



Small Business Entrepreneurship & Workforce Development Task Force

In the rural region of One Shawnee, small businesses are the economic lifeblood of our communities. They provide a solid tax base, employ our people, often serve as meeting spaces for community members, and donate to our schools and charities. A region with thriving small businesses is a healthy one with low unemployment, opportunity for working families, and bustling main streets with filled storefronts.

The Issue Identified by Community Input

From community input, it was determined that pursuing an economic development approach based solely on attracting large manufacturers would not be successful at this time given current limitations. With the need for job opportunities in a high-poverty and high-unemployment area still there, a few questions remained. How can we better support our current small businesses, spur entrepreneurship for the creation of new small businesses, and better connect and train our people for the good, middle-class jobs that are available in the region or just outside of it?

Purpose

The Small Business Entrepreneurship & Workforce Development Task Force is charged with carrying out the following objectives:

- Provide recommendations for supporting existing small businesses in the region.
- Provide recommendations for spurring entrepreneurship in the region by addressing the leading barriers to new business formation that currently exist.
- Create a plan and method for evaluating the current workforce development infrastructure within the region with a goal of fostering collaboration, new partnerships and streamlining education-to-career pipelines.