

ECODEVO 101

WYANDOTTE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Bonner Springs • Edwardsville • Kansas City, KS

EcoDevo 101: Wyandotte County Businesses
are Creating Jobs & Opportunities

CASE STUDY:

 **DELTA**
INNOVATIVE SERVICES, INC.

Delta Innovative Services is a family-owned and operated commercial and industrial roofing contractor founded in Kansas City, Kansas by Danny and Rose Boyle. Since its founding in 1990, Delta Innovative Services has earned a reputation as one of the largest and most respected roofing contractors in the Kansas City and Midwest region. Delta Innovative Services is continuously expanding to provide the most watertight and long lasting roofing systems for commercial building owners. They offer a comprehensive range of services to help customers correct the most complex roofing issues. Competitive pricing, a quick response time and top-tier client service make Delta Innovative Services unique. These qualities are reflected in the many [awards](#) the company has received.

- In 2022, Delta Innovative Services was awarded the 2022 Soprema Contractor of the Year. Soprema is based in Europe and invented Modified Bitumen Roofing, one of the most popular commercial roofing products.
- Delta Innovative Services received the GAF President's Club Award in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. GAF is North America's largest roofing manufacturer and this is the most prestigious contractor award GAF offers.

Delta Innovative Services continues to grow with the support of the Wyandotte Economic Development Council and the entire community.



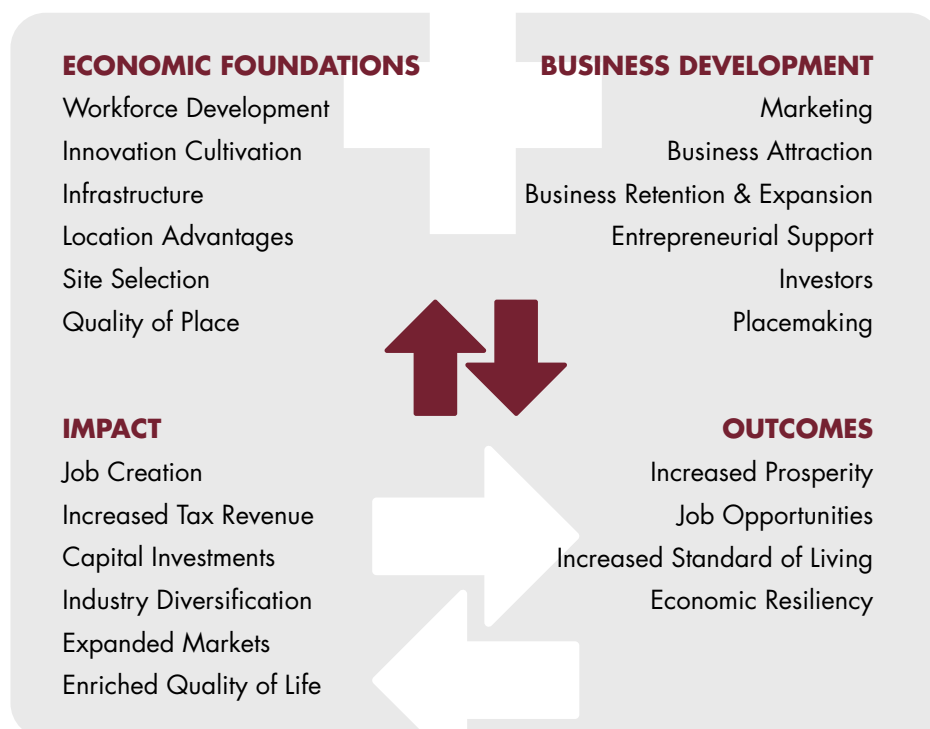
EcoDevo 101: How Economic Development Supports the Growth of Wyandotte County Businesses

Economic development is often discussed in terms of its parts, each category siloed and distinct: business retention and expansion, attraction, workforce development, and job creation, among others. [Wyandotte Economic Development Council \(WYEDC\)](#) joins other innovative thinkers working to flip the perception towards an ecosystem model where each objective is interlocked and dependent like the pieces of a puzzle to form the total picture of [EcoDevo 101](#).

