



## Position Profile

# President & Chief Executive Officer

## Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce

### Joplin, Missouri

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#### *The Opportunity*

The Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce (“the Chamber”) in Joplin, Missouri is seeking a dynamic leader to become its next President & Chief Executive Officer. The new CEO will work with an engaged Board and committed staff to drive the Chamber’s mission to improve the economic prosperity and quality of life in the Joplin region, and to be the principal advocate for, and provider of services to, its business community. The Chamber is one of the few chambers in the nation to have achieved the prestigious 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and was re-accredited at this level in March 2018.

The Chamber’s CEO will oversee and manage all aspects of the organization, with a particular focus on maintaining the Chamber’s engagement with leaders of the organization’s membership and making membership more valuable and relevant; developing and maintaining relationships and communications with a broad public and private constituency; clearly communicating the Chamber’s position and vision on regional, community, public and political issues; developing programs that will enhance the environment for member organizations to flourish; and increasing awareness of the Joplin area’s vibrancy and vitality. In addition, the selected candidate will function as the chief strategist, innovative thinker, and collaborative team leader – especially regarding fund raising, advocacy, messaging, economic development and overall program development.

#### *The Chamber*

With more than 850 members, the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce is the largest business membership organization in the 7-county, tri-state region. Since 1917, the Chamber has been a progressive force in the region working to improve the economic, educational, physical and spiritual well-being for the community and the Board, staff and membership are excited about moving into their next century of activity and engagement.

The Chamber is the key economic and community development organization in the Joplin area which includes Jasper, Newton, Vernon and Barton Counties in Missouri, Crawford and Cherokee Counties in Kansas and Ottawa County in Oklahoma. It brings together key leaders in business and industry, education and government in a spirit of collaboration. The Chamber offers a support network for area businesses and has diverse program offerings to help businesses of all sizes, from the one-person entrepreneurial company to the large corporation. As the community and region continue to grow, the Chamber will continue to engage with a wide variety of companies and constituents to maintain and grow its role as a community leader.

The Chamber’s \$2+MM budget is generated from members and investors from throughout the region along with revenue from over 50 special events and programs annually. The Chamber continuously endeavors to help members grow their businesses and offers a variety of networking, training and marketing opportunities year-round. In addition, the Chamber offers an array of programs including Leadership Joplin, Young Professionals Network, Business Expo, golf outing and others.

Today, the Chamber staffs and manages several key affiliates:

- **Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation (JACCF):** Promotes charitable endeavors that fall within the mission of the Chamber, with special emphasis on supporting charitable, cultural and educational programs and projects through which the community’s quality of life is enhanced.
- **Advanced Training & Technology Center (ATTC):** Joint venture collaboration of the JACCF, City of Joplin, Crowder College and the Workforce Investment Board, allowing the JACCF to purchase, renovate and equip a 51,000 sq.ft. building and provide a technologically advanced location for the training and development of the region’s workforce.

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- **Joplin Regional Partnership (JRP):** Public-private regional economic development organization that markets 11 cities in southwest Missouri and southeast Kansas for the purposes of business attraction; [www.joplinregionalpartnership.com](http://www.joplinregionalpartnership.com)
- **Joplin Business and Industrial Development Corporation (JBIDC):** The parent company for JRP, JBIDC provides a continuing revenue source to support the economic development efforts in the Joplin area, and to finance and market the speculative shell building. Board members are elected from contributors to JBIDC.
- **Joplin Capital Corporation (JCC):** Furnishes small business loans and/or equity for projects that could not be financed through conventional means.
- **Joplin Industrial Development Authority (JIDA):** Administers the issuance of industrial revenue bonds within the incorporated limits of the City of Joplin. Continue development and marketing of the Crossroads Business Park and maintenance of Joplin-Webb City Industrial Park.
- **Jasper County Industrial Development Authority (JCIDA):** Administers the issuance of industrial revenue bonds throughout Jasper County except for the area covered by the Joplin Industrial Development Authority.
- **Joseph Newman Innovation Center (JNIC):** Originally launched through the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation and now sponsored by the Missouri Department of Economic Development, JNIC is an 11,000 sq. ft. facility offering leased office space, manufacturing and shared resources for new business development and also supports existing businesses that need assistance.

