



# *Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership*

JUSTIN HORVATH SHARES  
STORY OF GROWTH AND  
POTENTIAL IN  
DOWNTOWN OWOSSO

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Photos and Story by Phil Eich,  
Storyville Social, as part of the  
Michigan Main Street Story  
Series

“Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership is a county-wide private, nonprofit organization that works to grow Shiawassee County's economy. We focus on business workforce and real estate development, and our ultimate goal is to bring more economic opportunity to local residents and businesses in the community.

For business development, we focus on three core areas: growing existing companies, attracting businesses from outside Shiawassee County, and assisting local entrepreneurs start their own businesses.

Communities with a strong workforce will be the ones who succeed, so another job we have is to build our talent pipeline by upskilling our current residents and attracting skilled employees to move to the community. We try to work with our educational systems, particularly at the K-12 level, to develop that future talent pipeline, as well.

For real estate development, we've historically focused on more commercial/industrial type opportunities, but our recent focus, and one that is important for downtown Owosso, is housing. We're talking to housing developers to encourage them to invest in some of our downtown buildings.

One way to cultivate local entrepreneurs is this pop-up shop opportunity in downtown Owosso. We know that for a lot of smaller entrepreneurs, it's very hard to commit to a large-scale lease, both in terms of dollars and duration, so this pop-up shop gives small-scale entrepreneurs an opportunity to test the market by showcasing their wares and building a customer base before having to take on a large amount of risk. Businesses rotate through this space with the hope that they will become successful and grow into a larger space downtown.



I have taken to calling Owosso a 'micropolitan community.' People know about metropolitan areas, but Owosso has enough business, housing, education, and industrial opportunities to make this community very attractive for people. Along with having a great downtown, we are very well-positioned as we move into the future."

—Justin Horvath, President and CEO of the Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership

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