



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

GREAT PLAINS DEVELOPMENT, INC.

2027-2031

ABOUT

Partnered With: The Kansas Department of Commerce
Kansas State University TDI (an EDA University Center)
The Institute for Policy and Social Research (University of Kansas)
Great Plains Development, Inc. Board of Directors and the CEDS Committee

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Abstract: This document is the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Great Plains Development, Inc. It serves as a tool to improve coordinated economic development in the region and build upon resources and efforts of the region to improve quality of life and make the GPDl region a great place to live, work, and thrive.

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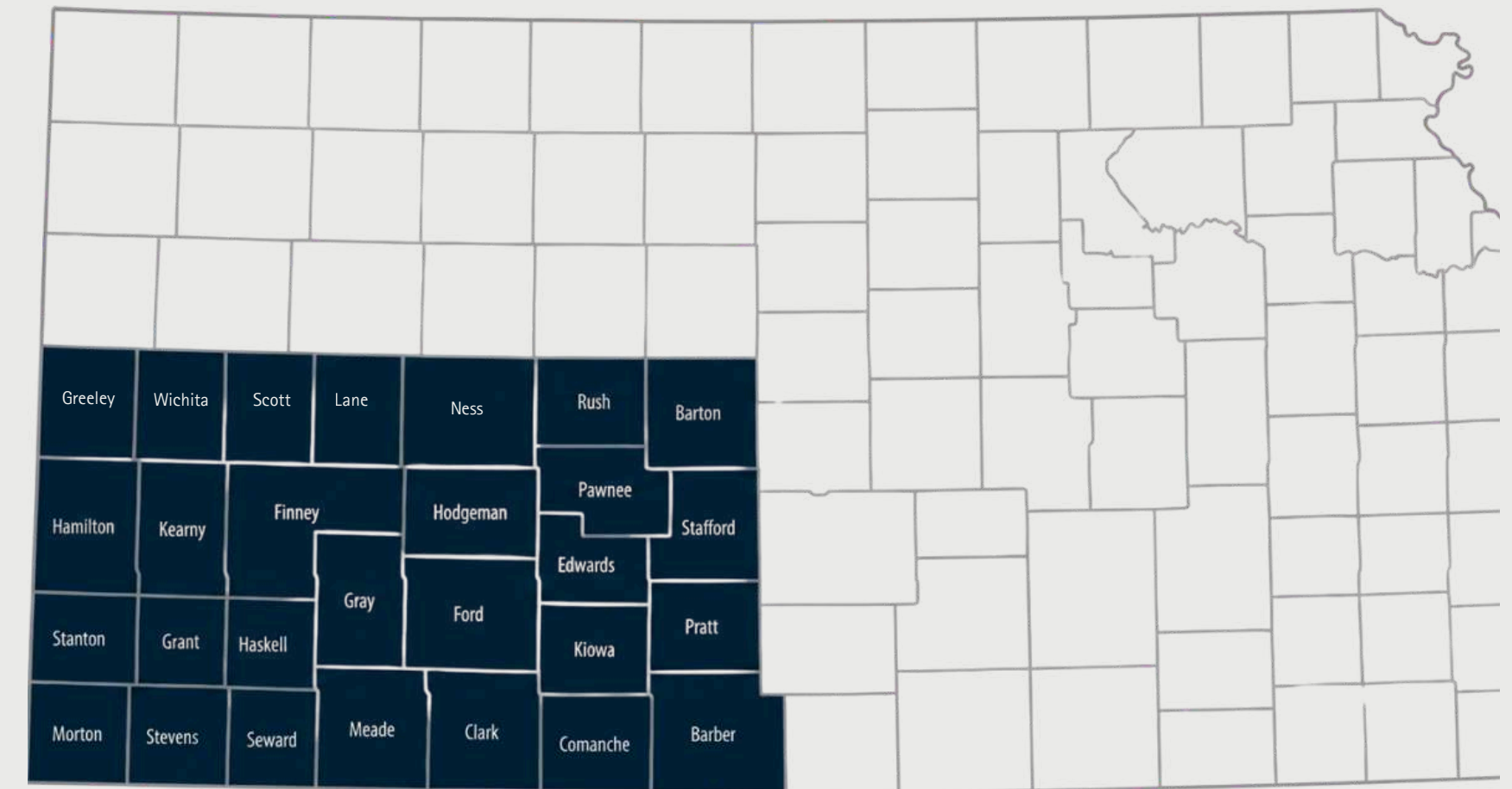


OVERVIEW

Great Plains Development, serves the 28-county region of Southwest Kansas. Every 5 years, our organization completes a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the 28 counties of SW Kansas.

The CEDS plan is a strategic economic development plan that guides its' respective region to ensure economic diversification, build capacity (locally and regionally), and improve overall prosperity for the future.

By conducting this study, we can measure our strengths, weaknesses, areas of opportunity, and impending threats. This allows us to be as proactive about the way we conduct and guide economic development as possible.



As an organization, we provide both grant administration services for municipalities and other organizations, along with commercial lending services and small business planning assistance.

Our region is a vastly rural 24,000 sq. miles area, with 107 incorporated cities, 117 unincorporated, and a total population of 201,778. The majority of the population is split between 5 micropolitan communities, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. These communities include Liberal, Garden City, Dodge City, Great Bend, and Pratt.



Executive Summary

The 2027-2031 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) will focus on the primary objectives, key initiatives, and opportunities that are presented throughout the region.

The 28-counties of southwest Kansas operates as a critical economic driver for the state's agricultural and food manufacturing output. In fact, 30-35% of Kansas's total agricultural market value comes from this region. It is especially a hub for cattle production; housing 50% of the states' total cattle-on-feed inventory. While agriculture is the lifeblood of our region, the agricultural production and industrial animal processing is heavily reliant on the Ogallala Aquifer. Roughly 25% of the agricultural land in the southwest is heavily irrigated to support high-yield corn, and the massive cattle feeding infrastructure. This presents a unique demographic footprint, but also a widely recognized threat, too.

Aside from agricultural production, southwest Kansas is also a leader in wind and renewable energy resources. Because our region is home to four of the state's major wind farms, this positions Kansas' ranking as #3 in the nation for the ratio of energy generated by wind.

With this supporting our economy, we are faced with critical aging infrastructure, difficulties in infrastructure resilience and connectivity; workforce recruitment, retention and childcare; water sustainability and natural resources; agricultural value-adding and industry diversification; and socioeconomic and institutional accessibility. This five-year plan aims to identify specific strategies and action items that will improve local and regional quality of life, increase wealth, and ensure economic resiliency when presented with economic shocks.

This document is intended to support the Kansas Association of Regional Development Organizations (KARDO), and its' coordinated state action plan that is underway. It will also support the ongoing initiatives by the Kansas Department of Commerce and its' Framework for Growth.

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT



30-35%

of Kansas agricultural
market value



50%

of Kansas cattle-on-feed
inventory



#3

in the nation for
wind-energy ratio

Goals

Target vulnerable infrastructure including water, utility systems, transportation (including freight demands, accessibility, etc.)

Stimulate the workforce, focusing on recruitment, retention, workforce development, childcare. Also, including small business lending opportunities.

Spur industry diversification and identify value-added agriculture; especially focusing on bolstering established infrastructure and commodities.

Water sustainability and natural resource conservation and utilization are to be targeted in order to preserve and better utilize the resources our region has access to.

Socioeconomic support and ensuring that institutional accessibility is targeted. This includes improving access to essential services due to geographical disadvantages.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND AND REGIONAL PROFILE

Due to the vast expanse of our region, it is characterized by stark demographic dualism. While much of the area is comprised of rural counties, there are also micropolitan cores that are seen amongst the previously mentioned 5 cities. However, Garden City, Dodge City, and Liberal hold much of the population. Due to this, the socioeconomic and demographic profile sees a major difference amongst the rural counties versus the counties that house the micropolitan communities.

Socioeconomic and Demographics

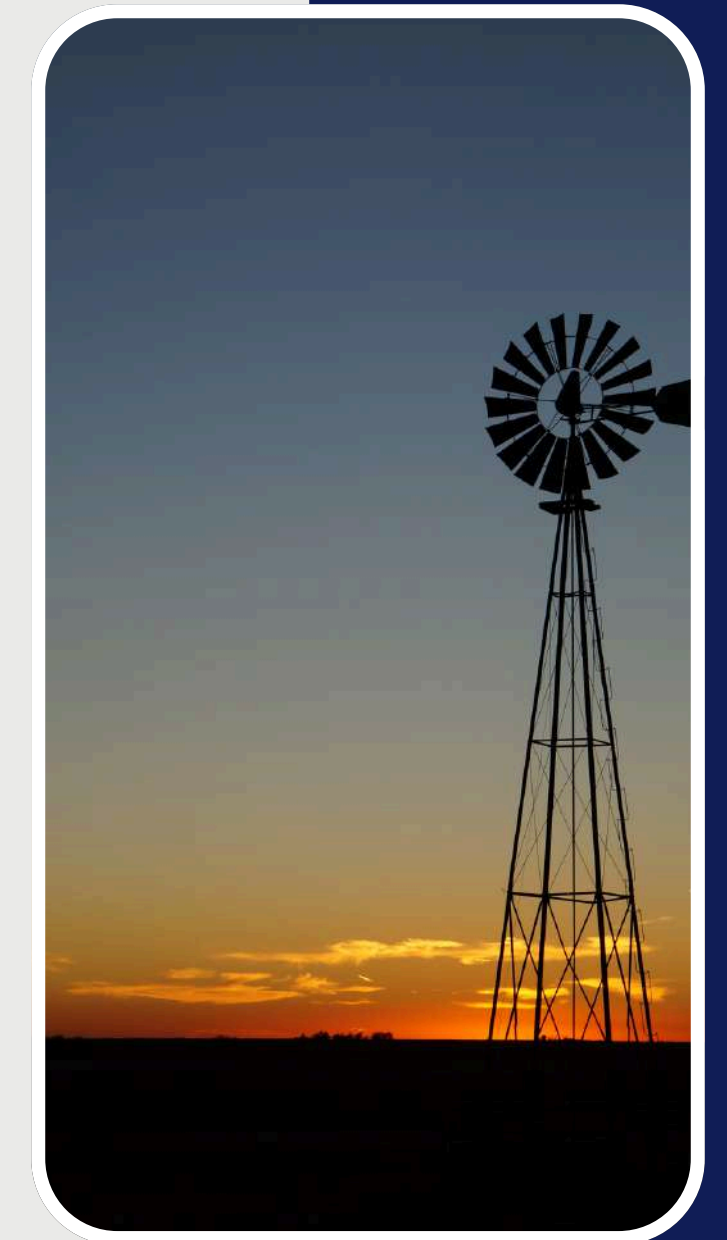
Garden City, in Finney County; Dodge City, in Ford County; Liberal, in Seward County see much of the industrial expansion, due to the heavier populations and growing infrastructure. Meanwhile, many of the more rural counties face difficulties such as aging infrastructure, aging workforce, and population declines. This is primarily in part to much of the population shifting and moving to the more populated areas for improved career opportunities, and a more broad access to resources.

While there is diversity amongst the rural counties and the micropolitan counties, there is also diversity within the population throughout much of Southwest Kansas. Driven by the labor demands of agribusiness, Southwest Kansas is proud to feature some of the highest racial and ethnic diversities within the state. Our region boasts a significant and growing Hispanic and Latino population, creating unique cultural assets. With this, comes specific needs for multilingual workforce training, inclusive entrepreneurial support, and diverse housing infrastructure.

Despite our robust agricultural output, numerous counties and communities within our 28-county footprint meet the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) criteria for economic distress. This distress manifests as low per-capita money income, stagnant wage growth, that is relative to national averages. Another issue is high-poverty pockets that underscore the crucial need for targeted federal public works and economic adjustment assistance.

While there are areas that meet EDA's criteria for economic distress, we have many counties and communities that have very high levels of income, primarily due to agricultural production and oil industry opportunities. This can create difficult situations, especially when looking into multi-county regional opportunities. As some counties within our region can have vastly diverse concerns and needs.

However, most counties find commonalities within difficulties surrounding workforce development and job training, aging infrastructure, aging and migratory populations, and accessibility to resources (such as healthcare, childcare, higher-paying jobs, and education).



