JOPLIN AREA CHAMBER / MOKAN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE
Q2 2024

The City of Joplin's investment enables the Joplin Area Chamber and MOKAN to increase capacity regarding promotion of the city as a place to do business, as well as to live, work and raise a family to potential workers. It also expands opportunities for more access to state and national resources, leaders and markets through conferences, mission trips with the Missouri Partnership and advertising mediums. Activities carried out in the previous quarter are as follows:

BUSINESS ATTRACTION:

RFI's

- 8 received since previous report (13 in Q1)
- 2 submitted on behalf of City of Joplin (1 in Q1)
- 4 submitted for MOKAN region (2 in Q1)

Projects Submitted

Project Pharoh

- Construction materials manufacturer looking to build a new facility
- 326 new full-time jobs
- $455 million of capital investment over two initial project phases
- 80-150 contiguous acres
- Rail is a requirement - submitted Wildwood site

Project Hedron

- Semiconductor manufacturer
- 74 jobs
- Capital investment of $40 million
- 8 acres or 80,000sf building
- Must be within 10 miles of Interstate Highway and 50 miles of a passenger airport
- Submitted Crossroads site

Active Projects

Project Buffalo

- Initial phase would include the addition of approximately 80 to 90 employees with high potential for future growth
- Approximate $50,000 avg wage
- $15 million capital investment
- The prospect company has agreed to a purchase price of the 55-acre MDED Certified Site at Crossroads in principal – the purchase agreement is still being finalized

Project Hydra (Project Missouri)

- Data center operation
- 100+ employees
- 35 acres
- $50,000 avg wage
- $60 million capital investment
- Wildwood Ranch site being considered
- Electric rates are critical to this project and prospect has made an application with Liberty and is waiting on a cost quote per usage

Project Key (Expansion)

- Existing Joplin company
- 110 new jobs
- $5 million capital investment
- Announcement pending

Project Atlas (Expansion)

- Manufacturer located outside Joplin but within the region
- 90 new jobs
- $42,000 avg wage
- $35 million capital investment

MARKETING & PROMOTIONS OF JOPLIN ACTIVITIES:

January 1 – March 31:

- **MOKAN Website**
  - We are currently going through the process of significantly upgrading the MOKAN website
    - a full audit has been completed and we are finalizing the site map

- **Choose Joplin Website**
  - 1,557 Total Active Users (980 in Q1)
  - 1,963 Sessions (1,392 in Q1)
  - 17,203 Event Count (this is a user taking action on the site; clicking or scrolling)
  - Top 3 pages viewed:
    - Home page
    - Cost of Living Calculator
    - Parks & Trails

- **LinkedIn**
    - 31 Posts
    - 6,796 Views
    - 13 Shares
    - 606 Total Followers
    - 58 New Followers added since Dec 31

- **Marketing Content**
  - **We have created a new 1-page promotional brochure**
  - *Included at the end of this report*

- **Livability.com**
  - Livability is a company that specializes in attracting workforce and talent who are actively looking to relocate via their website www.livability.com by creating content for communities that highlight the best of what they have to offer and then publish and promote articles digitally
  - For the past several months these written pieces have been in the creation phase and are scheduled to begin disbursement the week of May 20
  - Titles of articles:
    - Joplin is Perfect for Families
    - I came to Joplin for college and stayed for my career
    - Why I moved Back to Joplin to Plant Roots
    - Why I built my business in Joplin and you should too
    - How I got connected to my community
    - 5 Things to do after work in Joplin
    - Must-attend events and festivals in and around Joplin
    - Joplin: Live Like a Local
    - Discover Joplin neighborhoods
    - The arts are flourishing in Joplin

- **Billboards**
  - We continue to promote positive vibes and awareness of the Joplin community to passers-by on I-44 with 2 billboard ads along I-44; facing opposite directions to capture both sides of traffic
  - One ad featured The Wall Street Journal ranking as the #2 best place for remote workers
  - A second ad featured the 4 college institutions we have in Joplin
  - *Images are included at the end of this report*

EVENTS ATTENDED:

- **Hawthorn Foundation Quarterly Meeting** **Jefferson City – February 23**
  - Amy Kauffman and Travis Stephens each attended
  - Purpose is to update the partners of the previous quarter's state-wide business attraction efforts by the Hawthorn Foundation and the Missouri Partnership
  - The next quarterly meeting will take place in Springfield in June

- **Foreign Direct Investment Luncheon** **Chicago IL – April 16-17**
    - Amy Kauffman attended
    - Hosted by Missouri Partnership
    - Purpose is to establish relationships with representatives from the international business community and provide an overview of the SWMO region
    - 18 countries were represented at the luncheon and had one-on-one meetings with Canada, Germany, the UK and Australia