Economic Development Ecosystem

Structuring economic development around this ecosystem framework — like pieces of a puzzle — creates an environment where economic foundations and business development create impact and favorable economic outcomes. Wyandotte Economic Development Council prioritizes:

- Creating Jobs
- Raising Household Income
- Building and Strengthening the Workforce
- Improving Quality of Life
- Generating Tax Revenue





Character of Place is an Important Economic Foundation

In "[The character of innovative places: entrepreneurial strategy, economic development, and prosperity](#)" (*Small Bus Econ* 43, 9–20, 2014), Maryann P. Feldman asks, "Why do investments in certain places yield jobs, growth and prosperity while similar investments made in seemingly identical places fail to produce the desired results?"

While acknowledging that geography and clustering of resources play important roles, she postulates, "What matters most is human agency — the building of institutions and the myriad public and private decisions that determine what I call the character of place — a spirit of authenticity, engagement and common purpose."

In the Kansas City, KS, (KCK) region, Wyandotte Economic Development Council (WYEDC) supplies the human agency for placemaking, bringing assets, stakeholders, innovators and agencies together to fortify the region's economic development ecosystem. WYEDC promotes and strengthens Wyandotte County's economy through innovative approaches to programs, partnerships and incentives, as well as leadership in industrial, residential, office and retail markets. [In 2022](#), WYEDC's efforts resulted in 30 announced projects, \$418 million in capital investment, and 444 new jobs. Over the last 10 years, there has been over \$6.1 billion in capital investments.

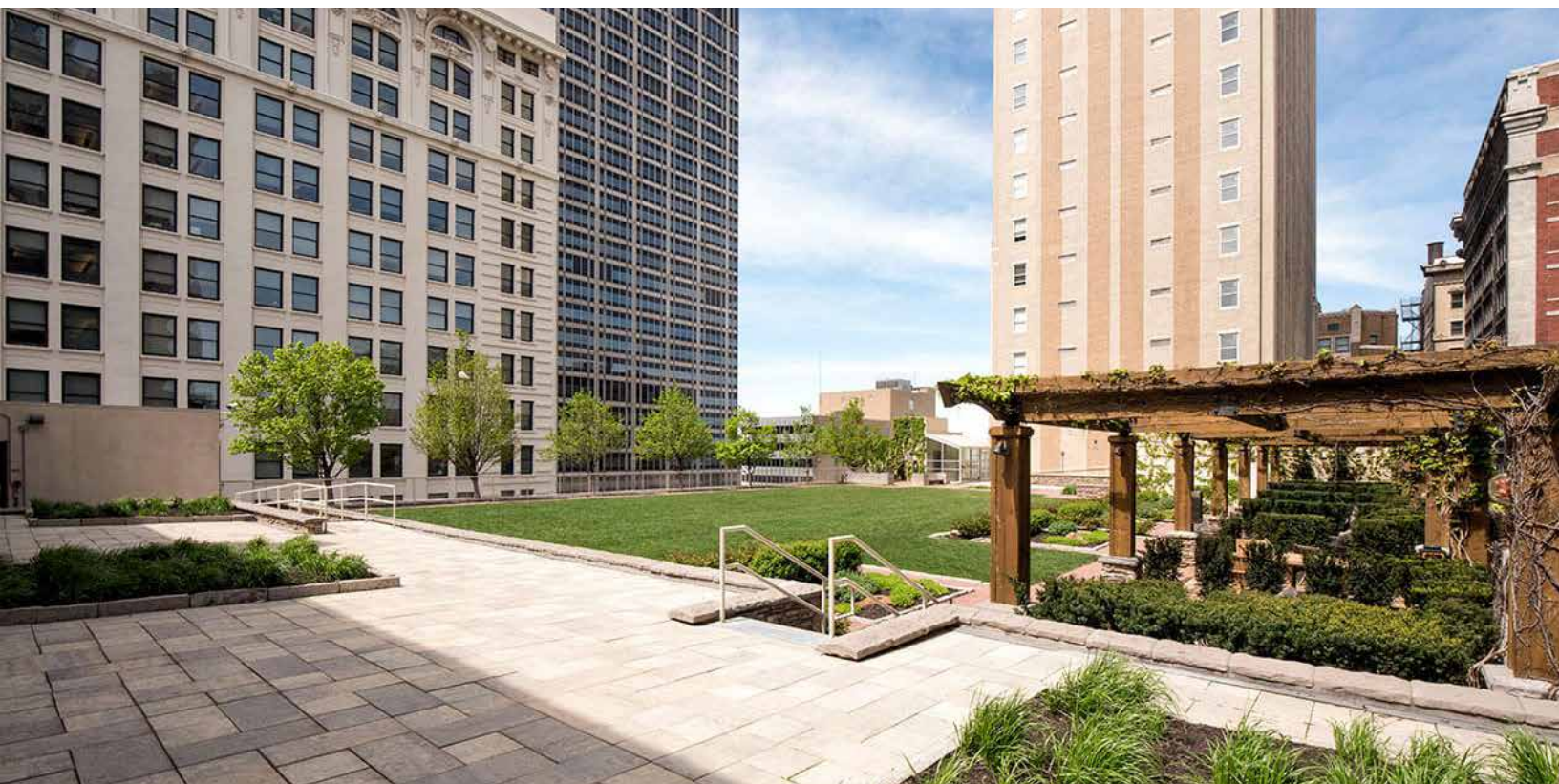
Delta Innovative Services, Inc. Benefits the Community By Creating High Wage Jobs for People of All Backgrounds

