



# **DIRECTION**

## **2025**

**A Three Year Economic Development Plan for  
the Ponca City Development Authority (PCDA)**

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## **DIRECTION 2025**

Why do we do what we do?

It is imperative that economic development organizations such as the Ponca City Development Authority (PCDA) have a clear view of what it is we are trying to accomplish. This plan, “Direction 2025” has been developed for this reason. It is a road map of what PCDA intends to work on over the next three year period. It is intended to be a comprehensive plan of work that goes far beyond just industrial recruitment (which is included) to strengthen and build the local economy.

The plan begins with overall organizational values and goals. The values are included in this plan as they serve an important function in the design and implementation of programs. The goals are the aspirations of PCDA, as decided upon by the duly appointed Board of Trustees. The goals answer the question above of why Ponca City is engaged in economic development in the first place. These goals are fundamental drivers of every objective, strategy and action step which follows.

It is vital to recognize that economic development does not occur in a vacuum. Economic development is only as good as the community itself. This plan seeks to address those items that are within PCDA authority to address. In many respects, it is a continuation of successful programs. It is also an opportunity for PCDA to head in new and different directions if the board so desires.

In its best form, it represents a consensus of the PCDA Board of Trustees on the path forward for economic development. In a post workforce-surplus world, which has more available jobs than people, this is likely to be as challenging as it is evolving. The important point is to make sure that leadership of PCDA agrees on the goals of the plan as the organization’s “North Star,” the aspirational success this plan seeks to achieve.

The next page, page two, serves as the “Executive Summary” of the plan. While specific strategies and action steps are where the proverbial rubber meets the road, they are intended to accomplish the goals and objectives. The values, goals and objectives represent the true direction of PCDA’s economic development programs and answer the initial question of “why we do what we do.”

Overall, the plan includes eight sections:

1. PCDA mission statement
2. Organizational Values
3. Organizational Goals
4. Plan Objectives
5. Ponca City’s Unique Value Proposition
6. Community General Attributes
7. Community Needs
8. Direction 2025 Strategies and Action Steps

PCDA is a very valuable resource that the community can and should use to grow the local economy. Developing a consensus of the organization’s leadership on the selected direction is of fundamental importance. That consensus, and the specific work planned, is the subject of this plan. It was designed with input from the PCDA Board and other community leaders and can be changed with a majority vote of the board. It is guided by the PCDA Trust and is focused by past and present board policy direction. Simply put, it is the statement of the PCDA Board of Trustees which says, “We’re going to go this way.”

It is, therefore, the “Direction” of Ponca City’s economic development programs through 2025.

## **1. Mission Statement**

“The mission of the Ponca City Development Authority is to accelerate economic growth in Ponca City, Oklahoma, through the support and development of primary enterprises.”

## **2. Organizational Values**

1. Maintain fiscal responsibility as a primary tenant.
2. Implement programs with tangible, measurable and relevant outcomes.
3. Recognize the comparable value of existing and new primary jobs.
4. Build and Maintain effective partnerships.

## **3. Organizational Goals**

1. Expanding job creation in primary enterprises.
2. Rising personal income through enhancing existing employment.
3. Diversification of primary employment in diverse industries and sectors.
4. Developing job opportunities in emerging industries.
5. Attracting investment to Ponca City.
6. Attracting more population to the community to support the growth of the local economy.
7. Maintaining stability and sustainability for PCDA.

## **4. Direction 2025 Objectives**

(To achieve the above goals)

1. Support primary industry in Ponca City through BR&E programs that facilitate job growth, wage growth, new investment, technological advancement and new product development.
2. Maximize the effectiveness of the current workforce by connecting people and companies to fill available jobs, and engage with the future workforce to develop their interest in Ponca City careers.
3. Grow and develop small businesses and entrepreneurs in order to launch new economic engines, diversify the local economy and provide expanding employment opportunities;
4. Attract new primary industry to Ponca City that expands the local economy and attracts new workers into the community;
5. Utilize the City Central building as a financially sustainable resource to grow the business services cluster and facilitate new business growth;
6. Position Ponca City as a community of the future through assertive marketing initiatives that clearly promote the opportunities here for businesses and individuals and build public support for economic development programs within the community;
7. Maintain a strong, effective, proactive economic development organization that continues to foster economic growth and meets and meets the economic challenges of the future.

