



Delaware Nation

2025 – 2030

Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy

Public Review Draft

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Thank you to the Delaware Nation Tribal members that participated in this planning process. Your input and direction were invaluable to the creation of this plan.



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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) contributes to effective economic development in towns, cities and counties through a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process. Economic development planning, as implemented through the CEDS, is a cornerstone of the U.S. Economic Development Administration's programs, and successfully serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. The CEDS provides the capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other economic actors, including individuals, firms, industries, creates the environment for regional economic prosperity.

Simply put, a CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. A CEDS is the result of a regionally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of an area or region. In this case, there are also geographically-independent considerations to be included, because the Tribe may wish to leverage its unique contracting advantages to pursue business opportunities in the public sector outside its service area.

The CEDS development project will closely follow the guidelines and steps outlined in the EDA's CEDS Preparation website, including significant engagement with the community and other key stakeholders.

Scope

The CEDS encompasses Delaware Nation's Tribal service area and considers all human activity in the region that generates income for the Tribe including labor, capital, investments, and enterprises. The CEDS evaluates current economic conditions and reflects the Tribe's opportunities to go forward. The CEDS creates a cohesive framework for decision-making and will contribute to long-term community, workforce, and enterprise planning.

- Facilitates **regional collaboration** needed to expand supply chains and grow and support new industry clusters.
- Helps to **attract federal funds** and **technical assistance** by demonstrating resources are used efficiently and effectively.
- Will make the Tribe and surrounding region more **resilient and better positioned to plan for, respond to, and recover** from natural disasters and economic shocks.
- Serves as a **call to action** for economic development.

Benefits of a Tribal CEDS

- Helps to **build on the strengths** of the region, as well as to identify gaps in resources or expertise that need to be addressed.

Parts of the CEDS

Planning and Project Oversight: A Strategy Committee made up of the Tribal Administrator, Economic Development representatives, Tribal Elders, and Tribal Departments. Additionally, the Tribal Council acted as the Advisory Committee providing feedback and approvals on strategy.

Summary Background: A summary background of the economic conditions in the region.

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

Economic Resilience: A plan detailing how Delaware Nation intends to respond to vulnerabilities of the Tribe and in the region.

Vision Statement: The goals set by the Strategy Committee after analysis of the Tribal SWOT.

Action Plan/Strategic Direction: Incorporated tactics identified through planning processes, other plans, and stakeholder feedback to develop the priorities and objectives for the Tribe.

Evaluation Measures: Woven into the objectives, evaluation measures are the marks set by objective, used to identify and monitor performance measures associated with the plan.

Tribal & Stakeholder Outreach/Engagement

The Strategy Committee members were identified by the Tribal Council and consisted of essential Tribal government departments and public servants serving the Nation. This core group was involved in the planning process and was responsible for reviewing the CEDS drafts throughout the planning process. The Strategy Committee participated in monthly virtual meetings, interviews, workshops, focus groups, and draft reviews.

Stakeholders were identified by the Strategy Committee and were interviewed throughout the Summer of 2024. They were also invited to attend an in-person workshop with the Tribe in October 2024 and January 2025.

A Delaware Nation CEDS website was developed in June 2024 to communicate the purpose and progress of the project to Tribal citizens. It also informed Tribal members on how they can become involved in the economic direction of their Nation.

A Tribal survey was sent out July 2024 via email and social media announcements. The survey sought to collect information on barriers to economic development, ideal projects for the Tribe, how Tribal government can help improve community economics, and overall hopes for the future. The survey had 19 questions which included both closed- and open-ended responses. The survey collected 334 responses, and approximately 250 completed the survey. The survey closed in August 2024.

Engagement Efforts

- Monthly Strategy Committee Meetings - #
- Strategy Committee Workshops – 6 conducted
- Tribal Member Survey – 334 respondents
- Stakeholder Interviews – 10 conducted
- In-Person & Virtual Focus Groups – 4 scheduled
- Public Review Opportunity – 1 month review process

Tribal Members were also invited to participate in in-person and virtual focus groups in October 2024 and January 2025.

Tribal CEDS updates have been announced via the Delaware Nation website, monthly newsletters, mailed postcards, and social media.

An additional opportunity for communication and feedback was provided on the website via a form and direct contact information for the project manager of the CEDS.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

History and Culture

The Delaware Nation, recognized as North America's oldest Indigenous Nation, is one of three federally recognized Delaware Indian tribes in the United States. Historically, they referred to themselves as Lena'pe or Lenni-Lenape, meaning "Real Men," "Men of Men," or "Original People." European colonists named them Delaware Indians due to their settlement across the Delaware River basin, which spans eastern Pennsylvania, southwest New York, New Jersey, and Delaware.

The Lena'pe were traditionally organized into three main branches: the Monsi (Munsee) or Tùkwsit (Wolf Clan), the Unami or Pùkuwànkò (Turtle Clan), and the Unilactigo or Pële (Turkey Clan). The Delaware Nation represents the Pùkuwànkò, or Turtle Clan.

According to the Delaware creation story, a great flood once threatened their ancestors. As the waters rose, the Creator guided them to a large hill for safety. Eventually, the hill began to tremble, and from beneath it emerged Taakox, the great turtle, who lifted the people on his back until the flood receded, saving them.

The Delaware, known as peaceful and diplomatic, were often referred to as the grandfathers or ancient ones by neighboring Native Nations. They were admired for their

hospitality and mediation skills by both Indigenous groups and European colonists.

The traditional history of the Delaware is preserved in the Walum Olum, a national legend. As European settlers encroached on their ancestral lands, the Lena'pe were gradually displaced westward, resettling across at least ten different states. Today, there are two Delaware groups in Oklahoma. The main group, known as the "Registered Delaware," moved from their Kansas reservation in 1867 to settle alongside the Cherokee along the Caney River. Another group, known as the Absentee Delaware Nation or "the lost tribe," separated from the main Lenape body after the American Revolution, eventually settling near the Washita River in Caddo County, Oklahoma.

The Delaware Nation holds a significant place in U.S. history, being the first Indigenous nation to sign a treaty with the United States in 1778. This treaty, spurred by promises of an Indian state, marked the beginning of formal relations between the Delaware and the U.S. government. Under the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, the Delaware reorganized and achieved federal recognition on July 5, 1958, as the "Delaware Tribe of Western Oklahoma." They ratified their constitution in 1972 and, in 1999, officially adopted the name "Delaware Nation."

Tribal Government

The Delaware Nation has been a federally recognized tribe and a sovereign nation since July 5, 1958. Their current constitution was approved in 1973, and its most recent amendment was adopted on November 13, 1999. The Tribe has an executive committee with a president and five other elected members.

The Delaware Nation has government-to-government relations with local, state, and federal entities as a formal government. It uses this relationship through the office of self-governance to protect and develop itself economically.

General Council

The membership of the General Council consists of all citizens of the Tribe eighteen years of age and older.

Executive Committee

The Delaware Nation government structure is led by an elected Executive Committee, consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and two other committee members. The Executive Committee is tasked with promoting the economic, moral, cultural, and health status of all Tribal citizens. Term of office is four years, and no person may serve more than two consecutive terms in an Executive Committee position.

Mission Statement: Through united effort and determination we promote the education and well-being of our citizens and secure unto our

Nation and our Nation's descendants the rights, powers and privileges provided by the laws of the Delaware Nation.

Membership

Delaware Nation has over 2,200 members.

Staffing

The Tribal administrative departments oversee the everyday function of the Delaware Nation government and provide support services for Tribal members. The Tribe also owns and operates several tribal enterprises that benefit both the Tribe and the community at large. Delaware Nation's main office is located in Anadarko, Oklahoma.

Jurisdiction

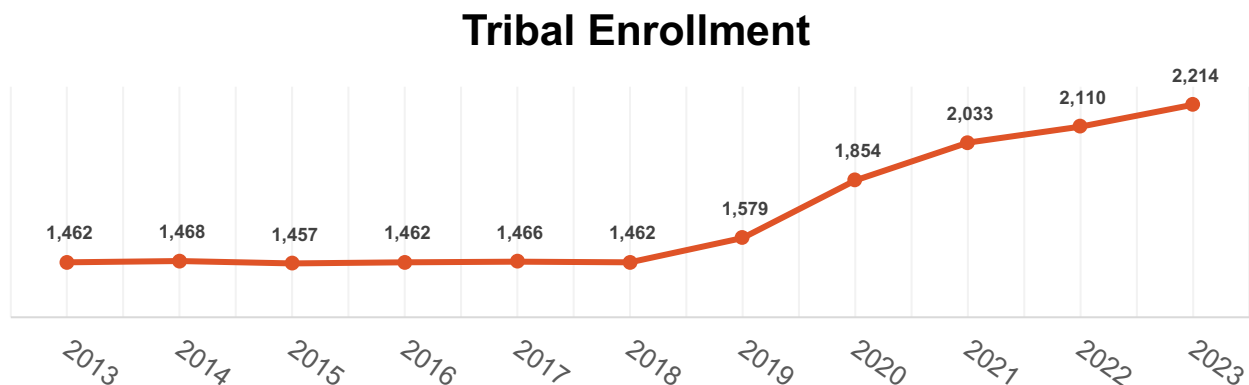
The Delaware Nation's tribal jurisdiction is situated within Caddo County, Oklahoma, with their headquarters just a few miles north of Anadarko. They share governance of the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Area with the Wichita Tribe and Caddo Nation. Each of the three tribes has 10 acres designated for the development of government programs, and while some service areas may overlap, the region is divided to ensure there's no duplication in services. All three tribes have representatives on the WCD board, which oversees decisions regarding the shared lands.

Current Social and Economic Conditions

Tribal Enrollment

The Tribal enrollment chart shows a steady increase in membership from 2019 onward, after several years of stability between 2013 and 2018, where enrollment hovered around 1,460. In 2019, there was a significant jump in enrollment to 1,579, followed by continuous growth, reaching 2,214 by 2023.