Delta Innovative Services is a family-oriented company that maintains a personal touch with clients even as one of largest roofing contractors in the Kansas City area. The company provides services like roofing maintenance and repair, re-roofing, new roofing construction and architectural sheet metal. Delta Innovative Services also specializes in the removal of built-up tar and gravel and modified bitumen. They have unique in-house fabrication abilities and skilled tradesmen that provide unparalleled quality, service and responsiveness.

This high level of service and attention to detail has helped the company grow exponentially. **Delta Innovative Services typically employs over 200 individuals**, with some adjustments made for seasonality. "I started here in 2017 and we had two trucks to make service calls, fix leaks and perform emergency repairs. We now have 10 trucks running and have four account managers that we call building engineers. **Our department alone has grown from 3 full time employees to 28 in just over six years,**" said Nick Sweeney, Maintenance Director.

"The ocean is the only thing that stops us. We do work nationally for large companies. Primarily, the Midwest region is our sweet spot. **We do a lot of work within three hours and a 200 mile range from Kansas City,**" said Sweeney.

Their growing workforce is making this expansion possible.





A Robust Workforce Training Program

Delta Innovative Services treats employees like family and provides opportunities for career growth regardless of educational or personal background. “We’ve got people who work here from other industries and differing backgrounds. Registered nurse. Felons. Former architects. It’s about what you put into it, not where you came from,” said Sweeney. “There are endless opportunities for advancement here. It is just about how hard you want to work and how far you want to take your efforts.”

Employees of Delta Innovative Services can learn new skills through on-the-job training, with personal growth being prioritized. Sweeney is one of these success stories. He got his GED instead of graduating from high school and found a chance to build his career at Delta Innovative Services. Through on-the-job training and an opportunity to earn his associate’s degree, Sweeney has built an incredible career.

“I’ve lived on my own since I was 15. My parents were hard workers and raised me to be independent, and I’ve built this career from the ground up to support my family,” said Sweeney. “Delta Innovative Services gives people the opportunity to build a career and finish strong, regardless of where they started.”

The commitment to providing advancement opportunities is evident in the amount of training the company provides. “About half of the training that goes on here is required by the industry and half is extra professional training offered by the company. OSHA requires the safety training side and certifications are required to operate machinery. We provide opportunities to obtain these skills and more. With roofing, you know immediately whether or not it was installed correctly. Delta Innovative Services makes sure employees are provided with the training to do it right the first time,” said Sweeney.

Giving People a Second Chance

Delta Innovative Services is also unique in its efforts to hire and train formerly incarcerated individuals in the Wyandotte community. **“Some of our hardest working employees are those who come here looking for a second chance. One of the toughest parts about having a background in the “system” is finding an opportunity to make a livable wage when you are released. Delta Innovative Services provides the training and support to earn a great wage, some employees making over \$100,000 a year,” Sweeney said.**

