

**GRAND GATEWAY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
ASSOCIATION**

**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
(CEDS) 2020-2025**

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# **Grand Gateway Economic Development District** **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

## **MISSION**

The principal goal of the district is to improve the quality of life through assistance to public entities and private sector firms to expand, retain and create long-term jobs without adverse impact on the environment.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/OVERVIEW OF CEDS PROCESS**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is based on input from all sectors and representatives of each county of the District. Presently, the CEDS Committee is comprised of the Grand Gateway Board, Grand Gateway Executive Board, Representatives of private and public entities within the Grand Gateway service area, and Employees. The CEDS Advisory Committee has been active since 1999. The towns and cities have ongoing needs assessments for their respective areas. The CEDS is viewed as an on-going and viable process and not as a planning document, per se. A grass root input is provided by CEDS Board Committee members and other sectors of each county of the Grand Gateway District. Staff provides technical assistance and drafts the annual update(s). The Board reviews and recommends refinement as appropriate. The current CEDS update was reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

GGEDA historically administers all state and federal economic and/or community development projects for eligible entities within the seven-county development district. Implementation of such projects is set forth in tandem with consideration for environmental reviews, budget constraints, funding agency requirements, as well as private sector investment. GGEDA has been and continues to plan for EDA Grants for Jay, Inola, Miami, Grove, Pryor Creek, Tulsa Port of Catoosa-Rogers County, South Coffeyville, Nowata County. Concurrently, CEDS Committee is updating CEDS regarding EDA guidelines such as the new GPRA reporting requirements.

GGEDA also has conducted Economic Development SWOT Analysis meetings and Incentives Packaging, in tandem with Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Cherokee Nation, and PSO Electric for South Coffeyville, Nowata County Industrial Authority, Ketchum, Locust Grove, Spavinaw, Dewey, Chelsea, Pryor, Grove, Oologah and Langley to encourage communities to list development sites on the Internet for a presence for site selectors

Additionally, GGEDA Economic Development planning is based on us being recognized by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization to plan for efficient movement of freight and commerce through the multi-modal avenues in tandem with ODOT, Cherokee Nation and Intertribal Council Consortium (nine tribes in Ottawa County). GGEDA has also been an active participant in addressing Workforce Issues through a USDA-SET program amongst and between Cherokee Nation, Delaware County, Adair, Sequoyah County Stakeholders. Other Workforce Board/Economic Development activities include: Northeast Workforce Board, Leadership Training with Cherokee Nation and NORA, Federal Transit Authority regarding RTPO Workforce Development, New Way, New Day Workforce Development Meeting Continuation-Process Mapping.

Southern Delaware Rural Water District was formed with the efforts of GGEDA and Cherokee Nation, is an ongoing collaboration amongst and between Colcord, West Siloam Springs, Kansas, Delaware Rural Water Dist. 11 and Flintridge Rural Water District to consolidate water systems and doubling potable water capacity to build out potential water infrastructure development along Highway 412 from the Arkansas border to and through Delaware county. This water development will be the impetus for development along the Highway 412 Corridor. Grand Gateway EDA is currently pursuing similar collaborations in Washington and Craig Counties.

Regional Development of rural waters systems in Rural Oklahoma is the one of the answers to ever present water scarcity issues.

Grand Gateway EDA Economic Development District is located in the seven most Northeastern counties of Oklahoma with Highway 75 on the West edge and Highway 412 on the South edge. Northern and Eastern boundaries abut Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas. Grand Lake of the Cherokees lies in the heart of the district with a mostly agricultural base in the gently sloping base of the Ozark Mountain uplift. The district's eligibility is based on the Per Capita income of five of our seven-county area. USA average of \$31,177 in 2017 (2013-2017) establishes the 80% parameter: Craig County \$20,666 (66%) ; Delaware County \$22,175 (71%) ; Mayes County \$22,575 (72%) ; Nowata County \$21,491 (69%); Ottawa County \$19,415 (62%). Rogers (96%) and Washington (93%) counties are below the National Per capita income and have census tracks of poverty and Opportunity Zones within them via American Community Survey via QuickFacts data. GGEDA is working within and throughout the region to help create and/or maintain livable wage jobs.

### **SWOT Analysis: An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**

## **I. STRATIGIC DIRECTION/ACTION PLAN: CEDS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**VISION STATEMENT:** The principal vision of the district is to utilize sustainable growth strategies and improve the quality of life through cooperative efforts amongst and between public entities and private sector firms to enlarge the GGEDA service district population while retaining and creating livable wage employment opportunities and supporting a higher quality of life environment.

Grand Gateway identified goals to work on during the period 2020 through 2025. Following is a narrative of steps toward each goal:

### **Goal 1:**

Continue to improve the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy of the Association so that it reflects the needs, sets the strategy of the area, and focuses on the greatest potential for economic growth. Continue to

establish an effective public relations plan and marketing campaign to promote positive image of the EDD and the Association Continue to strengthen planning and management capabilities of the Association to guide the discussion and decision-making of local leaders on economic development activities.

**Objective:**

The Board of Directors reinvigorated the CEDS Committee in 1999. The GGEDA CEDS committee has become a force to be reckoned with the leadership provided by former Legislator Joe Hutchinson. Annually, Congressman Mullin participates to get the feel of the region. This group consists of multi-discipline representatives with varied background, education, experience and expertise. The CEDS Committee names additional people to serve on the committee so that there is adequate representation from each county. EDA staff provides assistance and guidance as needed throughout the process. This procedure continues to date.