This increase coincides with a key policy change in 2019, when the Tribe conducted a secretarial election to modify its enrollment criteria. The shift from blood quantum requirements to lineal descendency allowed individuals to qualify for enrollment based on descent, rather than strictly blood quantum. However, new members must still have a minimum blood quantum of 1/8. This change broadened eligibility for enrollment, contributing to the notable rise in Tribal membership from 2019 onward.



Population Trends

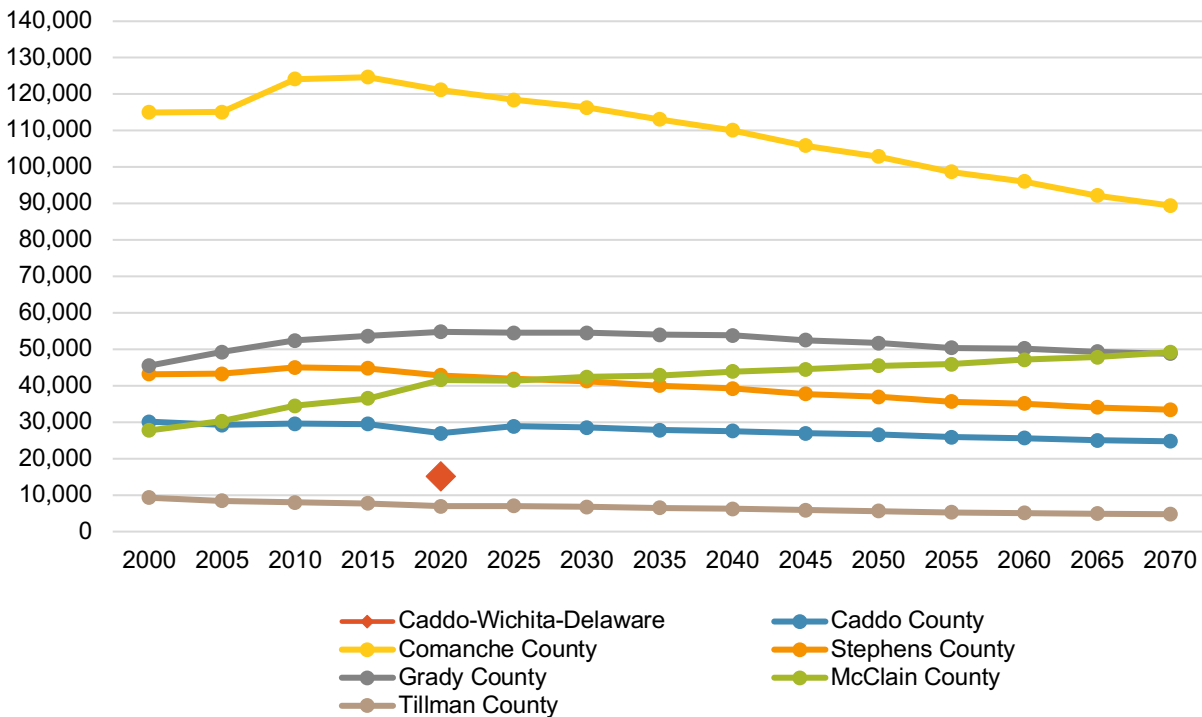
The population projections show trends for the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Area (OTSA), Caddo County, neighboring counties, and Oklahoma from 2000 to 2070. The Census Bureau does not provide historical data for Caddo-Wichita-Delaware, limiting insights into its specific population changes.

Most counties experience minimal growth or stabilization, with slight long-term declines expected. Caddo County shows brief growth but

follows the general trend of leveling off and shrinking, while Caddo-Wichita-Delaware's trajectory remains unclear.

From 2015 to 2040, Oklahoma's population is projected to grow modestly from 3.9 to 4.2 million, though the 5-year growth rate steadily declines. Caddo County shows a more volatile pattern, with a 9% drop from 2015 to 2020, a 7% recovery by 2025, and continued decline afterward. These trends likely reflect broader demographic changes such as migration or lower birth rates.

Population Projections



Population Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Oklahoma	3,904,722	3,959,353	4,005,315	4,094,815	4,149,670	4,235,079
5-Yr Growth		1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Caddo County	29,495	26,945	28,874	28,541	27,877	27,578
5-Yr Growth		9%	-7%	1%	2%	1%

Age

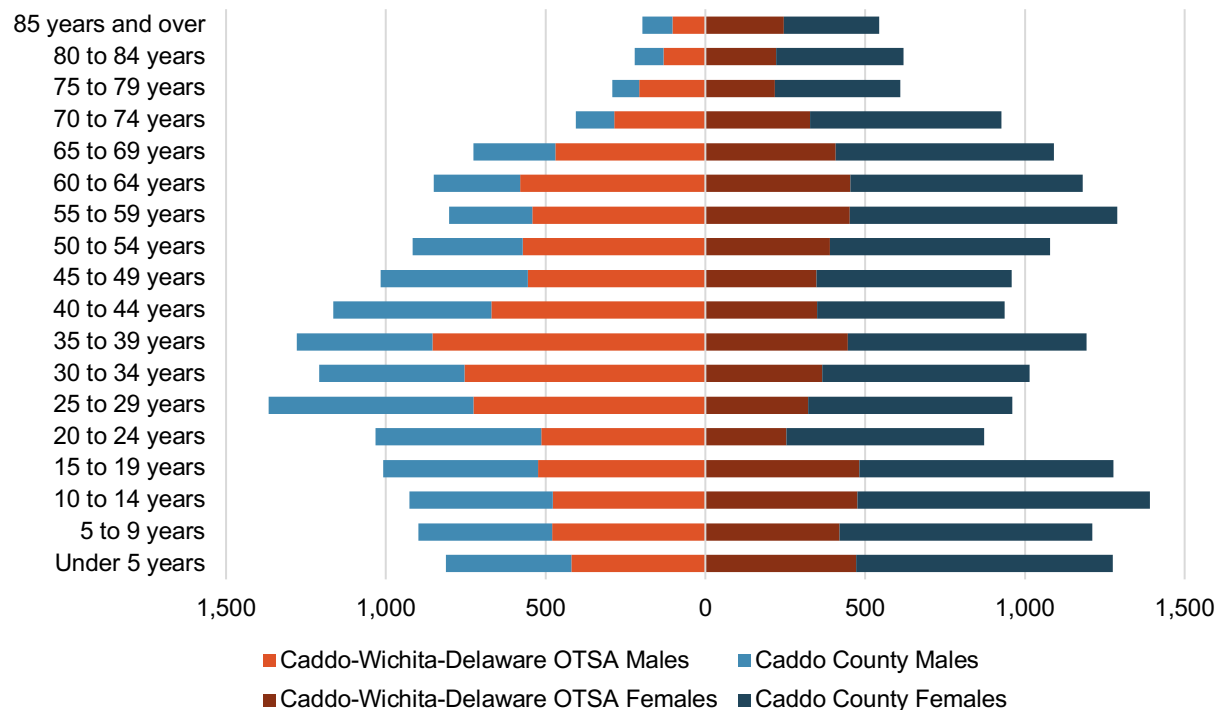
Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA (represented by the orange bars) has a relatively balanced gender distribution across most age groups, but it shows a larger population concentration among those aged 25-44. This indicates a working-age population core, which suggests economic activity and workforce potential in this age range.

Caddo County (represented by the light blue bars) shows a more pronounced representation

in older age groups, particularly in the 55-74 range. This suggests an aging population, which could point to challenges related to healthcare services, retirement communities, and potential labor shortages in the future.

Youth and Children: Both areas show smaller population counts in the under-25 category compared to other age groups, which may indicate lower birth rates and the potential for future population decline unless migration or birth rates increase.

Age Pyramid Caddo-Wichita-Delaware and Caddo County



The median age chart compares the 2010 and 2022 median ages across the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA, Caddo County, Oklahoma, and the United States.

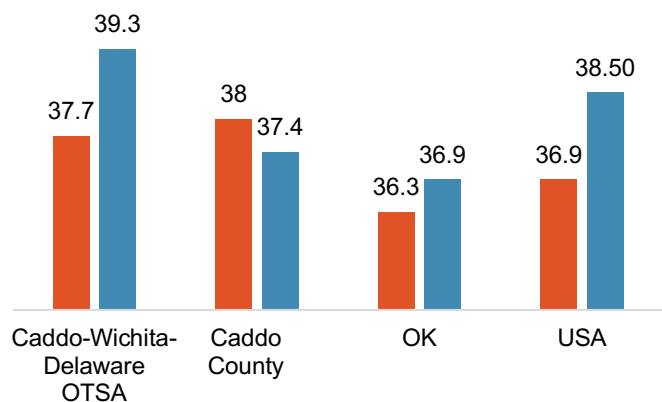
same period, reflecting a general aging trend across the country. The U.S. median age is now at 38.5, while Oklahoma is slightly younger at 36.9.

Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA saw an increase in median age from 37.7 in 2010 to 39.3 in 2022. This reflects a gradual aging of the population, consistent with national trends toward an older median age.

Caddo County similarly shows a slight decline in median age from 38 to 37.4 between 2010 and 2022, suggesting some younger population growth in recent years. However, this is still consistent with an aging trend relative to Oklahoma and the broader U.S. context.

Oklahoma and USA: Both Oklahoma and the U.S. median ages increased slightly over the

Median Age 2010 vs. 2022



Median Age

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
2010	37.7	38	36.3	36.9
2022	39.3	37.4	36.9	38.50
Change from 2011 to 2022	4%	-2%	2%	4%

Key Takeaways:

- **Aging Population:** Both the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County are experiencing aging populations, though Caddo County shows signs of a younger demographic shift.
- **Workforce Considerations:** The concentration of people in the 25-44 age

group in the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA suggests strong workforce potential, while Caddo County's older age groups may indicate a need for increased focus on healthcare and retirement services.

- **Future Growth:** Lower numbers in younger age groups suggest that future growth may rely on migration or increased birth rates to sustain population level.

