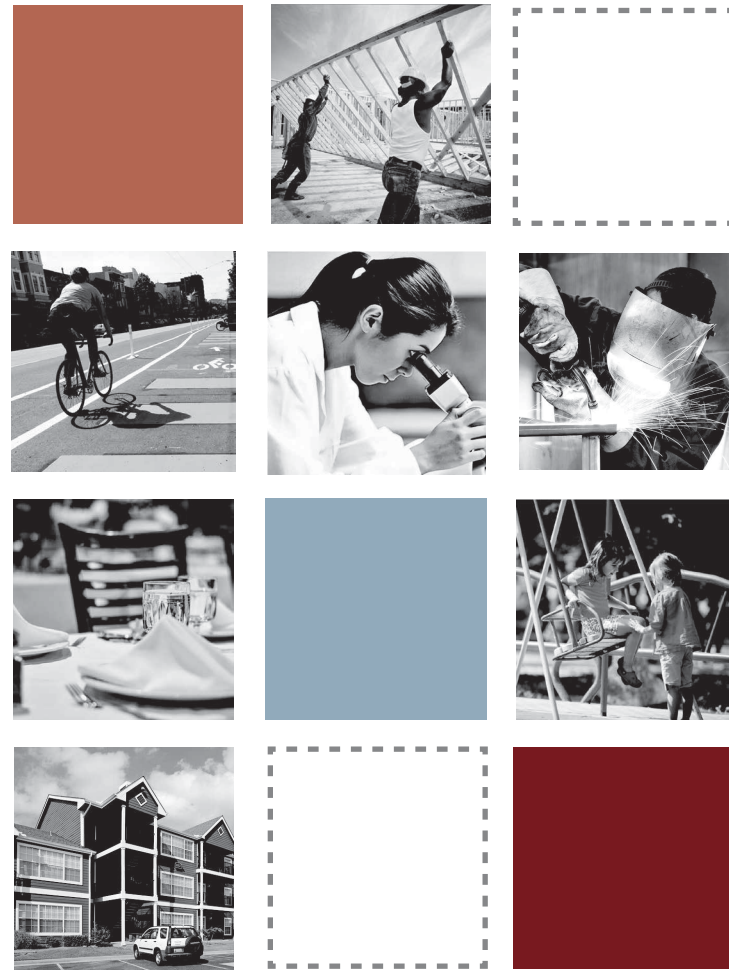


OWASSO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
315 SOUTH CEDAR STREET
OWASSO OK 74055
OWASSOCHAMBER.COM



OWASSO
REAL PEOPLE • REAL CHARACTER • REAL COMMUNITY



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

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2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Economic
Development
Strategic Plan

FROM THE OWASSO CHAMBER PRESIDENT / CEO

As we reflect on the past year, the Owasso Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development is thrilled to present our 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) Annual Report. This year marks a significant milestone in our journey towards fostering a vibrant, sustainable economic environment in Owasso. We have successfully completed a full year of integrating the EDSP with our Chamber's programs, events, and administrative functions. This merger has not only streamlined our operations but also magnified our impact within the community.

One of the most noteworthy accomplishments this year has been the remarkable growth of Workforce Owasso. Through dedicated efforts of exposing this program through the Chamber environment, we have successfully doubled the attendance of employers at these meetings. This achievement underscores our commitment to strengthening Owasso's workforce and providing our businesses with the resources they need to thrive.

In our quest to promote Owasso as a premier destination for shopping and attractions, we have intensified our marketing efforts in the greater Tulsa area. By showcasing what Owasso has to offer, we have attracted more visitors and increased local spending, contributing to our community's economic vitality.

Our commitment to supporting small businesses in the Redbud District has also seen significant advancements. We have assisted more businesses with Tax Increment Financing (TIF) incentive applications, facilitating enhancements and growth for these vital community contributors. This support not only helps individual businesses but also enhances the overall appeal and functionality of the Redbud District.

Recognizing the importance of fostering relationships between our businesses and elected officials, we have worked diligently to connect more businesses with local, state, and federal representatives. These connections are crucial for ensuring that the voices of our business community are heard and that their needs are addressed in policy-making processes.

