

City of Lawrence Outside Agency Bi-annual Report 2016

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org. Reports on activities from January 2016 to June 2016 are due on July 15th 2016. Cumulative reports on activities from January 2016 through December 2016 are due on February 15th 2017.

Agency Name: The Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and EDC of Lawrence & Douglas County

Reporting Period (please check one): ☐ January - June (deadline July 15) ☒ January – December (deadline February 15)

1. Give a brief narrative of the activities that were funded with City funds over the reporting period checked above.

Through December of 2016, the Economic Development Corporation of Lawrence & Douglas County (EDC) leveraged City of Lawrence financial resources to address the following economic development initiatives:

- Economic Development Partnerships
- Existing Business Support, Retention & Expansion
- Entrepreneurship & Startups
- Workforce Development
- New Business Attraction & Recruitment

With these core objectives, the EDC strives to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for the Lawrence community by creating jobs and growing the tax base.

2. Provide specific detail (and supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate progress made toward your goals/objectives.

Economic Development Partnerships:

- The EDC leverages multiple agency partnerships and organizational membership to accomplish its goals. Examples of these partners include: Kansas City Area Development Council, Kansas Dept. of Commerce, International Economic Development Council, Kansas Economic Development Alliance, and Southern Economic Development Council. These entities are critical in establishing business relationships with economic development practitioners and site consultants, acquiring project leads for business relocations and providing access to professional development opportunities, strategic resources and trade publications.
- In addition to professional/industry organizations, the EDC also leverages close partnerships with the City, County, USD 497, Haskell, University of Kansas, Peaslee Tech, through board involvement, monthly meetings, reports and advisory roles.

Existing Business Support, Retention & Expansion:

- While great effort is placed on marketing and recruiting outside business to our community, the EDC also places significant emphasis on retaining and support for our existing business. The EDC maintains constant contact with the established Lawrence business community through events, networking opportunities, board involvement and direct site visits. It also supports local growth through its partnership with the Chamber, which in 2016 conducted nearly 50 ribbon cuttings to celebrate local business growth, 18 of which represented wholly new businesses to the community.

Entrepreneurship & Start-Ups:

- The EDC supports entrepreneurial growth in several ways, e.g. regular attendance and financial support of Lawrence's installment of 1 Million Cups, financial support for Start-Up Weekend, shared office space with the KU Small Business Development Center, strategic relationships and communications with the Bioscience Technology & Business Center and KU's Innovation & Collaboration office, etc.
- Another small business support mechanism available through the EDC is the Network Kansas Metropolitan Entrepreneurial Community program. Based on the successful Network Kansas Rural E-Community program, which spurs development in rural communities, the Metro E-Community was launched in early-2016 as one of two pilot programs to promote business growth in urban communities (the other being Wichita). This program allows the EDC to directly support new and existing business through the creation of a revolving loan program. Qualifying businesses may receive up to \$45,000 in gap financing for start-up capital, business renovations, hiring staff, equipment, construction, etc.

Workforce Development:

- The EDC, in conjunction with the City, County, USD 497 and Chamber, formed the Dwayne Peaslee Technical Training Center in 2014, with an official open in fall of 2015. Now in its second year, Peaslee Tech currently has student enrollment above 300 and represents an integral piece of the workforce development plan for both the EDC and Chamber. As such, since its creation, both organizations have been intimately involved in the long-term planning, development and sustainability of the Center. In 2016, the EDC assisted Peaslee with the negotiation of a new tenant lease, provided grants totaling \$475,000 and continues to assist in fundraising and development efforts for a new auto lab.

New Business Attraction & Recruitment:

- The EDC serves as the marketing and recruitment arm for new business to the City of Lawrence as well as other communities in Douglas County. Beyond direct efforts through trade and industry event attendance, the EDC often travels out of market to visit with site consultants or hosts familiarization tours locally for potential business relocations.
- In the past 24 months, EDC efforts resulted in the relocation of five new businesses to the community, representing the creation of more than 500 new jobs and more than \$28.6 million in capital investment. In 2016 specifically, the EDC shepherded dozens of relocation requests and conducted several site visits with out-of-town businesses. Of these, Lawrence is actively being considered for five projects (four relocations and one local expansion), representing a combined total of more than \$150 million in capital investment and the creation of roughly 560 new jobs.

3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?

As illustrated with the answers above, the EDC has had a substantial impact on the Lawrence community, and thus on Lawrence citizens themselves. In the past 24 months the EDC's efforts have:

- Deepened collaboration and cross-communications amongst community partners (City, County, EDC, Chamber, USD 497, BTBC, KUIC, etc.).
- Celebrated nearly 50 ribbon cuttings and the creation of 18 new Lawrence businesses.
- Successfully created a revolving loan fund to spur entrepreneurial and small business growth.
- Created and ensured the sustainability of the community's first tech training facility.
- Led projects that created more than 500 new jobs and \$28.6 million in capital investment, with potentially more to announce in the first half of 2017.

4. What barriers, if any, have you encountered?

The greatest, ever-present barrier we face is the extremely low inventory of shovel-ready industrial property and the lack of existing industrial buildings to market. While VenturePark is a wonderful asset for Lawrence and has garnered a great deal of attention for prospective business relocations, it is relatively small on an industrial scale, where we routinely see requests for 100+ acre tracts and existing buildings of 250-500,000 square feet.

Another challenge for Venture and the broader community, is access to rail, which has re-emerged as the preferred, low-cost transportation method for manufacturers as well as domestic and international product distribution.

5. Review the line-item budget you provided in your application. How much of your allocation has been spent?

100% of our allocation has been spent.