Race

The racial composition of the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County reflects the broader diversity seen in Oklahoma. A significant portion of the population in both areas identifies as white, with 13,013 individuals in the OTSA and 16,743 in Caddo County. Notably, there is a substantial Native American presence, with 2,251 people in the OTSA and 5,773 in Caddo County,

aligning with the region's historical ties to indigenous communities. Hispanic or Latino residents also form a notable group, especially in Caddo County with 4,335 individuals. Smaller populations of Black or African Americans, Asians, and individuals identifying as "Some Other Race" contribute to the region's diversity. These demographics highlight the region's mix of racial and ethnic groups, with a strong Native American influence shaping its cultural identity.

Race

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	Oklahoma	USA
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,251	5,773	332,791	3,727,135
Asian	40	68	90,949	19,886,049
Black or African American	589	690	289,961	41,104,200
Hispanic or Latino	2,582	4,335	471,931	62,080,044
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	9	17	8,608	689,966
Some other Race	1,208	1,019	214,001	27,915,715
White	13,013	16,743	2,514,885	204,277,273

*Hispanic ethnicity independent of race

Employment Status

The employment data for the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA, Caddo County, Oklahoma, and the United States highlights several key trends. In both the OTSA and Caddo County, the labor force participation rates (52.4% and 53.6%, respectively) are lower than both the state (61%) and national (63.5%) averages. This indicates a smaller proportion of working-age individuals engaged in employment or actively seeking work compared to broader trends.

In terms of unemployment, the **Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA** has a notably lower rate at **3.8%**, which is better than **Caddo County** (6%), the state (4.2%), and the U.S. average (4.3%). This suggests that despite lower labor force participation, those who are part of the workforce

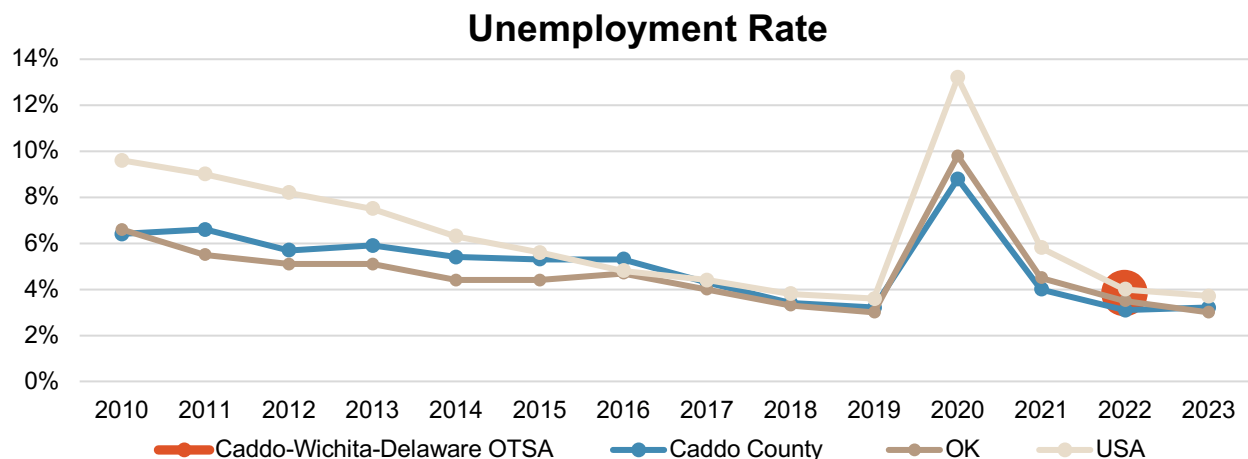
in the OTSA are more likely to be employed compared to other areas.

The **unemployment rate graph** shows a significant spike in 2020, aligning with the COVID-19 pandemic, across all regions. However, the rates have stabilized post-2021, returning to pre-pandemic levels. The Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA's unemployment rate remains consistently lower than Caddo County's and follows a similar trend to Oklahoma and the U.S., reflecting economic recovery in the region.

In summary, while labor force participation in the OTSA and Caddo County lags behind state and national levels, unemployment in the OTSA is lower, suggesting better job security for those employed. The pandemic had a noticeable impact, but unemployment rates have since rebounded across all areas.

Employment Status

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
Population 16 years and over	12,535	21,425	3,178,852	269,555,318
In labor force	52.40%	53.6%	61%	63.50%
Civilian labor force	52.30%	53.6%	60.30%	63%
Employed	50.30%	50.4%	57.80%	60.30%
Unemployed	2%	3.2%	2.50%	2.70%
Armed forces	0.10%	0.0%	0.80%	0.50%
Not in labor force	47.60%	46.4%	39%	36.50%
Civilian labor force total	6,556	11,479	1,916,016	169,852,882
Unemployment rate	3.80%	6.0%	4.20%	4.30%



Income & Poverty

The income and poverty data for the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County from 2012 to 2022 shows notable improvements in some areas, though there are mixed trends.

1. **Median Household Income:** Both regions experienced significant increases in median household income. The OTSA saw a 35% rise, reaching \$55,359, while Caddo County saw a 47% increase, bringing median income to \$53,443. These gains suggest economic growth in both areas.
2. **Per Capita Income:** While Caddo County's per capita income grew by 27%, the OTSA experienced a 10% decline, dropping from \$28,427 in 2012 to \$25,559 in 2022. This suggests that the income growth in the OTSA may not have been evenly distributed, and individual earnings may have decreased despite the overall household income increase.
3. **Poverty Rates:** Poverty rates improved in both areas over the decade. In the OTSA, poverty among all people dropped by 21%, from 19.6% in 2012 to 15.5% in 2022. Caddo County also saw a reduction in poverty for all people, decreasing by 11% to 18.6% in 2022. However, poverty rates for individuals under 18 in Caddo County remained static at 28.5%, while the OTSA saw a 10% decrease in child poverty to 24.5%.
4. **Unemployment:** Both regions saw improvements in unemployment. The OTSA maintained a low unemployment rate of 3.8% in 2022, while Caddo County's unemployment rate significantly improved from 6.4% in 2012 to 3.1% in 2022.

In summary, while both areas saw positive trends in median household income and poverty reduction, the decline in per capita income in the OTSA suggests potential disparities in individual earnings. Additionally, child poverty in Caddo County remains an ongoing challenge.

Income & Poverty

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA		Caddo County	
	2012	2022	2012	2022
Median Household Income	\$41,069	\$55,359	\$36,413	\$53,443
% Change		35%		47%
Per Capita Income	\$28,427	\$25,559	\$32,930	\$41,804
% Change		-10%		27%
Poverty-All Families		11.1%		16.4%
Poverty-All People	19.60%	15.5%	20.80%	18.6%
% Change		-21%		-11%
Poverty -Person <18 year	27.30%	24.5%	28.50%	28.5%
% Change		-10%		0%
Unemployment Rate		3.8%	6.40%	3.10%

The data suggests that **Caddo County** and the **Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA** have higher proportions of lower- and middle-income households compared to the state and national averages. While both regions have a solid middle class, there are fewer households in the higher-

income brackets compared to the U.S. This indicates some economic challenges, particularly in achieving greater income equity across the population, but also shows stability in the middle-income ranges.

Household Income

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
Total households	5,379	9,099	1,522,711	125,736,353
Less than \$10,000	4.6%	5.6%	5.6%	4.9%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.6	5.6	4.4	3.8
\$15,000 to \$24,999	9.8	9.3	8.5	7
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.2	12.9	9.4	7.4
\$35,000 to \$49,999	13.5	14.4	12.9	10.7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17.9	20.9	18.2	16.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.6	12.2	13	12.8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.8	12.9	15.2	17.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4.6	3.7	6.4	8.8
\$200,000 or more	3.4	2.3	6.3	11.4

Employment & Industry

The 2023 annual employment by industry data for Caddo County, Oklahoma, reveals important insights into the local labor market and wage distribution across sectors. Caddo County's economy is heavily supported by government employment (33% of total workforce), especially

at the local level, though high-paying jobs are concentrated in federal government and natural resources. Sectors like leisure and hospitality lag in terms of wages, while education and health services remain significant employers. Wage disparities across industries highlight the economic dependence on higher-paying sectors like mining and construction.

2023 Annual Employment by Industry – Caddo County, Oklahoma

Ownership/Industry	Total Establishments	Avg. Employed	Total Wages	Avg. Weekly Wages Per Employee	Avg. Wages Per Employee
All Industries	640	7,072	\$ 335,686,492	\$913	\$47,467
Federal Government	21	520	\$38,572,533	\$1,426	\$74,142
State Government	11	147	\$7,424,802	\$972	\$50,566
Local Government	75	2,336	\$96,045,717	\$791	\$41,111
Private	533	4,069	\$193,643,440	\$915	\$47,592
Trade, transportation, and utilities	148	1,292	65,496,584	975	50,710
Professional and business services	69	333	19,697,265	1,138	59,195
Education and health services	59	841	35,019,223	801	41,632
Financial activities	56	247	13,513,594	1,051	54,656
Natural resources and mining	50	281	13,873,645	949	49,372
Construction	49	370	28,358,152	1,474	76,626
Leisure and hospitality	46	437	6,639,559	292	15,196
Other services	28	103	3,642,577	681	35,393
Manufacturing	18	73	2,838,403	746	38,794
Information	12	92	4,564,438	954	49,613

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics - 2023 Annual Averages, Employment and Wage Data

The occupational data for the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA from 2010 to 2022 highlights significant shifts in key industries:

Major growth in oil drilling and fracking, but jobs are filled by non-residents.

Employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining has seen substantial growth, rising from 7% in 2010 to 18% in 2022, far exceeding the state average of 4%. This growth is likely due to the increase in oil drilling and fracking in the region. However, occupations are not filled by locals, rather, positions are filled by non-residents.

Construction jobs surge with major energy projects.

