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Commerce Announces New Northeast Regional Development Specialist

Northeast Region — The Oklahoma Department of Commerce (Commerce) welcomes Jared Cooper as the new Northeast Regional Development Specialist. In his first month, Cooper has prioritized connecting with community leaders in the Northeast region.

“We are excited to have Jared as a part of the Commerce team to be the boots-on-the-ground, face-to-face point of contact for the people and communities in Northeast Oklahoma,” said Charles Kimbrough, Director of Business Development. “He’s a great addition to the team and I know our community partners will welcome and enjoy working with him.”

In his new role as Regional Development Specialists (RDS), Cooper will work to provide resources to communities to help fund infrastructure improvements, attract retail establishments, and boost tourism among other economic development services.

“We’re anxious to get Jared out in the community to offer our assistance to our partners in economic development,” said Ray Little, Director of Business Retention and Expansion. “Our expectations are high, and we feel Jared is the one who can deliver.”

“In the first 43 days, I have visited a large portion of the northeast area of the state, this includes 50+ communities, businesses, and tribal entities, as well as covering approximately 4500 miles,” said Cooper. “I have also attended a week-long basic economic development training.”

Prior to accepting his position at Commerce, Cooper spent the majority of his working career in municipal government. He worked 14 years in the Community Development Department at the City of Shawnee, a portion of that time as the Chief Building Official

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and Interim Community Development Director. In Community Development, he worked closely with Shawnee Economic Development to find appropriate sites for New Projects as well as providing clear information for project progress.

In his new role, Cooper is excited for the opportunity to see growth and progress from a larger prospective.

“As a Regional Specialist, I have the chance to see diversity in projects, communities, and entities,” said Cooper. “I believe in the motto ‘a rising tide lifts all ships.’ The greater the unity among community partners, the greater the ceiling of possibilities. My primary goal is to be a facilitator of these relationships.”

Cooper has lived in communities under 500 people for the vast majority of his life, and this has led to a passion for small towns and their growth potential.

“The culture and character of rural towns in Oklahoma has proved itself time and again one of Oklahoma's greatest resources.”

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