- **Peer Cities Conference** **Ocala FL – March 4-6**
    - Conducted by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives
    - Participants from communities of similar size as Joplin attend to discuss challenges and best practices on a wide range of topics from community and economic development to internal systems and processes
    - Some other communities represented included Ashville NC, Macon GA, Scranton PA, Fort Wayne IN and Spartanburg SC

- **Heartland Economic Development Course** **Blue Springs MO – April 22-26**
    - Kai Hamilton spent a full week in Blue Springs MO attending the course
    - The course offers intensive training in the basic concepts, information, methods and strategies of local economic development
    - The course is conducted through the University of Northern Iowa and is open to professionals from IA, NE, MO and KS
    - This is an excellent opportunity for Kai to jump start his knowledge and professional development in the economic development industry

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEW BUSINESS START-UP ACTIVITIES:

Incubator Businesses

- Expanded
    - Power Engineers continues to be in growth mode and is on schedule to add two additional full-time jobs by 4QT, this year. Currently the company supports eight full-time jobs.
    - KSS Cleaning continues to grow, adding eight full-time jobs since starting with two full-time positions in 3QT, 2023.

- New Tenants
    - Break Point Sales secured one private space for four weeks to conduct sales training
    - AOE Bookkeeping, LLC, a new startup, has created one full-time position

- Graduates
    - Stellar Financial / Black Eagle Design graduated in April 2024 due to business expansion and created one full time job within the past year

- Startup Consultations
    - Ongoing consultation is available to all NIC members as needed - regular consultation taking place with AOE Bookkeeping
    - One to two consultations take place on average per week (Chamber membership is not required for consultations)

Innovate SWMO Summary:

- The JACC has been invited to be a partner in the Southern Missouri Innovation Network. This is a collaborative network of businesses and organizations across the 47 most southern counties of the state who work together to connect workers to training, entrepreneurs and founders to resources, and employers to talent—all to drive regional growth and prosperity. Innovate SoMo transforms communities by unlocking the full potential of entrepreneurship and innovation. This collaboration allows us to leverage resources and expand options for new startups and entrepreneurs.

- This initiative kicked off in Q1 of 2024; additional details regarding implementation and action steps will be included in future reports

Advocacy:

- It's important to educate our area high school and college students about the services offered by the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce, the Joseph Newman Innovation Center, and the entire entrepreneurial ecosystem. We work closely with MOSOCaps, JAG, FBLA, MSSU School of Business, SBDC, and Crowder College.

- In April, Doug Hunt was able to coordinate with the MSSU television show, Newsmakers, to feature Ms. Sara Newman, wife of the late Joseph Newman to appear as a guest on that show. She detailed the entrepreneurial history of the Newman family, the Joseph Newman Innovation Center, and the legacy of Joe Newman as an innovator. Here is a link to that broadcast: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxpBDze2o4w&t=1267s

EXPANSION & RETENTION

- **Business Retention & Expansion Visits**

    - In Q2 2024 we conducted 2 BRE visits
        - Ownes Corning and General Mills
    - In Q4 of 2023 we conducted a total of 33 BRE Visits
    - Kai Hamilton was hired in mid-February to fill the Workforce Development role and he did not begin meeting with companies until the very end of Q1. We had hired an independent contractor to assist with BRE visits in Q4 of 2023 to fill the void temporarily.

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Tour of EaglePicher with Congressman Eric Burlison**
  - Amy Kauffman and Travis Stephens participated in the industry tour with the Congressman on March 15

- **JIDA**
  - The JIDA continues to explore properties to acquire for future industrial site development opportunities
  - The JIDA is currently in negotiations to sell the 55 acre site at Crossroads Industrial Park to a large employer (Project Buffalo)

- **JRAHH (Joplin Regional Alliance)**
  - The final TEConomy strategic plan was presented to City Council on March 11
  - A board of directors has been created that will consist of the Presidents of each of the following entities; MSSU, Crowder, KCU, Mercy, Freeman and the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce
  - Immediate next steps are to raise funds to allow for 5 years of operations and to hire a director (the 1st of two positions) to begin implementation of the strategies identified in the plan

- **ATTC**
  - At the previous quarter update it was reported that Crowder College will be vacating the ATTC after purchasing a 70-acre site across from the Menard's development
  - Due to longer than expected modifications to the existing site, Crowder has extended their lease and will occupy the ATTC through the end of June, 2025

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy meetings (CEDS)**
  - Hosted by the Harry S. Truman Coordinating Council
  - Held in Barton, Jasper, Newton and McDonald Counties
  - Purpose is to provide community input in order to develop an economic development plan for each county that will aid in future strategy and funding opportunities via the EDA and other federal agencies