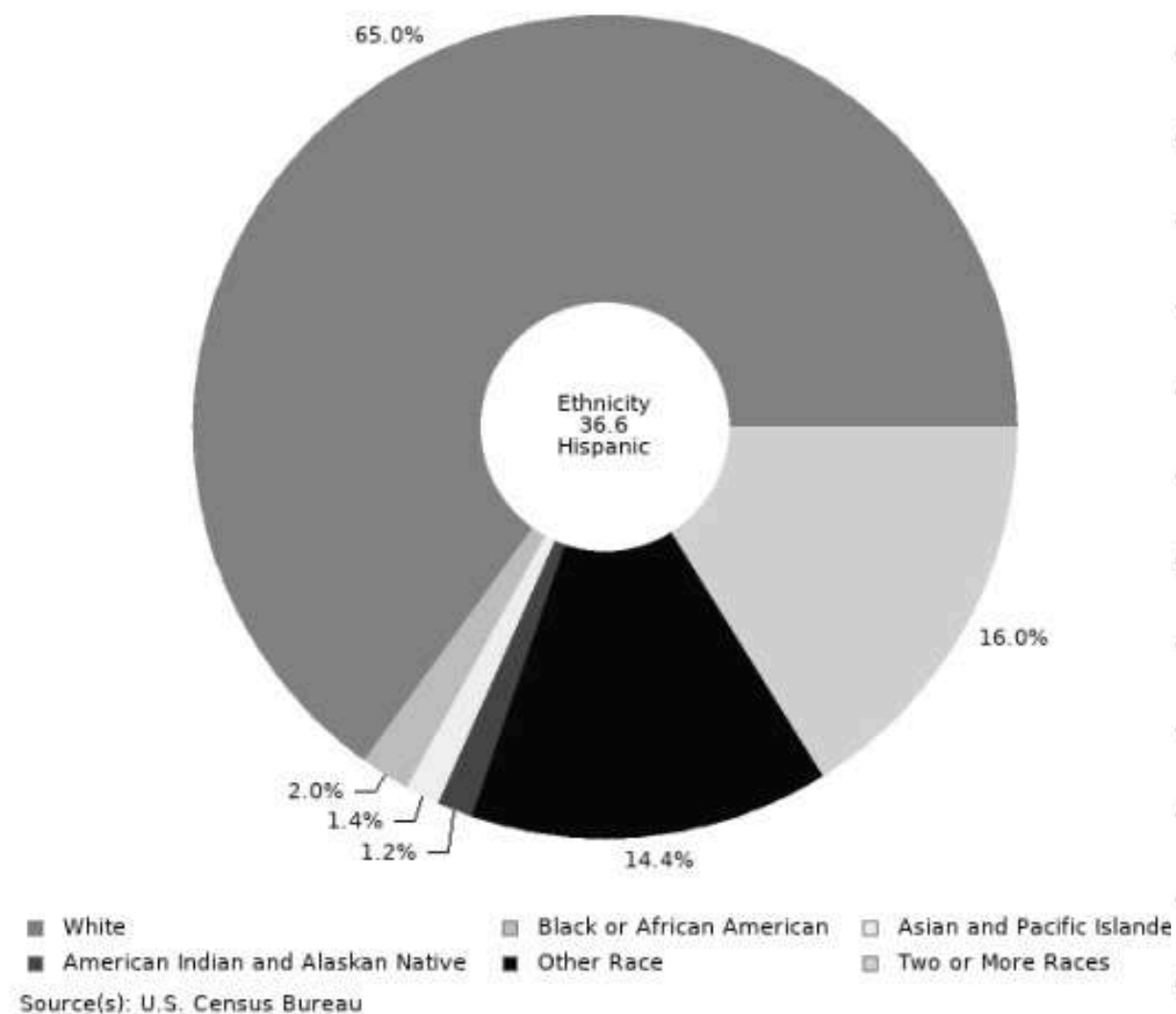
Demographic Profile

POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Race	2010	2020	Percent Change
White	180,174	137,054	-23.9 ↓
Other Race	22,768	30,273	33.0 ↑
Black or African American	3,540	4,185	18.2 ↑
Asian	2,758	2,885	4.6 ↑
American Indian and Alaskan Native	1,712	2,531	47.8 ↑
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	154	114	-26.0 ↓
Two or more races	4,789	30,832	543.8 ↑
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino	67,056	76,176	13.6 ↑
Percent of Total Population	31.1	36.6	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population by Race, 2020
Great Plains Development, Inc.



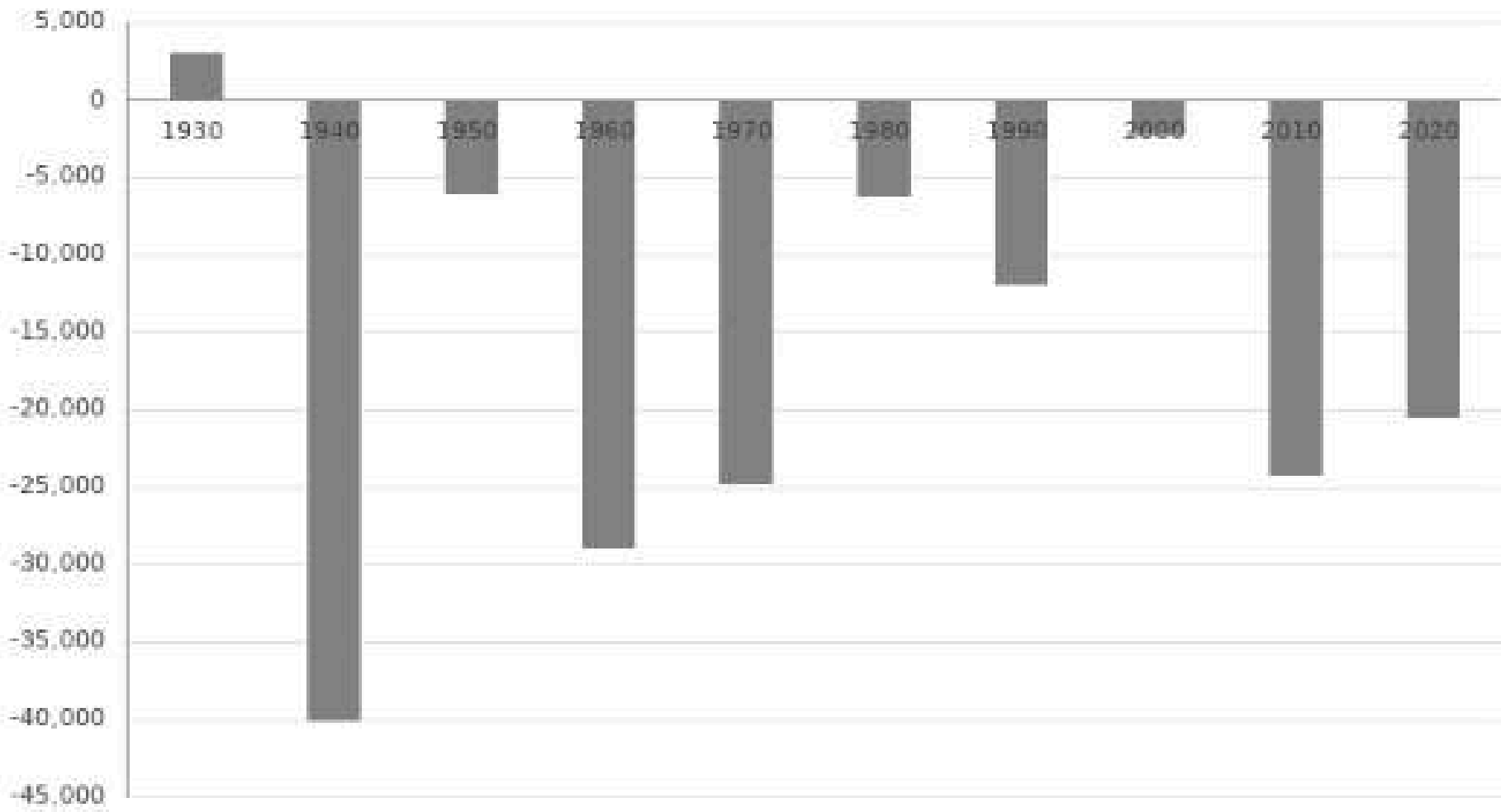
POPULATION BY AGE

Age Group	2010	2020	Percent Change
Age 0-4	17,705	14,613	-17.5 ↓
Age 5-9	16,523	15,843	-4.1 ↓
Age 10-14	16,577	16,817	1.4 ↑
Age 15-19	16,773	15,928	-5.0 ↓
Age 20-24	13,326	12,614	-5.3 ↓
Age 25-29	13,929	12,827	-7.9 ↓
Age 30-34	12,937	13,116	1.4 ↑
Age 35-39	12,437	12,815	3.0 ↑
Age 40-44	12,644	11,723	-7.3 ↓
Age 45-49	14,930	11,221	-24.8 ↓
Age 50-54	15,098	11,272	-25.3 ↓
Age 55-59	13,341	13,100	-1.8 ↓
Age 60-64	10,353	13,092	26.5 ↑
Age 65-69	7,862	10,956	39.4 ↑
Age 70-74	6,441	7,876	22.3 ↑
Age 75-79	5,716	5,569	-2.6 ↓
Age 80-84	4,487	3,970	-11.5 ↓
Age 85 and over	4,816	4,522	-6.1 ↓

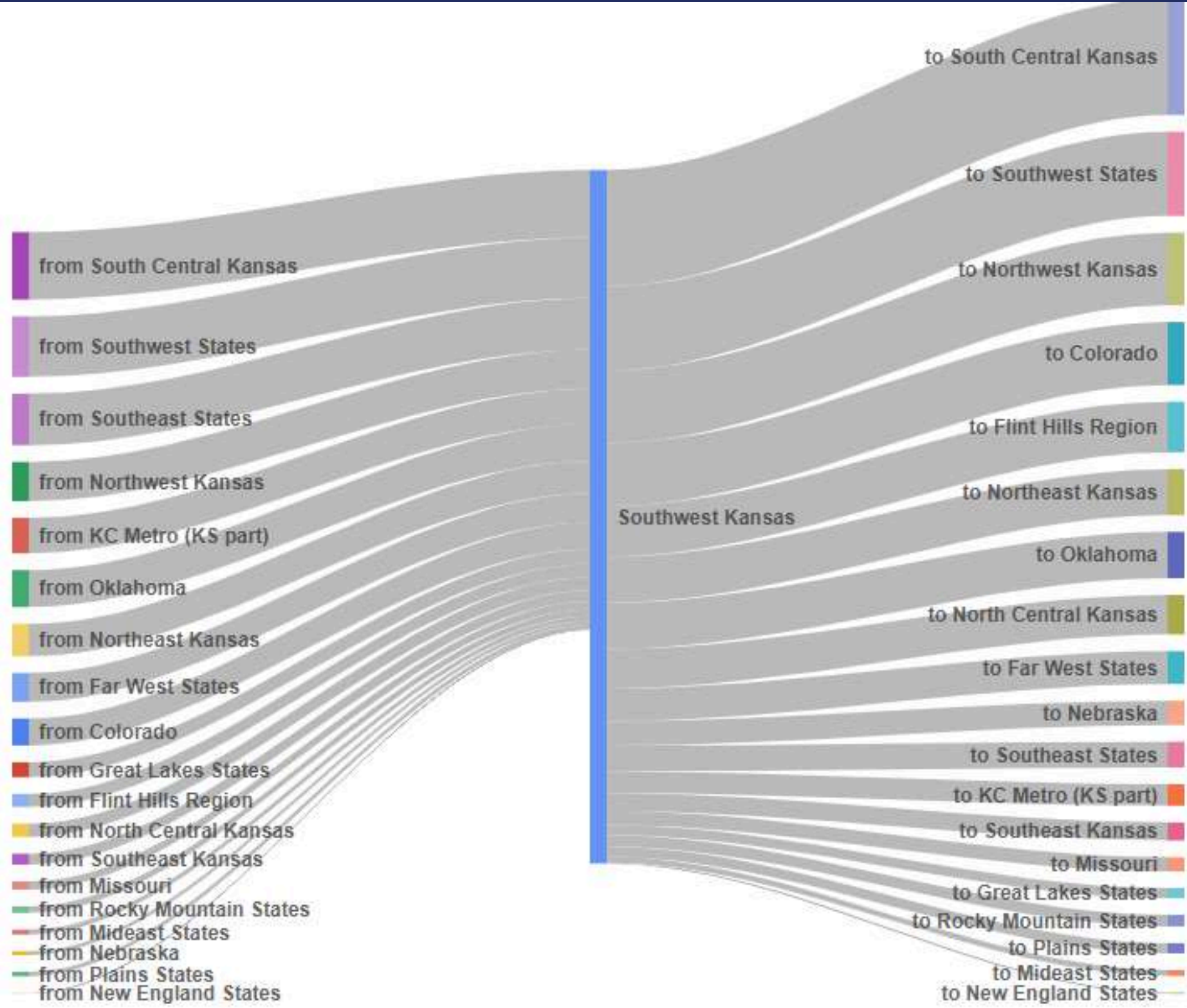
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Migration

Net Migration (Decade Ending)
Great Plains Development, Inc.



Sources: calculated by the Institute for Policy and Social Research, The University of Kansas



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-19 American Community Survey, County-to-County Migration.

Summary Background and Regional Profile continued...