## **5. PONCA CITY'S UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITIONS**

*The following are those attributes which are unique or relatively unique to Ponca City which should form the basis for economic growth:*

- Support of Ponca City-based primary industry is PCDA's top economic development priority.
- The community workforce has significant technical experience and technical training capabilities.
- The Ponca City economy is built upon a robust, advanced manufacturing cluster.
- The area is home to strong, active tribal nations which offer potential partnership opportunities.

## **6. GENERAL ATTRIBUTES**

*The following are assets which are not unique to Ponca City but are nevertheless uncommon and therefore represent attributes which can be used to grow the local economy:*

- Local economic development support and assets through PCDA and the dedicated economic development sales tax;
- The community offers a balanced life with minimum commute times, diverse employment opportunities and *most* city-level amenities;
- Ponca City serves as the regional hub for health care, education, retail and business services;
- The community has excellent broadband infrastructure and connectivity;
- Ponca City's location in the middle of Mid Continent Location;
- The cost of living in Ponca City is well below the national average;
- The City of Ponca City operates modern public utilities that are responsive and adaptable;
- Ponca City offers a user-friendly local government that works with companies.

## **7. CHALLENGES/NEEDS (from the April 14, 2022 PCDA board retreat)**

- The population is not growing in spite of increased employment opportunities;
- The lack of a workforce is limiting local economic growth;
- Lack of new housing is restricting population growth;
- Lack of childcare has a significant impact on the retention and availability of the workforce;
- There is a lack of suitable industrial buildings and more intense use industrial sites;
- Available built industrial space is needed to recruit and grow companies;
- The community should continue to shift away from oil industry dependency.
- Various training programs (i.e. CNC and automated processes) needed to help economic growth;
- Population retention and growth is further impacted by a lack of things to do in the community;
- Younger generations and forward thinking leaders should be encouraged;
- Stronger continuity (bonds) should be formed among different community groups and members;
- There has been a drain of wealth and higher paying jobs from the community in recent years;
- There is a need for intra-city transportation, notably rail service;

## **SECTION 8: OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS**

**Objective #1-Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E): Support primary industry in Ponca City through BR&E programs that facilitate job growth, wage growth, new investment, technological advancement and new product development.**

**Strategies**

- a. Know –** *Maintain an ongoing relationship with Ponca City primary employers to understand their business, their challenges, their opportunities, the products or services they provide or could provide.*

Action 1.A.1: Maintain regular, consistent contact with primary industries through regular company visits by staff.

Action 1.A.2: Maintain and update the industry data base.

Action 1.A.3: Maintain and update the local business resource directory.

Action 1.A.4: Maintain a resiliency plan which includes but is not limited to maintaining contact with local industries during extraordinary events and providing timely, accurate information to primary employers during that event.

- b. Build –** *Facilitate or lead projects that enhance local primary employment facilities.*

Action 1.B.1: Complete Cookshack Expansion.

Action 1.B.2: Continue Lighten the Load and/or similar programs that enhance the value of local industrial facilities.

Action 1.B.3: Identify available facility needs (i.e. warehouse needs) and seek to solve those challenges.

- c. Show –** *Serve as a marketing facilitator for local primary employers and assist them in developing new business opportunities.*

Action 1.C.1: Continue to the trade show brigade program and expand as opportunities are identified to promote new contracts and further diversification of the local economy.

Action 1.C.2: Continue to fund the Plan Room partnership with Pioneer Tech.

- d. Grow -** *Serve as a resource, where possible and appropriate, to help local industries grow and evolve to address changing market needs that may promote job and wage growth.*

Action 1.D.1: – Conduct a workforce study that includes post census data acquisition and surveys to inform local employers of workforce dynamics. This study will also be used in PCDA’s recruitment efforts.

Action 1.D.2: Actively promote the ICAP program to local industries.

Action 1.D.3: Develop the RAIN program (Robotics, Automation, Artificial Intelligence) to facilitate the growth of emerging technologies in local industries to enhance their employment opportunities and sustainability.

Action 1.D.4: Pursue the BCAP program to assist industry in addressing the child care needs of their employees.

Action 1.D.4: Investigate promising new industry connections to further diversity the local economy (example: the plastics and aviation industries).