More information about the Chamber and its affiliates can be found on its website: [www.joplincc.com](http://www.joplincc.com)

The Chamber's former President & Chief Executive Officer, Rob O'Brian, served for over 23 years and resigned in March 2018 to run for a Missouri Senate seat. He remains available to the Chamber as a consultant through the end of the year. The Board of Directors has therefore embarked on a national search to recruit a new President & Chief Executive Officer to guide the Chamber and its prominent business and economic development leadership activities in Joplin, Jasper and Newton Counties and the broader multi-state region.

### The Joplin Area

Located in southwest Missouri at the crossroads of I-44 and I-49 (and the iconic Route 66 runs right through downtown), Joplin is Missouri's fourth largest metropolitan area with a population of 400,000 within a 40-mile radius of the city's center. The region benefits from a diverse business climate, with international corporations along with small businesses and start-up companies. Major employers in the area include Freeman Health System, Leggett & Platte, Mercy Hospital, EaglePicher Technologies and Downstream Casino Resort.

Residents of Joplin believe it is the perfect place to live. With a growing population of 52,000, the daytime population swells to 240,000+ as people come to work, shop, learn and play. Joplin serves as regional hub of healthcare and retail with shopping experiences ranging from unique boutiques to favorite national chains. Within the city there's a strong sense of community, a bustling arts and entertainment scene, year-round events and festivals and a revitalized downtown. Boasting of a cost of living well below the national average, affordable homes, green space and low crime rate, it's a wonderful place to raise a family. Four distinct weather seasons allow for a variety of leisure and cultural activities year-round with easy access to the gorgeous Ozark Mountains.

There are numerous choices for K-12 education including an outstanding public-school system along with private schools in the region. Local educational institutions include Missouri Southern State University (6,200 students), Crowder College (4,000 students on 6 Missouri campuses, including Joplin), and the new Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences (150 current students and expected to grow to 600+).

More information on Joplin and the region can be found on the following websites:

- Visit Joplin MO: [www.visitjoplinmo.com](http://www.visitjoplinmo.com)
- City of Joplin government: [www.joplinmo.org](http://www.joplinmo.org)
- Jasper County government: [www.jaspercounty.org](http://www.jaspercounty.org)
- Newton County government: [www.newtoncountymmo.com](http://www.newtoncountymmo.com)

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**The Position**

**Location**

The President & Chief Executive Officer position is located at 320 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Joplin, Missouri 64801; telephone (417) 624-4150.

**Reporting Relationships**

The President & Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) of the Chamber reports to the Chair of the 7-member Executive Committee of the Chamber’s 28-member Board of Directors (18 elected; 10 *ex officio*). The CEO is an *ex officio* member of both the Executive Committee and the full Board, both of which meet monthly.

The CEO leads and directs the Chamber staff: Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, Director-Business Attraction & Retention, Director-Member Services & Development, Director-Small Business Incubation, Executive Assistant, Administrative Assistant, Finance Manager, Marketing & Public Information Manager, Member Events Producer, Program Support Assistant and Membership Sales Strategist.

Other important interactions include: executives and employees of Chamber member organizations; county and municipal elected and appointed officials; state and national elected officials; representatives of other public and private sector organizations with related community and economic development missions; university, college, technical college and K-12 education officials; representatives of prospect companies; site selectors and other economic development practitioners; and members of the media.

**Position Charter**

The President & Chief Executive Officer is the chief paid administrative executive of the Chamber and is responsible to the Board of Directors for the organization’s full range of activities and is accountable for the overall performance of the Chamber. The President also serves as Corporate Secretary to the Joplin Area Chamber.