Regional Industry and Economic Clusters



- Ag, Livestock, Food Prod.
- Health Care & Community Services
- Advanced Manufacturing & Value-Added Prod.
- Education, Workforce, & Public Services
- Other

Regional Cluster	What it Includes	Role in the Region
Agriculture, Livestock and Food Production	Cattle, Dairy, Wheat, Corn, Sorghum, Feed, Grain-handling, Agricultural Services, Meat Processing, and other Food Processing	Acts as a Foundaiton Regional Cluster
Advanced Manufacturing and Value-Added Production	Machinery, Fabricated Metal, Plastics, Equipment, Food Manufacturing, Industrial Production, Agricultural Equipment	Major Employment/Value-Added Cluster
Energy and Natural Resources	Oil and Gas, Wind Energy, Electricity Generation and Transmission, Mineral Resources, Energy Services	Major Capital-Intensive Cluster
Health Care and Community Services	Hospitals, Clinics, Nursing/Residential Care, Physicians, Behavioral Health, Pharmicies	Core Rural-Service and Employment Cluster
Transportation, Logistics, and Distribution	Trucking Warehousing, Rail, Agricultural Logistics, Cold Storage, Distribution, Equipment Maintenance	Cross-Cutting Enabling Cluster
Education, Workforce, and Public Services	K-12 Education, Higher Education, Workforce Training, Local/State Government, Public Administration	Workforce and Community-Support Cluster

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis helps us to determine our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) as a region. By doing so, we can consider the internal components (strengths and weaknesses) and external components (opportunities and threats) that have an impact on the potency of economic development activities within an Economic Development District region. Much of the data was gathered from a Regional Excellence Initiative that was conducted in our area with help from Kansas State University, Kansas Dept. of Commerce and our office. This allowed us to host stakeholders throughout our region, so that we could further develop our strengths, identify weaknesses, spur opportunities, and address threats.

Once we have established a thorough SWOT Analysis, we can begin to determine strategies that will influence prosperity and drive resilience throughout the region.



SWOT AT A GLANCE . . .



Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Agribusiness Dominance	Critical Water Resource Depletion	Downstream Value-Adding	Population Loss and Aging Communities
Logistical Infrastructure	Housing Deficiencies	Federal Infrastructure Influx	Global Commodity Volatility
Renewable Energy Capacity	Childcare Deserts	Establishing Opportunity Zones	Macro-Inflationary Pressures
Established Capital Vehicles	Digital Infrastructure Gaps	Circular Bioeconomy Expansion	Aging Infrastructures
Resilient Community Identity	Healthcare Vulnerability	Remote Work Capture	Natural Disasters and Long-Term Climate Impacts



Strengths (Internal Assets)

- Agribusiness dominance is prevalent in our region, housing massive meat-processing clusters (e.g. Tyson, Cargill, and National Beef). Also available, is a rapidly expanding dairy industry, and high-yield grain operations.
- Logistical infrastructure is throughout our region, including heavy freight networks like U.S. hwy. 50, U.S. hwy 83, U.S. 400. BNSF also has critical rail corridors that support global supply chains.
- The region's renewable energy capacity is exceptional – housing wind resources, high solar irradiance, and a large potential for biomethane due to large-scale livestock operations.
- With extensive, well-established capital vehicles, there is a plethora of lending opportunities to help lessen the risk on local banks. GPDI has 3 in-house revolving loan funds (RLFs) and has access to over 20 available loan funds, including USDA, EDA, and NetWork Kansas. This creates a strong entrepreneurial opportunity throughout the region.

 Agribusiness

 Logistics

 Renewable Energy

 Capital Access

 Community Resilience

Ag is a top-3 employment industry in 83% of counties

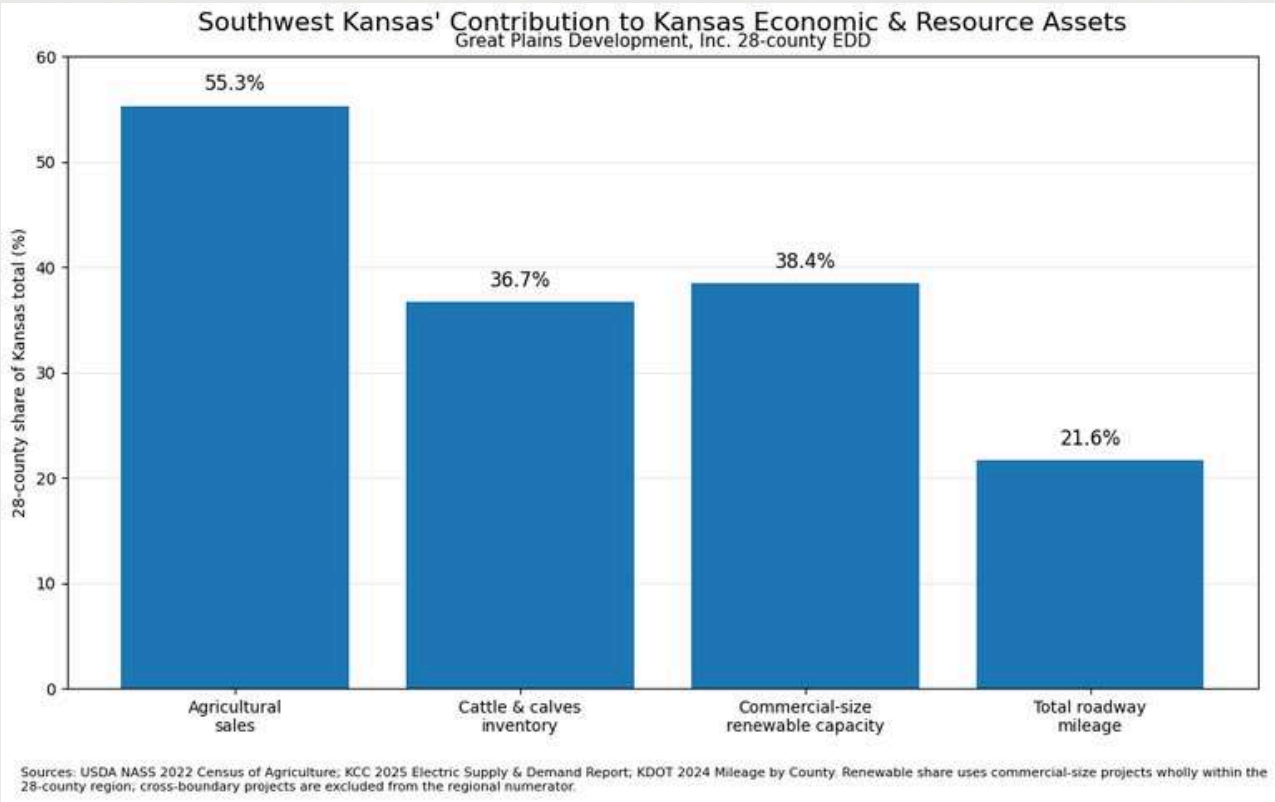
4 major U.S. highways & BNSF rail Corridors

≈4.0+ GW existing utility-scale renewable capacity

Accessibility to revolving loan funds & capital opportunities

Strong local leadership and development capacity

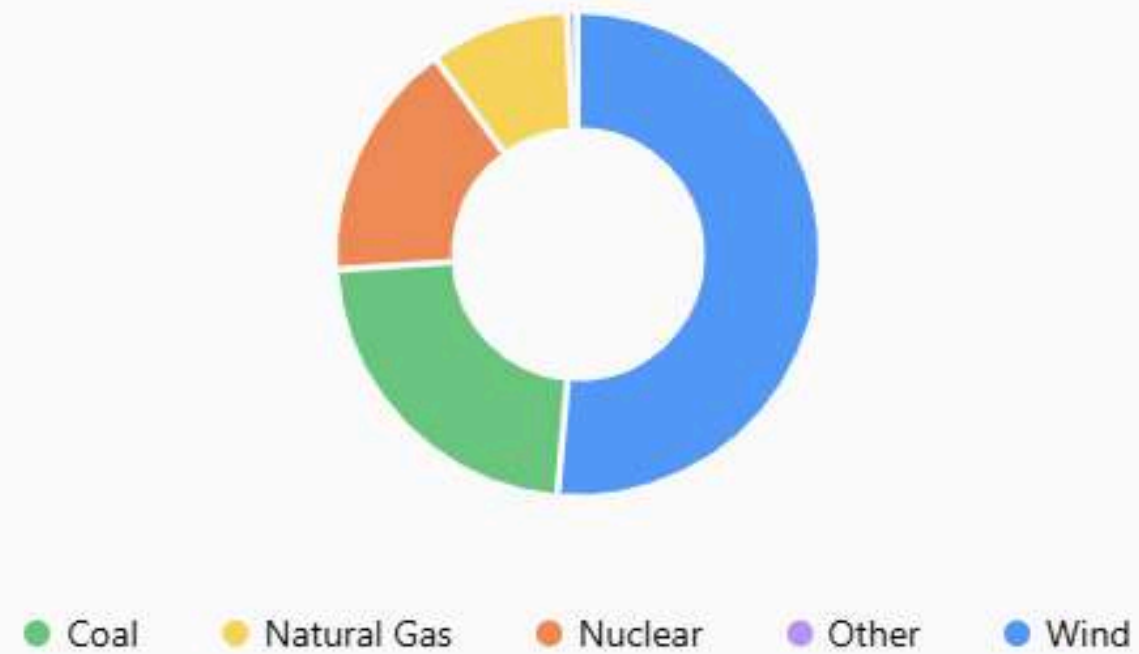
- The region is also home to a resilient population/communities. With high civic pride, strong local leadership networks, and a historic ability to face harsh environmental catastrophies and hardships with resilience and support, our region's population is no stranger to helping their neighbor.



Strengths Data

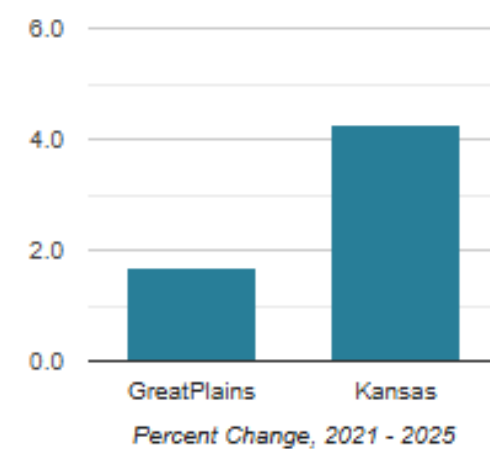


Electricity generation by major energy source using the Kansas Corporation Commission's reported generation figures.

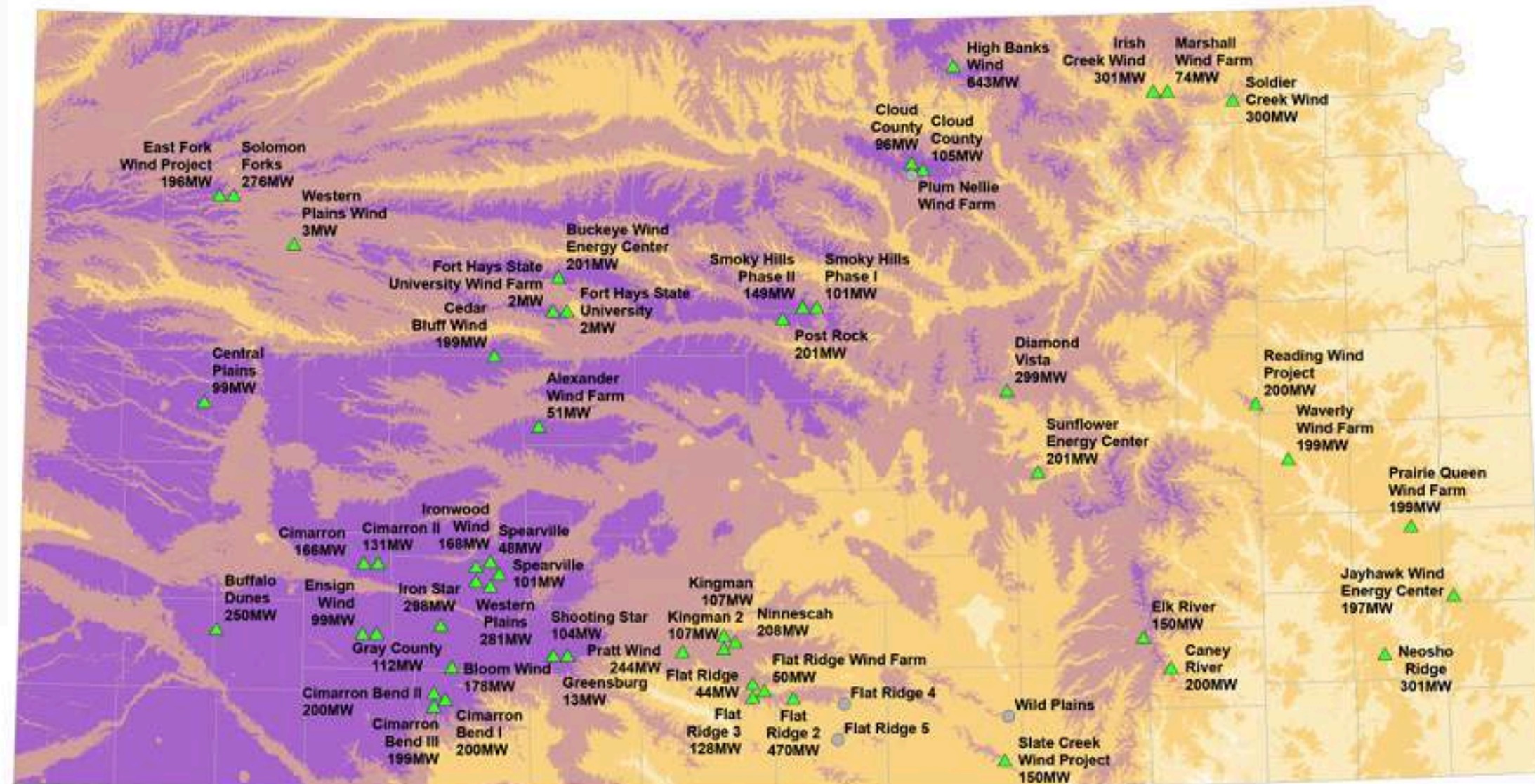


Source: Kansas Corporation Commission, Electric Energy Sources. Values shown are MWh.