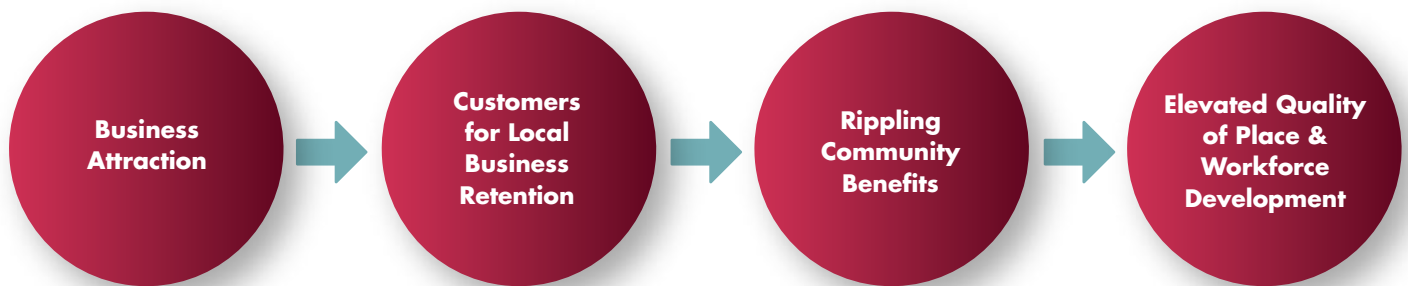
Sweeney believes that other Wyandotte County companies can benefit from creating a second chance hiring program and the loyalty it generates among workers.

Supporting Workers

Delta Innovative Services' support of workers extends beyond workforce training and giving people a second chance. They have chosen to be a union shop and appreciate the structure that it provides. "The union is a trades program that trains employees through apprenticeships, essentially. Wages increase incrementally until workers reach a journeyman wage. Great health insurance is also provided through this program, said Sweeney.

Delta Innovative Services provides secure careers and continual opportunities for growth for Wyandotte County residents. Being a union shop is just one way they achieve this.

KCK Community Benefits Ripple from the Success of...



Delta Innovative Services Has Invested in the Community

Beyond creating jobs, Delta Innovative Services has invested in the community through the company's expansion. In February 2020, they moved into a new building located at the interchange of Kansas Ave and I-635. Before the transition, the building was gutted and rebuilt from the inside out, creating construction jobs. New HVAC equipment, improved building insulation and LED lights were added to make the building more efficient, saving on costs and providing a more comfortable working environment for employees. The roof was also redone using various roofing technologies as part of the rehabilitation.

Delta's new headquarters boasts 20,000 feet of office space and 65,000 feet of warehouse and manufacturing space, which provides plenty of room for additional growth. The warehouse spans 10+ acres of paved property. The location also includes an event space that will accommodate over 100 people for corporate events and educational sessions.



Wyandotte County & WYEDC

Support Company Growth

"Delta Innovative Services is a service business. It's in the name. We are a construction company, but we can't survive without the Wyandotte community. **We are the community**, building things in our region for our people. It is a symbiotic relationship. The people make this place function, and we support the people," said Sweeney.

Monica Brede, Senior Director-Business Retention & Workforce Solutions, Wyandotte Economic Development Council, is working with the company to support their ongoing growth.

"Delta Innovative Services has a wide variety of professions within their company. They are open to internships, job shadowing and apprenticeships to help local students and potential employees make positive lifelong decisions about their careers. They offer excellent career opportunities with incredible earnings, some employees making upwards of \$100,000 per year without a college degree or college debt. As a growing company, the potential for career advancements is high as well," Brede said.

Career Pathways Student Tours to Delta Innovative Services

Career Pathways Student Tours is a Wyandotte Economic Development Council and local business collaboration that provides students with interactive opportunities to learn about career pathways in the community.

The Career Pathways Student Tours first began in 2022 in celebration of Manufacturing Month (October) and in collaboration with Kansas Manufacturing Solutions, Kansas City Kansas Community College and Workforce Partnership. WYEDC takes groups of students, around 25 total, from each of the high schools in Wyandotte County to tour local facilities and get a taste of career opportunities.

"The purpose is to highlight great employers that offer careers and professions with excellent pay in Wyandotte County. Some careers require post-secondary education, certifications or apprenticeship programs— all of which these star employers can help with. The Career Pathways Student Tours show students career opportunities they may not have been aware of otherwise," said Brede.

