](#)



SHARED REGULAR NEWS & EVENTS

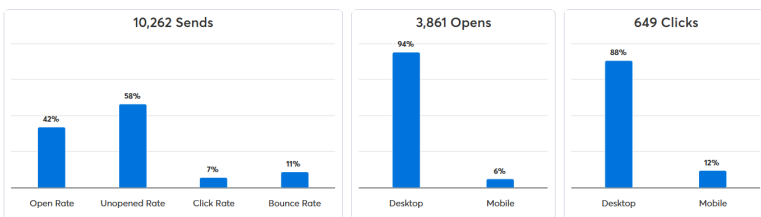
In order to help share news, resources, and opportunities relevant to Pottawatomie County residents and businesses, we've been active on social media, and regularly post on the community updates section of our website. These platforms help us share about the PCEDC's mission and activities, and promote events and news from our partners throughout the region.



COMPILED MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

To help promote our work and relevant economic development news, we now publish two monthly email newsletters.

Our community newsletter provides general updates on events, news, and business/community resources, while our investor-only newsletter provides additional insights into economic data and business and leadership development topics. Our newsletter open rates averaged around 40% with a 10% click through rate, high above industry standards, indicating highly valuable content for a targeted audience.



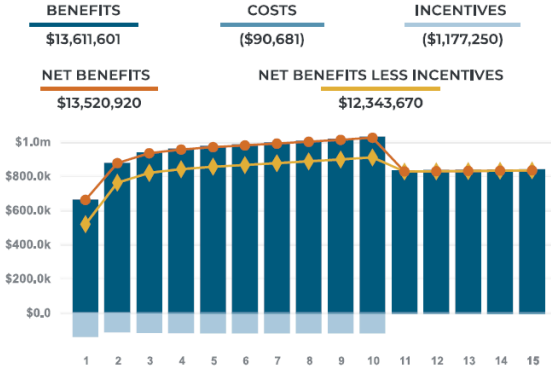
"Most informative newsletter in my inbox every month."

-Terri Hollenbeck, Crossroads Real Estate & Auction, LLC

IMPACT REPORT
PROJECT SUV
 Scenario 1 with Client Data

Recruitment Retail

Pottawatomie County



WHAT'S NEXT: JOB CREATION

We're excited to welcome Eck Auto Group to Pottawatomie County! The Eck Auto Group Project, formerly called "Project SUV" is anticipated to create 58 direct jobs, and 15 spin-off jobs, and generate around \$10.7 million in new capital investment. Total jobs created by this move-in are anticipated to have average salaries of over \$56,000/year.

We're also very optimistic about prospects that have been interested in the Wamego Caterpillar facility. We are in regular communication with seven highly qualified leads, providing everything we could to help: employee drive times, labor outlooks, information on additional properties in the area, and potential incentives.

BUY BUILD GROW POTT. CO.

We are launching the Buy Build Grow Pott. Co. initiative in 2025. This initiative will serve as a county-wide call to action, and a point of community engagement for the PCEDC. This initiative will aim to foster local pride and active participation in regional development. The initiative will connect to our events, social platforms, media outreach, and community-lead projects.



SUMMARY

In this year of growth and transition, we helped local employers attract and retain talent, supported business expansion, and played a key role in job creation. Through strong partnerships, we fostered collaboration and provided businesses, stakeholders, and residents with valuable resources. We also enhanced communication by producing economic reports, tracking key indicators, and sharing insights through newsletters and web content. Strategic planning was a priority as we gathered stakeholder input, conducted surveys, and developed the Advance Pottawatomie 2030 Strategic Plan. We also cohosted candidate forums, launched workforce task forces, and expanded outreach to strengthen the county's economic future. As we move into 2025, we remain focused on driving growth, fostering partnerships, and building a thriving Pottawatomie County.



WHAT'S NEXT?

We're implementing Year 1 of Advance Pottawatomie 2030, which includes creating a Grant Opportunity Calendar and housing assessments for Wamego, Westmoreland, St Marys and St George.

KEEP IN TOUCH

- Subscribe to our newsletter
- Become an investor
- ecodevo.com
- (785) 456.9776
- 1004 Lincoln Ave. Wamego, KS
- shanna@ecodevo.com