Employment Growth



Wind Farms and Wind Resource Potential in Kansas



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory with wind farm data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

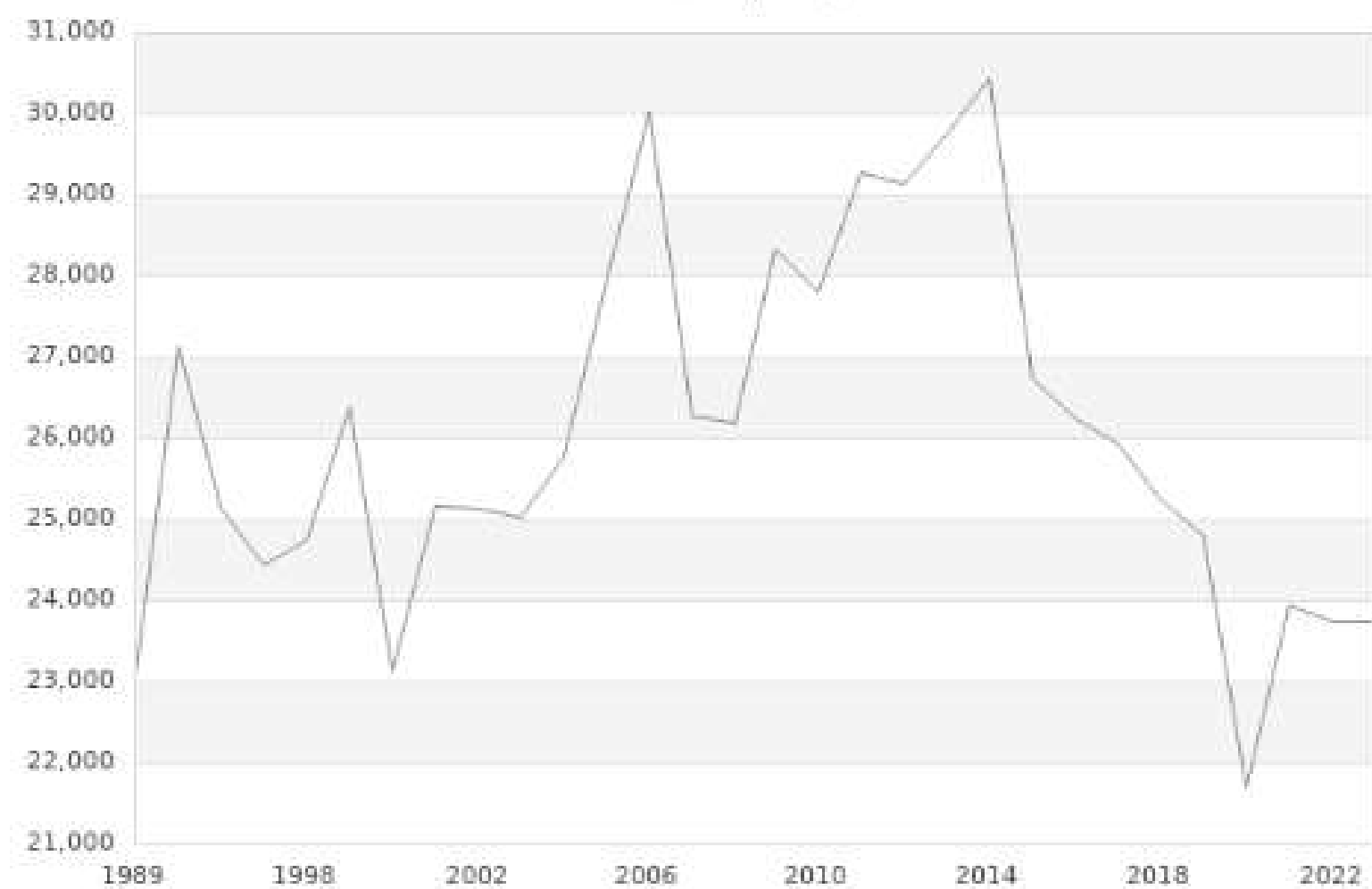
MW - megawatts

Kansas Wind Farms (2024)
▲ Operating (9,105.3 MW)
● Proposed

Wind Power Density at 50m (W/sq. m; 2015)
Poor (0 - 200)
Marginal (200 - 300)
Fair (300 - 400)
Good (400 - 500)
Excellent (500 - 600)
Outstanding (600 - 800)

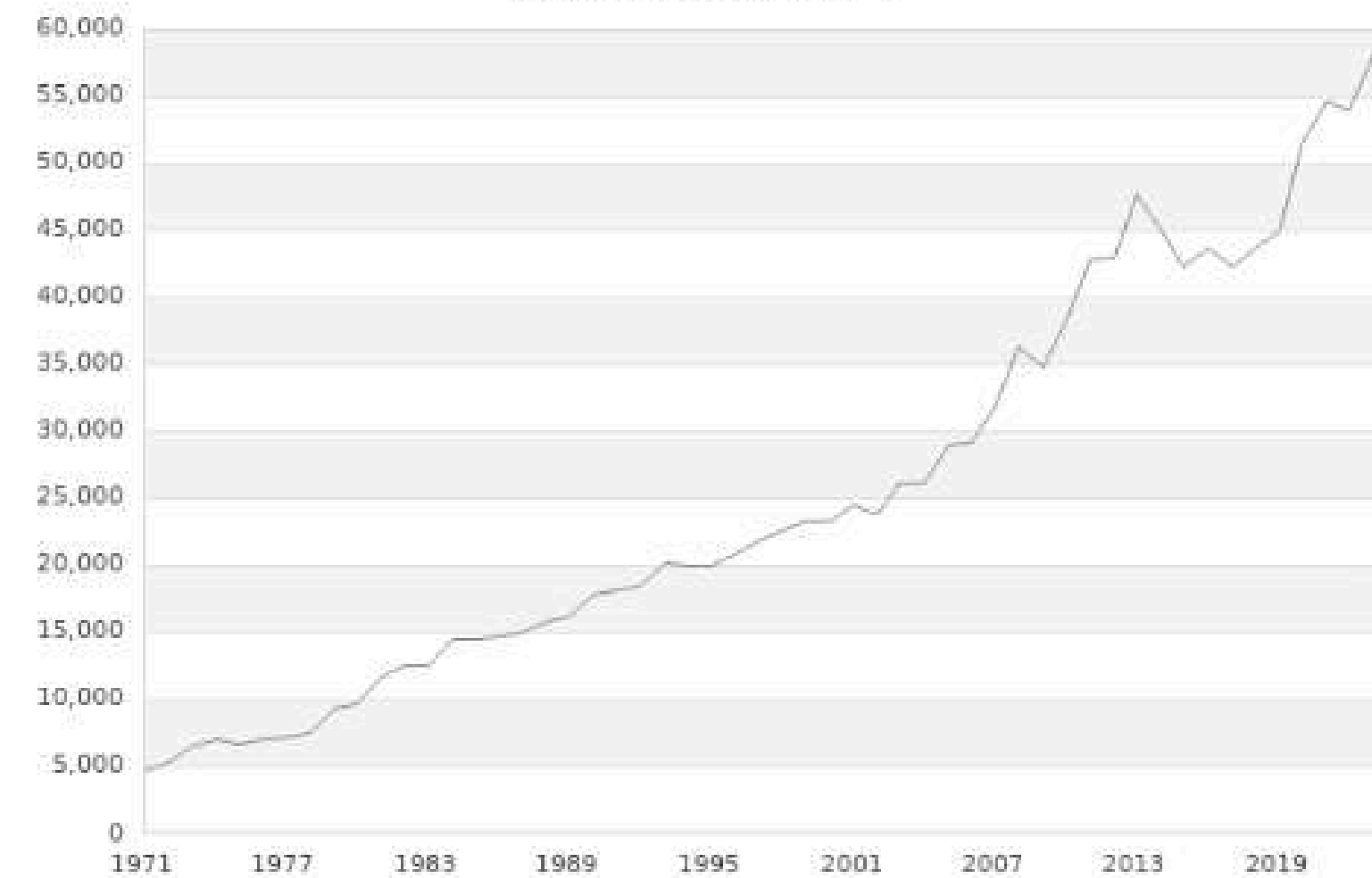
Strengths Data

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN POVERTY
Great Plains Development, Inc.



Source(s): U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

BEA PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME (\$)
Great Plains Development, Inc.



Source(s): U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (REIS)

Weaknesses (Internal Vulnerabilities)

- Critical water resource depletion is being experienced due to extreme long-term depletion rates of the Ogallala Aquifer and minimal rainfall amounts. This threatens our foundational agricultural economy, not to mention, basic water infrastructure for small and large communities.
- Housing deficiencies are also a major weakness for our region. With the lack of housing in many parts of our region, the cost of housing has hit a high-rate, making it difficult for working families and individuals to purchase and own a home. There is also limited access to affordable multi-family housing, too.
- Childcare is a difficulty for our region. With limited access to qualified childcare professionals, and limited sustainable funding routes to keep them funded, it creates a childcare desert in our region. This has a large hinderance on second-earner labor participation, and hinders talent attraction to parts of the region, too.
- Our region faces digital infrastructure gaps due to persistent broadband deadzones across highly rural, multi-county borders; thus, impacting business operations. In parts of our region, this limits important access to resources like online education, teleheath, etc. It also limits some in their ability to work-from-home, should their business/employer offer that. Our region faces a 16.8% BSL (Broadband Serviceable Location) that is unserved or underserved.
- Healthcare vulnerabilities are also present in our region. With high financial stress on rural critical-access hospitals, this results in provider shortages, and quality medical retention issues. Also, in rural parts of our region, access to transportation for healthcare is a weakness, too.

 Water	GMD3 had greatest groundwater decline of any KS GMD
 Housing	An extreme lack of housing has caused jobs to remain open
 Childcare Shortage	One of the most severe regional childcare crises in KS
 Digital Infrastructure	16.8% of the region's BSLs unserved or underserved
 Healthcare	≈15.5% healthcare positions are vacant

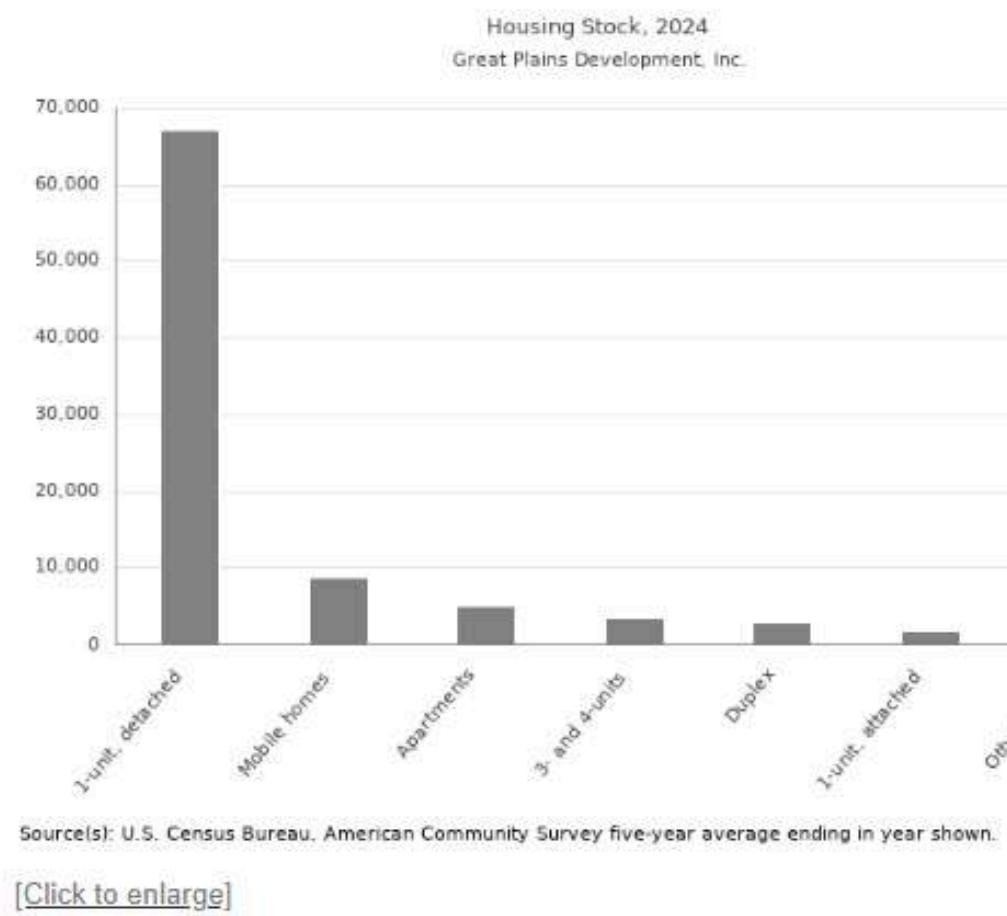


Weaknesses Data

HOUSING STOCK

Housing Type	Percent Change		
	2019	2024	2019 - 2024
Single family homes, detached	68,760	67,130	-2.4 ↓
Mobile homes	10,115	8,843	-12.6 ↓
Apartments	4,441	4,962	11.7 ↑
Tri- and Quadplex units	3,027	3,577	18.2 ↑
Duplex units	2,457	2,940	19.7 ↑
Single family homes, attached	1,776	1,676	-5.6 ↓
Other homes - boat, rv, van, etc.	60	72	20.0 ↑