"We have partnered with our best employers, like Delta Innovative Services, for these tours. The tour begins in the morning at one business, then lunch is provided at KCKCC followed by a tour of the FAME lab. We finish up the day with a tour of another company before they head back to school to be dismissed. The students are entered into a \$500 scholarship drawing based on the number of questions they asked while on the tour," she continued.

The Career Pathways Student Tours are a great example of the symbiotic relationship Sweeney referenced and the support companies can expect to receive from WYEDC.



"The students ask lots of excellent questions and the businesses are happy to educate. The students loved Delta Innovative Services, and we will definitely be back," Brede said.

2024 for Delta Innovative Services

"Panasonic Batteries, Facebook and Google are all building large projects in the Midwest, which is going to create economic growth and be good for us by association," said Sweeney.

"We have some large private work projects that are moving in the right direction. We will continue to grow our service, repair businesses and roof as many commercial buildings and regional schools as possible over the summer. We bid everything from the tenant finishes in strip malls up to the largest factory reroofs so we are always ready to take on opportunities," he said.

Wyandotte Economic Development Council's EcoDevo 101

Wyandotte Economic Development Council's focus on supporting the growth of local businesses improves the county's economic development ecosystem by pulling the pieces of the puzzle together: business attraction and job creation, business retention and improved quality of life.

The Career Pathways Student Tours that WYEDC takes to Delta Innovative Services and other local businesses are an important piece of the puzzle because they connect local students with career opportunities that will enable them to build a lasting career in Wyandotte County. "Our ultimate goal is to grow the economy of Wyandotte County one person at a time. We are working to create jobs through business attraction and business expansion efforts and these jobs should pay enough for people to support their families and live a good life," said Greg Kindle, WYEDC President. "But, that's only half of the equation. WYEDC is working to expose Wyandotte County students and adult residents to the job opportunities that already exist here and the training they need to take those jobs. If we can get more Wyandotte County residents to work for our companies, we would see a significant increase in household income."

The next piece of this puzzle is generating tax revenue for Wyandotte County which decreases the tax burden on each individual taxpayer. "When Wyandotte County residents aren't working or are making less money than they could, fewer people are paying taxes. That creates a higher tax burden on everyone else and can cause some understandable frustration. We're prioritizing getting all Wyandotte County residents to work earning as much as they can. Companies like Delta Innovative Services play an important role because they are giving people second chances and offering high wages that can support a family," said Kindle.

"It's a simple concept if you break it down. Imagine that you're going to a potluck with 20 people but only five people have signed up to bring a dish. Each of those five people are going to need to make large quantities to feed everyone. Now imagine that each of the 20 people coming to the potluck brings a dish. Instead of feeding the entire group, now the original five have help because all 20 are sharing in the effort to feed the community. That's what WYEDC is trying to do in Wyandotte County. By supporting businesses that create high wage jobs, we're making it easier for everyone to bring a dish to the potluck (or pay their taxes) so that each family gives less but gets more in the way of government services and funding for important things like schools and transportation."

And that is EcoDevo 101 - what Wyandotte Economic Development Council does. But, WYEDC can't do it alone. "We work closely with companies and our community partners to create opportunities in Wyandotte County and are thankful for companies like Delta Innovative Services who have chosen to invest and grow here," said Kindle.

For those wondering how they can help to grow Wyandotte County's economy, Kindle has this to say, "Before people can bring their 'dish' to the potluck, they need a high paying job. We have those in the community so if you know someone who is working part-time or in a low paying job, encourage them to apply. And, if they don't have the skills currently, tell them to reach out to Monica Brede so she can help them move from a job to a lasting career."



Wyandotte County Economic Development Council (WYEDC)

helps businesses harness "The Power of the Dotte." WYEDC promotes and strengthens Wyandotte County's economy through innovative approaches to programs, partnerships and incentives, as well as leadership in industrial, residential, office and retail markets. Contact them today! Follow WYEDC on LinkedIn and Facebook!



*"Feedback from our customers reflects our workmanship.
We don't consider a job done until our customers
are 100% satisfied."*

Nick Sweeney, Maintenance Director

Delta Innovative Services is proud to be a locally owned and operated roofing contractor. They are one of many local businesses contributing to the thriving Wyandotte County community. To learn more about their award-winning workmanship and unparalleled dedication to each client, contact them today!



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