



2023 ANNUAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
REPORT

City Economic Development Office



# Introduction

Each year, the City of Lawrence reviews and reports information on performance and compliance for active economic development programs, including participation in property tax abatements, Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB), Neighborhood Revitalization Areas (NRA), Tax Increment Financing districts (TIF), Transportation Development Districts (TDD), and other supported programs. This information is summarized within an annual economic development report, published by the City, as required by City Code.

As economic development programs involve public funding for current and future community assets, projects participating in these programs are viewed as an investment. The City analyzes the risks and returns of potential projects, selecting ones that best balance the City's economic development goals (stated in the comprehensive plan and policy) of growing the local economy with the required amount of investment.

The City supports a variety of economic development projects that utilize one or more economic development programs. The following is a summary of the active projects and support for the year.



# 1 – Property Tax Abatements (Non-Catalyst)

## Overview

Property tax abatements are authorized by the State of Kansas to allow municipalities and other taxing jurisdictions to reduce property taxes for a limited period to spur investment within a community. A property tax abatement on real property applies only to land and buildings and can be authorized for up to 10 years by state statute.

Eligibility and other criteria for seeking a tax abatement through the non-Catalyst process is outlined within the City’s economic development policy. Projects granted a non-Catalyst tax abatement are subject to annual reporting and compliance requirements throughout the duration of the incentive period. This information is used by the City to assess the effectiveness of the projects in bringing capital investment, quality jobs and wages, and other benefits to the community.

The City currently has two non-Catalyst Property Tax Abatements: the **Sunlite Science & Technology, Inc.** facility and the **T&M Heartland Community Clinic**. Sunlite, Inc. company met compliance requirements and received 100% of their agreed abatement amount. FY2023 was the final year for the Sunlite, Inc. tax abatement. Heartland Clinic is subject to a Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) schedule and has paid accordingly.

2023 Sunlite Compliance Summary						
Compliance Category	Description	Target	Actual	% Compliance (Actual/Target)	Weight	Overall Compliance
Capital Investment	Cumulative Capital Investment (as of Dec 31, 2023)	\$1,130,000	\$1,169,929	103.5%	0.25	25.62%
Job Creation	Full-Time Employment (FTEs)	41	10.9	27.0%	0.25	6.75%
Wages	2021 Wage Floor (\$13.73 per hour)	100%	100%	100.0%	0.125	12.50%
	Average Company Hourly Wage	\$16.59	\$44.01	260.46%	0.125	32.56%
Health Benefits	Employer Provided Health Care Coverage (minimum of 70% employer paid premium)	100%	100%	100.0%	0.25	25.00%

## 2 – Property Tax Abatements (Catalyst)

### **Overview**

Beginning in Spring of 2017, a real property tax abatement for industrial development projects could be processed through the Catalyst program, a special, temporary incentive program designed to spur economic development activity within the community. Originally authorized in April 2017 for new industrial projects constructed in Lawrence VenturePark or East Hills Business Park, the program was further expanded in June 2017 to include industrial development throughout the City of Lawrence.

The program was set to expire in April 2019. However, due to its success, the City Commission voted to extend the Catalyst program until April 2022, adding a minimum investment level for real property, and including eligibility for expansion projects proposed for VenturePark or on industrial zoned private property throughout the community. At the time of publication, the program has been further extended to April 1, 2025.

Because Catalyst is a special program, the regular provisions and processes associated with the City’s economic development policy do not apply. Expedited approval is granted directly through the City Commission for projects that meet the program’s eligibility requirements.

<b>Catalyst Assistance Package</b>
10-Year real property tax abatement: 50%; 70% if project built to LEED Silver equivalent
IRB Sales tax exemption on project construction materials
City/County owned business park land provided for projects located in LVP or EHBP.
State provided personal property tax exemption (machinery/equipment)
IRB and property tax abatement application fees and bond origination fees waived by the City.