Construction jobs rose from 3% to 9%, in line with state trends, but this reflects a heightened emphasis on infrastructure and development. DN suggests growth is driven by non-resident workers employed on the Caddo Wind Project, owned by ALLETE Clean Energy. Further job increases are expected, as Western Farmers Electric Cooperative started construction in October 2024 on two new GE Vernova aeroderivative

generators, with a projected completion date in late 2026. However, jobs will likely be filled by non-residents with qualified training.

Dollar General is replacing grocery stores.

The retail trade sector has grown to 12%, consistent with broader county and state averages, indicating its role as a stable employment option. The significant jump from 7% to 12% is likely due to the seven new Dollar Generals in the county.

Tourism contraction linked to population decline and regional competition.

The OTSA experienced a decrease in the arts, entertainment, and food service sectors, with a drop from 11% to 8%, indicating a possible contraction in tourism-related industries. This decline may be attributed to a population decrease in the county, reducing its ability to sustain these sectors. Additionally, the neighboring Grady County's efforts to expand and revitalize the city of Chickasha could be drawing tourism away from Caddo County, further impacting the local industry.

Occupations for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA		Caddo County		OK	
	2010	2022	2010	2022	2010	2022
Civilian employed population 16+	5,715	6,304	10,722	10,794	1,674,765	1,800,158
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	16%	17%	23%	20%	22%	23%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	7%	18%	12%	13%	5%	4%
Retail trade	7%	12%	11%	12%	12%	12%
Construction	3%	9%	8%	8%	7%	7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	11%	8%	8%	11%	9%	9%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	7%	7%	6%	9%	5%	6%
Public administration	2%	7%	9%	8%	6%	6%
Manufacturing	5%	5%	6%	4%	10%	9%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5%	4%	4%	3%	8%	9%
Other services, except public administration	19%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	7%	3%	5%	3%	6%	6%
Wholesale trade	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Information	7%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%

Source: 2010, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau: My Tribal Area.

Households Size

Both household and family sizes have increased in the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County from 2010 to 2022, reflecting a trend toward slightly larger families and households. This growth is in line with statewide

and national trends but remains somewhat higher than the averages seen at the state and national levels. The region's rising household and family sizes could reflect cultural factors, economic conditions, or housing trends that encourage larger household units.

Average Family Household Size

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA		Caddo County		OK		USA	
	2010	2022	2010	2022	2010	2022	2010	2022
Total HH	5,078	5,379	10,410	9,099	1,421,705	1,522,711	114,235,996	125,736,353
Avg. HH size	2.54	2.65	2.6	2.8	2.51	2.53	2.59	2.57
Total families	3,612	3,510	7,434	5,917	951,242	987,338	76,254,318	81,432,908
Avg. family size	3.03	3.32	3.08	3.54	3.07	3.14	3.17	3.18

Educational Characteristics

Both charts highlight a strong emphasis on primary and secondary education in the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County, with higher enrollment rates for younger students. However, the transition to higher education is a

challenge, as indicated by lower college enrollment rates and fewer individuals attaining bachelor's and graduate degrees compared to state and national averages. This suggests opportunities for improving higher education access and attainment in the region.

School Enrollment

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
Population 3+ enrolled in school	3,163	5,726	994,939	80,425,705
Nursery school, preschool	238	7.5%	6.4%	6.0%
Kindergarten	185	5.8%	5.8%	5.5%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	1,548	48.9%	49.8%	43.2%
High school (grades 9-12)	826	26.1%	26.0%	21.4%
College or graduate school	366	11.6%	12.1%	23.9%

Educational Attainment

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
Population 25 years and over	10,987			
Less than 9th grade	671	6.1%	4.5%	3.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,024	9.3%	8.8%	7.3%
High school graduate (and equivalency)	4,556	41.5%	45.4%	30.8%
Some college, no degree	2,361	21.5%	20.8%	22.6%
Associate's degree	569	5.2%	5.3%	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	1,313	12.0%	11.1%	17.8%
Graduate or professional degree	493	4.5%	4.0%	9.5%
Percent high school graduate or higher	X	84.6%	86.6%	88.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	X	16.4%	15.1%	27.3%

Internet Use

The charts illustrate the increase in computer and broadband internet access in the **Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA, Caddo County, Oklahoma**, and the **U.S.** between 2017 and 2022.

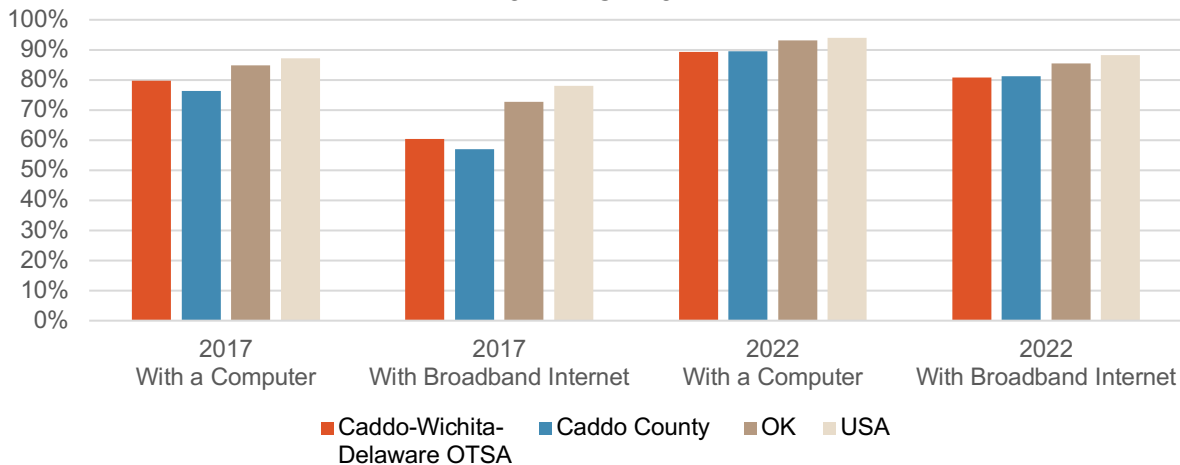
Although the data shows positive growth, DN highlights several critical local challenges:

- Approximately one-third of local Tribal Members lack internet access at home.
- Efforts to get AT&T, the region's sole provider, to connect rural "last mile" homes have proven difficult.

- Insufficient and weak cell towers in the area hinder the ability to use hot spots and wireless home internet services.
- Building larger cell phone towers faces significant hurdles, including excessive red tape and concerns over disturbing sacred grounds in Indian Country.

The Delaware Nation currently offers a broadband internet subsidy for **1,000 Delaware Nation households**, which likely contributed to the increase in broadband access in the region. This program has provided critical support, making broadband more accessible and affordable, especially in rural or underserved areas within the OTSA.

Computers and Internet Use 2017 vs. 2022



Computers and Internet Use

	Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA	Caddo County	OK	USA
2017				
Total Households	5293	10,273	1,468,971	118,825,921
Percent of households with a computer	79.7%	76.4%	84.9%	87.2%
Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription	60.40%	56.90%	72.80%	78.10%
2022				
Total Households	5379	9,099	1,522,711	125,736,353
Percent of households with a computer	89.3%	89.6%	93.1%	94.0%
Percent of households with a broadband Internet subscription	80.9%	81.3%	85.6%	88.3%

Historical Economic Challenges

Industrial Closures

The 2005 closure of Golden Peanut Company and Hollytex Carpet Mill in 2000 led to the loss of over 370 jobs, devastating the local economy. No other major employer has entered the region since. The recent completion of the Caddo Wind Project offered limited benefits as most workers were non-residents, causing economic gains to leave the community.

Tourism Decline

Cultural and tourism attractions once played a larger role in the local economy but have declined over time. The American Indian Expo and Indian City, which once attracted many Tribal Nations, saw participation dwindle throughout the 1990s. This decline is attributed to increased competition, insufficient accommodations, shifting tourism and cultural trends, and the deterioration of the Caddo County Fairgrounds. Additionally, internal conflicts within Tribal leadership and politics have hindered cohesive efforts to revitalize these attractions.

Local Business Struggles

Main Street businesses in Anadarko have struggled to stay open, limiting Delaware Nation's ability to foster thriving local enterprises. Local households are unlikely to support main street because of limited disposable income. Instead, they are more likely to purchase budget-friendly products online with free shipping. This has compounded the economic difficulties already facing the region.

Transportation & Credit Barriers

A significant challenge for many Tribal members is the inability to commute to work. Many do not own a car, and obtaining one is difficult due to a lack of credit. This limits access to job opportunities, creating a cycle of financial hardship.

Federal Support Threats

Potential relocations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) DC Office and General Services Administration (GSA) offices would disrupt vital federal support for Delaware Nation, weakening already fragile systems of economic aid and resources.

Shifting Focus Beyond Tribal Culture

While cultural preservation remains a priority, the Delaware Nation is increasingly focused on expanding economic initiatives beyond traditional tribal culture. This includes seeking new business opportunities, diversifying Tribal enterprises, and improving access to critical resources like education and infrastructure.

Youth Challenges

The younger generation of Delaware Nation lack financial literacy, which hinders their ability to manage personal finances and build credit, crucial skills needed for economic mobility. Motivation to complete higher education is also low. Improving life skills education and creating better employment pathways for youth will be critical to breaking the cycle of poverty and fostering a more prosperous future for the community.

Economic Development Analysis

Infrastructure Assets Related to Economic Development

Community Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g., roads, water supply, sewerage, telecommunication, and energy) needed to sustain the operation of a community.

Delaware Nation's jurisdiction over infrastructure in the region is limited, as it does not have a

designated reservation. Its infrastructure is confined primarily to its own facilities and the immediate areas surrounding them. However, the Tribe has partnered with local municipalities and the state on regional infrastructure projects.