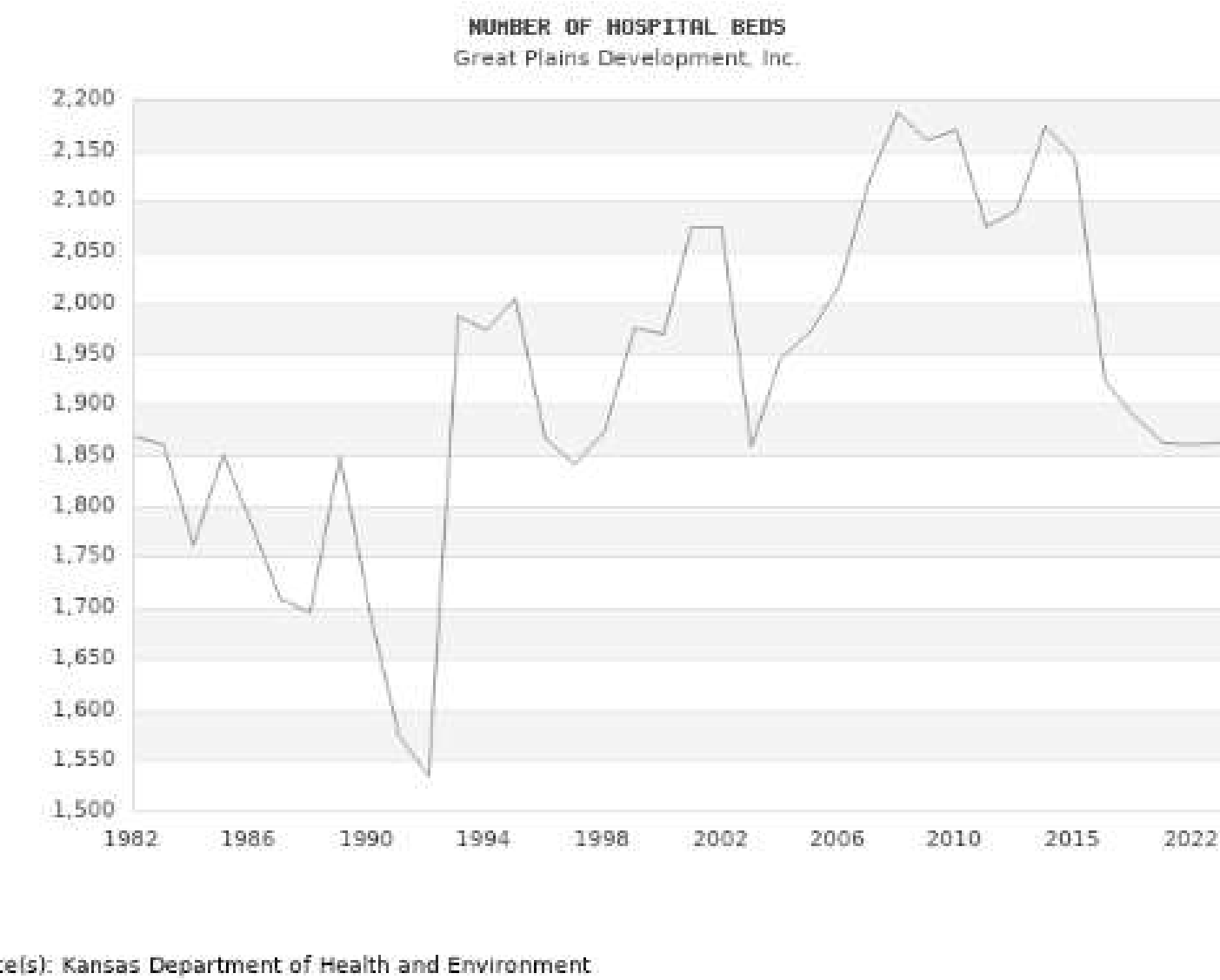
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey five-year average ending in year shown.





Great Plains

DEVELOPMENT, INC



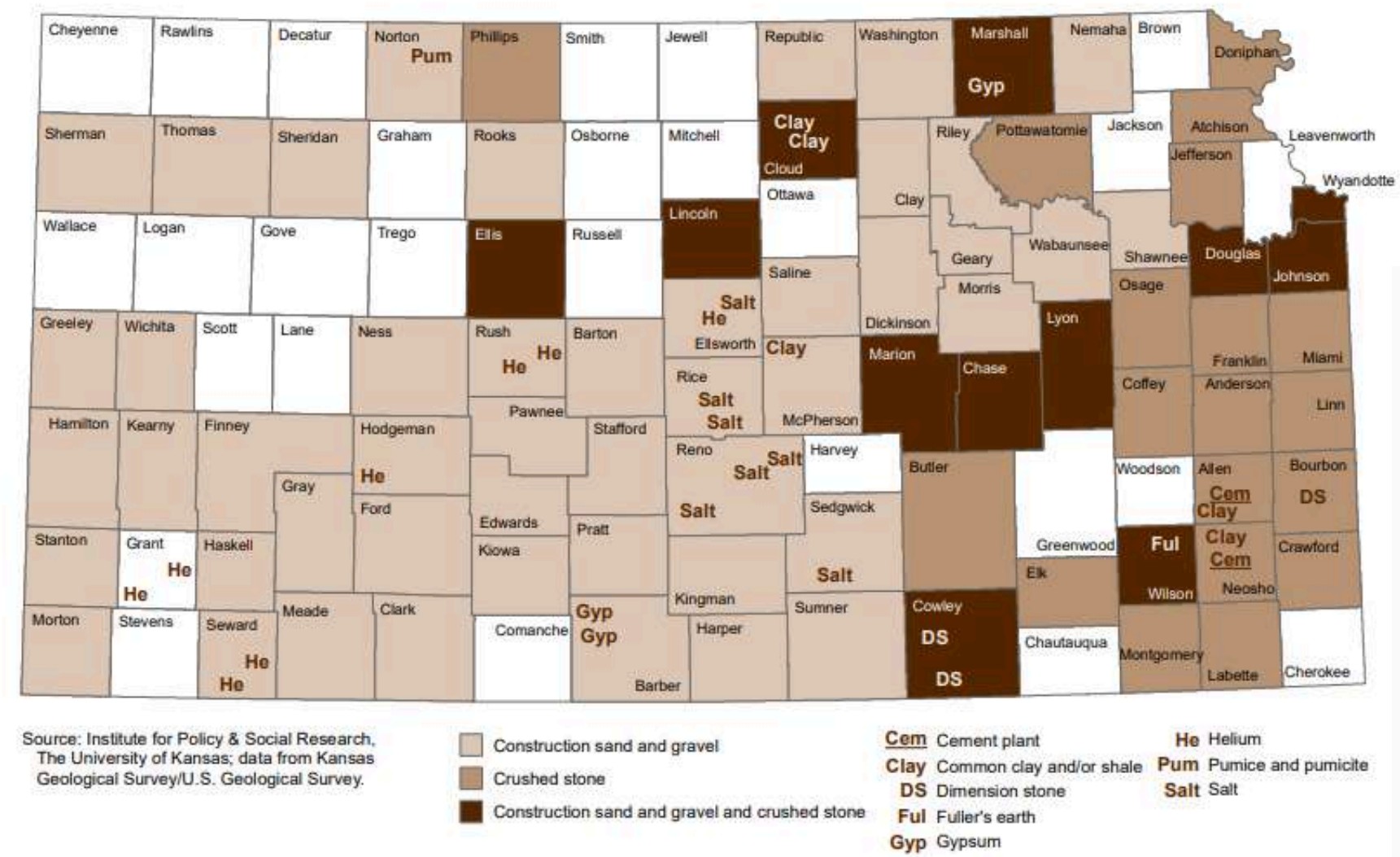
Opportunities (External Market Trends)

- Downstream Value-Adding could allow us to capitalize on the global demand for processed food, specialized dairy ingrediants, and localized animal feed manufacturing.
- By leveraging federal grant opportunities, like EDA and working with the Kansas Infrastructure Hub, it can allow our region to tap-into federal grant opportunities that can expand our infrastructure and help to attract assets like industrial parks and additional port authorities. The funds through BIL and BUILD Kansas, saw a huge impact on infrastructure throughout the state and our region. Furthering this initiative and providing additional grant writing services and technical assistance will help our region gain much-needed assets and heal aging infrastructure.
- Establishing opportunity zones (through risk assessments) in our region will be entirely beneficial. This can attract large-scale companies that can invest in our region. Due to our heavily-concentrated agricultural market, it sets our region up for a strong rating through resources like EcoStrat.
- Circular Bioeconomy expansions, similar to establishing opportunity zones, can also help to create further opportunities in our region. By monetizing off feedlot manure for renewable natural gas, and extra available resources like wheat straw and corn stover, we can further expand our agricultural footprint, not only on a state-wide basis, but having a global footprint, too. Another identified bioeconomic expansion could also be in mineral processing for silica products, specifically in the western part of our region.
- Remote work capture would also be another opportunity for our region. By attracting digital nomads to low-cost-of-living rural towns through newly expanded state-funded broadband networks, it would allow for our region to regain some population, but would also stimulate local economies, too. This could also potentially help with some of the difficulties we see in healthcare. By attracting remote workers, we can also attract additional telehealth workers.

Downstream Value-Adding	Currently, there is an average of \$13.27B in yearly ag sales
Fed. Infrastructure	Can invest additional millions into various infrastructure improvements
Opportunitiy Zones	Expands local porperty tax base, and improves local infrastructure
Bioeconomy	Tapping into readily available natural, renewable resources
Remote Work	Diversifies tax base and helps population decline

Opportunities Data

Principal Mineral Producing Localities in Kansas, 2014



Kansas crop-related exports

Kansas exports of cereals and oilseeds, 2021–2023. These categories are closely connected to Southwest Kansas crop production and agricultural markets.



Source: Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas International Trade Summary. Export values are statewide and reported in millions of dollars.

Threats

(External Risk Factors)

- A steady decline of 3.30% in population over the past 15 years continues to concern much of the area. While there has been a slight decrease in the loss (from 3.7 to 2.9 from 2020 to now), the fight to retain talent is still very much an issue for the area.
- Global commodity volatility is also a major threat in the region, with major crop commodities declining by 12% in price. This has major impacts, not just for farmers, but the region as a whole. Because agriculture is a major economic asset, the declined price has impacts on the interconnected commodity economy. This commodity-price volatility can affect cattle feeding margins, grain elevators and commodity handlers, ag equipment sales, truck and rail volumes, meat-processing activity, rural retail spending, land values, local tax bases, and agricultural lending. Overall, the threat isn't the fact that agriculture is a weakness, it is that the region's large concentration in agriculture means economic conditions outside the region can have a major impact on our local businesses and communities.
- Macro-inflationary pressures has seen rising operating, labor, construction, and financing costs throughout the region. Kansas farm interest expenses increased 193.6% over the past 3 years, according to the Kansas Farm Management Association. With construction costs increasing 4.1% in the past year, and private-sector hourly wages increasing 8.5%, this has created huge pressures especially since producers and businesses are already exposed to volatile commodity prices and rising input costs.
- The region faces ongoing roadway, water and wastewater infrastructure needs, while the agricultural and industrial economy heavily depend on reliable transportation and utility systems. For example, of the 2,691 bridges in our 28 counties, 47.4% of those are rated "fair or poor" by the Federal Highway Association.
- Between 2022 and 2025, our region has suffered from a historic drought that has triggered billions in federal crop insurance payouts due to failed crops, being further impacted by massive feed cost spikes for feedlots. In addition, catastrophic wildfires have cost the region millions of dollars in rangeland devastation, fencing, utility line replacement, cattle loss (with historic low numbers already). In addition, thunderstorms, severe winds (including microbursts and straight line winds) continue to affect the region, too.