# 3 – Industrial Revenue Bonds

2023 Catalyst Tax Abatements: Authorized					
Company	Start	Expires	Maximum Investment Amount Subject to Abatement	Abatement %	Ord/Res
VanTrust (Phase I)	2019	2028	\$10,200,000	70%	Ord. 9573
Plastikon (Phase I & II Expansion)	2019	2028	\$3,200,000	70%	Ord. 9430
Grandstand (Phase I Expansion)	2021	2030	\$5,000,000	PILOT	Ord. 9608
VanTrust (Phase II (Pretzels Inc.))	2022	2031	\$24,000,000	PILOT	Res. 7341
Standard Beverage Expansion	2022	2031	\$13,500,000	70%	Ord. 9829
US Engineering	2023	2032	\$15,000,000	PILOT	Res. 7297

The following is a list of historical Tax Abatement projects (Catalyst and Non-Catalyst) and their associated abatements per year beginning in 2014:

Tax Abatements									
Year	Traditional Abatement Program		Catalyst Abatement Program						Total
	Sunlite	T&M Heartland Clinic	VanTrust Phase I	Plastikon Phase I & II	Grandstand Expansion	US Engineering	Pretzels, Inc.	Standard Beverage	
2014	\$19,472	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$143,429
2015	\$21,182	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$149,197
2016	\$21,178	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$147,035
2017	\$22,997	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$153,794
2018	\$22,398	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$150,210
2019	\$19,999	--	\$123,778	\$70,663	--	--	--	--	\$357,370
2020	\$20,515	--	\$118,202	\$111,876	--	--	--	--	\$368,668
2021	\$21,059	--	\$201,413	\$114,648	\$82,496	--	--	--	\$541,380
2022	\$21,261	--	--	\$113,835	\$86,701	--	--	\$136,020	\$357,717
2023	\$22,423	--	--	\$117,399	\$95,306	--	--	\$133,600	\$368,728
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$191,223</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$443,393</b>	<b>\$528,421</b>	<b>\$264,503</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$269,620</b>	<b>\$2,737,528</b>

# 3 – Industrial Revenue Bonds

Starting in 2022, the Douglas County Appraiser’s office only provides Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) calculations for eligible properties. Abatement amounts for these properties are not calculated.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes					
Year	T&M Heartland Clinic	VanTrust Phase I	Pretzels, Inc	US Engineering	Total
2022	\$33,732	\$88,863	\$86,500	--	\$208,095
2023	\$33,526	\$90,481	\$87,966	\$29,696	\$241,669
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$67,258</b>	<b>\$179,344</b>	<b>\$174,466</b>	<b>\$29,696</b>	<b>\$449,764</b>



# 3 – Industrial Revenue Bonds

## Overview

Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs) are an incentive established by the State of Kansas to enhance economic development and improve the quality of life. Considered a “conduit financing mechanism” whereby the City can assist companies in acquiring facilities, renovating structures, and purchasing machinery and equipment through bond issuance, IRBs can be useful to companies in obtaining favorable rate financing for their project, as well as providing a sales tax exemption on project construction materials.

IRBs are repayable solely by the company and place no financial risk on the city. When IRBs have been issued, the municipality typically acquires a leasehold interest in the underlying facility and simultaneously leases it back to the company, and the debt is repaid through lease payments made by the tenant-company on the property that have been financed by the bonds. If the company defaults, the bond owners cannot look to the city for payment.

The City had the following Industrial Revenue Bonds outstanding at the end of 2023:

2023 IRBs: Outstanding					
Company	Date of Issue	Issuing Ord. #	Year Matures	Amount Authorized	Project
Bowersock: Series 2020A (refinance of 2011A)	May 2020	9760	2033	\$9,229,000	Hydro-Electric Facility
Bowersock: Series 2020B (refinance of 2011B)	May 2020	9760	2026	\$6,771,000	Hydro-Electric Facility
Rock Chalk Park	Oct. 2013	8862	2023	\$40,000,000	Commercial/Recreational
VanTrust-Phase I	Dec 2018	9573	2028	\$10,200,000	Industrial Building
USE Engineering (USE Real Estate Holding LLC)	June 2022	9919	Series A: 2042 Series B: 2031	\$15,000,000	Industrial Building
VanTrust-Phase II (Pretzels, Inc.)	Nov 2021	9877	2031	\$24,000,000	Industrial Building (Pretzels)
Banks Street IRB**	Dec 2020	9823	2024	\$2,000,000	Commercial Rehab
T&M Properties (Heartland)	Nov 2021	9889	2031	\$6,504,000	Community Health Clinic
Flint Hills Holding Group LLC/Penn Street Lofts Housing Partners LP	Nov 2020	9820	2021	\$12,000,000	Affordable Housing
Standard Beverage	Feb 2021	9829	2031	\$13,500,000	Commercial Expansion

# 3 – Industrial Revenue Bonds

Cedarhurst Senior Living Center	TBD	ROI 7413 issued 3-22- 2022	TBD	\$17,000,000	Senior assisted living and memory care facility
DCCCA, Inc.	TBD	ROI 7433 issued 7-5- 2022	TBD	\$7,900,000	Community Health Facility
Community Children’s Center	TBD	ROI 7458 issued 12-6- 2022	TBD	\$5,300,000	Childcare Support Facility
Heartland Medical Clinic, In.c	TBD	ROI 7486 issued 6-20- 2023	TBD	\$4,000,000	Community Health Facility Expansion





# 4 – Neighborhood Revitalization Areas

## Overview

Neighborhood Revitalization Areas (NRA) are an economic development tool established by the Kansas Neighborhood Revitalization Act (K.S.A. 12-17,114 et seq.) to promote reinvestment and revitalization of properties, which in turn have a positive economic effect upon a neighborhood and the City in general.

The NRA tool provides an annual property tax rebate (during a specified NRA rebate period) to the property owner based on a percentage of the incremental increase in property value resulting from improvements. The base property value (property valuation prior to improvements) is shielded from the rebate so during the NRA rebate period, taxing jurisdictions receive at least the same amount of property tax that would have been generated by the property had it not been improved.

### NRA Distributions

Year	720 E 9th	810/812 Pennsylvania (Cider Building)	1106 Rhode Island	900 Delaware	826 Pennsylvania	1101 Indiana St (HERE KS)	800 Penn St	Total
2011	\$12,515	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$12,515
2012	\$11,982	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$11,982
2013	\$12,162	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$39,155
2014	\$12,282	\$25,370	--	--	--	--	--	\$65,090
2015	\$13,617	\$25,620	--	--	--	--	--	\$68,955
2016	\$13,537	\$26,286	\$11,037	\$29,876	--	--	--	\$110,304
2017	\$14,624	\$26,763	\$10,504	\$33,061	--	--	--	\$112,587
2018	\$14,117	\$26,460	\$11,753	\$32,416	\$60,791	--	--	\$172,048
2019	\$16,286	\$26,264	\$11,860	\$32,984	\$69,634	\$504,936	--	\$686,576
2020	\$15,723	\$24,305	\$12,156	\$33,298	\$73,408	\$507,070	--	\$683,996
2021	\$17,869	\$26,426	\$11,405	\$35,314	\$41,789	\$510,824	--	\$655,206
2022	\$19,960	\$25,819	\$12,403	\$34,834	\$20,243	\$536,123	\$105,303	\$768,293
2023	\$26,548	\$25,646	\$12,626	\$37,679	\$19,786	\$561,326	\$75,471	\$759,082
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$201,222</b>	<b>\$258,958</b>	<b>\$93,743</b>	<b>\$269,462</b>	<b>\$285,651</b>	<b>\$2,620,279</b>	<b>\$180,774</b>	<b>\$4,145,789</b>

## 4 – Neighborhood Revitalization Areas

Seven (7) companies received NRA rebates in 2023. The 1040 Vermont NRA concluded its rebate period in 2022. Overall (for all years in which an NRA rebate was given), the seven NRA revitalized properties generated an average of one hundred and forty three percent (143%) more real property tax revenues as compared to property tax revenues that would have been realized if the properties were left in original condition.