**Goal 2:**

Continue activities for promoting the continuous growth and development of recreation/tourism and related services within the district.

**Objective:**

A focus for the district has been the utilization of a tourism strategy for the area. Additionally, direct technical assistance is provided to communities, associations, chambers of commerce, local citizen groups and businesses in developing an expanding tourism industry. Current recreation/tourism projects focus on pedestrian/trail systems in Mayes, Rogers and Delaware counties, fishing tournaments, rock crawling, Route 66 tourism and multiple cultural/historical events based on Native American culture. EDA staff works closely with state legislators in developing and implementing tourism throughout the seven county EDD.

**Goal 3:**

RTPO which stimulates interest and activity in planning and developing transportation systems and network throughout the district.

**Objective:**

The Association continues to operate a seven-county public transit system for Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Ottawa, Rogers, Nowata and Washington Counties. The Transit System coordinates with aging services, private industries and other public interests in order to provide the best services possible in light of funding constraints. The Association actively works with organizations in other counties to promote development of transportation systems. Additionally, the Association supports activities and programs to further improve the transportation network in the district by working with cities, towns and counties on funding for road, street, highway and bridge improvements and working with the Port of Catoosa on waterway requirement issues. The Association actively works with airport authorities throughout the district in order to improve these facilities.

**Goal 4:**

Focus on industrial development activities for expanding existing firms, target attraction efforts toward firms

providing services which are compatible with the needs of the district, highlight development of new basic service industries, and develop government contracting potential.

**Objective:**

The EDA staff of the Association continues to work with the industrial authorities throughout the district; the various economic development authorities in the communities and counties; chambers of commerce; and local business and community leaders in efforts to enhance employment opportunities. The district staff continues to work with the career-tech systems and community colleges, regional universities in the district to improve training programs that will enhance the work force as new or existing employers expand in the area. Multiple contacts are ongoing with local firms. The Association is also actively involved with the Workforce Investment Act Board for the district.

**Goal 5:**

Develop programs and activities necessary for communities to evolve to their greatest extent, thus fostering long-term economic expansion of the local area. RTPO CIP SWOT COVID DISASTER RELIEF and RESILINECY

GIS-CIP community assessment tools have become vital for planning future development. A partnership with Cherokee Nation has provided access to business development data and resources to help economic development planning throughout communities.

Various other studies, smaller in nature, have been carried out by the EDA staff for local entities and organizations throughout the district.

**Objective**

The Association provides various programs to assist communities to develop their economic viability. A major activity has been to develop a working relationship with each community, through personal contact by the EDA staff, to help each community set priorities and determine what they need to do in order to facilitate economic development in their area. This effort will continue in the 2020-2025 work program.

**Action Plan: Implementation**

Economic Resilience:

GGEDA expects to expand projects that assist with economic resilience, especially Natural and/or Pandemic Disaster Events Proactive and Reactive steps collaborating with the Hazard Mitigation Plans and the Capital Improvement Plans to help businesses with planning and recovery efforts.

Critical Infrastructure: GGEDA focuses on Critical Infrastructure through the CEDS process to identify projects and collaborate stakeholders to address building these economic infrastructure needs.

GGEDA joins efforts with Workforce Development & Manufacturing Projects through stakeholder matchmaking with businesses to our State Workforce Development system, Career Tech &/or University training systems, and the Cherokee Nation Career Services to build the workforce needed now and in the future.

GGEDA has two major Opportunity Zones within Ottawa and Delaware Counties along with pockets of tracts in Mayes and Washington Counties. GGEDA has been and continues to help planning efforts in Jay, Oklahoma, in an Opportunity Zone, to address poultry plant layoffs and building a new forty-acre industrial park. Further efforts include assisting MAEDS in Ottawa County with infrastructure development based on new business location and expansion.

We are also working with the City of Grove, aligned next to an Opportunity Zone, to accommodate expansion efforts for aeronautical companies. Tulsa Port of Catoosa was just given 2,000 acres of land by PSO that is prime property for industrial development with Sofidel being the anchor tenant. Continued relationships with MidAmerica and MAEDS help us address resiliency and critical infrastructure in and near an Opportunity Zone along the Highway 412 Corridor and in Ottawa county and.

#### Performance Measures:

- Establishing Information Networks: reach out to businesses, Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Organizations, Native American Tribes, and other interested stakeholders
- Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning: perform Disaster Assessments to create a resource plan to mitigate disasters within and throughout the GGEDA region
- Measuring Resilience: coordinate and write county and regional Resiliency Plans with germane Stakeholders
- Formulate the Economic Development Resiliency Plan Priority Projects with the Resiliency Plan Stakeholders and GGEDA team

Reach out to every county's emergency management officers, economic development professionals, chambers of commerce, and local industries to identify the recent impacts of the tornados, wind damage and flooding to quantify the actual damages both physical, work stoppage, and lost revenues. Identifying ways to mitigate the damages created by Natural Disasters and/or Pandemic events. Documenting the disruptions in utilities water sewer and electric service caused by disasters. Work with each county to identify and develop mitigation strategy. To prioritize each counties priority list to develop a plan and provide assistance to help finance needed projects. We are currently working with three counties to complete EDA application for mitigation assistance. Other counties state and federal funding is involved in these projects. We are currently working with Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Office Emergency Management, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture and coordinating with both US Senators Lankford and Inhofe as well as Congressman Mullin.