**Objective #2-Workforce Development: Maximize the effectiveness of the current workforce by connecting people and companies to fill available jobs, and engage with the future workforce to develop their interest in Ponca City careers.**

## Strategies

### a. **Connect** – *Help employers fill open jobs.*

Action 2.A.1: Post appropriate, timely jobs to the Ponca Works website.

Action 2.A.2: Assist local industry with employment related issues such as job descriptions, mock interviews and other techniques that assist them in providing employment opportunities that improve the lives of local residents.

Action 2.A.3: Utilize appropriate social networks to disseminate the information about available job opportunities and connect potential candidates with companies.

### b. **Tomorrow** – *Build a strong, sustainable pipeline for a future workforce.*

Action 2.B.1: - Develop partnerships with local education that enable programs designed to prepare and inform students for local future career opportunities.

Action 2.B.2: - Develop internship programs for students in local businesses.

Action 2.B.3: - Develop hands-on apprenticeship programs for students in local primary industries.

Action 2.B.4: Continue the Ambassador program to enhance awareness of local employment opportunities among students.

Action 2.B.5: Continue the Girl Power camp each year to build awareness of future local career opportunities in non-traditional occupations that are facing workforce shortages.

### c. **Welcome** – *Develop workforce attraction programs to grow the local economy*

Action 2.C.1: Host and/or sponsor events that promote workforce attraction and retention including events within underrepresented populations.

Action 2.C.2: Operate a pilot program to attract remote workers through an approach which utilizes non-financial incentives.

Action 2.C.3: Investigate methods to attract workforce to the community to fill open positions.

### d. **Engage** – *Build partnerships with primary employers to enhance workforce development.*

Action 2.D.1: Actively encourage industry leadership and/or participation in all aspects of workforce development.

Action 2.D.2: Investigate the feasibility of running a manufacturing leadership program to promote community connections and grow the next generation of local industry leadership in the industry.

Action 2.D.3: Support and facilitate, where appropriate, industry training programs such as “Weld to Work” to attract new people into the local workforce.

**Objective #3-Small Business Development: Grow and develop small businesses and entrepreneurs in order to launch new economic engines, diversify the local economy and provide expanding employment opportunities.**

## Strategies

**a. Support – *Serve as a resource for small business to grow and build resiliency.***

Action 3.A.1: Build and maintain a database of small business in Ponca City with appropriate, up to date contact information.

Action 3.A.2: Identify resources as appropriate (i.e. grants, loans or other programs) to assist in small business growth, development and resiliency.

**b. Launch – *Develop programs that expand and promote the growth of new small businesses In Ponca City.***

Action 3.B.1: Promote the business incubator at Pioneer Tech, connecting newly identified entrepreneurs as appropriate.

Action 3.B.2: Continue the Small Business Pitch-off events up to twice each year to promote the growth of emerging businesses.

Action 3.B.3: Provide technical assistance to emerging small businesses and connect them to available community resources.

**c. Accelerate – *Develop programs and/or resources to facilitate the growth and sustainability of newly emerged small businesses.***

Action 3.C.1: Host networking which connect small businesses and/or entrepreneurs with potential business partners and/or customers, as well as to provide information on subjects of interest to young businesses.

Action 3.C.2: Conduct a second stage pitch-off for existing companies with growth potential.

Action 3.C.3: Relaunch new programming for the Link and/or City Central tenants that expand their ability to grow their businesses.

Action 3.C.4: Promote programs such as the Plan Room and OBAN to encourage young businesses to identify new business opportunities.

**d. Extend – *Host and support community engagement events that promote small business growth as well as growth of businesses in underserved markets.***

Action 3.D.1: As appropriate, re-launch the Inventor’s Network with a goal to make the initiative self managing within three year.

Action 3.D.2: Investigate and support, as appropriate, engagement events that focus on underserved populations and promote small business growth within those communities.

**Goal #4-Recruitment: Attract new primary industry to Ponca City that expands the local economy and attracts new workers into the community;**

**Strategies**

**a. Facility – *Strive to have at least one industrial building available at all times in order to attract new companies and support the growth of existing Ponca City employers.***

Action 4.A.1: Fund and build spec building “Duke.”