**Major Duties and Responsibilities**

- **Economic Development:** Develop and supervise all economic development advertising and marketing campaigns, and work closely with existing industry to solve problems and encourage their expansion; organize out of town prospect trips, and in-town or area prospect visits; direct the updating of demographic information and brochures; maintain available land and building files, and promote that availability to the state economic development department and to local prospective industry and developers; travel regularly to Jefferson City to meet with state economic development officials; initiate action and follow-up on prospect leads. Lead the development and implementation of an effective economic development program for the City of Joplin as well as serve as the Chamber’s liaison to the Joplin Industrial Development Authority, the Joplin Business and Industrial Development Corporation and the Joplin Regional Partnership.
- **Strategic and Annual Planning:** Work with the Executive Committee, Board, and Chamber Staff to develop and annually update the Chamber’s Program of Action/Business Plan and strategic plans that provide direction for the long-term activities of the Chamber and for the long-term allocation of resources.
- **Governance:** Serve as the primary Chamber staff liaison to the Executive Committee, Board, and Chamber committees including the Economic Development Marketing Committee. The Chamber CEO also serves as the President and Secretary of JBIDC/JRP. Work in concert with the Board on key volunteer leader identification and training. Encourage active participation and engagement of Board members and other volunteers.
- **Advocacy:** Monitor issues of strategic importance to business and develop implementation plans for support or opposition as necessary. Work with Board leadership and key public policy staff to develop positions and report information on public policy issues of concern to the Executive Committee, Board, and membership. Develop meaningful relationships and communication with elected officials to provide information and advocacy on behalf of the Chamber’s members. Work with the volunteer leaders of the Chamber’s Political Action Committee on fundraising and endorsement of key issues impacting the membership and community.

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- **Chamber Staff:** Responsible for the employment, supervision, evaluation, training and leadership of all Chamber staff. Assure that staff members are prepared to successfully implement programs, and pro-actively provide information to the Chamber's constituencies. Foster a daily working environment that values ethics and teamwork. Ensure the highest levels of customer service.
- **Development and Fundraising:** Manage a comprehensive marketing process that promotes the Chamber, serves the investors and membership, attracts new members, and supports Chamber initiatives. Serve as the chief fundraiser for the organization, directly involved in formal capital campaigns, investor solicitation and sponsorship efforts.
- **Fiscal and Administrative Management:** Develop the Chamber budget and relate the budget to program goals and maintain responsibility for all expenditures within the framework of a \$2MM budget. Present financial statements to the Executive Committee and Board; ensure that financial records are audited annually. Develop the budget of the JBIDC and the Chamber's Economic Development Marketing Committee. Maintain responsibility for all administrative matters of the organization. Monitor the Chamber's organizational structure and culture to ensure that the Chamber is effectively geared to function with optimum efficiency.
- **Member Relations:** Responsible for maintaining the Chamber's engagement with leaders of the organization's membership. Motivate members to financially support Chamber programs, analyzing and interpreting the needs of members and recommending revisions and enhancements to improve service and assistance and to make membership more valuable and relevant.
- **Communication:** Act as the chief spokesperson for the Chamber and clearly communicate the organization's position and vision on regional, community, public and political issues. Fairly facilitate open discussion and understanding among affected constituents. Serve in a highly visible role as a speaker to various regional organizations to continuously keep Chamber relevant. Position the Chamber as a leader and positive influencer of the future direction of the Joplin Area and region. Maintain active marketing and communication efforts and a strong public relations program.
- **Chamber and Relationship Management:** Responsible for developing and maintaining relationships and communications with a broad constituency including:
  - Board of Directors:** Responsible for preparing meeting agendas, carrying out approved plans and programs in accordance with established policies, serving as representative of the Board for all contacts with staff, initiating programs for Board consideration, and advising the Board on all matters under consideration.
  - Government Officials:** Maintain strong communications and relationships with elected and appointed officials and their staffs in the City of Joplin, Jasper and Newton Counties and other municipalities, communities and counties throughout the tri-state region. Maintain a high level of ongoing communication with officials at the State of Missouri and Federal levels. Play a key role in advocacy on behalf of the Chamber.
  - Related Organizations:** Maintain and/or initiate effective working relationships with organizations within the Joplin area and region on a multi-state and national basis. Regularly convene meetings of other economic development organizations, area chambers, and key volunteers.
  - Community:** Through personal contacts with key regional and community leaders, help shape the future direction and well-being of Joplin, Jasper and Newton Counties, and the entire area. Take a strategic leadership role in local and regional issues, projects, or community organizations to assure presence and involvement of the Chamber to accomplish its mission.
  - Education:** Continue to foster stronger relationships with representatives of higher education institutions and school districts.
  - Media:** Serve as the official spokesperson of the Chamber with print and social media outlets.
- **Other Duties:** Perform other tasks and duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board.