Tribal Facilities & Land

The Tribe is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the following facilities:

Name/Location	Address	Size (acres)	Designation
Tribal Jurisdiction	Anadarko, OK Caddo-Witchita-Delaware OTSA	2,600	Trust
Government Buildings			
Delaware Nation Complex (Tamanend Building)	31064 State Highway 281 Anadarko, OK		
Robert Lawrence Building Administration on Aging Delaware Wellness Center	31064 State Highway 281 Anadarko, OK	17	Trust
Cultural Preservation Building	103 W. Broadway Anadarko, OK		Fee
Delaware Nation Museum & Library	105 W. Broadway Anadarko, OK (Lot 29 & 30, Block 36)		Fee
Delaware Nation Community Center (Projected completion: April 2026)			
Businesses			
Green Tech Property (Overseen by DNI)	1617 Industrial Road Anadarko, OK	44	Fee
Lenape Shirt Company (Closed to Public)	605 West Georgia Anadarko, OK (Lot 14, Block 7)		Fee
Gold River Casino (Overseen by Lenape Entertainment)	31064 State Highway 281 Anadarko, OK		
Casino Oklahoma (Overseen by Lenape Entertainment)	220 E Cummins St Hinton, OK	20 89	Trust Fee
Housing			
10 homes funded by the Indian Housing Block Grant	N/A		
20 homes (IHBG-Competitive Grant – In progress)	N/A		
Other Buildings			
Building/Land	607 West Georgia Anadarko, OK		Fee

(Lot 13, Block 7)

West Chester, Pennsylvania Property		12.2	Fee
Land			
Hardees West Acquisition (Future Orchard & Apiary)		2	Fee
Petree Property			
Lenape Gardens Community Area NEW Community Center Our Children's Garden Early Childhood Development Center	Anadarko, OK	20.29	Fee
Additional Petree Property (Housing)	Anadarko, OK	5	Fee

Regional Zoning Advantages

Anadarko, Oklahoma is within Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs). QOZs were created due to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (passed in late 2017). QOZs are economically distressed communities designated by states and territories and certified by the U.S. Treasury Department, in which certain types of investments may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. The tax incentive is designed to spur economic development and job creation in distressed communities by providing these tax benefits to investors.

A Priority Enterprise Zone (PEZ) is a designated area that uses incentives to attract capital and businesses to an Opportunity Zone. PEZs are created to help alleviate poverty and stimulate economic growth. Investors who take advantage of Oklahoma's Federal Opportunity Zones within PEZs can potentially layer other state and/or local incentives such as the Investment Tax Credit, Enterprise Zone Incentive Leverage Act, and Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

Anadarko, OK is also within a USDA mapped Food Desert Eligible Area. This designation allows for special financing for food retailers and other sources of funding to improve access to healthy and affordable food.

Road Systems

DN does not maintain any major roadways, but they have assisted in local municipal collaborations on projects.

- **2014** – DN initiated a signalization project on US Highway 281, enhancing access to the Casino, OK in Hinton, OK.
- **2015** – DN partnered with Oklahoma Department of Transportation to widen U.S. Hwy 281 near the Delaware Nation Casino in Hinton, OK.
- **2016** – DN collaborated with County and State agencies to repair Park Road Bridge in Anadarko, OK.

Electricity

Electricity in Anadarko is costly, making it challenging for many Delaware Nation citizens to afford living within city limits. As a result, many have opted to reside on the outskirts where CK Energy provides more affordable electric services to rural areas. In contrast, Anadarko Municipal Power Services, which supplies both water and electricity within the town, remains a higher-cost option, driving citizens to seek alternatives outside the city.

Water

The City of Anadarko faces frequent water main disruptions due to aging water infrastructure, and efforts to secure funding for necessary water and sewer system upgrades have been challenging.

All of DN's new constructions and renovations are built with updated and reliable water and sewer connections. In 2016, Delaware Nation initiated the development of a new Lift Station and Force Main, connecting its Government Offices and Gold River Casino to the Anadarko sewer system to support sustainable growth. The project was completed in 2017, enhancing wastewater management and contributing to regional economic development.

Housing

DN currently has ten homes that are maintained and operated with funding from the Indian Housing Block Grant. In 2023, DN was awarded \$3,825,000 HUD IHBG-Competitive Grant to purchase 20 homes for eligible applicants, supporting housing stability and economic growth.

CEDS Survey: Survey responses underscore the critical need for improved broadband internet access for Tribal members. Looking to the next five years, 33% of respondents identified the improvement of essential services, including broadband internet, as a top economic development priority. Additionally, 38% specifically highlighted improved internet/broadband access as the most needed development activity for the Tribe and surrounding community. These responses reflect a strong demand for enhanced connectivity to support economic growth and community well-being.

CEDS Survey: Survey responses indicate a strong need among Tribal members, both inside and outside service areas, to address the high cost of living through targeted economic development initiatives. Key concerns include making essential services and housing more affordable, increasing food security, improving essential utilities, and enhancing cultural wellness and financial literacy.

Specifically, 49% of respondents identified “addressing the high cost of living for essential services” as a top priority, with “building affordable and attainable housing” following closely. Dissatisfaction with housing costs and availability was reported by 45% of respondents, while 65% were unhappy with the general cost of living. Additionally, 58% emphasized the need for improved “services for the elderly” as a critical community resource. These responses underscore a widespread demand for economic strategies that enhance affordability, support community well-being, and improve quality of life for Tribal citizens across all demographics.

Broadband Internet

Broadband and communication infrastructure has improved since the Tribe was awarded a National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Grant Award in 2022. DN received \$7,219,711 establishing Community WiFi at various Tribal locations and providing laptops to families, improving digital access and economic opportunities.

Despite data collected from the Census Bureau asserting broadband connectivity has improved in the region, broadband internet access for Tribal citizens faces significant challenges. Despite distributing laptops, about one-third remain unused due to connectivity issues. Many rural areas lack “last mile” connections, and hot spots are ineffective,

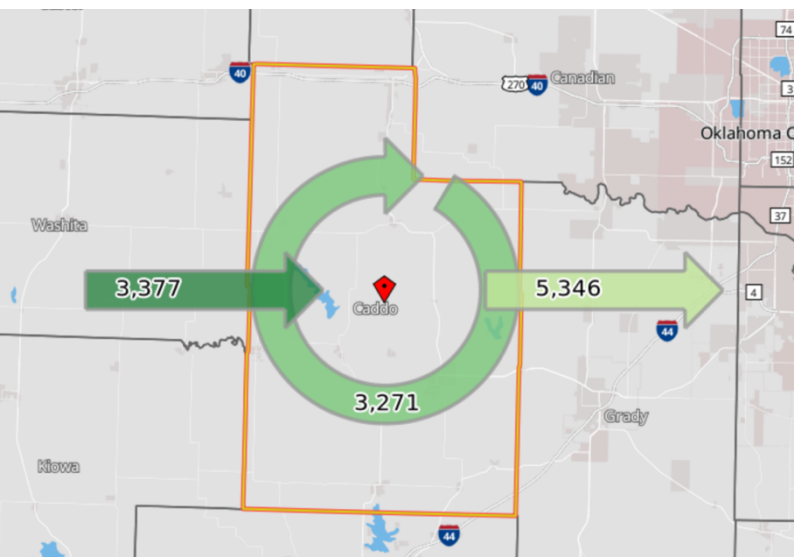
leaving roughly one-third of members without internet. This limits remote work options and forces reliance on small devices for

Workforce Needs Analysis

Regional Workforce Overview

The U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program uses data from a variety of sources including the unemployment insurance program, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), and administrative data from censuses and surveys to create models estimating worker commutes for primary employment.

According to 2021 figures, there were about 6,648 employed in Caddo County. Approximately 3,271 worked and lived in the county. 3,377 worked in the area but did not live there. 5,346 lived there and worked outside the area.



Source: Center for Economic Studies (CES), OnTheMap, 2019

Workforce Readiness

There is an opportunity to enhance workforce readiness by developing skills, knowledge, and competencies. Furthermore, leadership training is needed to expand skillsets and prepare future leaders for Tribal government positions.

applications. Building larger towers could help, but construction is complicated by the risk of disturbing sacred sites in Indian Country.

Delaware Nation operates several vehicles to provide workforce training and education assistance via the Social Services and the Vocational Rehab departments.

Educational assistance includes the Secondary School Incentive Program, Education-HS / College Program, Adult Vocational Program, Higher Education (Pell Eligible) Program, College Financial Assistance Program, Higher Education (Pell Ineligible) Program, Lenape Wise Program, Graduation Stipend Program, College Prep Program, Back-to-School Program, and First Time Driver's Education Assistance Program.

Workforce assistance includes the Direct Employment Assistance Program which provides a daily stipend for gas and lunch costs until a Tribal citizen's first paycheck is received and assistance with obtaining required tools or uniforms for new employment. Additionally, the DN's Vocational Rehabilitation services serve eight counties and provide counseling, guidance, evaluations, education/training, employment assistance, transportation assistance, and clothing assistance.

CEDS Survey: When surveyed on economic development priorities, 32% of respondents identified "increasing workforce development and job training" as a top priority for the Tribe. Additionally, when asked to define "success" in economic development, 25% of respondents described it as having a professionally trained Tribal Citizen workforce. Looking ahead, 46% indicated that "Tribal workforce development" is the most needed economic development activity over the next five years.

Youth Workforce Outlook

Primary and secondary education in the Caddo-Wichita-Delaware OTSA and Caddo County show high enrollment rates. However, college enrollment and the attainment of bachelor's and graduate degrees are lower than state and national averages, highlighting opportunities to enhance access to and achievement in higher education within the region.

DN offers job shadowing opportunities and workshops to introduce students to different career avenues. More recently, DN hosted the FBI Junior Citizenship Academy where high school and middle school students learned from special agents, intelligence analysts, language specialists, and professional staff with several presentations on topics including terrorism, cybercrime, public corruption, polygraph exams, evidence response, SWAT, and the day-to-day operations of a typical FBI office. Attendance from Tribal students was high and interest was strong.