In collaboration with the City of Owasso, Owasso Public Schools, and the broader business community, we have embarked on comprehensive planning for the future growth of our community. These collaborative efforts are essential for ensuring that Owasso continues to be a place where businesses can flourish, and residents can enjoy a high quality of life.

As we move forward, we are filled with optimism and excitement for what the future holds. The achievements highlighted in this report are a testament to the strength of our community and the potential that lies ahead. We extend gratitude to our members, stakeholders, and partners for their unwavering support and collaboration.

Together, we are building a brighter future for Owasso. Thank you for your continued investment.

CHELSEA LEVO FEARY

President / CEO
Owasso Chamber of Commerce
chelsea@owassochamber.com



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Owasso Economic Development Strategy is more than a simple document. It is a living and active plan developed by an expansive list of engaged and committed leaders in our community. It is because of this tremendous leadership that we are able to take on bold and critically important initiatives laid out in this plan.

OWASSO CITY COUNCIL

Doug Bonebrake Lyndell Dunn Alvin Fruga Dr. Paul Loving Kelly Lewis

OWASSO CITY STAFF

Alexa Beemer	Daniel Dearing	Brian Dempster	Chris Garrett
Carly Novisinsky	Wendy Kramer	Warren Lehr	Roger Stevens
Julie Lombardi	Chelle Mount	Josh Quigley	Julie Stevens
Shellie Wingert			

OWASSO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Chelsea Feary	David Charney	Alvin Fruga	Skip Mefford
Dominic Sokolosky	Dr. Bryan Spriggs	Dr. Dirk Thomas	

EDSP STEERING COMMITTEE

Gary Akin	Brian Beam	Brian Bigbee	Dr. Leslie Clark
Brian Dempster	Lyndell Dunn	Dr. Amy Fitchner	Chelsea Levo Feary
Michael Gordon	Warren Lehr	Dr. Paul Loving	Keith Mason
Andy McMillan	Renee Mowery	Martie Oyler	Chris Phillips
Stan Sallee	Janet Smith	Dr. Bryan Spriggs	Julie Stevens
Roger Stevens	Brien Thorstenberg	Dr. Paula Willyard	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Tadzo Consulting	City of Owasso
Tulsa Regional Chamber	Indian Nations Council of Governments
Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce Executives	Oklahoma Department of Commerce
International Economic Development Council	Impact Data Source
365 Degree Total Marketing	Public Service Company of Oklahoma
Owasso Public Schools	Verdigris Valley Electric Coop
Oklahoma Natural Gas	Select Oklahoma

2023 IN REVIEW

- ▶ Completed a full year of merging EDSP with Owasso Chamber programs, events, and administration.
- ▶ Doubled the attendance of employers at Workforce Owasso.
- ▶ Marketed Owasso to the greater Tulsa area for Owasso shopping and attractions.
- ▶ Assisted more small businesses in the Redbud District with TIF incentive applications for small business enhancements.
- ▶ Connected more businesses with local, state, and federal elected officials.
- ▶ Measured touchpoints between EDSP applications and businesses.
- ▶ Collaborated with the City of Owasso, Owasso Public Schools, and the business community on planning for future growth of our community.

WHAT'S ON DECK

- ▶ Begin discussions with new city manager and City Council regarding a revitalization of the EDSP.
- ▶ Continue to increase employer participation in Workforce Owasso.
- ▶ Increase development activity in Owasso's Redbud District.
- ▶ Conduct first Fly-In to Washington D.C. for Owasso.
- ▶ Create a new city map, apartment guide, hotel guide, and restaurant guide for visitors.
- ▶ Scout and compare software for touchpoint tracking.
- ▶ Increase online exposure for community and businesses through social media utilizing tracking.
- ▶ Create small business workshops for new small businesses and potential businesses.

The difference between good communities and great communities is often (1) long term strategic thinking/planning, (2) a willingness to experience short or intermediate term inconvenience for long term benefit, and (3) abundant generosity and partnership among its citizens. Owasso is the complete package.