Action 4.A.2: Maintain inventory of available industrial buildings and land (a property database) on the PCDA website.

Action 4.A.3: Aggressively market any industrial facility that becomes available, seeking to keep the property on the tax roles and providing jobs for area residents.

**b. Land – *Increase the inventory of available shovel ready land in Ponca City.***

Action 4.B.1: Maintain an inventory of all available industrial land in the area.

Action 4.B.2: Identify and develop an available I-2 parcel of at least 20 acres.

Action 4.B.3: Develop all PCDA-owned property to be “shovel ready.”

**c. Target – Identify appropriate industry targets for the area based upon existing industry clusters, infrastructure, training, supply chains and workforce.**

Action 4.C.1: As a starting point in securing tenants for the spec building as well as the former Smith building, conduct regular outreach to companies engaged in the steel and metal fabrication, food processing, plastics and automotive industries.

Action 4.C.2: Utilize workforce study (Goal #1, Objective E) to align available workforce with potential target industries. Target companies in industries for whom an available workforce has been identified by the workforce study.

Action 4.C.3: Target companies in new industries based upon specific justification. This includes an MRO for the hangar as well as industries that may be emerging elsewhere in the region.

**d. Outreach – *Market Ponca City facilities, land and available workforce to target industries.***

Action 4.D.1: Stay connected with the Department of Commerce and make sure they are aware of available Ponca City facilities and land.

Action 4.D.2: Continue ongoing outreach program to at least 60 new companies and 36 site consultants each year based upon targets.

Action 4.D.3: Market privately-owned industrial land and buildings side by side with PCDA-owned properties.

**e. Human - *Promote the general economic welfare as well as the protection and growth of jobs and wages through the non-financial encouragement of housing.***

Action 4.E.1: Identify suitable parcels for housing development.

Action 4.E.2: Document potential government housing programs.

Action 4.E.3: Work with local industry and civic leaders to identify best practices in rural housing development.

Action 4.E.4: Include housing developers in outreach programs.

**Goal #5 - City Central: Utilize the City Central building as a financially sustainable resource to grow the business services cluster and facilitate new business growth;**

**Strategies**

**a. Offices - Lease office suites in the building to business services tenants.**

Action 5.A.1: Seek to identify external companies that could be attracted to Ponca City with the availability of Class A office space.



Action 5.A.2: Strive to achieve occupancy of 90% of the office suites, on average, in order to have sustainable revenue to operate the facility.

Action 5.A.3: Make regular incremental adjustments of lease and rental rates that keep pace with market increase to ensure that the facility is financially sustainable.

- b. **Summit** - Build conference and social rentals in the Summit to increase the revenue to sustain City Central as a financially viable facility.

Action 5.B.1: Research and develop a list of targets (potential users).

Action 5.B.2: Design marketing materials and provide them to the targets (above).

Action 5.B.3: Research and utilize appropriate, identified regional advertising to promote the use of the facility.

- c. **Link** - Operate a Co-Work Center in the Link that builds entrepreneurship in the community.

Action 5.C.1: Build awareness of the facility with small businesses already working with PCDA.

Action 5.C.2: Advertise the facility in appropriate digital and print media

Action 5.C.3: Investigate the potential to build out more private offices.

- d. **Market** - Market City Central for the purpose of attracting tenants, conference center customers and local entrepreneurs.

Action 5.D.1: Keep up-to-date inventory of available office space information on the PCDA/City Central website.

Action 5.D.2: Develop and utilize marketing materials and digital outreach and target external businesses and/or leads that require office space.

- e. **Capital** - Improve and maintain City Central as an anchor to build the business services cluster in the community and to enhance the downtown area.

Action 5.E.1: Complete rehabilitation of empty suites and prepare them for rental.

Action 5.E.2: Replace all three elevators.

Action 5.E.3: Refresh (replace) exterior banners.

Action 5.E.4: Acquire, through trade, the South parking lot and install lighting.

Action 5.E.5: Complete Project Clean Breeze to enhance public safety.

**Objective #6-Marketing: Position Ponca City as a community of the future through assertive marketing initiatives that clearly promote the opportunities here for businesses and individuals and builds public support for economic development programs within the community.**

### **Strategies**

- a. **Message** - *Develop a value proposition for Ponca City that is forward looking and define the audience for whom marketing efforts are intended.*

Action 6.A.1: Clearly articulate “Why select Ponca City” for target industries, as well as for individuals considering employment opportunities in the community.