Develop a resiliency priority in each county, reach out to the state and federal partners, who are involved in particular disaster impacts for their input. Develop a regional resiliency plan to address the identified issues. After the Counties Mini Strategies are developed take the to the Grand Gateway CEDS Committee to incorporate into Regional CEDS.

GGEDA will continue to amend a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and to carry out planning consistent with EDA requirements for the CEDS as set forth in 13 CFR Part 303.

## **A. Economic Opportunity**

Given the nature of private sector employment in the region, rural based employment centers exist in the surrounding communities concentric with industrial and/or business parks, especially with reference to the distribution of subsidized housing. Most of the subsidized housing is in rural areas located on individual owned property, not in housing clusters or other forms of developments that were designed with an employment center focus.

This factor is most clearly demonstrated by the use patterns in the Pelivan and Tribal transit programs above. Because of time and distance constraints those who use the public transportation systems seldom use it to get to work. Rather, it is to education, health care, shopping or other purposes that are not time dependent like work. Our long-range goal is to create a data base of public housing locations and opportunities for public transit systems to mirror employment centers as a larger category in public transportation use patterns. To make these in local transportation modes more desirable, GGEDA is planning with the Private Sector and local governments to develop CNG Infrastructure capacity.

## **B. Transportation Access**

Pelivan and Tribal Transit systems only collect data on passenger use and fees paid, not individual miles traveled. Stakeholders and clients utilizing the Pelivan Transit System include area city, county, and tribal governments, area Community Action Programs, area social agencies including Department of Human Resources, Grand Lake Mental Health, Home of Hope Foundation, Oklahoma Healthcare Authority, area nursing homes, area retirement housing developments, area housing developments, Agency for Aging Americans, area Senior Citizen Centers, multiple private industries, area Chamber of Commerce, area shelters, area daycares and schools, area hospitals, medical clinics, doctors, therapy centers, dentists, medical support businesses, tribal citizens and the general public. Further development of the transit system includes investigating University Student ridership in Claremore, OK at Rogers State University as well as a trolley loop in Miami, OK.

Coordinated planning is needed to address the existing transit and area transportation systems' gaps and overlaps of transportation services currently being provided and how all the stakeholders can form a mobility management program. This coordination will enable participates in the CEDS Committee to expand and enhance the existing system. Additional work routes and vanpools will be developed for commuters from outlying communities into the Mid-America Industrial Park located near Pryor, Oklahoma as well as the Tulsa Port of Catoosa near the cities of Claremore and Owasso. Each city within this region will develop a transit and transportation plan to address park and ride locations for commuters as well as ADA compliant bus stops with proper walkways for safe transit boarding of passengers.

The approach to create a Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan is summarized as follows: Grand Gateway and the CEDS Committee of stakeholders involved in the regional planning will conduct technical fact finding to quantify the transportation problems and develop initial solutions and strategies. Second, at two key stages, the community at-large will be asked, through public meetings, to verify that the right issues are being addressed and that the solutions are sound and well prioritized. The study is expected to continue over a 36-month period. There will be continuous information updates to our website to keep the public informed and involved. Funding for this activity began in 2014 from the Oklahoma State Department of Transportation. GGEDA has been the Regional Transportation Planning Organization since 2016.

The goal of our study is to develop a Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan that responds to future needs including improvements that will enhance both transportation and economic development of the Grand Gateway Economic Development region into the year 2035. Current federal legislation is changing that will place the full responsibility of transportation planning to Sub-State Planning Districts. This means that the



outcomes of this transportation planning will have be even more significant when procuring federal funding for transportation and transit funding in the GGEDA service area.

## **C. Environmental Quality**

Given the continuing nature of the rural counties and communities, there has been little if any changes in urbanized land use patterns. The data for total miles distribution of water infrastructure per population served is not available because the Oklahoma Water Resources Board allocates water by permit to use documented acre feet water from defined sources, not based on how many miles of water line have or will be installed. This means that the different providers of potable water are cities and other municipalities; rural water districts; Indian Tribes and Nations; the Public Health Service; and, individual separate development by private sector developers. GGEDA works with all of the public water entities in planning, design, securing funding, and construction of water and wastewater systems.

## **D. Housing**

The need for affordable housing is a theme that was echoed throughout the region during the region's community action agencies, NEOCAA and CARD, annual community assessment process. This need was identified in all of the communities and in all of the surveys conducted.

When you consider the demand for affordable housing and given the limited availability of housing throughout the region, it can be said that there are not enough resources available to the agency to meet the needs. A combination of efforts including housing rehabilitation and weatherization to maintain current housing stock, new construction of affordable single-family homeownership units, consideration of the development and construction of both single-family and multi-family rental units and the provision of homebuyer education services and down payment assistance will be needed to begin to impact on the region's housing needs.

The CAA's have a combined capacity to provide extensive access to resources to meet projected population growth and housing needs of the region. These include, but are not limited to: certification by the Oklahoma Housing Finance Authority as Community Development Housing Organization (CHDO); experience in administering HOME funds and related housing programs; administering Weatherization LIHEAP funds for OERB, DOE, and DHS; Homeless shelters and facilities in region: Emergency Shelter Facilities: Transitional shelter Facilities: and, Permanent Housing Facilities; development of new rental housing with special needs housing, homebuyer units; CDBG housing activities; USDA Housing Preservation Grant; Owner occupied housing rehabilitation; Homebuyer Education; Down payment/closing cost assistance; Weatherization; OHFA Homeowner Occupied Rehabilitation; CDBG CBDO; Homebuyer Education and homeownership; and, down payment/closing cost assistance.

