

Sherman County Community Development

Annual Report – 2025

Letter From the Board Chairman

2025 was a year of momentum for Sherman County. As economic conditions continued to evolve, Sherman County Community Development stayed focused on strengthening our local economy, supporting businesses, and improving the quality of life for residents. Our work this year reflects a commitment to practical solutions, regional collaboration, and long-term community resilience.

The progress outlined in this report is the result of dedicated staff, engaged board members, and strong partnerships across Sherman County. Together, we are building a vibrant and sustainable future for our rural community.

Mission & Vision

Mission:

To promote new business opportunities, actively support current businesses, and develop Sherman County as a destination for visitors, economic growth, and prosperity.

Vision:

To achieve and maintain the most reasonable, dynamic, and robust business climate in the Sherman County community, by aggressively pursuing all avenues of growth for new and existing businesses, towards the goal of maximizing employment opportunities, tax base, and quality of life.

About Sherman County Community Development

- **Founded:** 2019
- **Service Area:** Sherman County, including the Cities of Goodland, Kanorado, and Edson
- **Core Focus Areas:**
 - Economic Development
 - Business retention and expansion
 - Workforce development
 - Business Enrichment
 - Entrepreneurship and small business support
 - Strategic planning and regional collaboration
 - Travel and Tourism
 - Welcome Center
 - Community Events and Activities

2025 Year in Review: Key Achievements

Business Retention & Expansion

- Conducted 139 business visits across Sherman County
- Assisted 10 companies with expansion or operational improvements
 - New Veterinary Clinic established
 - Business expansion with Advanced Auto Body, Traditions Restaurant, Flatland Ju-Jitsu, Mason Dental
 - New business establishment with 535 Tattoo, Lexi Peden GRIT Fitness, Brett and Janelle Schields (septic pumping and portables), Mason Hitchens (plumbing)
- Partnered with Retail Strategies
 - Strategic outreach to 30+ national retail and restaurant brands
 - A full-court press on the former Steak 'n Shake backfill
 - Engagement with multiple hotel owners and brokers
 - Reinforcing Goodland's value at ICSC
 - Deep local follow-up on Dollar General, Gambino's, and 11th Lane
 - Identifying upcoming market shifts, franchise opportunities, and property activity

Entrepreneurship & Small Business Support

- Provided technical assistance to more than 10 entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Hosted 4 networking events to support business enrichment
- Facilitated access to capital totaling **\$1,079,000**

Travel and Tourism

- 4,987 visitors at the Welcome Center in 2025
- HWY 24 Garage Sales
- Downtown Holiday Events – Parade of Lights, Santa at the Museum
- Park N Play – 3 downtown events plus Shindig at the Smoky
- FreedomFest
- NWKSDF Midway Entertainment
- Flatlanders Fall Festival in conjunction with Big Air ATV Show
- Main Street Crawl with FHTNW and USD 352 Appreciation

Community Development

- Secured **\$10000 in grants** for community revitalization
- Advanced 2025 projects such as:
 - Mural Project – 13 murals complete on tour, 4 supported by SCCD
 - Building Brilliance – 7 businesses participated in 2025
- Updated downtown and Highways 24 & 27 Christmas lighting

Regional Collaboration

- Strengthened partnerships with the City of Goodland, Sherman County, Sherman County Community Foundation, regional chambers, and state agencies
- Participated in Hansen Forum to strengthen regional planning efforts
- Represented Sherman County at Hansen Forum in Hays, KS, NW Kansas Travel Council, Highway 24 Alliance, Kansas I-70 Association

2025 Success Stories

Local Business Spotlight: Traditions Restaurant

Dawn and Justin Stasser, full-time working parents of five, bought Goodland's former VFW building intending to start an embroidery business. Inspired by the building's history, they instead opened Traditions, a restaurant honoring community service and family meals. They ensured veterans could continue using the event hall for free and reserved it for them on military holidays. The space also hosts various events like luncheons, benefit fundraisers, craft fairs, and concerts. Known for Friday and Saturday dinner specials—especially burger nights and ribeye steaks—the couple prioritized hiring local businesses for renovations, updating the kitchen, plumbing, wiring, and HVAC. Only the fire suppression system came from outside Goodland. Traditions aims to foster community spirit and showcase the area's rural heritage with historic local photos.

Entrepreneur Spotlight: Aryssa Walkinshaw

Goodland will soon welcome a new veterinarian, Aryssa Walkinshaw, who has purchased the former vet clinic on Caldwell Avenue. At just 24 years old, Aryssa always knew her calling and where she wanted to pursue it. She credits small town communities for supporting her journey to become a veterinarian and start her own practice. Raised on a farm near Burlington, Colorado—just west of Goodland—Aryssa's business will cater to both horses and household pets. She earned her undergraduate degree from Colorado State University and is set to graduate from their veterinary school in May 2026. Thanks to local backing from Western State Bank and SCCD, Goodland will benefit from this much-needed service well into the future.

Community Project Highlight: Building Brilliance

The Building Brilliance Business Incentive is a program in Sherman County designed to support and empower local businesses by enhancing their appearance and curb appeal. This initiative provides financial assistance, resources, and guidance to businesses looking to improve their storefronts, signage, and overall aesthetics. By focusing on revitalizing the look and feel of the business community, the program aims to attract more customers, boost local commerce, and create a vibrant and welcoming environment that benefits both businesses and residents alike.

- 2025 Recipients:
 - Stasser Properties, LLC – Freedom Hall exterior renovation
 - MJJC, LLC – Hotel Neu awning renovation
 - Goodland Furniture and Sleep Center – New signage and landscaping
 - Rod and Michelle Cooper Rentals – Main Street buildings awning renewal
 - Jacque’s Hallmark – Storefront window and door replacement
 - Linton Financial – Storefront window and door replacement

2025 Financial Overview

Revenue

- Grants: \$10,000
- Public funding: \$378,015
- Private contributions: \$8400
- Program Services: \$48,300

Expenses

- Program services: \$180,550
- Administration: \$278,250

Assets

- Cash - \$57,100 in 2025 vs \$77,677 in 2024
- Fixed Assets - \$97,465 in 2025 vs \$111,323 in 2024
- Total - \$154,565 in 2025 vs \$188,991 in 2024

Liabilities

- Taxes - \$1,997 in 2025 vs \$3,975 in 2024

Board of Directors

Matt McKenzie, Chairman

Jeremy Cloyd, Vice-Chairman

Amy Sederstrom, Treasurer

Kent Brown, Secretary

Ashley Mannis

Gennifer House

Bill Biermann

Partners & Supporters

- City of Goodland
- Sherman County, Kansas
- Sherman County Community Foundation

Looking Ahead to 2026

Focus:

- Expanding business retention outreach
- Strengthening workforce pipelines
- Increasing access to capital for small businesses
- Supporting housing development
- Advancing regional marketing and recruitment efforts
- Pursuing strategic grants and partnerships

Headwinds:

- Budget shortfall if we continue our partnership with Retail Strategies.
- Additional staffing needs to aid in administrative workload, grant writing, events and community engagement, and explore the potential to join the Kansas Main Street and Main Street America program.
- Revenue deficit in 2024 and 2025 is quickly depleting our cash reserve position.

Contact Information

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