One of the primary needs identified during the initial Tribal workshop was improving financial literacy for students. This includes essential skills like budgeting, managing a credit card account responsibly, and understanding personal finance

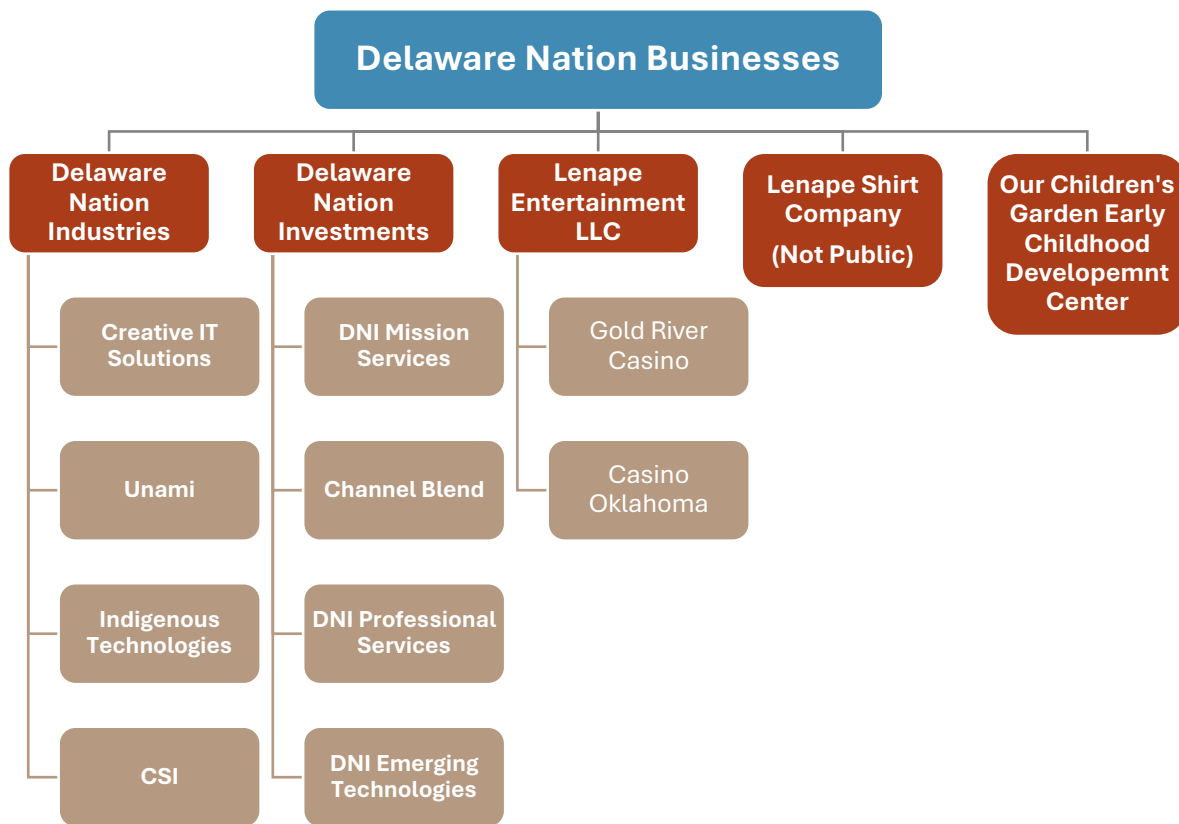
basics. By equipping students with these financial tools, the Tribe aims to foster greater economic independence and financial stability among young members, preparing them for future financial decisions and challenges.

CEDS Survey: Expanding educational opportunities for pre-K and K-12 students ranked among the top five economic development priorities, with 34% of respondents identifying it as essential for DN. Additionally, 41% expressed that DN should broaden its focus on education as a potential Tribal business enterprise. While Tribal citizens are generally satisfied with DN's current educational initiatives, they are express further development in this area.

Workforce Opportunities

Delaware Nation Businesses Operations

Delaware Nation directly operates several businesses. In addition, the Tribe owns both Delaware Nation Industries and Delaware Nation Investments, both are federally recognized Tribal contractors and parent companies to several entities. Collectively, DNIndustries and DNInvestments employ 1,300 people.



DNIndustries & DNInvestments: Computer & Software Education Assistance

Delaware Nation is actively working to bridge the digital divide among its tribal members by creating opportunities in computer and software education. With a focus on expanding access to technology, the Nation has implemented a broadband internet subsidy program for 1,000 households, increasing connectivity and enabling more members to participate in digital education and training.

Despite the growth in access, there remains a gap in representation within Delaware Nation's IT enterprises. DNIndustries and DNInvestments, which operate IT companies employing over 1,300 individuals, currently have only 13 tribal members employed. This highlights the need for continued efforts in providing tribal members with the necessary skills and education to compete for positions in these growing industries. By

expanding access to technology and offering educational support, Delaware Nation is taking meaningful steps toward empowering its members and fostering greater tribal participation in the IT sector.

DNIndustries & DNInvestments: Construction

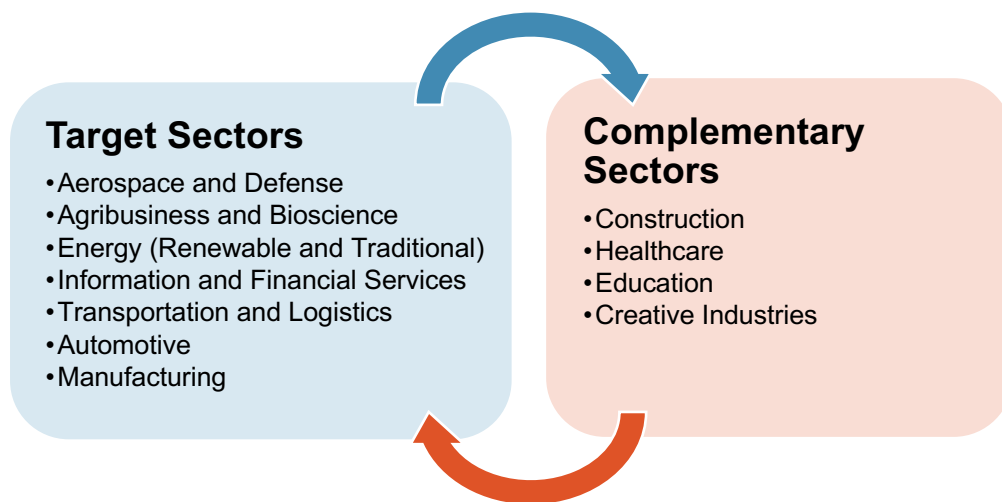
DNI is expanding its construction operations to meet the needs of current IT clients and leverage its Indian designation, creating valuable workforce opportunities for Tribal members. Upcoming projects include construction at the Norfolk Naval Base, modular government office builds, an \$8 million dog kennel for border patrol, and general building design contracts. This growth in DNI's construction business offers ample employment prospects for Tribal members, supporting workforce development within the community.

Greentech Center Renovation

A significant recent initiative includes a \$2.6 million investment from the U.S. Department of Commerce in 2022 to renovate the Greentech Center facility. This project aims to attract businesses focused on green technology, creating dozens of jobs and generating nearly \$900,000 in private investment. The Greentech Center is envisioned as an incubator for environmentally friendly startups, aligning with the Tribe's goal of promoting sustainable industries while boosting local employment.

South Central Oklahoma Workforce Development Area

Oklahoma Department of Commerce has identified Key Industry Sectors for the state of Oklahoma. The Key Industry Sectors provide a competitive advantage in a global economy. They exhibit significant potential for employment growth and provide wealth generating employment opportunities. The figure below displays both the Target and Complementary Sectors for the region.



Regional Workforce Preparedness

Caddo Kiowa Technology Center

Caddo Kiowa Technology Center (CKTC) offers training in basic construction trades, pre-engineering, and HVAC, providing valuable foundational skills for Tribal members interested in careers with Delaware Nation Industries' expanding construction sector. These programs equip students with practical knowledge and technical skills that align well with DNI's projects, such as modular government office construction and other specialized builds. While these courses offer an excellent starting point, further education may be needed to pursue more technical career advancement, allowing Tribal members to access higher-level opportunities.

Economic Development Capacity

Economic development is achieved through internal and external entities working collaboratively to address vision, goals, and implementation actions. These entities often have focused roles in their activities but play a more significant role in economic development success. For example, education and training may focus on the youth in the community, but they also are a crucial part of preparing the future workforce.

This section provides insight into the internal and external economic development capacity for the Delaware Nation.

Internal Capacity

Delaware Nation has several departments that play vital roles in the community, social, and economic development.

- Housing Department
- Environmental Programs
- Community Health Representative Program
- Cultural Preservation
- Historical Preservation
- Grant Coordinator & Grant Writer

- Family & Social Services
- Vocational Rehab

DN also has two tribally controlled enterprises that act as the economic development arm of the Tribe.

The **Delaware Nation Economic Development Authority** or **Delaware Nation Industries (DNI)** leverages tribal advantages for non-gaming business strategies. DNI is focused on delivering business growth strategies and solutions for both government and commercial sectors. Their core services and solutions include enterprise information technology, engineering services, program/project management, cybersecurity operations, security (investigative & physical), modular & construction, inside/outside plant cabling, and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS/sUAS). With expertise in areas like IT services, construction, security, and environmental services, DNI supports projects for agencies such as the U.S. military and Indian Health Service. They provide a range of services, from modular construction to cybersecurity, leveraging tribal advantages to drive success for their partners and create financial independence for the Delaware Nation.

Delaware Nation Investments (DNI) uses non-gaming business strategies to generate financial benefits for the Delaware Nation. They specialize in artificial intelligence (AI), data science & annotation, blockchain technology, customer contact support, professional services, network operations & support services, cybersecurity, land & title research services, and Value-Added-Reselling (VAR). Their mission-driven approach is supported by a skilled team of data scientists and cyber engineers, delivering innovative solutions to U.S. government enterprises. DNI also operates Channel Blend, offering customized support and data-driven results for client campaigns.

External Capacity

Delaware Nation's jurisdiction authority overlaps Caddo County and portions of Grady, Canadian, Blaine, Custer, and Washita Counties.