The CEDS COMMITTEE will address the ability of residents to take advantage of housing opportunities throughout the area without discrimination because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or familial status. Existing analysis methodologies already assess impediments to fair housing choice and, with implementation of the CEDS COMMITTEE project, will be able to link transportation, employment, and housing resources in order to promote fair and affordable housing in high opportunity areas, and adhere to and promote economic development while utilizing the housing factor as an economic indicator.

In this context, the GGEDA PELIVAN public transportation system, together with that through the Indian Tribes and Nations, has made planning a priority for these considerations and is doing extensive research to link

housing areas; employment centers; health service delivery facilities; and, educational opportunities. Therefore, the CEDS COMMITTEE has a unique collective capacity and access to resources that will ensure positive outcomes for the future.

## **II. COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SECTOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPANTS**

Northeast Workforce Investment Board, Claremore Industrial Economic Development Authority, Mid America Industrial Park, Miami Area Economic Development Service, City of Miami Progressive Industrial Park, Bartlesville Development Corporation, Rogers County- City of Tulsa Port of Catoosa, Pryor Chamber of Commerce, Mayes County Prosperity Project, Nowata Chamber of Commerce, Jay Industrial Authority, Rogers State University, North Eastern Oklahoma A&M College, Northeastern State University, Inter Tribal CEDS Committee, Rogers County Industrial Economic Development Authority, Friends of the Coleman Theatre, Inola Economic Development Council, Northeast SACE-ZZ, Welch Area Development Authority, Littlefield Business Park in Afton, Grove Municipal Services Authority, Cherokee Nation Enterprises, Cherokee Nation Businesses, Grand Lake Association and USDA. This listing of participants is not inclusive of all participants, but, those most active in Economic Development activities in the GGEDA service area. GGEDA's bordering states and their respective Economic Development entities work in tandem forever expanding regional efforts. This list of participants will continue to expand, and contract as regional projects develop.

The CEDS planning process allows regional sessions for data collection and coordination of service delivery into an integrated regional plan that ensures all constituents have a voice in the final outcomes of the plan. For example, as mandated in all federal applications and to comply with Oklahoma Statue, open meetings with full agendas and participation are made available to the public in either posted and/or printed media in papers of local distribution, in the respective courthouse and are disseminated by the appropriate entity.

The important point in this discussion is that the data bases and resources are already identified, the CEDS Committee has been formed, and the intent is to merge these into a coherent and useable long-range vision and plan for the region. Given that the plan will be a work in progress while it is developed by the CEDS Committee the respective partner entities from GGEDA will report to their respective boards of directors for review, comment, critique and final approval. Regular meetings ensure that all parties to the plan will have immediate and long-term involvement in its development and commitment to its implementation.

The formal structure and commitment of the parties in the CEDS Committee are contained in the express purpose to... "fashion the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Benefit for all Members, Partners and/or Stakeholders in the region. The target population that this CEDS Committee intends to serve reside in the Oklahoma counties of Rogers, Mayes, Delaware, Ottawa, Craig, and Nowata. The population benefit from the strategy by equity of plans and services being distributed throughout the service region based on the integration of local objectives with broader regional concerns consistent with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document."

Further, GGEDA will be the lead technician and vehicle for submitting EDA and other funding agency applications for member entities. GGEDA, along with the member applicants, shall have responsibility for submitting the funding applications, and, with the CEDS Committee recommendation, shall execute fiscal and programmatic responsibility.

In addition, if other stakeholders are identified they will be invited to become full participants in the planning and evaluation processes that lead to the final regional planning document. These include, but are not limited

to, rural volunteer fire departments, private sector housing developers, PHA's that are localized and want to participate in a large area project.

An essential component of any plan is sustainability - the project directors, in their role as managers and long-term investment strategists, will work with all partners to assist with their continuation applications, provide data bases that enable them to expand service delivery, and conduct searches for additional funding for service delivery.

Fifty-two communities within the seven-county region in the most Northeastern corner of Oklahoma along with current emphasis with and among the following stakeholders: South Coffeyville Development Authority, Nowata County Development Authority, City of Grove, City of Jay, Town of Langley, Town of Spavinaw, Public Service Company of Oklahoma, Grand River Dam Authority, Northeast Oklahoma Regional Alliance, Cherokee Nation, Intertribal Council, Delaware Tribe, Town of Ochelata, Port of Catoosa, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Rogers County Industrial Development Authority, Claremore Industry & Economic Development Authority, Miami Area Economic Development Service-Chamber of Commerce-City of Miami, City of Commerce, Northeast Career Tech, Tri-County Career Tech, Northeast Rural Electric Co-op, BOLT Fiber, Northeast Oklahoma Workforce Board, USDA, Oklahoma Water Resources Board, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality.

### **III. RESILIENCE PLANNING**

Projects are selected and prioritized according to District eligibility criteria. Criteria include:

- \$ Project is a Pressing Need for the Area
- \$ Project is Consistent with CEDS
- \$ Area of Impact
- \$ Justified Need for Project
- \$ Cost Effectiveness
- \$ Resources Available
- \$ Number of Term Jobs Created to Reduce Unemployment/Underemployed of Area
- \$ Feasibility of Project, Impact on Environment

The CEDS Committee, as historically established at GGEDA, consists of multi-discipline representatives with varied background, education, experience, and expertise. The committee meets prior to each GGEDA Board of Director's meeting in February, June, August, October, and December. The CEDS Committee also meets should a sudden economic opportunity arise.