The following table displays the “to-date” taxable values of all active NRA projects, comparing their pre- and post-development estimates:

**All NRAs: To-Date Property Taxes**

NRA	Tax Revenues After Development			Tax Revenues No Development
	Total Taxes Paid	NRA Rebate	Retained Tax	Base Tax
720 E 9th St	\$387,464	\$201,231	\$186,233	\$170,705
810 Pennsylvania St	\$389,657	\$258,958	\$130,699	\$39,747
900 Delaware St	\$296,927	\$269,462	\$27,465	\$21,001
1106 Rhode Island St	\$124,598	\$93,743	\$30,855	\$22,437
826 Pennsylvania St	\$535,419	\$285,651	\$249,768	\$66,405
1101 Indiana St	\$3,361,891	\$2,620,279	\$741,612	\$243,617
800 Penn St	\$172,958	\$153,072	\$19,886	\$5,057
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,268,914</b>	<b>\$3,882,396</b>	<b>\$1,386,518</b>	<b>\$568,969</b>

**Tax Revenue Comparison: All NRAs**

	Base	Retained	% Gain (Loss)
To Date	\$568,969	\$1,386,518	143.7%
	<i>Unimproved Property</i>	<i>Improved Property</i>	<i>Return</i>

# 5 – Tax Increment Financing

## Overview

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts are an economic development tool established by the Kansas TIF Act (K.S.A. 12-1770 et seq.) to aid in financing projects for substantial public benefit. Public benefits can include creating jobs or retaining existing employment, eliminating blight, strengthening the employment and economic base of the City, increasing property values and tax revenues, reducing poverty, creating economic stability, upgrading older neighborhoods, facilitating economic self-sufficiency, promoting projects that are of community-wide importance, or implementing the Comprehensive Plan and economic development goals of the City.

The City currently has three (3) active TIF districts: **901 New Hampshire**, **The Oread District**, and the **9<sup>th</sup> & New Hampshire District** (includes 900/888 New Hampshire projects). The City approved the establishment of **The Crossing TIF District** in 2023, which will become active and receive reimbursements after completion of ground-level improvements.



# 5 – Tax Increment Financing

TIF Distributions									
Year	Oread		900 New Hampshire (South)			888 New Hampshire (North)			Total
	Sales Tax	Property Tax	Sales Tax	Property Tax	City Retained 5%	Sales Tax	Property Tax	City Retained 5%	
2009	\$3,113	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$3,113
2010	\$152,978	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$152,978
2011	\$200,603	\$426,278	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$626,881
2012	\$264,453	\$222,746	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$515,284
2013	\$211,542	\$240,830	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$480,457
2014	\$181,813	\$250,558	--	--	--	--	--	--	\$460,456
2015	\$181,009	\$270,490	\$51,041	\$22,685	\$3,880	--	--	--	\$557,191
2016	\$63,493	\$283,002	\$116,652	\$297,330	\$21,789	--	--	--	\$810,350
2017	\$169,259	\$295,932	\$119,925	\$304,136	\$22,319	\$0	\$39,265	\$2,067	\$980,987
2018	\$168,467	\$361,989	\$112,208	\$341,644	\$23,887	\$329	\$228,303	\$12,016	\$1,276,927
2019	\$146,547	\$369,804	\$132,221	\$305,249	\$23,025	\$271	\$260,419	\$13,706	\$1,279,326
2020	\$106,994	\$368,131	\$72,799	\$314,525	\$20,386	\$112	\$266,695	\$14,042	\$1,191,769
2021	\$127,725	\$297,473	\$74,010	\$305,514	\$19,975	\$0	\$229,585	\$12,083	\$1,094,450
2022	\$146,051	\$307,615	\$109,724	\$278,865	\$19,313	\$0	\$287,232	\$11,754	\$1,188,638
2023	\$189,283	\$305,055	\$120,313	\$264,921	\$20,275	\$0	\$272,870	\$14,362	\$1,187,079
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,313,330</b>	<b>\$3,999,902</b>	<b>\$908,892</b>	<b>\$2,434,869</b>	<b>\$174,848</b>	<b>\$712</b>	<b>\$1,584,368</b>	<b>\$80,030</b>	<b>\$11,805,886</b>

# 6 – Transportation Development District

## Overview

Transportation Development District (TDD) is an economic development tool established by the Kansas TDD Act (K.S.A. 12-17,140 et seq.) to assist in financing public transportation improvements. In all districts, public improvements were financed initially by the developer and are reimbursed annually via a one percent (1%) transportation district sales tax on retail or taxable services occurring within the district.

