



OCTOBER 1, 2018

THE OSAGE NATION  
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# SMART GROWTH AMERICA PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

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OSAGE NATION



## PURPOSE

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On October 6, 2016, the Osage Nation applied for the SGA Implementing Smart Growth 101 Initiative. The purpose of why we applied for Smart Growth America is to advocate for better cities, towns and neighborhoods within Osage County starting with Pawhuska. To move towards having Pawhuska become a more economically prosperous, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable place to live. The information we received from Smart Growth America we would then be able to pass onto other municipalities within Osage County. We could then be a support to them so that they could improve economic development and become socially equitable from what we learned through our trial and errors. On November 22, 2016, we received notification that the Osage Nation was approved to receive one of the Smart Growth America programs, Smart Growth 101. Which allowed us to receive hands-on assistance from national experts. The technical assistance provided by this workshop aided our community in visualizing a plan that incorporated a sustainable strategy of revitalization and economic development. The technical assistance was funded through a grant to Smart Growth America from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Sustainable Communities.





## ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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It was requested from the Smart Growth America team that we prepare a list of the City of Pawhuska's issues and concerns. This information was gathered from various entities within Pawhuska that included Osage Nation, Pawhuska Schools, Chamber of Commerce, City of Pawhuska, Retail Merchants Society and Osage County.

### Initial Community Issues and Concerns:

--- These concerns were provided from the community in preparation for the Workshop

- Lack of technology infrastructure – broadband
- Refurbish City of Pawhuska Water Reservoir
- Obtaining Wastewater lift stations
- Lake Pawhuska Dam repair
- Water and Sewer lines – city water processing, piping and sewage infrastructure needs
- Automation of water plant – long term sourcing of water for the city
- Re-routing of truck traffic away from downtown Pawhuska
- Affordable housing and rentals
- Removal of nuisance and dilapidated structures
- Economic development
- Workforce challenges (quantity and quality) for local businesses
- Public safety and Emergency Response
- The need to create a culture conducive to tourism: Welcoming & accommodating to tourists/visitors
- Lack of commercial hotel accommodations
- Decrease in State and Federal funding to our school district
- School recruitment and retention of personnel
- Public Bathrooms
- Public Parking
- Road Repair and Maintenance
- Accessibility
- Public Storm Shelter

## SGA WORKSHOP

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On May 3, 2017, the Osage Nation hosted the Smart Growth 101 Workshop, which included 49 attendees from organizations such as federal, state, regional and local leaders. Several attendees coming from great distances to participate in this unique hands-on session. These representatives, leaders and the SGA technical assistance team worked on how to apply ten principles of smart growth that would make sense for the community. Preceding the day of the workshop, Pawhuska had encountered several days of torrential rain, which it had not encountered for 10+ years. It continued to rain up to the morning of the workshop but still representatives came from many miles to participate in this unique event. Due to these heavy rains, the morning of the workshop had caused the water pipes in the area to bust which caused the building the workshop was hosted (Business Development Center) to not have any water. Attendees to the workshop were unable to use the bathrooms and drinking fountains. They knew the importance of the purpose of this project that they stayed from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. This unexpected event reinforced why improvements to the water and sewer lines are an issue and concern for the City of Pawhuska.



## SGA RECOMMENDATIONS

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Based on the SGA teams observations from the tour and workshop provided the following recommendations:

1. Leverage the recent tourism increase to invest in and spur downtown revitalization, placemaking, and streetscaping.
2. Invest in broadband internet access as well as other utility infrastructure improvements.
3. Reinvest in the Constatine Theater by providing a stable and permanent revenue source.
4. Work to coordinate City of Pawhuska, Osage County and Osage Nation services.
5. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy and implementation strategy.
6. Focus efforts on transportation connections to downtown Pawhuska.
7. Look for opportunities to increase affordable housing within and connected to downtown – including for Millennials and an aging population.
8. Create a marketing and action plan for the Osage Nation and Pawhuska’s unique arts, culture and history.
9. Create an implementation committee to move these recommendations forward

These recommendations encouraged our group to put the long-term vision and goals for the city ahead of pursuing short-term financial gain comprised of uses incompatible with their long-term strategic vision for the community.

- 1. Leverage the recent tourism increase to invest in and spur downtown revitalization, placemaking, and streetscaping.**
  - a. Turning vacant buildings and parcels into economic opportunities.
    - i. One vacant lot has been converted into a Garden Center used to sell plants, flowers, trees, etc... Another is used to place inflatables and games during public events.
  - b. Celebrate and find new uses for Pawhuska’s historic building stock
    - i. Seek out opportunities for place making and streetscapes
      1. Current outdoor multiuse public spaces include Ranchers Plaza, old Firehouse area and area around Triangle Building which is used for Indian Taco festival as well as Cavalcade.
      2. Benches and trash receptacles has been established in the downtown area with both image of buffalo and wording Pawhuska on them.
      3. An engineering firm has completed a “Highest & Best Use” study for the First National Bank building. In process of reviewing options.
      4. Osage County Tourism has already created a paper form of a downtown map, they are in process of making it electronic. The Retail Merchant Association has also created their own map of lodging, shopping and eateries.



