



CITY HISTORY AND FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Ottawa was incorporated in 1866 and in 1867 voted to become a city of the second class under the guidelines established by the State of Kansas. During the same time frame, a bridge company was formed, and constructed a suspension bridge across the Marais des Cygnes River at Main Street, purchased by the City in 1874.

City Hall was constructed at the corner of Fourth & Walnut in 1911 and remained at that location until August 1996 when it moved to 101 S. Hickory.

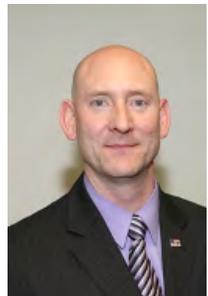
Ottawa was governed by a Mayor-Council system until 1913 when the City became a Commission form of government. In 1970 voters established the City Manager form of government with a five (5) member Commission, which annually selects a Mayor from its ranks. Three seats on the Commission are open every odd numbered year. Two Commissioners are elected to four-year terms and one is elected to a two-year term.

The City Commission is the legislative and policy making body of the City. Regular City Commission meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month. The first Wednesday meeting is scheduled at 7:00 p.m. and the third Wednesday is set at 9:30 a.m. The City Commission also meets at 4:00 p.m. every Monday afternoon in work session and in joint session with the County Commission and members of the U.S.D. 290 School Board every third Wednesday at noon. All meetings are open to the public.

The City Manager is appointed by the City Commission to serve as agreed upon by a written employment agreement. The City Commission may remove the City Manager from office at any time. The City Manager serves as the CEO of the City and is charged with the responsibility of supervision, coordination, and administration of the City, and carrying out policies of the City Commission.



CITY MANAGER & COMMISSIONERS



GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY

The City of Ottawa is a full-service entity with a \$38,000,000 budget. The City purchased the utilities in 1905 and currently operates the electric, water and wastewater utilities. The electric system transfers approximately \$1,000,000 to the General Fund each year. The City employs 27 full-time police officers and in 2005 received a 2-year Domestic Violence Grant awarded by the Office of Justice Programs.

The City maintains six parks: Forest Park in the northwest corner of the city is notable for its mature trees and recreational facilities, including the municipal swimming pool. Kanza Park has a 4,200 foot walking track lit with vintage Victorian light fixtures from Main Street. City Park has a renovated bandstand used for summer concerts and the Carnegie Cultural Center, operated by the Community Arts Council. Freedom Park is a neighborhood facility on the east side of town. Haley Park serves as a focal point for downtown events. Heritage Park, located on the northeast side of town, boasts a ¼ mile-walking track. The Prairie Spirit Rail Trail, a state park, starts in Ottawa and extends through Garnett.

The City owns and operates a Municipal Airport encompassing 440 acres of land. Located there is a main hangar and shop building, a T-hangar, a hard surface tie-down area, a hard surface runway, hard surface taxi-way, and two sod run-ways.



Water Treatment Plant



**The New
Wastewater Treatment Facility**



Ottawa Municipal Airport

CITY PARKS

- Forest Park
- Kanza Park
- City Park
- Haley Park
- Heritage
- Cox
- Freedom
- Prairie Spirit River Trail

[On-line Park Reservation Form](#)



LOCATION AND GROWTH

Ottawa is served by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, several trucking firms and by Interstate 35, US-59 and Kansas Highway 68. Ottawa is located in a strategic area approximately 25 miles south of Lawrence and 30 miles southwest of the greater Kansas City area, and is experiencing an upward growth cycle. Residential electric accounts are up to 4,997 as of August 2006. This compares to 4,631 in January 1999. Over the last 12 years 2,800 jobs opportunities have been established by the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new business locations in the Ottawa area.



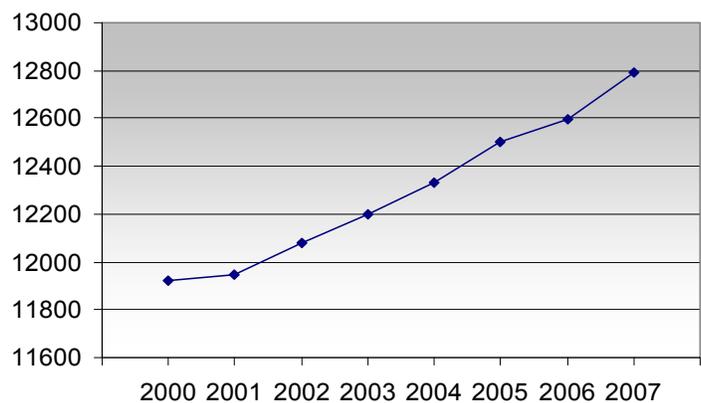
BUILDING PERMITS

Year	Value
2000	\$10,560,525
2001	\$17,534,344
2002	\$11,441,331
2003	\$36,172,426
2004	\$18,518,326
2005	\$16,348,645
2006	\$54,855,860

Significant businesses added to the area in the last decade include a regional distribution center for Wal-Mart located three miles east of Ottawa, which started construction in 1994 and now employs approximately 1,500 workers at the 205-acre facility. In 2001 American Eagle Outfitters located in Ottawa's Industrial Park. This facility is currently operating with approximately 250 employees. In 2006 American Eagle Outfitters broke ground on a \$54,000,000 addition to its current facility, doubling their presence in the community and adding up to 300 additional jobs.