- Anadarko Economic Development Authority (AEDA)
- Association South Central Oklahoma Governments (ASCOGS)
- Redlands Community College
- University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma – Chickasha Campus
- Oklahoma State University Extension
- Riverside Indian School
- Caddo County Health Department
- USDA State Director of Rural Development in Oklahoma
- American Indian Chamber of Commerce (AICCO)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- Caddo Kiowa Technology Center
- Indian Health Services
- SparkWheel
- Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

Tribal Survey Analysis

The CEDS Survey sought to collect information on barriers to economic development, ideal projects for the Tribe, how Tribal government can help improve community economics, and overall hopes for the future. According to the CEDS Tribal Survey, Delaware Nation citizens consider economic development success as:

1. Support for Tribal citizens in terms of financial, social, Tribal Elders, and wellness, etc.
2. Cultural preservation and growth
3. Independence from government assistance
4. Jobs for Tribal citizens
5. Education and workforce development
6. Business diversification via the continued success of DNI

Tribal Citizen Support

Support for Tribal citizens inside and outside of service areas includes addressing high cost of living, increasing food security, building affordable housing, improving the delivery of essential services and utilities, providing more cultural wellness services, and improving financial literacy. When asked to define the economic development activities the Tribe and surrounding community most need over the next five years, 58% and the top responses was “services for the elderly.”

Cultural Preservation and Growth

Respondents highlighted cultural and community alignment as vital for economic development, with a strong emphasis on cultural preservation through language, traditions, and ceremonies. Suggestions to expand cultural connections, like broadcasting events and sharing educational resources with out-of-state citizens, aim to unify the community across distances. Prioritizing youth involvement in cultural education and language revitalization ensures heritage continuity and fosters a skilled, culturally grounded generation. Respondents' emphasis on aligning cultural preservation with community goals strengthens DN's heritage and economic resilience, building a solid foundation for sustainable growth.

Financial Independence

When asked to define “success” for the Tribe's economic development, 52% of respondents selected “economic self-sufficiency for the government,” highlighting the importance of financial independence as a foundation for resilience. Financial autonomy is seen as essential for meeting community needs, adapting to economic changes, and pursuing growth, reflecting Tribal members' desire for long-term stability where the Nation can sustain its citizens' well-being through self-directed initiatives.

Jobs and Workforce Development

When surveyed on economic development priorities, 32% of respondents identified "increasing workforce development and job training" as a top priority for the Tribe.

Additionally, when asked to define "success" in economic development, 25% of respondents described it as having a professionally trained Tribal Citizen workforce. Looking ahead, 46% indicated that "Tribal workforce development" is the most needed economic development activity over the next five years.

Education

Expanding educational opportunities for pre-K and K-12 students ranked among the top five economic development priorities, with 34% of respondents identifying it as essential for DN. Additionally, 41% expressed that DN should broaden its focus on education as a potential Tribal business enterprise. While Tribal citizens are generally satisfied with DN's current educational initiatives, they are express further development in this area.

Business Diversification via DN Industries

Survey responses highlighted business diversification, especially through Delaware Nation Industries, as crucial for economic resilience and financial independence. When defining "success" for the Tribe's economic development, 40% of respondents selected "Business diversification to increase financial resilience." Additionally, in response to an open-ended question on goals for the next five years, 30% of 185 comments focused on achieving financial stability through the expansion and diversification of business enterprises, as well as the continued growth of Delaware Nation Industries. This focus on financial autonomy reflects a strong desire among Tribal members for long-term stability, where the Nation can sustain its citizens' well-being and adapt to economic changes through self-directed and diversified business initiatives.

SWOT Analysis

Overview

Understanding the Tribes's unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) is important for determining areas of potential growth and how to better prepare for future economic and community disruptions.

This SWOT analysis focuses on the specific issue of Kashia's economic sovereignty and development. Strengths and weaknesses often relate to those things that are internal to an organization, whereas opportunities and threats most often reflect those things that are external to an organization. The following analysis shows

that the Tribe is uniquely positioned to seek out opportunities for strengthening community support programs and establishing unique business opportunities on Tribal lands while still respecting the Tribe's cultural values and long-standing traditions.

Core themes from the analysis are a need for increased education and training, the unique knowledge set of Tribal members, and the importance of ensuring Tribal members' basic needs are met including access to housing, food, healthcare, and transportation.

Strengths

- Forward thinking
- DNEDA (DNI), ex-committee
- Economic development diversity
- DNEDA (DNI)
- Current economic development
- Tribal citizen focused
- Social services programs for members
- Goal oriented leadership
- Leadership
- Executive committee
- Policies and procedures in place
- Stable tribal government
- Community investment
- Longevity with workforce
- Grant supported programs
- Good relationship with community
- Grant funding
- Grant writer
- Blood Quantum Dependency reform
- Tribal citizen diversity
- Tribal citizen focused
- Tribal membership involvement: CEDS Survey!
- Diversity
- Culture
- Frequent positive feedback on social media from citizens
- Forward thinking
- Revenue Allocation Economic Development (RAED) Plan – low-risk interest bearing Trust Account for the Nation's Minors

Weaknesses

- Capacity infrastructure: space
- Employees spread thin
- Lack of tribal lands
- Adequate office spaces
- Low volunteer rate
- Lack of tribal citizen participation
- Tribal participation
- Tribal participation
- Need for more funding
- Funding
- Additional services specifically for disabled children and adults
- Infrastructure of Anadarko
- Difficulty building economic opportunities in an economically deprived area
- Lack of leadership development for future tribal government/leadership
- Tribal communication to leadership and Tribal employees – cursing and complaining
- Negative communication on social media
- Potential for future poor leadership because current leadership will be passed their term
- Division
- Disagreements
- Unwillingness to change or accept change

Opportunities

- Financial literacy for school children and young adults
- Collaboration with other tribes
- Tourism
- Business development
- Job advancement
- Workforce training
- Constitutional reform
- Land acquisition
- Enrollment growth
- Investing in Tribal youth
- More funding
- Financial stability
- Federal funding

Threats

- Negative information on social media
- Negative attitude
- Lack of interest / indifference of Tribal citizen youth
- Loss of funding
- Loss of revenue – Federal government cutting grants
- Federal and state government
- Oklahoma Governor
- Social government
- Reduced gaming revenue
- Younger generation not interested in gaming
- Lack of affordable housing available for Tribal citizens in the region
- High utility bills in Anadarko
- City employees lack knowledge of building codes
- Cost of land
- Poor local community leaders

Economic Resiliency

Overview

The Economic Development Administration highlights that regional economic prosperity increasingly depends on an area's ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions, or "shocks," to its economic base. While many definitions of economic resilience focus solely on rapid recovery, in economic development, resilience encompasses three key attributes: ability to recover quickly from a shock, the capacity to withstand a shock and the capability to avoid the shock altogether.

The background summary and SWOT analysis address the first two types of disruptions, which are often managed through strategies outlined in the action plan. However, the third type—external shocks due to disasters and climate change requires additional attention for effective resilience planning.

Economic Vulnerabilities

Delaware Nation and the CEDS process have identified several vulnerabilities:

- **Workforce:** Tribal members experience barriers to enter the workforce due to lack of available jobs, training, health, transportation, etc.
- **Regional Infrastructure:** Town permitting process, aging water infrastructure, lack of broadband to rural communities
- **Business Development/Entrepreneurship:** Limited economic base, business closures, lack of active workforce development initiatives, etc.

- **Housing:** Lack of available housing, affordable housing, accessibility in housing, elderly housing, etc.
- **Dependency on External Funding Sources:** Relying heavily on external grants or subsidies creates vulnerability if those funding sources are reduced or discontinued.

Climate Vulnerabilities

Delaware Nation updated their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) with the technical help of FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant Program in 2024. The HMP is used to identify all possible natural disasters that could affect DN and to prepare for these events by clarifying action plans to determine capabilities and resources for preparedness. With a completed HMP, DN will be able to apply for Emergency Management grants that could further the Nation's preparedness and emergency response capabilities.

Strategies To Address Climate and Economic Risks

Economic Diversification: We will promote economic diversification by identifying and supporting new economic opportunities and sectors.

Climate Adaptation: We will implement climate adaptation strategies, including infrastructure improvements, land-use planning, and community preparedness measures, to mitigate the impact of climate-related risks.

Resource Management: Sustainable resource management practices will be adopted to support economic growth while preserving the environment

Capacity Building: To enhance resilience, we will invest in education, training, and skills development to empower community members to adapt and thrive in changing conditions.

Disaster Preparedness: We will develop and implement plans for disaster preparedness and

response to protect our community's economic stability during emergencies.

Implementation: We will prioritize resilience initiatives based on their importance and potential impact. Resources, including funding, staff, and expertise, will be allocated to support the successful implementation of resilience initiatives. Specific timelines and milestones will be established to ensure that resilience initiatives progress according to plan.

Strategic Direction

Vision & Goals

The Strategic Action Plan is the cornerstone of the CEDS, outlining the strategic elements necessary for achieving economic development success. It provides a framework of broad visions, goals, and actionable programs to guide future growth and prosperity.

Tribal Vision and Mission

The following are Delaware Nation tribal vision and mission:

- **Vision:** To promote the economic, moral, cultural, and health status of all our citizens.
- **Mission:** Through united effort and determination, we promote the education and well-being of our citizens and secure unto our Nation and our Nation's descendants the rights, powers and privileges provided by the laws of the Delaware Nation.

Therefore, to maintain consistency with the Delaware Nation's vision and mission, the following outlines the vision of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:

Economic Development Goals

Accomplishing this vision is five broad goals have been developed that capture the essence of opportunity and strengths of the Delaware Nation while addressing economic threats and overcoming weaknesses.