Population Loss & Aging Communities	2.9% loss in population from 2020-2025
Global Commodity Volatility	Major crop commodities declined by 12% since 2024
Macro-Inflationary Pressures	22% increase in farm interest, 4.1% construction cost increase
Aging Infrastructures	Includes water infrastructure, roads, bridges, broadband, utilities
Natural Disasters & Long-term Climate Impacts	≈\$3.8 billion regional loss over the past 5 years due to drought, storms, wind, and wildfires

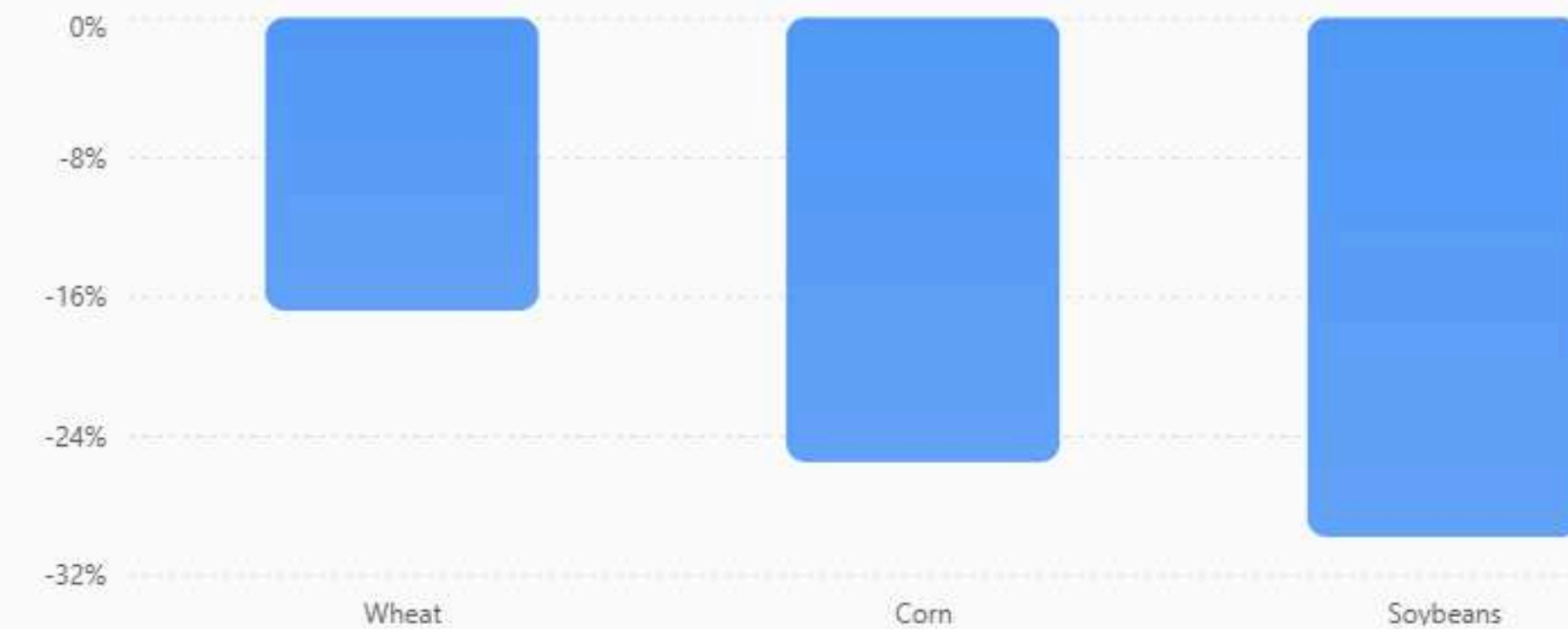


Threats Data

Crop price decline, 2022–2025

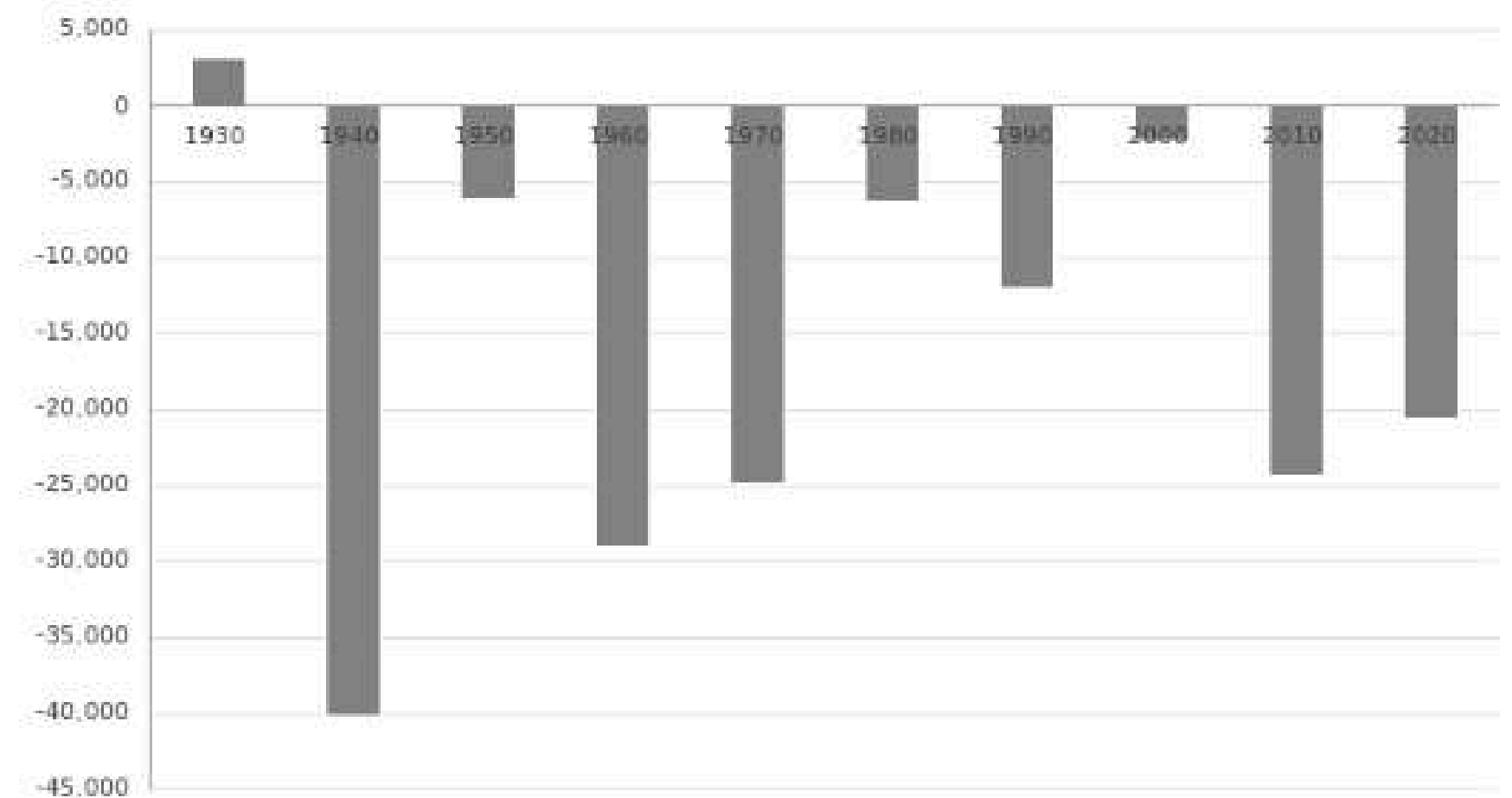
Crop price decline in Kansas

Change in crop insurance reference prices from 2022 to expected 2025 levels, illustrating commodity-price volatility affecting agricultural producers.



Source: Kansas State University Agricultural Economics, Kansas Agricultural Land Values and Trends 2024. 2025 values are estimates.

Net Migration (Decade Ending) Great Plains Development, Inc.



Source(s): calculated by the Institute for Policy and Social Research, The University of Kansas

Strategic Direction and Action Plan

The action plan depicts the 5-year strategy for the region. This strategy was curated through meeting with local and regional stakeholders, business owners, and statewide leaders that will help to create a roadmap for the future. This engagement and strategies have been brought before the GPD board of directors for feedback and review, further culminating in the analyses and recommendations provided in the plan.

This plan is intended to provide realworld, feasible solutions and strategies to address the regional constraints that our region is facing. We believe that by implementing these solutions, it will help our region to thrive even more and will also help it to be more resilient to economic shocks.

By fostering sustainable solutions to real life problems, we can continue to facilitate growth and possibilities for all within Southwest Kansas.



Infrastructure Resilience and Connectivity

Water, Streets, Hospitals, Community Centers

Water

Strategy: Develop a coordinated regional water strategic plan that increases available water capacity, improves system reliability, reduces losses, and supports existing communities and future economic development.

- Priority Actions:**
- Identify communities with declining water capacity and/or aging systems
 - Identify opportunities to interconnect neighboring municipal systems
 - Help the identified communities to access funding opportunities through federal and state grant and/or loan funding

Streets

Strategy: Work with KDOT to help to identify regional transportation investment framework that prioritizes roads and streets that support employment, industry, agriculture, health care, housing, and economic development.

- Priority Actions:**
- Identify high-economic-impact transportation corridors
 - Help to provide opportunities to improve county roads to key agricultural businesses (e.g. dairies, feed lots, etc.)
 - Assist communities in ensuring their streets are safe, accessible, and in good condition

Hospitals

Strategy: Develop a regional rural-health infrastructure strategy that supports the long-term viability of hospitals, local clinics, EMS, and other essential health services

- Priority Actions:**
- Establish current inventory of hospitals, rural health clinics, EMS, nursing homes, behavioral health services, dental services, pharmacies, telehealth capacity, and the opportunity for specialists
 - Explore possibilities and identify key needs to support attraction, and retention for workers
 - Identify gaps, and secure opportunities to broaden accessibility and current offering
 - Measure outcome by health care workers trained, vacancy reductions, new health services, EMS response/infrastructure improvements, etc.

Community Centers

Strategy: Identify communities that are at-risk communities or are communities that lack gathering places for the public and assist in establishing places for community.

- Priority Actions:**
- Identify highest-at-risk-communities
 - Identify key community needs and what type of space best fits the community
 - Source funding to assist in the development of a gathering place (funding through CDBG, philanthropic opportunities, etc.)

Infrastructure Resilience and Connectivity (*continued...*)

Freight and Logistics - Highways, Broadband

Freight and Logistics

Strategy: Identify key needs for a regional freight and logistics network that further connects our region to major markets while improving the efficiency and reliability of commodity movement.

Priority Actions:

- Identify current inventory of freight and logistics offerings
- Identify infrastructure that directly affects and assists agriculture, livestock, food processing, manufacturing, energy, construction, distribution, etc.
- Increase the number of industrial/agricultural sites with reliable freight access

Also, similar to the goals and strategies of streets, ensure the prioritization of highway improvements that support the movement of people, commodities, and improve accessibility to key resources

Broadband Infrastructure

Strategy: Ensure that broadband is addressed as a key-component of infrastructure, and not just a quality-of-life service. Broadband reliability and accessibility is critical for businesses to operate, succeed, participate in e-commerce, recruit, remote work, and especially for telehealth offerings.

Priority Actions:

- Identify underserved and highest-risk locations and communities
- Identify current broadband options and accessibility
- Work with communities to determine what opportunities is best for their needs where broadband is concerned
- Ensure strong broadband infrastructure is readily available to growing businesses and key economic drivers
- Address redundancy and reliability concerns



Water Sustainability and Natural Resources

Water Sustainability and Accessibility

Strategy: Because water sustainability, and accessibility is at the forefront of our communities, our office will continue to hold conversations with key stakeholders.

This includes:

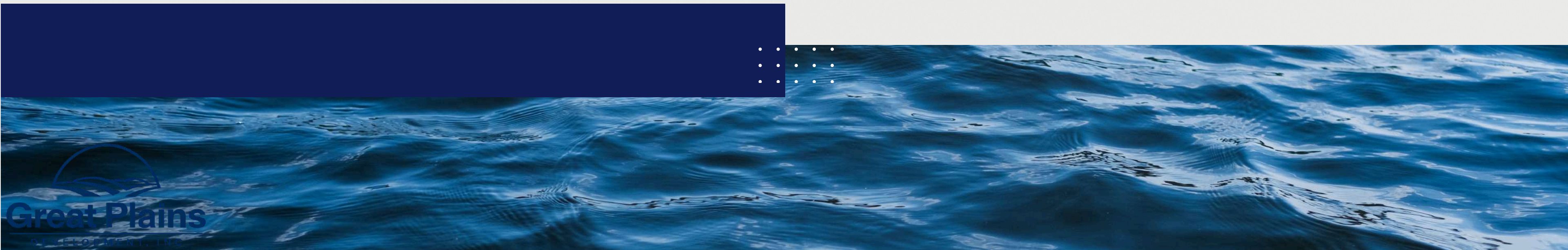
- Working hand-in-hand with Kansas State University and Kansas' water work group
- Working with the Kansas Water Office
- Working with Legislators to identify key needs
- Identify highest-risk communities
- Assistance in securing funding for integral projects
- Assistance in the development of regional water planning

Natural Resources

Strategy: Due to our area having an abundance of natural resources, expanding our utilization of the natural resources will help to diversify industries, stimulate local and regional economy, and create additional jobs.

This includes:

- Identifying additional natural resources that haven't been utilized
- Expanding current utilization of natural resources and its footprint
- Target natural resources that are in high-demand to create a lucrative commodity outlet (silica, minerals, etc.)



Agricultural Value-Adding and Industry Diversification

Agricultural Value-Adding

Strategy: Expand opportunities to process, manufacture, package, and market agricultural products in the region.

This includes:

- Identify areas throughout the region that would support economic growth in this area
- Identifying key opportunities for potential value-added industries (e.g. meat processing, livestock processing, dairy processing, animal feed, food manufacturing, bioproducts, specialty grains, cold storage and warehousing, ag equipment, packaging, and distribution)
- Create additional jobs, wages, tax base, business investment options, demand for local services, transportation activity, and opportunities for entrepreneurs

Industry Diversification

Strategy: Establish key areas throughout the region that could support economic growth from industry diversification and expand current industries.