DEE SOKOLOSKY, CHAIRMAN AND CEO
FIRST BANK OF OWASSO

THE STRATEGY

PLAN PURPOSE

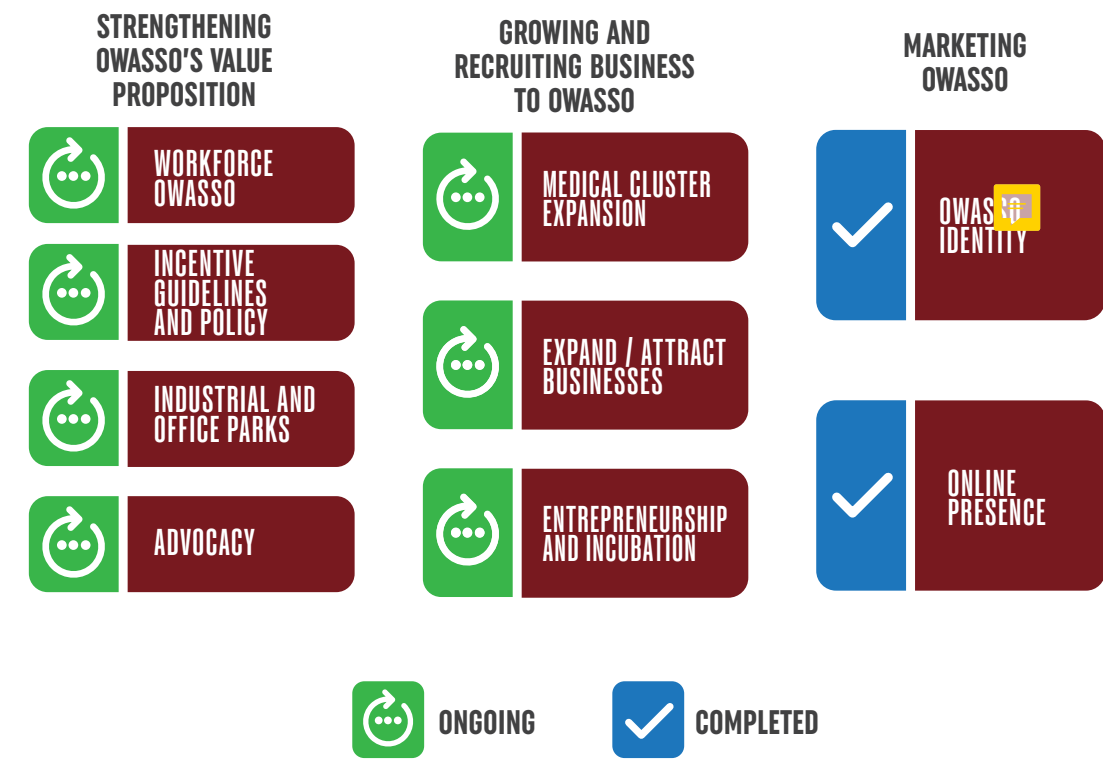
Owasso is one of the most desirable communities for residents in the Tulsa region. Quality housing and robust retail growth have been a focus for community leaders. To sustain growth of retail and lifestyle amenities, it is important to intentionally work on a more developed community to accommodate opportunities for not only living and playing in Owasso, but also quality employment opportunities. Employment in basic industries - those industries that bring new wealth in a community by selling a product or service outside the region - pay higher wages for skilled workers. Basic industries located in Owasso increase daytime population so that more money is spent locally for retail, restaurants and local services.

The purpose of this plan for Owasso economic development efforts is to strategically invest resources so that we sustain and perpetuate opportunities for Owasso citizens. By diversifying job opportunities, Owasso will suffer less negative impact from cyclical economic challenges.

We also value how the community can be involved and informed in these efforts. Our vision is for all pieces to really work together - to communicate and collaborate. This plan is not a city government plan; it involves teams of committed partners making a positive impact for growing Owasso's economy collectively.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The Owasso Economic Development Strategy encompasses nine strategic initiatives, organized into three related categories:



STRENGTHENING OWASSO'S VALUE PROPOSITION

During the planning process, the Competitiveness Assessment and subsequent focus groups with local employers revealed gaps and liabilities in Owasso's asset offerings that are critical to Owasso's success in growing and attracting businesses in Owasso. If these issues are not addressed, the work of the other two strategic initiative categories will encounter more obstacles and waste resources.

WORKFORCE OWASSO

GOAL

Network of employers, resources and service providers for recruiting and retaining a workforce of excellence in Owasso, Oklahoma.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Local employers provided resounding input on the critical factor of attracting and retaining skilled and unskilled candidates to work at their Owasso operations. By convening *Workforce Owasso*, it not only demonstrates proactive efforts for listening to employer needs, but also shows that Owasso is interested in acting on solutions that support employer needs.