The official United States Census figures indicate the population of Ottawa was 10,193 in 1940; 10,081 in 1950; 10,673 in 1960; 11,036 in 1970; 11,016 in 1980 and 10,585 in 1990, 11,921 in 2000 and 12,792 in 2007.

CITY OF OTTAWA: Population Growth





BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City serves as a retail and agricultural center for a trade area containing some 73,500 people. Ottawa's industries include a manufacturer of plastic kennel products, a manufacturer of air filtration units, a manufacturer of steel fabrication components, a manufacturer of steel aircraft components, restaurant cabinets and equipment, semi-trailer tractors, and two regional distribution facilities.

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Through the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce and downtown business community, Ottawa achieved designation as a Kansas Main Street City. One member of the City Commission sits on the Main Street Board of Directors and the Commission has provided financial support of up to \$30,000 per year. In addition, the City offers low interest economic development loans and participates in a tax-increment financing plan known as the Neighborhood Revitalization Act. This Act helps retain valuable retail businesses and provides potential development opportunities in the future.

The City works closely with local retailers. The Sears store relocated as a strong anchor in the downtown area. In addition to providing low interest economic development loans, the City also participates in a tax increment-financing plan known as the Neighborhood Revitalization Act. This act helps retain valuable retail businesses and should provide potential development opportunities in the future.

Agriculture of Franklin County and surrounding counties contribute substantially to the economy of Ottawa. Cattle production, corn, milo, soybeans and wheat are the major agricultural activities in the area.

Encouraging economic development is a major focus for the City of Ottawa. As a result of this focus and Ottawa's strategic location, manufacturing and distribution are the leading commerce. For example, major companies such as American Eagle Outfitters, Midwest Cabinets and Wal-Mart Distribution have recently invested or expanded in the Ottawa area. Land is available along this major traffic artery, making Ottawa prime for additional growth and development.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Wal-Mart DC	Distribution	1500
American Eagle	Distribution	700
KALMAR Ind.	Semi-tractors	350
Wal-Mart Store	Retail	350
USD 290	Education	340
Ransom Hospital	Medical/Surgical	289
Franklin County	Government	225
Schuff Steel	Structural	150
City of Ottawa	Government	150
Ottawa University	Education	145
Midwest Cabinets	Cabinets	120
COF Training Services	Assembly	82





EDUCATION

There are four elementary schools, one senior high school and one middle school in Ottawa. Voters approved a \$25,900,000 bond issue for construction of one new elementary school and improvements to the high school and Garfield Elementary. The schools are staffed with a faculty of approximately 201 teachers and administrators. Past enrollment statistics follow:

Ottawa is home to Ottawa University, a private four-year liberal arts college that provides many cultural events for the citizens of Ottawa, as well as, providing a general atmosphere of higher education. The City is also the home a satellite of Neosho County Community College, a two-year junior college. In addition, the University of Kansas, located at Lawrence, Kansas, 25 miles North of Ottawa, provides additional access for the community to higher education and cultural benefits.

ENROLLMENT

1999–2000	2,329
2000–2001	2,474
2001–2002	2,431
2002–2003	2,503
2003–2004	2,472
2004–2005	2,445
2005–2006	2,459
2006–2007	2,443
2007–2008	Est. 2,526



COMMUNITY SERVICES & SUPPORT

The Ottawa Library is located in the same building with City Hall and provides over 52,000 print and non-print informational, educational, cultural, and recreational materials, public use computers, as well as, programs for children and adults. A seven-member board oversees library management, which is appointed by the mayor and approved by the city commission.

The City owns and operates a municipal auditorium, which was constructed at the corner of Third and Hickory in 1919.

The community is served by Ransom Memorial Hospital, a 55-bed hospital, located in Ottawa. Eleven full-time physicians serve the area and twenty-four specialists who make scheduled visits to the community.

VISIT THE WEBSITE!

[USD 290](#)

[Ottawa University](#)

[Neosho County Community College](#)

[Municipal Auditorium](#)

[Ottawa Library](#)

[Ransom Memorial Hospital](#)

[Ottawa Recreation Commission](#)

[Ottawa Main Street](#)

[Ottawa Chamber of Commerce](#)