The CEDS Committee will make a report at each Board Meeting of the Association and will recommend to the Board the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the District for their adoption. The CEDS Committee will bring revisions and/or additions to the existing CEDS to the Board during the year for necessary action.

The EDA staff of Grand Gateway will provide the manpower and technical assistance to the CEDS Committee in order to carry out the work of the strategy.

Staff members from all departments represented by the Association are constantly talking to the people in the district about all the programs available and how they impact each other. This information is shared among the staff so that needed projects are identified. Further, use of the Capital Improvement Plans and advanced networking will also identify projects.

Grand Gateway staff has conducted several informative meetings with other agencies and private sector groups in each county. The information derived is used in conjunction with input from the public sector to update the EDA Annual Report.

#### **A. Community Development Activities**

Community Development activities will continue to focus on assistance to the local government entities in planning activities and technical assistance for day-to-day operations of the town. This will be accomplished by assigning at least one full-time staff member to carry out local government specialist activities.

The Association will continue to house a regional data center and continue to collect, develop, evaluate, and maintain data on the district and its local government entities. This data will be disseminated through various means including newsletters, reports, special publications and one-one one requests.

The Association will continue to provide technical assistance and advise to local entities in developing, implementing and managing action oriented projects such as CDBG, OWRB, EPA, Rural Development, etc., especially those resulting in overall improvements in the infrastructure of the area.

Since the inception of the 1996 Oklahoma State Legislature Rural Economic Action Plan Act, REAP has provided more than \$20 million dollars for local infrastructure needs throughout the GGEDA service area. The program implementation is approved by the district's Board of Directors. The board uses the CEDS process to help determine local needs and set priorities for funding based upon those needs.

All activities carried out in the community development program will be coordinated through the economic development division of the Association in order to assure activities ultimately address improvement of the community's economic capabilities. This assures the activities meet the overall goal of long-term job development, creation, and retention in the area.

## **B. Special Contracting Arrangements**

The Association will continue to provide special services to member entities on a contract basis with the community. These services will include:

- \$ Administration of EDA Contracts.
- \$ Median Household Income Surveys.
- \$ Administration of CDBG Contracts.
- \$ Special planning reports and activities specified by local entities.

The listed services are provided as a means for communities to share costs in providing services as required by Oklahoma State Statutes. Since many small communities cannot afford, and do not need a full-time service, cost sharing permits these types of service.

GGEDA is the recognized planning entity for the region as set by state statute and EDA. As noted above, our service delivery to member entities is extensive in administration and management of multiple programs and serve as subcontractor and passes through entity for funding to local small communities who do not have the capacity to secure the funding or to administer grant programs.

GGEDA, through the CEDS Committee, partners with the two (2) Community Action Agencies, Northeast Community Action Agency and Community Action Resources and Development. All three (3) agencies serve the same constituent population with programs and services that require annual planning activities for low and moderate income persons and families. The CEDS Committee method and strategy merges these capabilities, qualifications and programs into a coordinated and well defined strategy to complete a long range planning.

Programs offered through Grand Gateway Economic Development Association's Economic and Community Development department are briefly described below.

## **C. Community Development Block Grant/Economic Development Infrastructure Financing (CDBG/EDIF)**

Community Development Block Grant/Economic Development Infrastructure Financing (EDIF) program provides public infrastructure financing to help communities grow jobs, enable new business startups and expansions for existing businesses.

The national objective of this program is the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities principally for people earning low to moderate incomes. The state program will achieve this national objective by funding projects in which at

least 51 percent of the new jobs created are made available to low- and moderate-income individuals.

#### Types of Projects Funded:

Publicly owned and maintained improvements that will provide basic infrastructure services to a new or expanding business, including water, wastewater, transportation improvements, and rehabilitation and new construction of publicly owned industrial buildings.

### **D. Community Development Block Grants**

CDBG Water/Wastewater - Community Revitalization - CDBG REAP (Rural Economic Action Plan)

#### Program Overview/Purpose

Grant proposals must address how the project achieves at least one of the following national objectives:

- \$ Provide benefit to people earning low to moderate incomes;
- \$ Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight;
- \$ Meet other community development needs having particular urgency, posing a serious or immediate threat to the health or welfare of a community.

### **E. GIS/CIP (Geographical Informational Systems/Capital Improvement Planning)**

#### Program Overview/Purpose

The CDBG Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) grant provides funds to help communities create or update a Local Inventory of Governmental Capital Assets & a Local Capital Improvement Plan & Budget. The CIP process requires communities to create strategic plans for addressing the needs for publicly owned capital assets. By prioritizing capital budget needs, a community is better prepared to meet the financial requirements for enhancing its local infrastructure & paving the way for future community & economic growth & stability.

Geographical Information Systems (Geo) & Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) GeoCIP© combines Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology & Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) or local government asset management practices into a standardized process for creating a GIS based inventory of local government assets to be used in annually evaluating asset conditions, setting improvement priorities for assets & updating the local government capital budget.

#### GeoCIP© Helps Communities Improve Strategic Planning & Operations

- \$ Provides a GIS-based, comprehensive & detailed inventory & mapping of local government owned assets - the same tools used by larger communities
- \$ Provides a standardized guide to local governments who have little or no structured way of taking care of the needs of infrastructure management

- \$ Establishes a local administrative & policy framework for making responsible capital budgetary decisions
- \$ Clarifies & projects economic & demographic trends likely to influence the needs for new & expanded local capital facilities
- \$ Estimates the cost for repairs, replacements & expansions that incorporate mandatory, essential, desirable & deferrable needs
- \$ Provides small grants to aid in the costs incurred

## **Pelivan Transit**

### **Transportation Planning**

Our transportation planning will develop Grand Gateway EDA's service territory transportation system to promote better mobility in and around our communities. In partnership with the Federal Transit and RouteMatch/ UBER we have developed a phone app which arranges efficient routes, methods to pay, and a girth of information on travels patterns.

