



DONIPHAN COUNTY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN  
2018

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## Executive Summary

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It is important that people who live together collectively craft their future. Residents in Doniphan County can accomplish great things in our county by listening to each other, developing shared goals and committing to a cooperative effort. The Economic Development Commission (Commission) chose a strategic planning process to focus their efforts and engage other voices in envisioning the future, but most of all to excite people about getting involved in making it happen. The Commission has not completed a planning effort since the early 1990s; it was time to once again find out how residents want the Commission to spend limited time and resources. The biggest benefit of a planning exercise is gathering citizen input, focusing work on areas that people agree to and establishing a mechanism to track progress. The value is in the decision-making, networking and energy, not the actual document.

One member of the Strategic Planning Board (Board) set the stage for the process when he commented on a similar effort.

***Reflecting on his strategic planning experience with a local company he said:***

*The mindset of some directors at the beginning was; "On no, do we have to?" The group was resistant but forced to go through it anyway. It turned out to be very beneficial for the company and the end plan works because they measure it every year and update it every year too.*

This written summary is the final step in the planning phase, but only the first step in the action phase. The real work, success and long-term impact happens next when people who care about the County come together to make a difference in their lives now and in the lives of others 20 years from now.

## Planning Process

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After it became very evident that putting together a strategic plan was vital to the future success and endeavors of the Commission, we did research on the best way to approach the process.

- **Consultant**
  - We chose to hire a consultant to facilitate the exercise rather than utilizing internal staff for numerous reasons including
    - Outside and unbiased perspective of the area. Neutral party.
    - Offering valuable knowledge, expertise, creative solutions and perspective.
    - Project Management: A consultant can help to keep the project on task and save us time and money by streamlining the project.
    - Existing staff would have difficulty freeing up sufficient time to effectively lead the effort while still conducting regular duties
  - We looked for someone with strong recommendations from other Economic Development Professionals, with a rural development focus who had rapport with local leaders and offered realistic and affordable pricing.
- **Mission/Vision sub-committee**
  - We chose a sub-committee to help draft our mission, vision and core values. This group of five individuals represent a countywide perspective. They are active leaders in our communities who come from different walks of life and hold different viewpoints. The sub-committee answered initial questions about the County and offered their perspective of the future. With

- their responses, a draft of the mission, vision and core values was written. The Board reviewed and helped edit the final versions which will be adopted by the County Commissioners.
- **Designation of the Board**
    - The goal in selecting the Board was to find representatives from all stakeholder groups. All municipalities, townships, school boards, as well as Highland Community College (HCC) and the Chamber of Commerce received letters inviting them to select or recommend a board member; As well as to support the effort financially. This process resulted in a board with diverse backgrounds and many entities providing financial support. *See Appendix A for Board Member List.*
  - **Survey**
    - The Commission collaborated with the Doniphan County Health Department & Home Health (Health Dept.) to conduct a community survey. The Health Dept. is in the process of a Community Health Needs Assessment which also involves a survey. We conducted a 28-question survey focused on perspectives and satisfaction levels regarding quality of life, growth and development and community services.
    - There were 245 responses to the survey between November 27, 2017 and January 16, 2018. *See Appendix G for survey results.*
  - **Work Sessions with the Board – two, three-hour sessions**
    - The Board completed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the County. *See Attached Appendix B.*
    - They were educated and informed about economic development and the importance of strategic planning. We also shared with them local demographic and statistical data on our area and compared ourselves to our neighbors in the region. *See Appendix C for demographic and statistical data.* The survey responses were also discussed.
    - From this information the Board developed SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound) goals for the future as a basis for the plan.
    - We developed 10 initiatives and voted on which six to prioritize over the next three years.

