



**ABILENE CITY COMMISSION  
AGENDA  
ABILENE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 209 NW FOURTH STREET  
MAY 11, 2026 - 4:30 PM**

Following the adjournment of the regular meeting

**VIEW THIS CITY COMMISSION MEETING VIRTUALLY AT**

**[www.abilenecityhall.com/watchlive](http://www.abilenecityhall.com/watchlive)**

- 1. Call to Order –May 11, 2026, City Commission Study Session**
- 2. May 11, 2026, City Commission Study Session Agenda**
  - a. Industrial Land Policy Discussion
- 3. Adjourn the May 11, 2026, City Commission Study Session.**

Future Meeting Reminders



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**Memorandum**

To: Mayor and City Commission  
From: Jon Quinday, Interim City Manager  
Date: April 20, 2026  
Subject: Industrial Land Policy Review and Pricing Strategy for Industrial Park

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide background information and policy considerations regarding the City’s industrial land program in light of ongoing infrastructure investments in the industrial park. The City Commission is asked to provide direction on whether to maintain, amend, or replace the current policy governing the sale of industrial land.

The City of Abilene has historically used industrial land as a tool to attract new and expanding businesses. In April 2020, the City Commission adopted a policy allowing the City to convey industrial land at no cost (“free land”) to qualifying projects that meet established investment, job creation, and wage requirements.

Under this policy, eligible projects must generally include:

1. A minimum private capital investment of \$500,000
2. Creation of at least four (4) full-time jobs
3. Wages of at least \$20.00 per hour

The policy also requires companies to meet these commitments over a five-year period. If those commitments are not met, the City may recover the value of the land at fair market rates.

Approximately 20 acres of City-owned land within the industrial park are subject to this policy. Historically, the “free land” approach has reduced upfront costs for businesses and served as a primary economic development incentive.

The City is currently making a significant investment in the industrial park to improve its readiness for development. This project includes:

- Installation of water and sanitary sewer infrastructure
- Construction of a stormwater detention basin
- Development of roadway access

The total project cost is approximately \$3.0 million. The City has received grant funding from the State of Kansas that will reimburse project costs proportionally, with the State contributing up to \$2.5 million and the City responsible for a local match of up to \$750,000.

As a result of these improvements, the industrial park will transition from largely undeveloped land to fully serviced sites with infrastructure in place.

It is helpful to understand two commonly used terms as they relate to industrial development:

1. Shovel-ready site: Land that has necessary infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, and drainage) in place or immediately accessible, allowing a business to begin construction quickly.
2. Certified site: A designation from the Kansas Department of Commerce indicating that a site has undergone additional due diligence (such as environmental review, utility verification, and title work) to reduce risk and accelerate development timelines.

It is important to note that certification does not determine the price of land. Pricing is established locally by each community, and certified sites in Kansas vary widely in price depending on location and market conditions.

A review of industrial land across Kansas shows that pricing varies significantly based on location, infrastructure, and demand.

General pricing ranges include:

Rural / incentive-driven communities:

- ~\$5,000 – \$10,000 per acre  
(Often includes free or heavily discounted land to attract jobs)

Communities similar to Abilene (secondary markets):

- ~\$15,000 – \$60,000 per acre  
(Typical range for land with infrastructure in place)

Larger or metro markets (Wichita / Kansas City region):

- \$100,000+ per acre

A summary of Kansas industrial land pricing and comparable sites is included as Attachment A.

Industrial land pricing in Kansas varies widely, even among certified sites. While infrastructure generally increases land value, many communities use pricing strategically—offering land at no cost, at a discount, or at market rates—depending on their economic development goals.

The City's infrastructure investment represents a significant change in the condition and marketability of the industrial park. Historically, the property has consisted of undeveloped or partially improved land. Upon completion of the current improvements, the site will be fully serviced and ready for development, allowing businesses to begin construction more quickly and with fewer upfront challenges.

This transition raises an important policy consideration for the City Commission: whether to continue offering land at no cost as an incentive or to establish a pricing structure that reflects the City's investment in infrastructure and the increased value of the property.

The City Commission has several options to consider regarding the future of the industrial land policy, each reflecting a different balance between economic development incentives and recovery of the City's infrastructure investment.

One option is to maintain the current policy of providing land at no cost to qualifying projects. This approach maximizes the City's competitiveness with other rural communities that offer aggressive incentives and continues to reduce upfront costs for prospective businesses. It is also a simple and familiar program that has been used successfully in the past. However, continuing this approach would not allow the City to recover its investment in infrastructure, may undervalue land that will soon be fully serviced, and provides the same level of benefit regardless of the size or impact of a project.