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***Compensation***

The President & Chief Executive Officer is expected to earn an attractive compensation package; appropriate benefits and some relocation assistance will be provided.

**The Candidate**

***Education***

A Bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree in business, law, public administration or related field is desirable. A graduate of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management, Certified Chamber Executive designation or Certified Economic Developer designation is desirable.

***Professional Qualifications***

The ideal candidate must have a proven track record of success and may come from a variety of backgrounds such as: the top executive within a progressive and effective comparably-sized economic development organization, chamber of commerce, or related significant business association organization; experience as a "#2" or other senior-level executive at a larger like-enterprise as noted above; an executive with a strong record of community involvement from a complex private or public sector entity. Experience serving a regional marketplace along with significant Board interaction and experience leading large numbers of volunteers are all strongly desired.

***Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Abilities***

- **Executive leadership experience** (strong staff leadership, delegation and human resource development; has led a complex corporate, community or economic development organization).
- **Collaborative relationships** (demonstrated track record of developing effective relationships built on trust among all sectors and constituents).
- **Economic development** (has worked collaboratively with established public-sector delivery systems and private sector resources to effectively promote the business growth of a community or region).
- **Membership development** (has actively promoted a membership-based organization; track record of membership development, retention, increased value and appropriate expansion).
- **Volunteer organization experience** (appreciates the value of voluntary organization structure and operating techniques; proven ability to motivate and utilize volunteers).
- **Community/regional development** (able to identify both local and regional issues and effectively manage interactions with and among regional organizations to achieve common goals).
- **Public policy** (capable of advocating sound public policy and developing effective and even-handed working relationships with elected/appointed officials and their staffs).
- **Planning** (proven track record of successfully developing and executing operational and strategic plans).
- **Fiscal management** (budget conscious; demonstrated ability to develop revenue sources and control expenditures; experience with an annual budget with revenues of at least \$1MM).
- **Fundraising** (experience with varied successful resource development activities including capital campaigns, sponsorships and advertising, special events and other non-dues revenue campaigns).
- **Staff leadership** (demonstrated background of leading, managing and developing staff; inclusive while providing basic direction; allows senior staff team to execute without excessive personal involvement).
- **Governance** (significant involvement with Board development and recruitment, governance issues, and interactions with sophisticated business leaders serving as Directors).
- **Varied industries** (experience within a business environment with diverse industries including healthcare, agriculture, technology, financial services, manufacturing, retail, and education).
- **Innovation** (actively promotes enhancements and expansion of technology; recognizes value and potential of social media; computer literate).
- **Traditional/social Media and public relations** (ability to effectively articulate goals, objectives and policy positions of the Chamber to the media and the community through all forms of media).