## Summary of Outcomes & Results

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Participants in both the survey process and the work sessions identified broad areas of both concern and promise related to the county. Contributors spoke repetitively of the following. *See more in Appendix B.*

- **Areas of Concern** - need for more sustainable, living wage jobs; lack of housing for the full cross-section of residents; retention of educated youth in the county; citizens overly negative perspective of the county; lack of access to food providers (includes restaurants, grocery stores and fresh local food vendors); concerns about drug use; need to improve county roads
- **Areas of Promise** - unique historic and natural resources; a strong business base to serve as models of development; geographic location along the highway and in proximity to metro areas; quiet, small town atmosphere which is desirable for quality of life; local residents who own businesses who are investing in the County and who may be catalysts for more aggressive development

## Vision

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- **Defined:** The future status the county will achieve if we execute the mission; inspires and motivates; time bound at 10 years
  - *Doniphan County, home to unified communities and growing businesses, creating a successful future.*

## Mission

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- **Defined:** What we do, who we serve, results they achieve; client centric; 6 to 12 words
  - *To facilitate empowerment of residents and businesses, enhance quality of life and nurture growth in Doniphan County.*

## Core Values

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- **Defined:** How we behave in the process of carrying out the mission
  - *Prepared, diligent and well-informed in all dealings*
  - *Ethical, optimistic and approachable in both mindset and action*
  - *Future focused/future driven in purpose and result*
  - *Supportive of entrepreneurs and strategic, realistic, external and internal development*
  - *Responsive to the needs of the area's economy and natural resources and respectful of the history*

## Defining Economic Development for Doniphan County

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A strong economic development effort is built on unified communities and a positive self-concept. Development is focused on continual improvement of the County economy. Paramount is supporting businesses, both new and existing, who create jobs that are sustainable and offer a living wage; as well as building a culture that generates compelling reasons to invest within the county for long term success

### Our Board summed it up as follows:

- Making sure Doniphan County residents have reason to spend their dollars locally
- Assessing ALL our capital - human, financial and natural; capitalizing on what we have and filling in what is missing
- Executed best by getting countywide engagement
- Requires prioritizing activity
- Pursuing the perspective of younger residents and being responsive to their input
- Helping people see compromise and negotiation is necessary for development to happen

## Telling our Story

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Sharing information among residents and with those outside the county is important to build unity and to attract new residents and businesses. Whenever possible, we need to focus on relaying accurate information that reflects the best about our county. When negative aspects of our area are identified, we need to focus on action to correct the issue to create a positive culture rather than discussing the problem.

Positive self-concept is key for communities as is positive and open communication. It should be the norm in all areas of our work. The Board believed the need to enhance our self-concept was significant enough that it should permeate all areas of our work. The Board identified several ways to help spread our story.

- Utilize social media to connect with younger residents to increase their affinity with their home
  - Keeping gossip levels down
    - Relay facts/right information
    - Help older generations understand how to effectively use social media to post about events and updates in their communities
- Utilize Yea-Sayers to compete with the Nay-Sayers; give the positive storytellers a strong voice and a vehicle to share their positive perspective
- Utilize the Doniphan Proud effort to relay positive quality of life stories
  - Doniphan Proud is a program organized by the office of Economic Development to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses to Doniphan County.
  - All businesses and organizations that reside in or serve Doniphan County are an automatic member of Doniphan Proud. They are honored to be part of the Doniphan Proud economy, and the County is pleased to have them.
  - Use the Doniphan Proud program as a marketing tagline with all of our promotional videos, press releases and other news stories.
  - Expand on this effort to broaden the reach of the Doniphan Proud Concept to other areas of the County culture
- Perception vs. Reality / Rumor vs. Reality / Myth vs. Reality Initiative
  - Creation of a repository of facts that refute myths or common misperceptions. Identify the five to seven myths surrounding things such as quality of schools, cost of living, tax rates, dropout rates, drug problems and other differences between Doniphan County and neighboring counties. **Information can be referenced in Appendix D.**
  - Communicate this information utilizing social media and word of mouth
- Focus specific education pieces on what really makes Doniphan County unique
  - River – we have the largest number of linear feet of riverfront area of any county in Kansas
  - Highway 36 – Close to major cities, but with a rural lifestyle
  - HCC – oldest institution of higher education in Kansas
  - History – Native American Heritage, Pony Express and Lewis and Clark
  - Soil – we have the best soil in the world other than one location in China
  - Name – we were the first county named in Kansas

## 6 Key Initiatives

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### 1. Establish housing to fill gaps along the housing continuum. Focus on meeting the needs of elderly residents transitioning from single family housing.