Currently, the City has three (3) authorized TDD's: the **Oread District**, the **Free-State (Bauer Farms) District**, and the **9<sup>th</sup> & New Hampshire District** (includes 900/888 New Hampshire projects).

TDD Distributions						
Year	Oread	Free State (Bauer Farms)	9th & New Hampshire			Total
			900 New Hampshire (South)	888 New Hampshire (North)	City Retained 5%	
2009	\$1,609	\$9,472	--	--	--	\$11,081
2010	\$79,087	\$19,457	--	--	--	\$98,544
2011	\$103,774	\$52,561	--	--	--	\$156,335
2012	\$136,867	\$59,650	--	--	--	\$196,517
2013	\$109,474	\$72,809	--	--	--	\$182,283
2014	\$94,024	\$88,152	--	--	--	\$182,176
2015	\$93,559	\$137,753	\$0	\$0	\$21,622	\$252,934
2016	\$32,831	\$245,863	\$0	\$0	\$49,434	\$328,129
2017	\$87,538	\$232,990	\$0	\$0	\$50,829	\$371,358
2018	\$87,049	\$244,944	\$0	\$0	\$47,664	\$379,658
2019	\$75,708	\$283,539	\$0	\$0	\$56,103	\$415,350
2020	\$55,284	\$330,379	\$0	\$0	\$30,880	\$416,543
2021	\$65,998	\$333,968	\$0	\$0	\$31,346	\$431,312
2022	\$75,503	\$454,689	\$0	\$0	\$46,492	\$576,684
2023	\$97,926	\$371,975	\$0	\$0	\$51,008	\$520,909
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,196,232</b>	<b>\$2,938,203</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$385,378</b>	<b>\$4,519,813</b>

# 7 – Additional Support Programs

## Overview

The City of Lawrence annually contracts with the agencies below to provide services related to economic development in order to foster job growth within the community. The City participates in direct-support programs to help initiate and support economic development within the community.

2023 Other Support Programs	
Support Program	Description
Economic Development Services	BTBC/KUIP
Economic Development Services	Chamber and KU-SBDC
Workforce Training	Peaslee Technical Training Center
Economic Development Services	Douglas County CORE



# 7 – Additional Support Programs

## KU Innovation Park



The KU Innovation Park creates, recruits, grows, and retains companies that produce high quality, high-paying jobs by supporting growth of the bioscience and technology industries in the City of Lawrence, Douglas County, and Kansas City. By producing these jobs, the Park increases the local tax base and creates wealth in the community. To help its tenant companies grow and succeed, the Park provides:

- Customized office and laboratory space
- Access to the Park’s network of business and industry contacts
- Access to KU resources
- High bandwidth, low latency fiber internet connection
- Business services and support

The Park is a unique coalition consisting of the City, Douglas County, University of Kansas, and the local business community via the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce—the first of its kind for Lawrence. As a result of this unique partnership, each dollar contributed by the City is leveraged by contributions by the other partners.