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***Desired Personal Traits***

- **Critical thinker** (ability to make decisions while exhibiting sound and accurate judgement).
- **Ethical** (possesses the highest ethical and moral standards; trustworthy).
- **Collaborative/consensus-builder** (sees value in working with others to achieve positive results for the region; demonstrates a willingness and ability to work with and through others; inclusive verses exclusive).
- **Communication skills** (excellent listener; outstanding written and oral communication skills).
- **Executive presence/credibility** (polished; self-confident; able to rally others and command respect of Board, staff, business, government and community leaders).
- **Visibility** (highly visible to staff, members and business leaders; active in the region and community).
- **Energetic** (genuinely enthusiastic; strong personal work ethic; motivates others).
- **Persuasive** (able to synthesize various viewpoints and mobilize support for policy objectives).
- **Genuine** (fair; self-aware; walks the talk; takes responsibility).
- **Human relations skills** (builds constructive and effective relationships).
- **Teamwork** (recognizes that many parties are necessary to accomplish big things; speaks of “we” first, not “I”; relishes in sharing credit with others).
- **Decisive** (makes decisions in a timely manner and achieves desired outcomes).
- **Executes for results** (proven track record of “getting things done;” holds others accountable).
- **Organized** (detail oriented; able to establish Chamber agenda and maintain key priorities).
- **Regional knowledge** (has or able to develop an appreciation for Midwest US culture and ways of doing business).

***Challenges and Opportunity***

Key accomplishments and challenges for the new President & Chief Executive Officer in the first year and beyond include:

- Establish presence as the Chamber’s CEO by immersing him/herself into the details of the day-to-day operations of the Chamber and becoming knowledgeable about the work of its staff, finances, programs, Board members and committed volunteers.
- Initiate formal and informal introductions and connections with the Chamber’s membership and investors through varied communications and in-person meetings. Identify ways to specifically communicate the Chamber’s relevancy and value to existing and prospective members by connecting investment with tangible outcomes for members thereby increasing perceived value and pride of chamber membership.
- Become actively involved in the community, attending multiple Chamber and non-chamber events; become known as “the face” of the Chamber within the community.
- By listening and observing, form effective working relationships with key municipal, county, regional, state and national government leaders, entrepreneurial business owners and corporate executives, economic, community and tourism partner organizations, college and other educational officers and leaders of cultural arts entities.
- Work with Board and Finance Committee to stabilize chamber budget and achieve self-sustaining services with ATTC. Begin planning process for future revenue development campaign.
- Maintain existing membership base and develop plan to increase dues paying membership base. This will include identification of target markets, mindful of changing demographics, and clear articulation of value proposition of chamber membership.

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- Continue to encourage staff members in their own professional and personal growth paths, providing mentoring and support to each as needed and maintaining established culture of excellence in programs and operations.

The President & Chief Executive Officer position is an outstanding opportunity for a chamber of commerce, economic development, association, nonprofit or private sector executive to lead and grow a successful regional Chamber organization in a growing and vibrant region. The CEO will have the benefit of working with a highly committed and influential Board of Directors and group of volunteers with a “get it done” attitude. The level of collaboration between the private sector and public sector is exceptionally strong. This spirit of cooperation and resiliency was demonstrated when the community weathered a catastrophic EF-5 tornado in May 2011, causing \$2.8BB in damages. As the “go to” business organization in the region, the Chamber took the lead in the community’s re-building effort which has brought Joplin back stronger than ever.

The Chamber CEO is a highly visible leadership position and, as such, the new CEO will have significant influence on the continued growth and development of the city in the years to come. The Chamber’s volunteer and staff leaders are not content with status quo and have high expectations for the Chamber’s new leader as he/she leads them into “the next chapter” for the Chamber and the Joplin Area regional community.

**Contacts**

If you are aware of an outstanding executive who meets these requirements and would be interested in evaluating this dynamic opportunity, please email [Joplin@Waverly-Partners.com](mailto:Joplin@Waverly-Partners.com) or contact either consultant at WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the 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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Executive Search Consultants

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