- The need for an assisted senior living facility (assisted living) in Troy has been identified. When the aging population has access to local care facilities that meet their changing needs, they are likely to stay in their home community. Likewise, as they transition out of traditional housing, the residence can meet the needs for incoming or local younger families. Some families may also choose to move an aging parent or other relative to be near them if this type of housing is available.

- **Current Status**
  - Currently, the county has two nursing home facilities on each end of the county. They also have a 13-bed home-plus facility, Two Timbers, in Highland and there is another home-plus in the process of being built in Wathena. However, there is no assisted living options anywhere in our Rural Northeast Kansas region.
  - Each community does have senior housing available (Housing that is designed to meet certain requirements and standards that will accommodate citizens over the age of 55), but with our rapidly aging population, that space fills up quickly.
  - About eight years ago, local members of the community came together and decided they wanted to invest in placing an assisted living community, outside of Troy. One of the investors planned to donate a piece of land for this purpose. Before this plan could become a firm commitment, the donor passed away. The developer they had been in conversation with did not end up being a viable option.
  - In the past, a local land owner has expressed interest in selling land in Troy for a reasonable price for health-related development. The Health Dept. and the Economic Development Director can pursue this conversation with this couple this spring.
  - The Health Dept. identified this as a top priority in their Community Health Assessment (CHA).
  
- **Strategies**
  - Identify possible site for such business in Troy - Summer 2018
  - Identify funding sources including financing and grants for construction line of credit and long-term financing - Summer 2018
  - Outline facility feasibility - Fall 2018
    - Workforce needed
    - Number of units needed
    - Assess potential partners
    - Review licensure
    - Assess pros and cons of Homecare plus vs. Assisted Living
    - Talk to existing Home Care Plus facilities to see if interested expanding into Troy
  - Identify or create incentives for health-related development - Winter 2018
    - **See Appendix E for resources and incentives.**
  - Decide what size or model of a facility supports the area's needs - Spring 2019

## **2. Support and encourage locations for social activities in the County promoting community engagement and keeping dollars within the county.**

- The general population is eating out at an increasing rate. More and more people eat out for at least one meal of the day and it can be breakfast, lunch or dinner. One or more unique, family restaurants, including great food and a full bar, is needed in the county. Highland specifically has a lack of a social gathering place outside resident's homes. The initial effort will be on helping to fill this void.
- **Current Status**
  - There are only three options for prepared food in Highland; locally owned Stop n' Shop gas station/convenience store, the local Casey's gas station and the HCC dining center for lunch.

- Ernie's which has historical significance and following in the area has been closed since fall 2016. The property is currently in transition and some tax issues are being addressed. This location may be suitable for the desired restaurant.
  - Interesting tie-in is the mention in the song: Joey + Rory "Cheater, Cheater"
    - "Cheater cheater where'd you meet her down at Ernie's bar?"
- Highland residents expressed preference for a family restaurant/ sports bar. The inclusion of a full bar is important.
- El Canelo Mexican restaurant in Elwood is a good example of a successful, local family style restaurant with a full bar.
- Since The Place bar and restaurant in Wathena has recently closed, Wathena could also benefit from the following strategies.
- **Strategies**
  - Study feasibility of a restaurant - Fall 2018
    - Workforce needs
    - Interested investors
    - Interested manager or leaser
    - Review cost and availability of liquor license
    - Options for a unique identity/destination element
    - Evaluate locations and determine minimum specifications
    - Study capitalizing on Ernie's history and positive tie-ins, but elevate them to the next level
  - Reaching out to other successful bars/restaurants in surrounding areas that might expand into the market. - Fall 2018
  - Dialogue with key partner - HCC business training in restaurant management program - Winter 2018
  - Evaluate starting with a food truck before a building were available - Winter 2018
  - Consider a special incentive for a new restaurant - Spring 2019
  - Identify cost of construction or renovation for a building - Spring 2019
  - Find a qualified restaurant manager - Summer 2019
  - Partner with Northeast Kansas Enterprise Facilitation (NEKEF) for ideas and business coaching - Summer 2019

### **3. Establish housing to fill gaps along the housing continuum. Focus on meeting the needs of young families and new graduates seeking smaller, first time housing.**