The goal of our study is to develop a Regional Transportation Plan that responds to future needs including improvements that will enhance both transportation and economic development of the Grand Gateway Economic Development region into the year 2035.

### **The Plan does meet both local needs and federal requirements, through:**

- \$ Supporting the economic vitality of the United States, the State of Oklahoma and the Grand Gateway region.
- \$ Increasing the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
- \$ Emphasizing the preservation of the existing transportation system;
- \$ Increasing the accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight;
- \$ Protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation and improving the quality of life
- \$ Including stakeholder outreach and public involvement, plus involving advisory groups that represent transportation system providers and users for the movement of both people and goods.
- \$ Forming a Regional Transportation Organization to more fully utilize stakeholder leverage and shared concerns in regards to all forms of mobility management within, throughout, and adjoining the Grand Gateway service area, including, but not limited to; roadways, interstates, rail, waterways, pedestrian traffic, and the Port of Catoosa.

Other important issues to be studied include funding uncertainties, potential air quality concerns and how best to address climate change and energy dependency. The resolution of these issues may be of paramount

importance and will influence the final development of a Long-Range Plan.

The approach to create a Long-Range Plan as the Regional Transportation Planning Transportation Organization RTPO summarized as follows: First, Grand Gateway and the consortium of stakeholders involved in the regional planning will conduct technical fact finding to quantify the transportation problems and develop initial solutions and strategies. Then, at two key stages, the community at-large will be asked, through public meetings, to verify that the right issues are being addressed and that the solutions are sound and well prioritized.

## **Tourism Planning**

The Grand Gateway Economic Development Association's service territory has a vast array of tourist attractions situated in the area includes Grand Lake O' The Cherokees. Grand Lake was created in 1940 with GRDA's completion of Pensacola Dam. It is one of the premiere lakes in the Midwest and the crown jewel of a chain of lakes in the northeastern Oklahoma region.

Its 46,500 surface acres of water are ideal for boating, skiing, fishing, swimming, and sailing. In fact, the lake, which lies in a southwest to northeast direction, is popular with sailboat enthusiasts wishing to take advantage of the prevailing wind. Normal surface elevation is 742 feet above sea level.

With 1,300 miles of shoreline meandering through the foothills of the Ozark Mountains, everything from bustling lakeside communities to quiet secluded coves and lakeside resorts can be found along its shore.

Other tourist attractions include the Coleman Theatre located in Miami, Oklahoma located in a national historic district. The Coleman Theatre originally was a vaudeville theatre and movie palace, the "Coleman Theatre Beautiful" opened to a full house of 1,600, at \$1.00 a seat, on April 18, 1929. Built by George L. Coleman, Sr., local mining magnate, the opulent structure with Louis XV interior design dazzled the audiences of the day. From that day forward the Coleman has never been "dark". The historic structure was donated to the City of Miami by the Coleman family in 1989. Restoration and renovation of the theatre has become a "labor of love" in the community. Efforts have included returning the "Mighty Wurlitzer" pipe organ to its original home and restoring the magnificent chandelier. Live performances continue in this beautiful theatre located in northeastern Oklahoma.

Indian gaming has become a multi-million-dollar industry in Oklahoma with 39 federally recognized tribes within the state. Currently there are 19 casinos located within the Grand Gateway EDA service territory. There are twelve casinos situated within Ottawa County alone which is in the furthestmost northeastern corner of Oklahoma just 20 minutes from Joplin, Missouri and one hour from Tulsa on I-44. Hotels, entertainment venues, and beautiful golf courses have arisen around these attractions for tourism. Tourism planning will be an important component for jobs and economic growth in this region. Performing arts, along with venue sector employment, is a rising economic force throughout the region.

## **Area Agency on Aging**

### **Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

### **Older Americans Act Services**



Collaborates with Ombudsman Long Term Care, Information & Assistance, Pelivan Transportation, Legal Services of Eastern Oklahoma, Caregiver Training & Respite, Homemaker Chore Service, Nutrition Programs, Case Management, Medicare Plan D Consultations, and Health promotion & Medication Management

### **AAA Programs**

Include Elder Abuse Awareness, Referral Services, Silver Haired Legislators, Educational Presentations, Prescription Drug Programs, Resource Directory, O4A Assessment Training, Medicare+Choice, Assistive Technology, C.E.N.A. Program, Disaster Assistance, Advisory Council on Aging, Grand Old Times Newsletter

### **Rural Fire Protection Activities**

Since 1986, the Association has operated a Rural Fire Coordinator's Program funded by the State of Oklahoma. This program provides a full-time fire coordinator on staff to provide direct technical assistance to rural areas in developing fire protection organizations; assistance to existing departments in training, equipment requisitions, etc.; with the overall emphasis to lower ISO ratings so that insurance is available in all areas.

Includes 80/20 state grants for rural fire departments serving populations under 10,000 Includes Operational grants for rural fire departments serving populations under 10,000 Includes FFP assistance for reassignment of military equipment to be used in rural fire departments

## **IV. PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Grand Gateway operates many vital programs on a district-wide basis which allows for coordination of program activities for improvement and development of the district. Grand Gateway also coordinates with various other entities and Indian Tribal activities so that activities are carried out in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

The Association has a foundational relationship with the Inter-Tribal Council, an organization representing nine (9) tribal governments. Grand Gateway continues to work with these very important governments in order to enhance and coordinate economic development activities.