A second option is to amend the current policy to establish a hybrid approach. Under this model, the City could introduce a base price for industrial land while retaining the ability to offer discounts or incentives based on project performance. For example, land could be priced per acre or square foot, with reductions or waivers provided for projects that meet higher thresholds for investment, job creation, or wages. This approach balances cost recovery with economic development goals, aligns with practices used by many comparable Kansas communities, and allows flexibility to respond to different types of projects. However, it would be more complex to administer and would require the development of clear criteria and guidelines.

A third option is to move to a market-based pricing model in which all industrial land is sold at a set price based on current market conditions. This approach would allow the City to recover a portion of its infrastructure investment, provide consistency and transparency in pricing, and support long-term sustainability of the industrial park. The primary drawback is that it may reduce the City's competitiveness in attracting new businesses, increase upfront costs for developers, and require the use of other incentive tools to remain competitive with peer communities.

Finally, the City could consider a tiered pricing strategy that varies the cost of land based on the overall impact of a project. Under this approach, high-impact projects could receive free or reduced-cost land, while standard projects might receive discounted pricing and lower-impact uses would pay full market value. This structure allows the City to align incentives with community priorities, encourage higher-quality development, and maintain flexibility in negotiations. However, it introduces additional complexity, requires clearly defined evaluation criteria, and may involve a greater degree of subjectivity in decision-making.

In evaluating these options, the City Commission may wish to consider several factors, including the City's financial investment in infrastructure, competitiveness with similar Kansas communities, and the role of industrial land as either an economic development incentive or a revenue-generating asset. Additional considerations include the long-term sustainability of the industrial park, opportunities for future reinvestment, and the level of administrative complexity associated with implementation.

Staff is seeking direction from the City Commission on whether to maintain the current policy, bring back an amended policy based on the direction the Commission wishes to proceed, or repeal and replace the policy with a new framework.

## Attachment A – Kansas Industrial Land Comparable Analysis

The following matrix summarizes industrial land pricing across Kansas, with emphasis on sites that are either certified (“shovel-ready”) or have infrastructure in place. Pricing is normalized to a per-acre basis for comparison.

Location	Site / Type	Acres	Total Price	\$/Acre	Infrastructure / Readiness	Market Type
<b>Coffeyville</b>	Certified Industrial Site	62.5	~\$562,500	~\$9,000	Full utilities, highway access	Rural
<b>Tribune</b>	Certified Site	24.83	\$125,000	~\$5,000	Basic utilities	Rural
<b>Wichita</b>	The Paddock Industrial Park	Various	—	\$126,000–\$166,000	Fully serviced, shovel-ready	Metro
<b>Wichita (frontage)</b>	Premium frontage lots	—	—	~\$435,000	Fully serviced, high visibility	Metro
<b>Salina</b>	Airport Industrial Land	13.02	\$345,030	~\$26,500	Utilities + logistics access	Secondary
<b>Newton</b>	Industrial Park Lots	2–4	\$28K–\$241K	\$15K–\$80K	Subdivided, utilities in place	Secondary
<b>Topeka</b>	Industrial Lots	~10	\$112K–\$612K	\$11K–\$60K	Utility-served	Secondary
<b>Garden City</b>	Industrial Land	36.14	\$674,000	~\$18,600	Utilities available	Rural/Secondary
<b>Salina (larger tracts)</b>	Industrial Sites	14–18	\$510K–\$1.78M	\$35K–\$98K	Fully serviced	Secondary
<b>Spring Hill (KC region)</b>	Industrial Site	25	\$4.3M	~\$172,000	Fully serviced	Metro

Based on the comparables above, industrial land pricing in Kansas generally falls within the following ranges:

Market Category	Typical Price Range	Characteristics
Rural / Economic Development Pricing	\$5,000 – \$10,000 per acre	Often subsidized; may include free land incentives
Secondary Markets (Comparable to Abilene)	\$15,000 – \$60,000 per acre	Infrastructure in place; most common range
Regional Logistics / Larger Tracts	\$25,000 – \$100,000 per acre	Larger sites with transportation access
Metro Markets (Wichita / KC Region)	\$100,000 – \$175,000+ per acre	High demand, fully serviced
Urban Core / Infill	\$175,000 – \$350,000+ per acre	Limited land availability

**Key Observations**

- Industrial land pricing in Kansas varies widely based on location, infrastructure, and market demand.
- Certified (“shovel-ready”) sites do not have a standard price and range from approximately \$5,000 to over \$150,000 per acre.
- The presence of infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, drainage) significantly increases land value.
- For communities similar to Abilene, the most representative pricing range for serviced industrial land is approximately \$15,000 to \$60,000 per acre.