- For the County to grow, there needs to be an assessment of the housing needs within the area. Overall, we are not meeting the needs for the current population, let alone future families or individuals who may be interested in relocating here.
- Young families and/or recent graduates often look for "starter homes" when purchasing a property for the first time. They represent a more reasonable living option for incoming and local younger residents. We will identify where the highest need exists and where it is plausible to achieve success in this effort. It is believed that a need for construction or renovation of starter homes exists in Highland and Troy. Secondary need is believed to exist in Wathena, Denton, Bendena and Elwood.
- **Current Status**



- It has been discovered that most people who work at the college or other businesses in Highland, would live in town as well, if there were available homes.
- An issue in Highland specifically and many other areas in the county, is that it is very difficult to get people to sell farmland to allow developers or potential homeowners to build.
- Homes that exist in Highland are in poor shape, but landlords continue to rent these facilities to College students, instead of renovating or flipping them for long-term families or individuals.
- Wathena and Elwood have self-motivated developers and land to build homes since they are near St. Joseph.
- Highland, Troy, Bendena and other areas could benefit from creative ways to bring attention to housing needs to help incentivize and facilitate people to sell land to allow developers to build.
- **Strategies**
  - Use the Housing Assessment Tool (HAT) to assess current housing inventory in order to develop relevant strategies for housing improvement - Summer 2018 through Spring 2020
  - Apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs through Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC). Deadline for 2019 funds is Aug. 31, 2018. – Summer 2018/2019/2020
  - Assess available current infrastructure: Roads, sewer, electric, broadband, etc. - Summer 2018
  - Identify if the need is for rentals, single family ownership or multi-unit structures - Fall 2018
  - Identify non-traditional buildings that could be converted or renovated to create housing - Fall 2018
  - Identify foreclosed and tax sale houses for people or businesses that will flip houses - Fall 2018
  - Assess what incentives we have for builders and buyers and really market them - Winter 2018
  - Consider creative incentives that would encourage farming landowners to sell land for housing development purposes - Partner with Farm Bureau and Extension on this effort- Spring 2019
  - Research housing demolition incentives and grants through state programs - Spring 2019
  - Work with the Doniphan County Zoning Board and with NEKES to make requirements less stringent so it will be easier to build a house for those wanting to build - Spring 2019
  - Survey large employers about what their needs are for housing for employees and see if they would be willing to help invest in providing that housing for their employees - Spring 2019
  - Look into options to create a community Land Bank (Hiawatha, Atchison examples) - Summer 2019
  - Promote the County's Neighborhood Revitalization program to anyone/any company that is looking to build or renovate their property - ongoing
  - Review and market the numerous available housing initiative programs and resources that exist for developers, individuals, government agencies, and lenders. (*See Appendix G for complete list*) - ongoing

#### **4. Focus development on businesses that offer quality salaried positions of \$35,000/year or greater and that offer a benefits package.**

- A salary at or above \$35,000 is competitive and will help to attract and keep quality individuals in the county. Benefits are important, especially health insurance, and may also include but are not limited to, vacation and sick paid time off, retirement options, etc. Such companies would attract employees that would increase the overall skill level of residents within the county.
- **Current Status**

- Currently, the county's average wage is \$35,000/ year or \$17.09 an hour. There are incentive programs offered through the state of Kansas where companies who hire a certain number of workers and pay them over the median salary range of either the county or over median wage in the industry according to their NAICS code, can receive tax credits.
- The levy along the Missouri river is still in the planning stages to become certified. The timeline of planning and construction phases could still be another two years to complete. The Wathena and Elwood areas are affected by the levy certification and the opportunity to recruit new industry development to this area could pose a major problem due to it being in a flood plain.
  - Current business expansions are a more viable option to support first before seeking new business recruitment.
- **Strategies**
  - Visit current industry and manufacturing businesses in the County to understand what businesses could be brought in to help grow or support their business - ongoing
  - Market incentives we have on a local and state level (specifically state tax incentives for jobs above median level) - ongoing
  - Coordinate and partner with the Kansas Department of Commerce and remain aware and updated on programs, support and incentives that can be offered through the state. **List available in Appendix G.** - ongoing
  - Educate and gather key people that can help further new business - Summer 2018
  - Research the County's workforce availability - Fall 2018
  - Identify what industry corridors already exist in the County - Fall 2018
  - List available properties and buildings that are for sale and zoned as industrial use on LocationOne Information Services (LOIS) - Winter 2018
  - Create a non-traditional approach to incentives - Spring 2019
  - Identify industries, companies or other businesses that would be ideal for the County - Summer 2019
  - Complete an example request for information (RFI) and request for proposal (RFP) packet for interested incoming businesses - Fall 2019
  - Explore options for value-added agriculture developments using the commodities grown in the county - Winter 2019
  - Potentially attend trade shows to market the county and available land - Summer 2020