Metric	Park Companies	Park Graduates	Park System Total
<b>Companies</b>	42	28	70
<b>Jobs - Direct</b>	435	245	680
<b>Jobs - Indirect</b>	206	192	398
<b>Jobs - Induced</b>	139	114	253
<b>Jobs - Total</b>	780	551	1,331
<b>Annual Payroll</b>	\$28,859,640	\$16,254,280	\$45,113,920

*Analysis produced using IMPLAN economic development software, Jan 2024*

KU Innovation Park Facilities			
Facility	Location	Building SF	Description
KU Innovation Park Main	KU’s West Campus	51,400	Office and lab space situated near several prominent KU research buildings.
KU Innovation Park Phase III	KU’s West Campus	66,000	Highly customized office and wet lab space for established companies with specific facility requirements.
KU Innovation Park West	15 <sup>th</sup> Street and Wakarusa	17,500	Suited for incubator graduates, tenants with unique space requirements, and companies seeking GMP-ready space.

*Source: Kansas University Innovation Park, Jan 2023*



## 7 – Additional Support Programs

### **The Chamber & Economic Development Corporation**

The EDC's economic development program is intentionally multi-faceted. Produced in collaboration with its strategic partners, the EDC designed to serve a variety of community constituents and to impact economic growth on several fronts. The EDC endeavors to recruit, grow and retain companies to and within the broader community to produce jobs, expand the tax base, and ensure economic prosperity for the citizens of Lawrence and Douglas County.



#### **Job Creation and Economic Prosperity**

The Chamber and EDC generated and/or worked over 40 recruitment/expansion project leads over the course of 2023. The majority of the recruitment project opportunities came via our regional economic development partners, the Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC) and the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), while others came directly from the business community or Chamber generated contacts.

The Chamber/EDC continues to increase its connection and outreach to local and small businesses, including the creation of the Small Business Series in response to conversations with local businesses about their needs, interests, and opportunities. These quarterly gatherings will both provide businesses timely and relevant information.

#### **Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

In FY 2023, two E-Community loans were funded for \$28,200 and \$31,500 respectively, for a total of \$59,700. Loans of various kinds through NetWork Kansas continue to support local businesses, new and established.

Two woman-owned businesses in Lawrence were referred to our partners in the Douglas County E-Community, whose Financial Review Board is authorized to review and approve GROWKS loans. They received \$62,500 and \$100,000 in matching funds to support their growing businesses in Lawrence.

In June 2023, the Chamber co-sponsored EMPOWER Minority Entrepreneur Grant Pitch Competition, with funding from NetWork Kansas and co-sponsored with KU Innovation Park and Black:30. Fifteen businesses owners/entrepreneurs pitched their ideas to a panel of three BIPOC judges who scored each on their merits. Ultimately three prizes were provided for a total of \$15,000 to support their businesses.

#### **Workforce and Talent Development**

The Chamber continued its support for the Tech Guild throughout 2023, sponsoring regular monthly meetings, increasingly co-hosted by local tech companies themselves. Energy has grown throughout the year so that smaller groups of 10-15 people from the Guild would meet in between the larger meetings of 40-60 attendees. The support and growth of the Tech Guild's efforts and initiatives has increased to the extent that they are now planning the First Annual Lawrence Tech Conference on Friday, April 5, 2024 at KU Innovation Park.



# 7 – Additional Support Programs

## **ASBDC-Kansas** **(Small Business Development Center)**



The KU Small Business Development Center is one of 11 Centers in Kansas and one of approximately 1,100 Centers in the America’s SBDC network. The Center provides free and confidential advising services to new and existing small businesses. Staffed by professionals who are well versed in the topic areas of value to small businesses including strategic planning, market research, financial analysis and more, The KU SBDC focuses on providing services for business planning, access to capital, marketplace/industry analysis, marketing, and financial benchmarking and more. The KU SBDC also pairs MBA candidates at the University of Kansas with local small businesses for specific project engagements.



In 2023, the KU Small Business Development Center provided nearly 2000 hours of one-to-one consulting and over 500 hours of other community engagement. As an SBA Resource Partner, in 2023 the Center was actively involved in providing support and information to businesses seeking resources to start or grow their business especially those recovering from the pandemic. While the KU SBDC provides services throughout a six-county area, approximately eighty-five percent (85%) of measured activity takes place locally in Lawrence.

As part of the cooperative model, economic impact was previously measured annually by The Docking Institute in cooperation with the Kansas Small Business Development Center. The Kansas Small Business Development Center is currently exploring new avenues for tracking impact. Results are preliminary estimations captured using our current Customer Relationship Management system.