### **A. Development Strategy and Implementation Plan**

The current district development strategy and implementation plan for the period January 1, 2021 through January 1, 2026 are addressed in this chapter. Assumptions for the new funding period are consistent with plans from the past. These assumptions are:

1. The Tourism and Recreation, and Entertainment venues potential will continue to develop in Northeast Oklahoma; growth will occur more rapidly than in past years based on the gaming industry and performing arts.
2. Northeast Oklahoma continues to be an idea growth area for service industry, i.e., insurance, research wholesale, other business services.
3. Northeast Oklahoma will continue to be an ideal retirement area.
4. The trend for multiple-family member jobholders is expected to continue to increase for the foreseeable future.

5. Northeast Oklahoma will continue to be a desirable location for industrial development for targeted industries.
6. Expansion of existing firms continues to be a viable potential for creating new employment opportunity in Northeast Oklahoma.
7. The trend in locally owned and operated small firms employing 10 to 50 employees will continue in Northeast Oklahoma.
8. Activities aimed at marketing and promoting Northeast Oklahoma will continue to increase for the foreseeable future.
9. Agriculture, aerospace, 2,000-acre expansion of the Tulsa Port of Catoosa River Rail Industrial Park, new 40+ acre Jay Industrial Park and energy industries will continue to impact Northeast Oklahoma economic considerations in the future.
10. Environmental issues and concerns will continue to play an ever-increasing role in economic development activities in the foreseeable future.
11. Educational systems will continue to feel pressure to improve.
12. State assistance to rural areas for program development, planning and project implementation will decrease in the foreseeable future.
13. Reliable or easily accessible sources of financing for small business creation or expansion will continue to be a problem unless more public funded Revolving Loan Funds are established in the area.

## **B. WORK ACTIVITIES & STRATEGIES for 2020-2025**

### **GRAND GATEWAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION WILL:**

- A. Review needs assessments for all counties and for all cities large enough to have economic development programs. The needs assessment will identify barriers to economic development for these sub- areas.
- B. Review and update the environmental surveys of the district. The survey will include environmentally sensitive issues and areas in this region, which could impede or constrain economic development projects, or provide economic development opportunities. The information will be in sufficient detail to develop economic development policies to address areas of concern that might constrain potential economic development projects.
- C. Sustain and update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy employing the methodologies discussed in length previously
- D. The CEDS Committee will be responsible for monitoring and approving work elements of this planning grant. The Committee will give the staff guidance and priority in implementing work program.
- E. Coordinate economic development planning and implementation with other economic development organizations affecting this area, especially EDA funded grantees such as Miami Area Economic Development (MAEDS) , state and regional planning grantees, adjoining economic development districts

and Indian Tribes. The final product will be a progress report showing number of meetings the district's staff has had with these groups.

F. Perform planning grant management requirements. Prepare progress reports required by the grant. These reports will follow the work program approved in the grant and will show specific accomplishments. The progress reports will include items that were accomplished using EDA planning grant funds. GGEDA will perform other administrative functions of the grant contract.

G. Perform any of the work elements listed in the CEDS Committee Agendas and/or Minutes as provided by Addendum.

### **C. Additional work items:**

A. Perform activities necessary to maintain the CEDS process and will be useful in the development of a district strategy.

B. Prepare special economic studies and projects identified in the CEDS or approved by the CEDS Committee. Resiliency strategies will be emphasized during this process to fortify the long-term viability of the region, especially during crises such as Natural Disasters and/or Pandemic threats.

C. Network with economic development organizations and other groups to implement CEDS recommendations.

D. Develop and maintain a socioeconomic information system.

E. Disseminate socioeconomic information.

F. Maintain current information of federal, state, and local economic development programs. Special emphasis will be placed on EDA programs.

G. Provide staff support to develop and monitor projects and programs that will increase economic development opportunities with the district. Priority will be placed on developing EDA grant applications.

H. Provide technical assistance for capital improvement programs for member agencies, industrial parks, land use regulations, bond elections, district committees and sub-committees, and cities and counties.

I. Implement special projects, Resiliency studies and programs that have been specifically identified in the district's CEDS.

J. Provide training and workshops to local governments, economic development groups, and businesses.

K. Coordinate and network with agencies and businesses located outside the district that can provide benefits for the district's economic development program.

L. Participate in other activities approved by the Austin Regional Office.

## **V. NEW OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

- A. Further refine the CEDS process to properly identify the private sector entities that need resiliency assistance.
- B. Utilize all public assistance programs to assist communities to support private sector entities to expand, thereby creating jobs.
- C. Analyze the projects requiring assistance for presentation to the CEDS Committee. Make special reports, when appropriate, so that the Project Selection Process can become district-wide in scope.

### **Share knowledge amongst partners**

CEDS meetings will be held between the CEDS committee, diverse program directors, data collected, and preliminary assessments of integration criteria and strategies developed for review and critique by each partner entity. This will be supplemented by on-line access to the websites of each entity and continual information sharing. The full schedule of meetings and total programmatic participation is in place and can be implemented.