Nationally, talent is the leading driver for business growth and competitiveness through innovation. Communities that are focused on helping local employers access talent, as well as partner on upgrading skills, are growing through talent capacity. These communities are also gaining attention outside of the marketplace as potential areas for new locations because they are addressing employer talent needs.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- ⚙️ Conducted six roundtable meetings with a total of 80 participants, setting benchmark for 2024.
- ⚙️ Collaborated with OPS staff on creating "Industry Socials" for high school students.

METRICS – WORKFORCE OWASSO

PROCESS METRICS	OUTCOME METRICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish <i>Workforce Owasso</i> • Assemble workforce resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 employers engaged in Workforce Owasso (+9 employers) • 8 service providers engaged • Provided two education programs in 2023

NSP has benefited tremendously through WORKFORCE OWASSO from receiving a wealth of knowledge, assistance, and support through partner referrals, incentive programs, and training and development in improving our current workforce challenges, while keeping in mind our future workforce needs for our continued business success.

JULIE BRUGGER, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
NPS PROTEINS

OWASSO'S ONLINE PRESENCE

OWASSO'S ONLINE PRESENCE

GOAL

Establish effective online presence for Owasso with information available "24 X 7" to save staff time.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Owasso has no economic development-specific website and limited social media accounts and messaging. The leading marketing tool for economic development marketing is a website that presents relevant data, case studies of local businesses, maps and other points of interest that influence business location decision-making. Not only is this the first place a business or site selector seeks information, it may be the only place information is gathered before a desktop screen of the community is made. No information available online may result in elimination of consideration.

A website also serves as a place to house the most current information for staff to present to businesses and the community at-large. In turn, a website provides the information around the clock and saves time – for businesses, site selectors and staff.

Regarding social media, increasingly businesses and site selectors are gathering news from these outlets. In addition, as a means to share information, relationships develop based on the value of that information and dialoguing. When a community is not participating in social media, there is a void that competitors can fill with news about their communities.



Our Economic Strategy Plan has provided unity of purpose and clarity of vision for all city stakeholders on the extremely important business of economic development. Chelsea Levo Feary has taken on the leadership of implementing the plan in a manner that inspires confidence for the continued and future economic growth of Owasso.

WARREN LEHR, CITY MANAGER
CITY OF OWASSO

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INCUBATION

GOAL

Develop and implement a structured program of entrepreneurship resources, including an incubator in the Redbud District, to foster start-up and fast-growing businesses in Owasso to stay here as they grow.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Entrepreneurs start businesses where they want to live. There are many reasons why people want to live in Owasso and this resident-attraction strength is an opportunity to leverage for business development through entrepreneurship. Often, where a company starts is where they continue to have a presence for the long run...if they get the resources and assistance they need to expand and grow.

The Competitiveness Assessment uncovered many entrepreneurship resources throughout the Tulsa region, but none of these resources are located in Owasso. There is a connection link that is needed to maximize the value of these resources for local businesses and entrepreneurs.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- The Criterion Building opened creating a shared workspace for entrepreneurs.

MARKETING OWASSO

In the era of robust information and immense competition in economic development, Owasso must tell its story to get attention. And the story must be authentic and clear so that it is understood, believable and memorable to stand out in the chatter of overwhelming media.

OWASSO IDENTITY

GOAL

Define consistent identity for Owasso supported with relevant message and facts.

WHY IMPORTANT?

As a suburban community, it is valuable to leverage the known community of the region – Tulsa. Yet, there are many suburbs clamoring for attention. Owasso needs to define compelling, authentic and unique attributes to frame a cohesive and memorable identity for who Owasso is now and in the future.



INCENTIVES GUIDE AND POLICY

GOAL

Establish incentive guidelines and policy.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Incentives can be a highly controversial topic for communities. Strategic communities utilize incentives as tools to close a deal – if it helps the community to achieve what economic growth they are trying to influence AND only if needed.

The importance of this initiative is to thoughtfully consider how incentives will help Owasso advance efforts towards what the community needs to achieve – for the short and long-term. Because we have limited resources, we want to make smarter investments utilizing these limited resources for maximum return on investment.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Worked with three small businesses to submit and receive TIF incentives.
- Worked with two commercial developers on incentive applications for the City.