<b>2023 KU-KSBDC Economic Impact</b>	
Total client companies	≈400
Reported starting business	≈40
New access to capital	≈\$10,000,000
Est. Jobs impact	778

*Source: Neoserra, Fort Hays State University*

## 7 – Additional Support Programs

### **Dwayne Peaslee Technical Training Center (Peaslee Tech)**



Peaslee Tech was established in 2015 by a consortium of partners, including the EDC of Lawrence, the City of Lawrence, Douglas County, the Chamber of Commerce, local industries, and private donors. Peaslee Tech's mission is to grow a workforce, rich with technically skilled individuals, within the Lawrence and Douglas County communities.

Since its opening, the center has also come to be recognized as the largest provider of apprenticeship programs in the State of Kansas.

#### **Programs and Course Offerings**

As of 2023, the center now offers 27 career training preparation programs. Peaslee Tech offers programs and courses to support several sectors, including Transportation, Building Trades, Skilled Trades, and Healthcare. In 2023, Peaslee had 119 new apprentices added, including those with Apple Electric, Douglas County, Westerhouse Heating & Cooling, Blue Duck Plumbing, Post Holdings, Berry Global, and many more. Peaslee has added 6 new apprenticeship programs that have been approved by the KAC in 2023.

Peaslee Tech offers custom courses in a wide variety of areas, and has included Supervision for Front Line Managers, Accountability, Hydraulics, Electric Motor Drives, Programmable Logic Control, and Environmental Health & Safety. These professional development, short-course offerings are based on industry's expressed needs.

In 2023, the center had 2,900 enrollments and saw an exceptional completion rate.

#### **Expansions and New Developments**

Peaslee Tech makes extensive outreach to create opportunities for underrepresented populations. The Peaslee Tech's Raise Income Security & Equity Program (RISE) has served more than 200 participants over the last three years by training them for livable wage careers.

THE CRUNCH has served over 78 different local companies, individuals, and non-profits in 2023. Here are just a few companies served: Price Excavating, Freedom Excavating, Lawrence Tree Company, JB Pearl, Next Level Utilities, Atronic Alarms, Thomas Heating & Cooling, MWM Inc., She Digs It, Buckley Powder, Kanwaka Township, Full Nelson Inc., Transport 1, Colt Energy, JAG Excavating, City of Tonganoxie, Health Department, Standard Beverage, Haag Oil Company and many more.

## 7 – Additional Support Programs

### **Douglas County CORE**



Since 2020, Douglas County CORE has been working to strengthen the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. Alongside partner organizations, this entrepreneur-led initiative has been:

- Connecting ecosystem constituents and elevating the collective ecosystem strategy, expectations and acumen,
- Creating content, hosting events and mentoring aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs,
- Cultivating growth in established businesses, and
- Celebrating successes throughout the ecosystem.

Douglas County CORE is turning its attention to pipeline development. They aim to expand the volume of work with two groups – 1) those who wish to establish or grow a business, and 2) those who have direct entrepreneurial experience and want to give back.

Douglas County CORE participated in or lead 50+ meetings and community events to enable the following outcomes:

- Build partnerships among Entrepreneur Service Organizations
- Facilitate entrepreneur help sessions
- One-on-one and group training sessions for entrepreneurs
- Helped the City of Lawrence with Equitable Entrepreneurship efforts with the National League of Cities
- Participated in the DCCF Giving for Good Campaign

In Q4 2023 Facebook engagement has enjoyed a 1200% increase in reach and 42% increase in page visits, the new website was visited by 1,401 new users, and the LinkedIn page saw a 183% increase in unique visitors.

12 businesses participated in the pitch competition and numerous other aspiring entrepreneurs were mentored throughout the year. At least one business has started, but many others have moved along the development continuum because of our efforts. CORE is looking to raising funds in 2024 to hire staff who can reach out to registered entrepreneurs to track their progress and provide ongoing support at least every other month.