This includes:

- Target areas that are lacking current industries or strong output
- Identify industries that are supported by the local region
- Collaborate with community members to identify goals, potential opportunities, and needs
- Expand current output to include additional industry-related products and commodities

This should also include support for current industries and continued viability, stimulating the current regional supply chain and ensuring output is healthy.



Workforce Recruitment, Retention and Childcare

Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Strategy: Workforce retention and job creation are often at the forefront of our mission. Ensuring businesses can be created, thrive and grow is what makes our region viable. By creating community incentives, great places for families to live and grow, and ensuring businesses have what they need to succeed (infrastructure, accessibility, customer base, etc.) we will ensure

- This includes:
- Helping businesses secure funding to acquire, or expand their business
 - Working with some communities to offer tax incentives to new businesses
 - Measuring workforce trends, changes, needs, etc.
 - Spurring industry diversification within the region to add and expand job opportunities
 - Working to ensure housing, and other essential infrastructure is affordable and available to working individuals and families

Childcare and Family Services

Strategy: In order to accommodate workforce recruitment and retention, there must be reputable, safe childcare centers throughout the region that are accessible and long-standing to serve the working families and their children.

- This includes:
- Helping childcare centers target incentives to ensure stability
 - Ensuring licensing is available and accessible to those who want to become a certified childcare center
 - Help provide capital and funding for childcare centers
 - Ensure infrastructure needs are met to accommodate



Socioeconomic and Institutional Accessibility

Socioeconomic Accessibility

Strategy: Target socioeconomic accessibility to enhance and improve quality of life. Especially such things that attract population, ensure retention, and improve blight conditions.

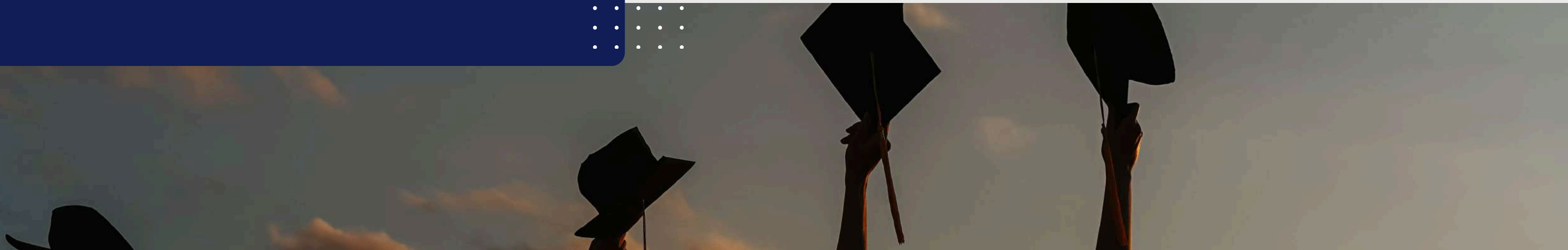
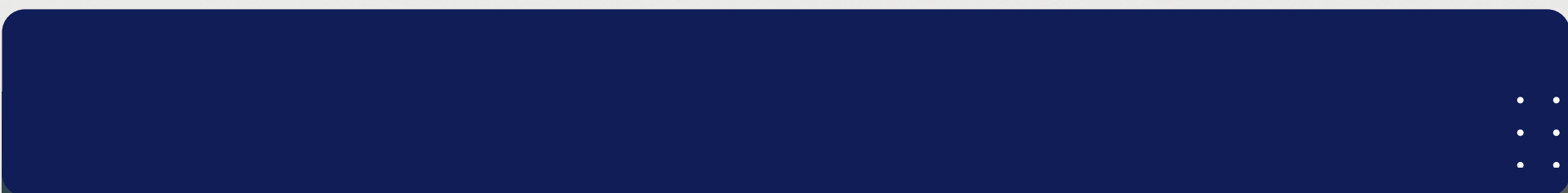
- Priority Actions:**
- Identifying affordable community amenities and recreational activities, and implementing them into communities that are struggling
 - Marketing the region with a focus on agricultural and rural living, and lower-density communities
 - Expanding our already strong community networks
 - Coordinating to help offer additional multi-lingual certification programs

Institutional Accessibility

Strategy: Accessibility to integral services, especially healthcare. Transportation to essential services is also critical for the area, too.

- Priority Actions:**
- Target communities, especially those with aging populations, to ensure critical accessibility is being met
 - Draft potential opportunities throughout the region that target accessibility for transportation
 - Identify “dark zones” where communities don’t have essential services within a close proximity and target ways to mitigate the need
 - Target opportunities where essential services can expand their footprint with remote locations

Strategy: Much of this aligns with health care opportunities and needs. However, essential services can also include grocery stores, food accessibility, etc.



Evaluation Framework

Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps

The goals of the region and therefore GPDI are focused in three major areas.

1. Facilitate the creation of jobs
2. Foster stable and diversified economies
3. Facilitate improvement of living conditions within the region

Next steps

After profiling and evaluating key economic indicators and performing a SWOT analysis for the region, working with GPDI staff, the general membership of GPDI, the Kansas Department of Commerce, K-State University TDI and Extension, the CEDS Committee, and community economic development representatives. They have been identified as:

1. Economic Resiliency
2. Attracting local and outside talent to lend support in the creation/retention of jobs
3. Supporting the improvement of living conditions, quality of life, and diversification

Objectives, strategies, and action items have been developed for each of our goals, based on the previously stated and included in our “Strategic Direction and Action Plan.”

Developing goals and identifying objectives and action steps to accomplish this work is of little value if there isn’t accountability and follow-up. Without following-up and taking action, the process and goals will fall flat. As such, the measurements on the right are the measurement indices that have been established and will be reviewed with the Community and Business committee quarterly to bring accountability for GPDI and the region.

Performance Measurements

- 1 Track the number of referrals to GPDI
- 2 Track the number of businesses assisted with project development and funding
- 3 Track the number of jobs created and/or retained
- 4 Track the number of communities assisted with funding opportunities
- 5 Track the number of training opportunities facilitated or presented and the attendance
- 6 Track the number of projects with multiple partners providing funding
- 7 Use “strategic wins” to communicate results and foster new programs

Economic Resilience

It is integral for our region to have an established resiliency plan. It is imperative that we are prepared to deal with the issues as they occur, so that we are able to withstand change in our economic model. According to the aforementioned threats in our region, below is a summary of how those are to be navigated.

FOUR STRATEGIC RESILIENCE PRIORITIES

1. Diversify and Strengthen the Regional Economy

Objective: Reduce vulnerability to individual industries, commodities and external markets by supporting value-added agriculture, advanced manufacturing, energy, logistics, technology, healthcare, entrepreneurship and other emerging or complementary sectors.

Actions: Conduct regional industry and supply-chain analysis; support business retention and expansion; strengthen local entrepreneurship; develop regional business recruitment assets; and pursue value-added opportunities that retain more economic activity within Southwest Kansas.

2. Protect Critical Infrastructure, Water and Economic Assets

Objective: Increase the region's ability to maintain essential services and economic activity during disruptions.

Actions: Establish a regional critical-infrastructure inventory; identify priority transportation, water, utility, broadband and communications investments; coordinate infrastructure planning across counties; and align projects with state and federal funding opportunities.

3. Build Workforce, Business and Community Capacity

Objective: Ensure employers and communities have the people, skills, housing, capital and organizational capacity necessary to adapt to economic change.

Actions: Strengthen employer-education partnerships; expand workforce training and retraining; support entrepreneurship and small-business financing; address housing and quality-of-life barriers; and establish regional business continuity resources.

IMPLEMENTATION

Lead: Great Plains Development, Inc.

Core Partners: Local governments; economic development organizations; chambers of commerce; businesses and industry; agricultural organizations; workforce boards; community colleges and universities; utilities; financial institutions; emergency management; transportation organizations; state agencies; and federal partners.

Year 1: Establish baseline data, resilience network, vulnerability assessment and priority-project inventory.

Years 2-3: Implement priority infrastructure, workforce, diversification and business-resilience initiatives.

Years 4-5: Evaluate outcomes, update the regional risk assessment and revise priorities for the next CEDS cycle.

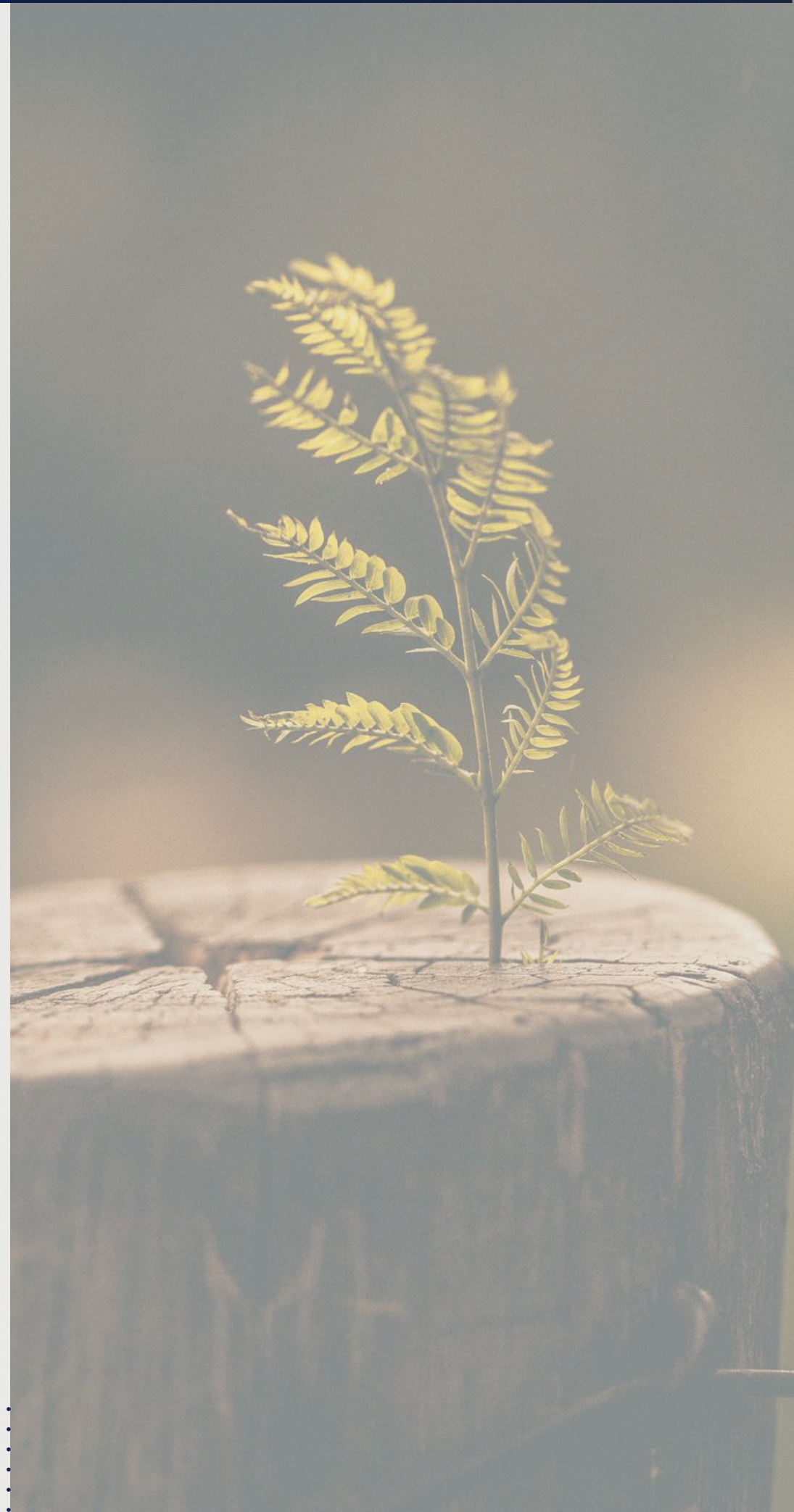
PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Great Plains Development will track:

- Economic diversification: industry concentration/diversity and employment by sector
- Business resilience: businesses assisted, retained/expanded, and supported through disruptions
- Workforce: workers trained, credentials earned, labor-force participation and employer vacancies
- Infrastructure: priority infrastructure projects advanced and funding leveraged
- Water/resource resilience: priority water and resource projects completed
- Disaster recovery: establish regional economic impact assessments and recovery coordination following major events
- Investment: public, private and federal dollars leveraged
- Regional capacity: number of participating partners and communities engaged in resilience planning

REGIONAL OUTCOME

A more diversified, connected and adaptive Southwest Kansas economy—one that can withstand disruption, recover quickly, protect its economic base, and convert challenges into opportunities for long-term regional prosperity.