The City’s investment in infrastructure will transition the industrial park to fully serviced, development-ready sites. Based on Kansas comparables:

- Serviced industrial land is typically marketed at a per-acre or per-square-foot price
- Some communities continue to offer free or discounted land as an incentive
- Others use market pricing combined with performance-based incentives

# City of Abilene, Kansas

## Industrial Land Funding Policy

**Section 1. Intent** – The city of Abilene considers the growth of employment and investment in industries that manufacture or add value to products that are sold outside of the community as a primary benefit to the health and vitality of the Abilene. In order to foster industrial growth, the City has invested public resources into land acquisitions that accommodate new, expanded, and relocating industrial activities.

**Section 2. Eligible Property** – The benefits of the policy may be applied toward the approximate 20 acres of land that the city owns. This property is located along 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. and the future Industrial Park Ave. The legal description of these lots are:

1. LOT 1 BLOCK 1, INDUSTRIAL PARK ADDITION NO. 1, S07, T13, R02, BLOCK 1, Lot 1, 129050 SQUARE FEET, 3.0 ACRES
2. LOT 2 BLOCK 1, INDUSTRIAL PARK ADDITION NO. 1, S07, T13, R02, BLOCK 1, Lot 2, 218471 SQUARE FEET, 4.9 ACRES
3. LOT 3 BLOCK 1, INDUSTRIAL PARK ADDITION NO. 1, S07, T13, R02, BLOCK 1, Lot 3, 217725 SQUARE FEET, 4.9 ACRES
4. LOT 4 BLOCK 1 INDUSTRIAL PARK ADDITION NO. 1, S07, T13, R02, BLOCK 1, Lot 4, 217804 SQUARE FEET, 5.0 ACRES

All or part of the property is eligible contingent on meeting the criteria set forth in these guidelines.

**Section 3. Minimum Project Requirements** – An individual Industrial growth project must meet the following minimum requirements:

- \$500,00.00 of private capital investment in buildings, equipment and/or site improvements.
- A minimum of 4 new FTE employees; and
- A base wage of \$20.00 for each created position.

**Section 4. Benefit Request** – A request for the industrial land may be filed with the Planning and Zoning Department and must include a detailed description of the project to include:

- Company Description and contact information;
- Specific site information;

- Building improvement information, including anticipated construction costs;
- Description of the industrial process, materials, and products produced;
- Anticipated employment by position and base wage rates; and
- Description of other public incentives being sought from either City, State, or other resources.

Requests will be reviewed by the Dickinson County Economic Development Corporation for a recommendation, which will be forwarded to the Abilene City Commission for consideration.

**Section 5. Assurances** – The eligible industry shall maintain the employment requirement set fourth for a minimum of five years with base wage of at least \$20.00 for the four FTE. If this standard is not met, the company will be required to pay for the given land at fair market rate.

**Section 6. Compliance Documentation** – Annually the company must provide the following data to the Planning and Zoning Department prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent anniversary dates of the closing of the property acquired from the City under this policy.

- Monthly employment data for the previous year including FTE positions and wage rates for each position;
- Statement of capital assets to include, building, land, site improvements, and equipment;
- Any significant changes in products or materials produced or used in production activities.

This information will be reviewed by the Dickinson County Economic Development Corporation and a finding of compliance forwarded to the Abilene City Commission for consideration. If the criteria is not met the City Commission has the right to revoke the free land agreement, and charge the industry the fair market rate of acquired property. After the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the transfer of land the requirements stated in this policy will be automatically fully released.

**Section 6. City Commission Discretion** – The Abilene City Commission reserves the right to exempt any project from the limitations set forth in this policy. Exemptions may include the eligibility and benefit standards. Also, if projects do not meet the criteria, the land may be purchased for the going market rate. The Commission may also terminate, suspend or amend this policy when deemed necessary by a majority of the Commission.

**Section 8. Effective** – This policy shall be effective upon the adoption by the Abilene City Commission and will remain so until such times as the City Commission revokes or amends the provisions herein.

Approved this 13<sup>th</sup> day of April 2020.

ATTEST:



*Chris Ostermann*  
Chris Ostermann, Mayor

*Penny L. Soukup, CMC*  
Penny L. Soukup, CMC  
City Clerk