



President & CEO – Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce Manhattan, Kansas

The Organization

The Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce is a 501(c)6 umbrella organization that provides chamber of commerce, economic development and convention and visitors bureau services. Established in 1925, the Chamber serves as the voice for the business community and is well respected by local, state and federal leaders across business, government and nonprofit sectors. Exceptionally strong and cooperative relationships between the public and private sector leadership have allowed the organization to accomplish objectives that are impossible to do alone. Collaborative relationships with Fort Riley, a major U.S. Army installation contiguous to Manhattan, and Kansas State University add to the chamber's robust program of work and influence in the region.

The Chamber has 850 members, \$3MM budget and staff of 18. The Manhattan regional economy is diverse, with military services, higher education, agriculture, animal health, advanced manufacturing, professional and technical services, bio defense/security, and travel and tourism as the leading industries. The organization is playing a key role in Region Reimagined ~ *Our Blueprint for Prosperity*. Developed in 2017 in conjunction with Market Street Services, R2 is a five-year holistic economic development action plan created by business leaders, community stakeholders and government officials. The Chamber serves as the coordinating entity for the implementation of R2 going forward. More information about the organization can be found: www.manhattan.org; www.manhattaned.org; www.manhattancvb.org.

The Manhattan Region

Manhattan is a city of over 56,000 and the county seat of Riley County, population 74,000. Portions of Manhattan are also in Pottawatomie County, population 23,000. Nestled in the rolling Flint Hills along I-70, the Manhattan regional MSA has a population of over 134,000, the 4th largest urban area in the state. Manhattan has been recognized by a number of national media outlets for its favorable business climate and quality of life including #2 "Best Place to Live in America, 2018" (*Livability.com*) and one of the "Ten Best College Towns in America, 2017" (*American Institute for Economic Research*). The Manhattan business environment is diverse, with Kansas State University and Fort Riley as the top employers. Air service from American Airlines provides multiple daily flights to Chicago and Dallas. Manhattan offers an outstanding quality of life based on education, affordable cost of living, an increasingly diverse population and short commute times. Arts, culture and leisure activities include galleries, community festivals, historical sites, unique shopping and dining options, golf courses, parks, zoo, boating, hiking and Division 1 athletics. More information on Manhattan: www.cityofmhk.com; www.k-state.edu; www.riley.army.mil.

The Position

The President & Chief Executive Officer reports to the Chair of the 6-member Executive Committee of the Chamber's 30-member Board of Directors (21 elected; 9 *ex officio*). He/she is the chief paid executive and responsible to the Board of Directors for the full range of activities of the Chamber. This includes providing overall leadership to Chamber staff and all volunteers in executing the respective missions of the Chamber, along with financial management and reporting, marketing and public relations, membership development and fundraising, motivation of volunteers, maintenance of physical office space. He/she is expected to provide leadership and direction that creates a high level of enthusiasm, expectancy and momentum among the membership, Chamber staff and the regional business and civic community.

Ideal Candidate

The CEO may come from a variety of backgrounds such as: serving as the top executive within a progressive and comparably-sized economic development-focused organization, chamber of commerce, or related significant business association; experience as a "#2" or other senior-level executive at a larger like enterprise as noted above; or an executive from a complex private or public-sector entity. Significant Board interaction and experience leading large numbers of

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volunteers is strongly desired. A minimum of 10 years progressively responsible experience along with a minimum of 5 years of direct management experience is required. Successful candidates will be expected to demonstrate a consistent and measurable track record of achieving goals and objectives in leadership positions. Outstanding leadership, vision, communication, collaboration and organization skills essential; experience working in regional market strongly desired.

The Opportunity

The President & Chief Executive Officer position of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce is an excellent opportunity for an established executive to lead and grow a successful chamber/economic development/convention and visitors organization. The Chamber enjoys an excellent reputation across the Midwest and is in a strong fiscal position. In addition, the region's strong and diverse economy help make Manhattan immune to economic fluctuations that other communities often experience. The Chamber has an experienced and engaged staff, committed Board members and an energized volunteer base. The new CEO will be a dynamic leader who can embrace and marshal resources across the region to elevate the Chamber to even higher levels of influence and success in the years to come. While proud of its success, the Manhattan Area Chamber volunteer and staff leaders are not content with status quo, and therefore there is significant anticipation surrounding "the next chapter" for the Chamber and the Manhattan regional community.

Contact

If you are aware of an outstanding executive who meets these requirements and would be interested in evaluating this dynamic opportunity, please contact WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the Manhattan Area Chamber Board on this search and the "preferred provider" of executive search services of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

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