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

Identify competitive sites ready for development and available buildings, all with complete information, to meet target prospect needs for industrial and office operations.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Businesses need a place to locate. They will locate expansions and new operations where they can meet their project timelines. This requires us to not only have complete information on available sites and buildings documented, we also need to have sites and buildings ready to meet their needs. By working on industrial and office parks proactively we will be better positioned to provide speedy client response and compete more effectively for investment and employment projects.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Returned to a former commercial property and demographics provider for accurate and improved information for commercial developers and real estate partners.
- Met with the State Department of Commerce regarding the SITES program for development assistance.

ADVOCACY

GOAL

Provide education and information about issues, policy, and laws affecting Owasso, Oklahoma.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Leadership across the community is concerned about the implications of policy for long-term economic health of Owasso and all Oklahoma cities. (Advocacy - continued next page)

ADVOCACY (CONT'D)

Current challenges with the state budget already draw attention to fiscal policy issues necessitating an update. Including this initiative in the Owasso Economic Development Strategy is a sign of true leadership to advance Owasso's future, so that we may be able to provide quality services for residents and businesses as we grow.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted the Lt. Governor, Labor Commissioner, State Treasurer, State Director of Film & Music, U.S. Congressman, and Chief of the Cherokee Nation in Owasso.
- Hosted second annual Owasso Day at the Capitol.
- Scouted a partner community DC Fly-In for future planning of Owasso's DC Fly-In in 2024.

GROWING AND RECRUITING BUSINESS TO OWASSO

The initiatives in this category focus on three different avenues to expand basic industry employment and investment in Owasso by basic industries specifically.

MEDICAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

GOAL

Establish Owasso as a destination for medical treatments and R&D to grow high-paying, sustainable jobs in Owasso. Position Owasso as nationally-recognized medical cluster and increase specialized services.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Owasso already has a strong and growing medical cluster anchored by two major hospitals. The medical field will always be in demand and rely on skilled positions with higher-earning opportunities. Local schools have programs in place (and developing more programs) to train workers for medical-related positions. Many communities, not just in the Tulsa region and throughout Oklahoma, but throughout the USA are targeting medical expansions as well. This initiative is important to allocate thoughtful and dedicated efforts to make Owasso stand out as a location for exceptional medical business growth. Owasso benefits beyond economic growth with this initiative as residents will also have access to the expanding services and programs.



EXPAND AND ATTRACT BUSINESS

GOAL

Retain existing businesses and recruit diverse, high-growth companies of targeted basic industries (metal manufacturing, aircraft parts, office/headquarters, information technology, and medical) in order to grow wealth and increase daytime employment in Owasso.

WHY IMPORTANT?

Taking care of existing businesses is like a business taking care of existing customers. Not only does this ensure that recruitment of new businesses to Owasso builds on the current economic base, but also satisfied local businesses can be important advocates and proof to prospective businesses considering an Owasso location.

The importance of proactively retaining and recruiting targeted businesses is essential to transforming and evolving the growth of Owasso's economy. Being intentional in positioning Owasso's assets for, and in front of, targeted industries is a better use of marketing and economic development resources than a reactive approach for retaining and recruiting businesses choosing to locate in Owasso.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted several one-on-one meetings with local small businesses to discover their pain points to form a program designed for them in 2024.
- Created two free events specifically to help small businesses network.
- Produced six months of metrics to evaluate touchpoints with businesses.
- Hosted a Shop Small Owasso event increasing traffic to local small businesses and marketing our community across the Tulsa area.

METRICS – EXPAND AND ATTRACT BUSINESS

PROCESS METRICS

- Recorded over 1,000 touchpoints with Owasso businesses.
- Identified most utilized strategic initiatives by local businesses are :
 - (1) Expand and Attract Business
 - (2) Advocacy
 - (3) Workforce Owasso.

OUTCOME METRICS



The City of Owasso and Tulsa's Future collaborated using a customer relationship management tool to create visual data reflecting the city's strategic initiatives and metrics. We offer this platform to regional partners to assist communities like Owasso in staying engaged with and tracking local business, retention and expansion efforts as part of our vision to support economic development in the region.