**5. Increase access to grocery shopping options in the county and support existing grocery options with initiatives that expand access to fresh and local foods.**

- There is a concern in the County, particularly in Highland that there is no grocery store. Highland is one of the few bigger towns in the County that is located within a food desert (**Appendix E**). This harms the marketability of the community to potential incoming residents and businesses, as well as HCC's recruiting efforts. In addition, many areas of the County lack access to fresh, local food.
- **Current Status**
  - Grocery Store
    - There are currently three grocery stores in the county:
      1. Weiland's Grocery: Bendena
      2. John's Market: Troy

- 3. Simpson's Grocery & Hardware: Wathena
  - The county also has two Dollar General locations that help fill some of residents' grocery store and general store needs:
    - 1. Elwood
    - 2. Troy
  - There are private investors interested in establishing a grocery store in Highland. In the past, we have held community meetings and gone over all the potential models but there are two vital factors missing from making this dream a reality.
    - 1. Obtaining an experienced manager to run the grocery store
    - 2. Figuring out the location of the building.
- Access to Fresh and Local Foods
  - Highland has recently started to run a Farmers Market locally.
  - In the past, Wathena had a Farmers Market.
  - In Blair, located between Wathena and Troy, Fleek's Market offers seasonal and fresh produce, seeds, plants and flowers.
  - Second Harvest Community Food Bank in St. Joseph does a fresh mobile pantry that gives away seasonal produce and frozen meat to anyone who shows up. They do not have any income requirements or restrictions and currently have two drop off locations in the County:
    - New Life Church in Blair - the first Friday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon.
    - Casino White Cloud - the second Tuesday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon.
- **Strategies**
  - Grocery store in Highland
    - Research grocery co-operative model; this relates to the need for a supplier which may only be available via a cooperative model - Summer 2018
    - Work with K-State Rural Grocery Initiative and Food Co-op Initiative to help lead and guide this task force - Summer 2018
    - It may be possible to use funds from the Doniphan County Community Foundation as a financing vehicle or to match grant opportunities if we do use a non-profit model - Fall 2018
    - Explore two new models – Dollar General with more groceries in combination with a farmer's markets and/or a Restaurant, Bar and Grocery combination - Fall 2018
    - Research other successful alternative grocery examples like Onaga, KS - Fall 2018
  - Fresh Food Access
    - Assess which cities would like to start their own organized Farmer's Market or determine if there is a consensus to put together a traveling Farmer's Market for multiple interested cities - Summer 2018
    - Visit surrounding areas such as Hiawatha, Atchison and St. Joseph to understand how and when their Farmer's Markets operate - Summer 2018
    - Research partnerships with local sources such as Light House Farm Hydroponics, Juhl's Greenhouse Market, FFA Chapters growing projects as a local food supplier - Fall 2018
    - Research other local or regional organizations similar to Second Harvest - Winter 2018
    - Partner with other County organizations to bring in more services - Spring 2019

## 6. Advocate for and help create additional activities and facilities in the county that focus on fitness and recreation.