- Goal 1: Enhance and Grow Workforce Capacity
- Goal 2: Invest in Tribal Youth
- Goal 3: Diversify and Expand Business Opportunities
- Goal 4: Optimize Land and Resource Use
- Goal 5: Expand Access to Affordable Housing for Native American Families
- Goal 6: Preserve Tribal Culture Through Fundamental Services

Accomplishing these goals and achieving the vision of the CEDS is detailed in the plan of action

Delaware Nation's CEDS Vision Statement

To build a thriving, self-sustaining economy that honors our cultural heritage, empowers our resilient people, and creates opportunities for future generations through strategic economic diversification and business development.

CEDS Strategic Action Plan

Introduction

The **CEDS Strategic Action Plan** serves as a guiding framework for Delaware Nation's long-term economic growth, workforce development, and community resilience. Grounded in Tribal priorities and cultural values, the plan outlines broad goals and flexible strategies designed to adapt over time. As Delaware Nation advances its vision for self-sufficiency and prosperity, the plan acknowledges a critical reality: the future of federal funding for Tribal programs is increasingly uncertain. Fluctuations in federal budgets, shifting political climates, and administrative delays have already impacted core services across Indian Country. In response, this Strategic Action Plan emphasizes adaptability, strategic partnerships, and diversified economic approaches to ensure that Delaware Nation can sustain progress—even in the face of limited or delayed external support.

Strategic Action Plan & Evaluation Framework

Goal 1. Enhance & Grow Workforce Capacity

Delaware Nation is committed to building a strong, adaptable workforce that reflects community priorities and long-term economic goals. This includes supporting job readiness, expanding access to training, and fostering meaningful career pathways for Tribal citizens. Implementation will remain flexible to accommodate changing economic conditions, community needs, and the ongoing uncertainty of federal funding.

Objective 1: Strengthen workforce coordination.

- Explore the development of a centralized workforce support system.
 - *Performance Indicators:* Assess feasibility and define potential structure.

Objective 2: Evaluate the Tribal workforce.

- Conduct periodic evaluations of Tribal workforce needs and skill gaps.
 - *Performance Indicator:* Complete one workforce needs assessment or update every two years.

Objective 3: Continue to grow partnerships to enhance tribal citizens career growth.

- Establish and maintain relationships with regional employers, training centers, and educational institutions.
 - *Performance Indicator:* Engage with at least three new partners per year to explore collaboration or training opportunities.

Objective 4: Enhance youth workforce readiness.

While the creation of a standalone youth department is not currently feasible, the Tribe will integrate youth-focused activities into existing programs and collaborate with schools, community partners, and internal departments to maximize impact with available resources.

- **Career Readiness Activities**

Provide job readiness workshops, mentorship opportunities, and resume-building support for high school students.

- *Performance Indicator: Host at least two youth-focused workforce events annually, in coordination with local schools or partners.*

- **Leadership & Cultural Engagement**

Encourage youth leadership through informal opportunities such as student engagement in community events or summer programs.

- *Performance Indicator: Involve youth in at least one cultural or civic activity per year that builds confidence and connection to community.*

- **Strategic Collaboration**

Work with existing Tribal departments and external organizations to identify shared resources that can support youth programming without requiring dedicated staffing.

- *Performance Indicator: Develop at least one new partnership or joint initiative annually focused on youth enrichment or training.*

Goal 2. Diversify & Expand Business Opportunities

Objective 1: Expand Delaware Nation's Business Portfolio Through DNIndustries, DNInvestments, and Lenape Entertainment.

- Actively acquire government contracts, especially with alternative government agencies, to diversify revenue streams.
 - *Performance Indicator: Acquire two new contracts a year.*
- Expand the construction management division to capitalize on new market opportunities.
 - *Performance Indicator: Operate a revenue generating construction management division.*
- Investigate opportunities for strategic mergers and acquisitions with existing companies that complement the expertise of DNI and add value to its portfolio.

Objective 2: Promote tribal entrepreneurship and support small business growth.

- Promote and support small business development through technical assistance, referrals, and access to capital when possible.
 - *Performance Indicator: Provide outreach or assistance to Tribal entrepreneurs or small business owners.*

Objective 3: Evaluate and reorganize business structures.

- Review and adjust business structures (nonprofit, for-profit, hybrid) to better support economic development efforts.
 - *Performance Indicator: Conduct an internal review of economic development entities at least once during the CEDS term to ensure alignment with goals.*

Goal 3. Optimize Land and Resource Use

Objective 1: Assess land and resource potential for business development.

- Strategic Land Assessment – Evaluate the potential of existing Tribal lands for cultural, commercial, or residential use.
 - *Performance Indicator: Complete at least one major land use assessment every two years to inform planning and development decisions.*
- Highest & Best Use Planning – Prioritize development opportunities that maximize community benefit and long-term value.
 - *Performance Indicator: Develop at least one Highest & Best Use Plan during the CEDS term to guide decision-making for key properties.*
- Land Reclamation & Trust Conversion – Continue efforts to bring ancestral and fee lands into trust to expand Tribal sovereignty.
 - *Performance Indicator: Submit at least one application or initiate one land-to-trust process during the CEDS term, as capacity and legal conditions permit.*
- Real Estate Portfolio Development – Build a strategic inventory of land and property assets within or near Tribal boundaries.
 - *Performance Indicator: Identify and document at least three priority parcels or acquisitions of interest during the planning period.*

Objective 2: Explore and Develop Land Resources for Housing Expansion

- Identify land suitable for future housing development.
 - *Performance Indicator: Evaluate at least one property per year for potential residential use or infrastructure feasibility.*

Goal 4. Expand Access to Affordable Housing for Native American Families

Objective 1: Continue seeking funding and providing program support.

- Maintain and strengthen existing housing assistance programs that support low-income Tribal families.
 - *Performance Indicator: Provide assistance or services to at least 75 families annually, as funding allows.*
- Evaluate land and funding opportunities for future housing development.
 - *Performance Indicator: Identify at least one potential site or funding source per year for long-term residential planning.*

Objective 2: Educate Native families and individuals about homeownership best practices.

- Offer workshops and resources to help Tribal members prepare for and sustain homeownership.
 - *Performance Indicator: Host a minimum of two homeownership education sessions each year.*

Goal 5. Preserve Tribal Culture Through Fundamental Services

Delaware Nation is dedicated to sustaining and revitalizing its cultural identity through language, traditions, food systems, and community well-being. This goal emphasizes the integration of cultural values into daily life and Tribal services. Recognizing the variability of external funding and program capacity, efforts will be phased, responsive, and tailored to community engagement and interest.

Objective 1: Reinforce Delaware Nation's tribal culture and heritage.

- Language and Cultural Education – Support the teaching and revitalization of the Delaware language and cultural traditions across generations.
 - Performance Indicator: Offer at least culturally focused classes or events annually, with participation from multiple age groups.
- Youth Cultural Engagement – Provide opportunities for youth to engage with their heritage through seasonal camps, workshops, or mentorship.
 - Performance Indicator: Organize at least one youth-centered cultural activity each year, depending on interest and available resources.
- Community Storytelling and Outreach – Promote Tribal pride through storytelling, digital outreach, and community engagement.
 - Performance Indicator: Publish or share at least three community stories or staff spotlights per quarter through newsletters or online platforms.
- Elder Support and Inclusion – Provide social and cultural support to elders through dedicated programs, gatherings, and transportation access.
 - Performance Indicator: Facilitate elder-focused activities per year, with culturally relevant themes and community participation.

Objective 2: Establish a Self-Sustaining Food System for Delaware Nation

- Food Sovereignty and Wellness – Encourage health and self-sufficiency through food cultivation, traditional cooking, and wellness programs.
 - Performance Indicator: Host a minimum food- or wellness-related events annually, with participation open to all age groups.

Goal 6: Strengthen Tribal Sovereignty and Fiscal Resilience Amid Federal Funding Uncertainty

In light of recent federal budget cuts affecting tribal programs—including healthcare, housing, education, and environmental initiatives—Delaware Nation recognizes the imperative to bolster its sovereignty and financial independence. These reductions have disrupted essential services and highlighted the need for strategic adaptation.

This goal focuses on enhancing Delaware Nation's capacity to navigate political shifts and funding uncertainties by diversifying revenue streams, strengthening governance, and expanding strategic partnerships.

- **Advocacy and Intergovernmental Relations**

Engage proactively with federal and state agencies to advocate for the fulfillment of treaty obligations and to secure alternative funding avenues.

- *Performance Indicator: Participate in at least two intergovernmental consultations or advocacy events annually.*

- **Economic Diversification**

Develop and invest in diverse economic ventures beyond federal funding dependencies, such as renewable energy projects, tribal enterprises, and partnerships with private sectors.

- *Performance Indicator: Initiate or expand at least one non-federally funded economic project per year.*

- **Capacity Building and Governance**

Strengthen internal governance structures and administrative capacities to manage and sustain programs independently.

- *Performance Indicator: Conduct annual reviews of governance policies and implement training programs for Tribal administrators.*

- **Strategic Partnerships and Alliances**

Forge alliances with other Tribal nations, non-profits, and private entities to share resources, knowledge, and best practices.

- *Performance Indicator: Establish at least two new partnerships or collaborative agreements annually.*

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Implement a robust system to monitor the impact of federal policy changes on Tribal programs and to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.

- *Performance Indicator: Produce an annual report assessing the status of federal funding and the Tribe's adaptive measures*

Appendix A: References

As a key part of the background research and contextual analysis, the project team reviewed past plans, reports, and other relevant documentation. The Plan Review highlights themes, findings, data, and early-stage recommendations identified in the documents and is used to inform dialogue with internal teams and other key stakeholders. Below is the list of documents reviewed as part of this process, including brief summaries of each.

The following plans, documents, and websites were reviewed as part of this planning process.

Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development. *South Central Oklahoma Workforce Development Area 2022 Local Briefing*. Oklahoma Department of Commerce, 2022.

Delaware Nation Housing Department. *IHBG FY2025 Initial Plan (IHP)*. 2024.

Foster, John, and Christina Cooper. *Local Foods, Local Places Community Action Plan: Anadarko, Oklahoma*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018.

Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments (ASCOG). *2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*. ASCOG, 2017.

United States Census Bureau

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

U.S. Economic Development Administration