APPENDIX

Acronyms commonly used in our Economic Development District

B & I	Business & Industry	
CDBG	Community Development Block Grants	
CDBG -CI	Community Development Block Grants - Community Improvement	
CDBG -ED	Community Development Block Grants - Economic Development	
CDBG-HO	Community Development Block Grants - Housing	KDOCH Kansas Department of Commerce & Housing
CDBG-ND	Community Development Block Grants - Neighborhood Development	KDOT Kansas Department of Transportation
		KWO Kansas Water Office
CDBG-ML	Community Development Block Grants - Micro Loans	NADCO National Association of Development Companies
CDC	Certified Development Company	NADO National Association of Development Organizations
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	RBEG /RLF Rural Business Enterprise Grant/Revolving Loan Fund
CHDO	Community Housing Development Organization	RD Rural Development
CSA	Central Servicing Agent	RLF Revolving Loan Funds
DCFC	Development Company Funding Corporation	SBA Small Business Administration
EDA	Economic Development Administration	SBA 7-A Small Business Administration Guaranty Programs
EDA/RLF	Economic Development Administration/Revolving Loan Fund	SBA/TA Small Business Administration Technical Assistance
EDD	Economic Development District	SBC Small Business Client
EDS	Economic Development Specialist	SLC Seasonal Line of Credit
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	UCC Uniform Commercial Code
FSA	Farm Services Agency	
GPD	Great Plains Development, Inc.	
IRP/RLF	Intermediary Relending Program/Revolving Loan Fund	
KDHE	Kansas Department of Health and Environment	



LINKS

University Centers and Education Links

GPDI Economic Development District Data Portal: <https://ksdata.ku.edu/sdc/region.php?tab=0&area=GreatPlains&Get+Regional+Data=Get+Regional+Data>

EDA University Centers

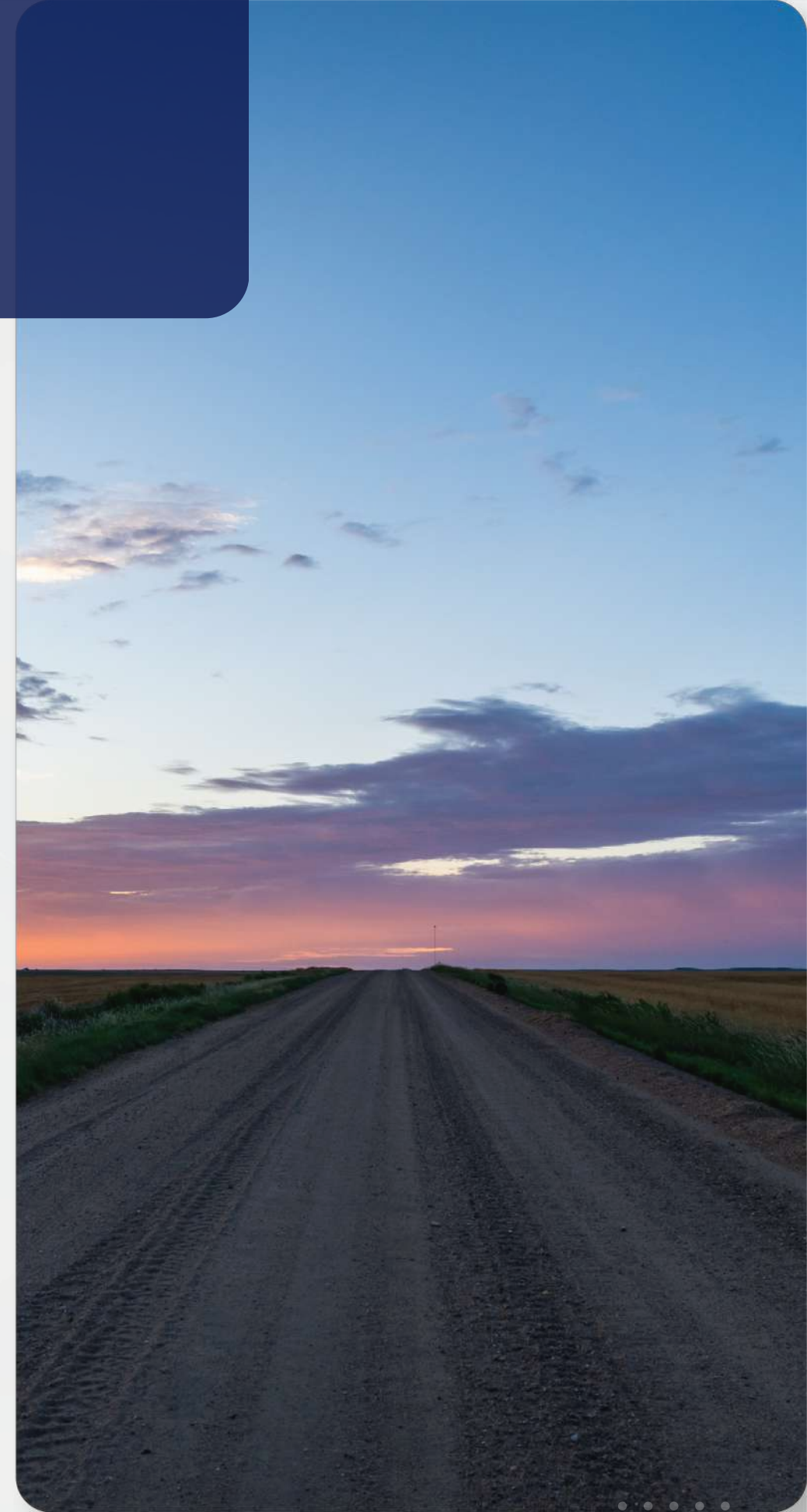
Kansas State University Technology Development Institute (TDI): <https://www.k-state.edu/tdi>

College Websites in GPDI Region

Dodge City Community College	http://www.dccc.cc.ks.us/
Garden City Community College	http://www.gcccks.edu/
Barton County Community College	http://www.bartonccc.edu/
Pratt County Community College	http://www.prattcc.edu/
Seward County Community College	http://www.sccc.edu/
Barclay College (Private)	http://www.barclaycollege.edu/

University Websites in State of Kansas

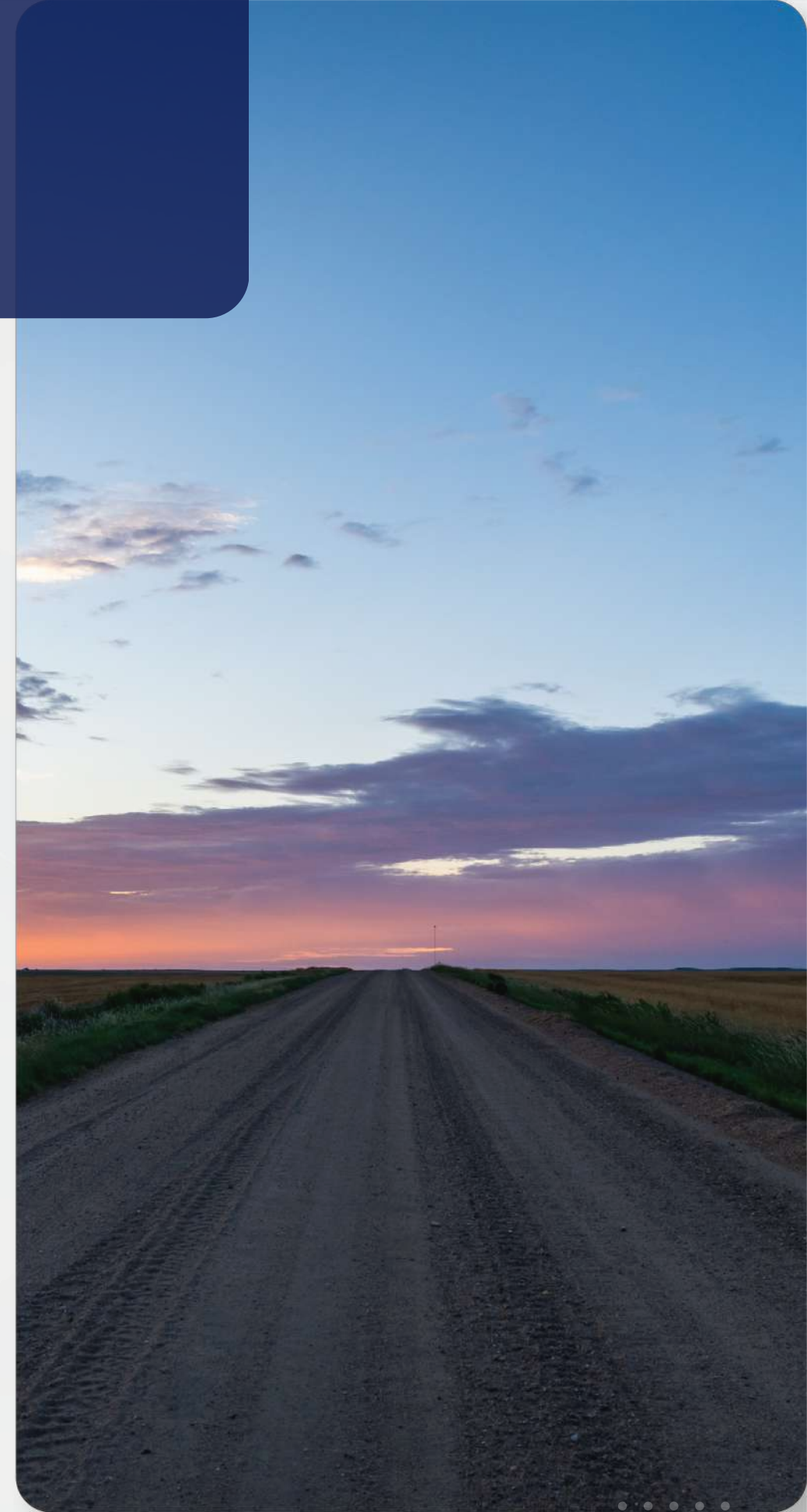
Emporia State University	http://www.emporia.edu/
Fort Hays State University	http://www.fhsu.edu/
Kansas State University	http://www.k-state.edu/
Pittsburg State University	http://www.pittstate.edu/
University of Kansas	http://www.ku.edu/
Wichita State University	http://www.wichita.edu/thisis/



LINKS

Resources and Reference Links

Kansas Fish and Game	http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/KDWP-Info/Locations/Wildlife-Areas/Region-3
Kansas Agriculture Statistics	http://www.ksda.gov/statistics/
Kansas Department of Commerce	http://www.kansascommerce.com/
Kansas Maps - Topo- Rivers - Roads - Cities	http://geology.com/state-map/kansas.shtml
Homeschooling in Kansas	http://www.kansashomeschool.org/component/option,com_wrapper/Itemid,72/
Community Foundations	http://www.kansascfs.org/
Kansas Statistical Abstract	http://www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/
EDA Guidelines for CEDS	eda.gov/resources/comprehensive-economic-development-strategy
CEDS Central	https://www.cedscentral.com/
Kansas Land Mass Info	http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/20000.html
Info on Hugoton Gas Field	http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hugoton/background.html
State of Kansas Map for Geography	http://geology.com/state-map/kansas.shtml
Wind Energy Info	http://www.kansasenergy.org/wind_projects.htm
Solar Energy Info	http://www.kansasenergy.org/solar_small_projects.htm
Broadband Info	http://www.broadband.gov/
Kansas Hospital Info	http://www.kha-net.org/KansasHospitals/default.aspx
Cattle on Feed	https://www.agmanager.info/livestock-meat/cattle-finishing-historical-and-projected-returns
Water Info	http://www.kwo.org/Kansas%20Water%20Plan/SWP/KWP_2008/KWP_Volume_III.htm
US Census Bureau	https://www.census.gov/



WHO WAS INVOLVED

GPGI Board

Dan Fankhauser, GPGI Board President, Retired Garden City mayor and city council

Gary Johnson, GPGI Board Secretary, Retired Banker

Craig Neeland, GPGI Board Treasurer, Banker

Duane Drees, GPGI Board Member, Retired Finney Co. Council Member, Farmer

Jeanette Siemens, GPGI Board Member, Pratt County EcoDevo Director

Josh Sullivan, GPGI Board Member, Banker

Vienna Lee, GPGI Board Member, Retired Morton County EcoDevo Director

Mike Utz, GPGI Board Member, Finney Co. Council Member, Retired Chief of Police

Marsha Ewy, GPGI Board Member, Retired Community College Professor in Nursing



WHO WAS INVOLVED

CEDS Committee

Scott Beatty	Curtis Machine Co.
Erik Pedersen	NetWork Kansas
Mark Pingsterhaus	City of Cimarron
Jason Kuilan	Great Bend EcoDevo
Mike Lew	Hamilton County
Dave Bergmeir	High Plains Journal
Charlotte Neuschafer	City of Cimarron
Linda Dinkel	City of Syracuse
Steve Williams	Equity Bank
Koy Watkins	Equity Bank
Miranda Carpenter	KDC
Joann Knight	DC/FO Co. Dev. Corp.
Ben Schears	FHSU
Susan Penka	KSBDC at FHSU
Dan Fankhauser	GPDI Board President
Duane Drees	GPDI Board
Romaine Redman	KDC
Suzie Lidstrom	CS Oilfield Services
Norma Jean Dodge	Seward Co Com. College
Amber Jones	Seward Co Com. College
Teresa Randle	KCB Bank
Blanca Terrazas	KCB Bank
Brandon Hutton	KDC
Deborah Kohl	Kansas State University
Faye Trent	GPDI
Bob Wetmore	GPDI
Hannah Sparks	GPDI
Paul Olsen	GPDI





Thank you

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

GREAT PLAINS DEVELOPMENT, INC.

2027-2031