- There is increased opportunity for our communities to provide facilities for fitness and recreation. This is important not just for the overall health of residents, but also from a placemaking standpoint. Incorporating trails and recreation activities diversifies our communities and economies and makes the community welcoming and interactive. These developments can go a long way towards helping increase tourism, especially in this part of Kansas that encompasses such natural scenic views and lands full of historic significance.
- **Current Status**
  - Fitness Facilities:
    - Currently HCC's Walters Wellness Center is the only recreational facility open and available to the public. Creating another location would make it more likely that people will take their health and rehabilitation needs more into their own hands to help combat obesity and other physical ailments.
    - The Wathena Baptist Church has a small gym located in the basement of their church, that is open to the public for a small monthly membership price.
  - Recreational Activities:
    - The County has two golf driving ranges in Bendena and Troy
    - There have been attempts in the past to establish walking trails through the "Rails to Trails" program. There was resistance, but it may be worth discussing again.
    - Bike Across Kansas (BAK):
      - Every four years, BAK partakes in a route that starts in St. Francis, Kansas and ends in the County. Usually Troy will host them overnight and put on a festival for the bikers. In 2016, it ended up being the same weekend as the rodeo that happens at the fairgrounds every summer.
      - There are approximately 900 bikers who participate on this 500+ mile trek with the average age of participants being 54.
      - Part of the BAK's purpose is to advocate to the communities they visit to establish bike trails. They are especially encouraging of our area to have a trail system set in place that could somehow connect to Atchison, St. Joseph, and Kansas City.
- **Strategies**
  - Fitness Facilities:
    - Discuss if the task force group specifically wants a gym/wellness center or would like efforts to be focused on other projects like bike and walking trails - Summer 2018
    - Talk with HCC to see what the possibility would be to create a remote or satellite branch of the wellness center elsewhere in the county - Summer 2018
    - Hold a joint meeting with all existing recreation programs in the county - Fall 2018
    - Research fitness centers in similar areas and analyze their strategies - Winter 2018
    - Investigate if old or current school building's gyms are available to use as a fitness center for the public. Can do the same with local churches. - Spring 2019
    - Do a cost analysis on construction and equipment - Summer 2019
    - Seek out donations and investments - Fall 2019
    - Research and apply for possible grant opportunities - 2019-2020

- Recreational Activities:
  - Discuss riverfront development as a potential walkable area for trails - Winter 2018
  - Research Counties with trail programs (Allen County) - Spring 2019
  - Research potential opportunities and land options for development - Summer 2019
  - Conduct Trail feasibility and assessments - Fall 2019
  - Pursue tourism grant opportunities for trail development - Spring 2020

## *Secondary Initiatives*

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### **1. Foster and support youth engagement and retention.**

- We need to be proactive in stopping the “brain drain” that has been happening in our community for the last several decades and retain educated youth in the County.
  - Initiatives to get our youth more involved in the happenings of the county:
    - Facilitate mentorship programs between business leadership and government leadership and students.
    - Encourage more youth to attend the Entrepreneurship Camp put on every summer at HCC by NEKEF.
    - Engage youth with Economic Development work as decision makers.
    - Encourage local businesses to offer internship programs
    - Panel discussions in high schools or at HCC with people who wish they had more education or who had taken advantage of that
    - Keep conducting local career fairs and job fairs on an annual basis
    - Work with Chamber to provide programs directly targeting youth retention
    - Continue to offer and promote the Rural Opportunity Zone (ROZ) program

### **2. Launch a new industrial park.**

- To grow the presence of industry in the County, we need to look at investing in another industrial park within the county.
  - This could mean having an analysis done for the county of where the best location would be and then getting the utilities ready for the site and incentivizing companies to build.
  - This could also mean expanding our existing industrial parks in Wathena and Elwood.
  - This relates to the need for key infrastructure; currently this includes internet and cell phone coverage throughout the county where it may be weak.

### **3. Create a vibrant tourism corridor by capitalizing on our natural resources and historical significance.**

- The county is rich in history and an untouched tourism gem. We need to build up other amenities to help facilitate tourism and market our beautiful landscapes. Amenities that would support tourism initiatives would be Bed and Breakfasts, hotels/ motels, restaurants, walking trails, gift shops, annual festivals, local events, etc.
  - Ideally this would happen in areas where there is historical significance, specifically Troy and Highland. However, an area that already has some momentum is Wathena.