## 2. Invest in broadband Internet access as well as other utility infrastructure improvements

- a. Broadband Internet Access
  - i. Grayhorse award notification – 12/27/17
  - ii. Bowring award notification – 3/23/18
  - iii. Pawhuska – pending review
- b. Water and Sewer Infrastructure
  - i. 1/5/18 provided City of Pawhuska with application for Free Water Loss Audit Pre-Audit Checklist, qualifies for free leak detection and/or meter analysis technical assistance from ORWA
    1. The Water Loss Program through ODEQ and then once completed will then be referred to ORWA for technical assistance with leak detection and meter analysis to address the issues found in the audit
    2. Also provided City of Pawhuska with program requirements for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Procedures and Strategy, which assist affordable financing options in order to construct needed drinking water system improvements necessary to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act.
  - ii. IHS provided us the SDS (Sanitation Deficiency System) priority list for projects within Osage County: **Osage Nation ranked the top 4 tribal priorities:**
    1. **Grayhorse Community Sewer Renovation**
      - a. 9/28/18 received \$100,000 tribal contribution from the Osage Nation Congress for the Indian Health Service Office of Environmental Health and Engineering for a cost analysis of an updated sanitation system total cost of project \$548,000.00
        - i. Award notification comes out in Feb or March
    2. **Pawnee Service Unit Multi-tribal Ind. Water and Sewer Project**
      - a. In process of finding funding 5% tribal contribution for project
    3. **Barnsdall Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements**
    4. **Pawhuska Groundwater Storage Tank Modification**
      - a. 11/6/2017 Provided City of Pawhuska Ground Storage Tank Engineer Report which was completed in April of 2017 – in process of finding funding
    5. **Pawhuska Indian Camp Sewer Main – PHASE 2**
      - a. Provides for the construction of wastewater collection facilities for an estimated 7 new and 2 like new homes
      - b. In process of finding additional funding to complete project

## 3. Reinvest in the Constantine Theater by providing a stable and permanent revenue source

- a. Applying for the Cultural District Development program which will provide funding for feasibility study to have a community theatre built in Pawhuska

## 4. Work to coordinate City of Pawhuska, Osage County, and Osage Nation services

- a. Have had several meeting with City officials to collaborate resources which have included INCOG, IHS (Indian Health Services), state, federal and Osage County resources



## 5. Adopt a Complete Streets Policy and Implementation Strategy

- a. In process of Streetscape Phase 1 which specializes in design services for pedestrian improvements and facilities
- b. Through the Cultural District Development program will be able to provide funding to hire professional consultants which will include Dave Shildler (OSU Associate Professor and Community Development Specialist – Dept of Agricultural Economics)
  - i. His program will provide a feasibility study for moving the community toward a vision and actions around placemaking. Through his research and documentation we can then collaborate with OU's Institute for Quality Communities to assist with implementation of the aesthetics that can be used to incorporate with the Streetscape plan
- c. U.K Tours European Tour company has made site visits to Pawhuska and are looking at incorporating Pawhuska as a couple three night stop on their tours from Branson to Dallas.

## 6. Focus efforts on transportation connections to downtown Pawhuska

- a. Pawhuska has 2 new local tour companies Roaming the Osage and Tallgrass Tours which provides shuttle service to local attractions within Pawhuska

## 7. Look for opportunities to increase affordable housing within and connected to downtown – including for Millennials and an aging population

- a. In process of working with Rural Development (Chris DeFreese) Civil Rights Manager/NA Coordinator on potential opportunities

## 8. Create a marketing and action plan for the Osage Nation and Pawhuska's unique arts, culture and history.

- a. A July 23-27 Summer DEK Film Camp was hosted in Pawhuska for students ages between 12-18, it was a between 12-18, it was a five day film camp which introduced the students to all stages of production from brainstorming and storyboarding to scriptwriting, preproduction, character design, camera operation and movement, traditional and digital animation techniques, sound, performance, editing and presentation. Film students gained experience with state of the art equipment and software while learning professionalism and the fundamentals of cinematic storytelling.

## 9. Create an implementation committee to move these recommendations forward

- a. A committee has been created which has members of the Osage Nation as well as City officials to discuss and resolve issues and concerns within the city.
- b. A list is in process of being developed of potential resources for funding provided by contact from states, federal and local agencies.

## SUMMARY

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We are encouraged to continue the effort that the SGA team had shown us. Our goal is to move forward with our improvement and prosperity. We will use the skills and approaches we have learned through this process to continue to grow and be able to assist our surrounding neighbors with their issues and concerns so that they may experience our same growth.