**b. Digital - *Maintain a fresh, properly formatted, easily accessible digital presence which promotes Ponca City’s position as a digitally connected community.***

Action 6.B.1: Maintain a modern website with appropriate economic development, consistent with industry standards that is easy to find and navigate.

Action 6.B.2: Maintain a social media presence through regular posts on popular sites with messages that are relevant to PCDA’s mission.

Action 6.B.3: Develop relevant economic reports, (i.e. the workforce study) and make sure that information is accessible on the PCDA website.

Action 6.B.4: Develop videos and similar media highlighting Ponca City, local companies and available facilities and make it easy to find on the PCDA website.

Action 6.B.5: Utilize available methods to promote PCDA social media through advertising, boosts, etc. as annual budgets provide.

Action 6.B.6: Utilize commercially available tools to measure the effectiveness of digital media and annually adjust the use to pursue effectiveness.

**c. Partner - *Collaborate with other Ponca City organizations and agencies to promote positive image and value proposition to help grow the local economy.***

Action 6.C.1: Work with organizations and agencies on joint marketing campaigns as the opportunity and budget allow.

Action 6.C.2: Support local organizations involved in placemaking projects to build a strong community spirit that enhances workforce retention and attraction.

Action 6.C.3: Participate in relevant state organizations that promote economic development and/or workforce development.

Action 6.C.4: Support initiatives that seek to boost underrepresented populations in order to support workforce attraction within those demographics.

**d. Local - *Present economic and PCDA information to the general public on an ongoing basis to facilitate economic knowledge and build support for economic development programs.***

Action 6.D.1: Continue to digitally publish the “Weekly Update” every week.

Action 6.D.2: Utilize local media (radio and press) to report on PCDA activities, primary employer recognition and other relevant information.

Action 6.D.3: Provide PCDA speakers at local service groups and similar organizations to build a better understanding of economic development.

**Objective #7-Organization: Maintain a strong, effective, proactive economic development organization that continues to foster economic growth and meets and meets the economic challenges of the future.**

**a. Fiscal - *Manage the dedicated economic development sales tax in a manner that is consistent with the organization’s trust indenture, board direction, state law and the spirit of the public’s support of PCDA.***

Action 7.A.1: Maintain board approved financial policies that guide the management of the public’s money.

Action 7.A.2: Provide financial reports to the PCDA board every month.

Action 7.A.3: Contract for an independent audit of PCDA finances annually.

**b. Accountable - *Make sure that all economic development agreements provide the public benefit intended and report that benefit to the public on a regular basis.***

Action 7.B.1: Utilize economic impact models and incentive guidelines in the preparation and board deliberation of any incentives agreements.

Action 7.B.2: Monitor and track each incentive agreement.

Action 7.B.3: Develop an annual public report on PCDA actions which include financial reporting, project work, and deliverables.

Action 7.B.4: Annually update a “Return on Investment” report that compares confirmed jobs and wages and the impact to the local economy.

**c. Capable - *Employ certified industry professionals with the proper tools and continuing education needed to keep PCDA respected and functioning at a high level.***

Action 7.C.1: Budget and support professional education for staff people in including obtaining industry certifications in relevant fields.

Action 7.C.2: Maintain organizational accreditation through the IEDC.

Action 7.C.3: Maintain up to telecommunications, office equipment and an office environment that encourages collaboration and is welcoming to prospects.

**d. Research - *PCDA shall serve as a trusted, reliable source of economic information.***

Action 7.D.1: Maintain appropriate data subscriptions with recognized sources that provide access to current internal and external economic data.

Action 7.D.2: Conduct COLI cost of living surveys on a quarterly basis.

Action 7.D.3: Obtain primary data, as needed from local partners.

Action 7.D.4: Make research on non-confidential matters publicly accessible.

**e. Responsive - *PCDA will be prepared in the event of disasters or other events.***

Action 7.E.1: Maintain and update emergency contacts and resource guide.

Action 7.E.2: Update and improve the disaster response plan.

Action 7.E.3: In an emergency, PCDA will verify and confirm any information so that business can rely upon the information they receive.