- KDOT and KDWPT are in the process of completing and implementing Glacial Hills Scenic Byways and Highways kiosks to be located in White Cloud and Troy in 2018.
- Take advantage of Agritourism programs offered through the state.
- Consider riverfront development in multiple areas

#### 4. Develop facilities and programs to help deal with perceived drug problems.

- Survey responses heavily alluded to a high level of drug activity in the County. St. Joseph is becoming well known in the nation for its drug issues, so it is a concern that those issues would overflow into our county.
  - Partner with the Health Dept. to support current and offer more businesses and programs for mental health and substance abuse
  - Work with school districts to implement educational programs like Doniphan Committed
  - Support Sheriff's department in keeping drug crime low
  - Craft a strong message that Doniphan County does not tolerate drug traffic or usage

### Identified Partners

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The following is a list of partners that the Commission has identified. However, this list will inevitably expand as we further work on our initiatives within task forces.

- **Local Partners:** *within Doniphan County*
  - Business leaders
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Doniphan County Agencies, Resources and Education (DCARE)
  - Doniphan County Community Foundation (DCCF)
  - Doniphan County Education Cooperative #616 (DCEC)
  - Doniphan County Fair Board and Doniphan County 4-H
  - Doniphan County Farm Bureau
  - Doniphan County Government Agencies
    - County Appraiser/ GIS
    - County Attorney
    - County Clerk
    - County Treasurer
    - Economic Development
    - Emergency Management
    - Health Dept./Home Health
    - Planning & Zoning
    - Register of Deeds
    - Road & Bridge
    - Sheriff and Law Enforcement
  - Doniphan County Heritage Commission
  - Doniphan County Historical Society
  - Doniphan County Library District #1
  - Doniphan West - USD #111 School Board and District
  - High School FFA Chapters
  - Highland Community College (HCC)
  - Municipalities

- Northeast Kansas Environmental Services (NEKES)
- Riverside - USD #114 School Board and District
- Rural Water Districts
- Townships
- Troy - USD #429 School Board and District
- Volunteer First Responders
- **State Partners:** *available throughout the State of Kansas*
  - Blue Cross Blue Shield Kansas (BCBSKS) Foundation
  - Kansas Health Foundation (KHF)
  - K-State University
    - Center for Rural Enterprise Engagement(CREE)
    - K-State Extension
    - K-State Rural Grocery Initiative
  - State of Kansas Agencies
    - Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA)
    - Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC)
    - Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE)
    - Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)
    - Kansas Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism (KDWPT)
  - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- **Regional Partners:** *partners within the Northeast Kansas region and the Northwest Missouri*
  - Benedictine College
  - Missouri Western
  - Hillyard Technical Center
  - Glacial Hills Resources, Conservation and Development
  - Kanza Mental Health
  - Mo-Kan Regional Planning Commission
  - Northeast Kansas Enterprise Facilitation (NEKEF)
  - Northeast Kansas Tourism Coalition
  - MINK Corridor Organization
  - Atchison Chamber of Commerce
  - St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce
  - St. Joseph Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

## ***Foundational Functions of Economic Development*** ---

Continual improvement of the county's economy and standard of living is the core of economic development. To accomplish these big picture goals and to further build on the success and momentum of the Commission, daily tasks and other organizational involvement will continue to occur and can sometimes take priority depending on the project.

First and foremost, the Commission will always pursue economic opportunities for the county whether it's business expansions, recruitments or grant opportunities as well as serve as a resource hub for businesses and residents. Also, the Commission represents the county on local and regional boards for economic development including collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce to host learning sessions and seminars. Another important area is promoting the county through social media and digital marketing, managing the county's website, writing press releases and updating and creating

tourism brochures and initiatives. At all times, the department communicates and updates local government officials, community leaders and organizations on progress and opportunities.

## Next Steps

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Action is vital to a successful strategic planning effort. To ensure progress on the key initiatives, the Board believes the following steps are important.

- Form a Task Force for each key initiative. The Task Forces should be established within 45 days of plan adoption and should report at least quarterly to the Commissioners on progress. Each Task Force will be supported by the Economic Development Staff. We will start by using our identified partners as a resource to establish our champions for our task forces:
  - Housing – Assisted Living Development
  - Social Outlets
  - Housing – Starter Homes
  - Job Creation
  - Access to Food
  - Physical Activity
- Task Force Members will be trained on the Strategic Doing Process and introduce to the work Packets that can be useful in guiding their progress. They will specifically focus on using the measurement of constant commitment to activity and reporting back on accomplishments and taking on new tasks.
- The County will hold an annual Community Summit where all non-profit and governmental entities will come together to share accomplishments, share resources and plan for the following year. This activity will increase communication, create efficiencies in activity and help bridge the communication gap in the county.
- The Economic Development office will create a One-Piece Summary of the Strategic Planning results to widely distribute in the County and will assist Task Force members in doing the same to further describe their specific initiative.