### **Expand Cross-Cutting Policy Knowledge**

Data collection will match factors in the EDA programmatic reporting form(s) plus the additional requirements of respective agency and programmatic needs for continuation funding. First, GGEDA staff will hold peer meetings with programmatic staff from partner entities to collect the base line data. Second, GGEDA staff will work with the Center for Innovation at Cherokee Nation to set the metrics for data collection, updating, outcome projections and evaluation of the final plan to be submitted to the CEDS Committee Board and the Board of each participating partner.

Our experience has been that one of the most important outcomes of this opportunity can be to make more standardized public policy documents, such as contracting, fiscal and programmatic management, bid process, etc., can be made available to the rural communities and county governments. This will enable a better-defined administration in each governmental entity and afford the private sector an opportunity to have access to region wide standardized policies and processes. This will lower the final cost per project to all involved.

The primary reason for this expectation is that the full range of programmatic resources and staff expertise by partner organizations includes additional levels of government, by type and size, their respective fiscal capacities, and the requirements of multiple funding from other public and private sources that will be included in the CEDS to be created and adopted.

The CEDS plan and strategy outlined above will ensure that, as the lead entity GGEDA will be better situated to fulfill its mission of providing multiple level service delivery; contracting opportunities; coordinated planning strategies and creation of plans; and, most important, having a new capacity to assist regional service providers with expanded access to resources to fulfill our shared mission of serving the rural populations in our service are jurisdiction.

Russell Earls  
Chairman of Grand Gateway Board of Directors  
Chairman Ottawa Co. Comm.

## **VI. BACKGROUND**

The Grand Gateway Economic Development Association (hereinafter referred to as "GGEDA" "Grand Gateway" or "The Association") is an association of local governments and public entities formed under the provisions of Oklahoma's Interlocal Cooperation Act. Through a joint Resolution and Agreement - currently filed with the Secretary of State of Oklahoma, on May 14, 1971, and subsequently amended. The Association serves as a CEDS Committee for certain local program operations within a seven-county service area consisting of Craig, Delaware, Mayes, Nowata, Ottawa, Rogers and Washington Counties. A Grand Gateway Economic Development Association district map is included.

The Association is the planning and development of district-wide, long-term, economic, physical, and social programs for the future growth of the seven-county district. The designated contact person for Grand Gateway is Mr. Edward J. Crone, Executive Director, (918) 783-5793.

The Planning Organization: Grand Gateway Economic Development Association, a quasi-governmental, voluntary association of fifty-three (53) community and seven (7) county jurisdictions, Port of Catoosa, eleven (11) Native American Tribes, twenty-seven (27) Rural Water Districts, forty-five (45) K-12 Public Schools, Northeastern Oklahoma College and Rogers State University joint jurisdictions that are eligible with most participating within the Grand Gateway Economic Development Association (GGEDA).

US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration Economic Development District designated region of north east Oklahoma. Grand Gateway Economic Development Association (GGEDA) offers services and assistance through multiple programmatic resources through local, state, and federal funding to and for entities that choose to work in a collaborative effort for the benefit of approximately 278,040 citizens of these specific counties in Northeast Oklahoma.

According to the 2010 Census and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Demographics, our seven county Economic Development District has 278,040 people: Craig County, 15,029, Delaware County, 41,487, Mayes County, 41,259, Nowata County, 10,536, Ottawa County, 31,848, Rogers County, 86,905, and Washington County, 50,976 respectively.

GGEDA has been serving these entities since 1967 in and through the focus areas of Economic Development Administration , Area Agency on Aging, Pelivan Rural Transit System, Community Development Block Grant Program, Capital Improvement Planning, Geographical Information Systems, Rural Fire Program, Rural Economic Action Plan, E-911, Disaster Planning, FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning, FEMA Structure Repetitive Loss Program, Masonic Lodge funding, as well as the associated tasks and programs that are germane to the encompassing umbrella of the parent entity. The CEDS Committee consists of representatives of private and non-private entities, based on sustainable development considerations throughout the service region.

GGEDA also works in tandem with other funding agencies, i.e. US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Communities Unlimited, Oklahoma State Departments of Commerce, Transportation, Agriculture and Health as well as Cherokee Nation Indian Health Services and Cherokee Nation Business Services, as well as the multiple programs focusing on Public Transit in the Federal Transportation Association to supply infrastructure and services that spur economic activity and sustainable development.

Grand Gateway EDA (GGEDA) has over fifty-years of experience in developing economic sustainability and development in the seven-county district of Northeast Oklahoma. Edward J. Crone: Executive Director leads this organization with over twenty-five years of experience at this agency, and a combined ten years of experience in other economic development planning and implementation capacity organizations. Errin Clocker, Financial Officer/Deputy Director of GGEDA guides financial and budget in accordance with national, state

and local standards. Ed and Errin direct the activities of the Community Development team to work in tandem with the Economic Development activities in the region. Tami McKeon, Economic Development Director administers EDA related program management, coordinates the Community Development Team and with the funding entities for upcoming infrastructure needs throughout the service area. Tami also sits on the Workforce Investment Board and the Business Services Team that serves the same seven county area in a continuous effort to collaborate services for better business expansion/retention and building a better prepared workforce to meet the current and future needs of the district. Annette Morgan, REAP Director, assists economic development projects and efforts through REAP grant funding and offering expertise in Environmental Assessment/NEPA implementation. Cary R. Jester and other staff assists with CEDS committee meeting minutes/agenda/mailing coordination, and general clerical assistance. This team administers technical, planning, and grant opportunities for the eligible entities throughout the service area. The CEDS committee is currently expanding to include a more diverse set of civic and business leaders, labor, minority, and other community organizations to address economic development activities of the region.