

The Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation (CPCDC) was certified as a Native American Community CDFI and loan fund established in Shawnee in 2003. It is the mission of the CPCDC to finance, promote, educate, and inspire the entrepreneurial growth, economic opportunity and financial well-being of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation Tribal Community and other underserved Native populations.

CPCDC provides financial education, access to capital, business development services, innovative capacity building practices, and community development initiatives. The organization serves all Native Americans living in the State of Oklahoma and Citizen Potawatomi Nation tribal members nationwide.

CPCDC assists those who cannot access bank financing due to bruised credit, lack of collateral or down payment. The organization offers commercial loans, employee loans, credit builder loans, jumpstart auto loans, business development services, credit counseling, and financial education opportunities.

Organization Highlights

- Timeframe/years for the organization data highlights: Fiscal Year 2017
- Jobs created or retained: 188
- Businesses assisted: 301
- Individuals provided with financial counseling and literacy training: 576
- Total dollar amount loaned: \$25,424,712

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FireLake Arena: New Economic Opportunities for Citizen Potawatomi Nation



The FireLake Arena was opened by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Shawnee, Oklahoma in January 2014. The spacious facility can host events of all kinds, boasting more than 52,000 square-feet of space and seating up to 5,000. As host of the Inter-Tribal Emergency Management Coalition Summit in 2015, the Arena added to its reputation, and that of the Nation, as a valuable partner in the community.

By 2016, the value brought to the table by the FireLake Arena to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and the surrounding community, only served to highlight the fact the Arena needed a lending partner to further its mission and expand its business. As the only Native CDFI approved and awarded capital through the U.S. Treasury Department's CDFI Bond Guarantee Program, the CPCDC was there to lend a hand.

By orchestrating the first ever bond collaborative, the CPCDC was able to fund an \$8.5 million-dollar tribal project for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation through a leasehold mortgage of the FireLake Arena. These funds allowed for refinancing, consolidation and cashing out of previously paid out of pocket capital improvements. These Bond funds issued through the CPCDC freed the FireLake Arena to reach new business heights, expanding profit margins and event bookings, while seeing thousands of visitors walk through its doors. Since reaching out to the CPCDC, the FireLake Arena has gone on to host concerts, community events, tradeshow, and sporting events.

The CPCDC loan to the FireLake Arena is laying the groundwork for Indian Country to explore new opportunities with the ability to mortgage assets with financing from a nontraditional source. The success of FireLake Arena and ventures like it are why CPCDC exist, to push for economic development in Indian Country and advocate every day on behalf of Native success everywhere.

Project Highlights

- Median Income Compared to Area Median Income (AMI): 74%
- Unemployment Rate: 4.6%
- Poverty Rate: 18.1%
- Non-Metropolitan Statistical Area
- Jobs created or retained: 126