## Appendix

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- A. Board member list
- B. SWOT Summary
- C. Demographic and statistical data packet
- D. Abbreviations and Definitions
- E. Resources for Task Forces and Source Links
- F. Survey Results - Attachment

### A. Board Member List

- City of Highland
  - Eric Ingmire: VP of Student Affairs at HCC
  - Mark Allen: Doniphan County Undersheriff and USD #111 Board Member
- City of Denton



- Melvin Massey: Mayor
- Sue Winchester: City Council Member
- Sarah Albers: City Council Member
- City of Troy
  - Carolyn Clary: City Council Member
  - Jennifer Luedke: USD #429 Board Member
  - Michael Cluck: Head Lineman at Doniphan Electric Co-op
- City of Wathena
  - Chris Walter: Production Manager at Summit Truck Bodies
  - Teresa McAnerney: Facilitator at NEKEF
- City of Elwood
  - Joel Euler: City Attorney
- Chamber of Commerce
  - Marty Allen: President
- Doniphan County
  - Julie Meng: Emergency Management and Zoning
- Health Dept./Home Health
  - Sheryl Pierce: Administrator
  - Kay Smith: Public Relations
- Economic Development
  - Leah B. Johnson: Current Director/Previous Assistant
  - Adrienne Korson: Previous Director

## B. SWOT Summary

- **Strengths – Summarized and Grouped**
  - Location - Close to major populations, Highway interchanges and airports
  - Culture - Work ethic, Family Oriented, Community Oriented, Community Pride
  - Education - HCC, Small Schools
  - Natural resources - soil, natural gas, the riverfront, The 4-state lookout, Tall Oak, Natural Beauty
  - History - The courthouse, Native American Culture, Lewis and Clark Trail, Pony express Route; assets in this category throughout the county
  - Tools Available - Zoning, Rural Opportunity Zones, High Land Valuation
- **Weaknesses – Summarized and Grouped**
  - In Culture - Low wage mentality, Attitude, Lack of County Unity, Lack of Entertainment/Things to do
  - In Tools for economic development - High taxes, Land is tightly held, Lack of funds to maintain county roads, land requirement of 2 acres to build a new home, lack of funds to keep small schools open, lack of tax base, Lack of Incentives for Business and Developers
  - Location - Lack of Highway 36 access, No Railroads, Money Flow to KC and St. Joe
  - Citizens - High Age, Lack Skills, Lack of Human Capital
  - Business Climate - Not enough businesses, Hard for them to Open and Grow, Lack of entrepreneurs, Lack of Investors
- **Opportunities – Summarized and Grouped**

- Natural Resources - Landscape, Beauty
- Location - The MINK corridor, Highway 36, Urban Sprawl
- Businesses - AG focused, Truck Stops, Restaurants, Hotels, Grocery
- Citizens - Children Who Pursue Professions and Go to College
- Tools - HCC (trade schools), Branding, ROZ designation
- Housing - Demand for housing in Highland
- **Threats – Summarized and Grouped**
  - Location - KDOT Unwilling to help open 36 access, Farmland Monopoly, St. Joe Crime Rate, Lack of Law Enforcement on Highway
  - Culture – Fear of Change, We’ve Always Done It that Way, Surrounding cities negative attitudes about the County (St Joe, Hiawatha, Atchison), Gossip
  - Natural Resources – Pollution
  - Outside Mandates

### C. Demographics and Statistical Data Packet - *Packet attached*

- Stats that represent information about the county and in comparison, to other nearby areas
  - This will help the Perception vs. Reality in the Telling our Story section to be better communicated
  - <http://www.towncharts.com/Kansas/Economy/Doniphan-County-KS-Economy-data.html>

### D. Abbreviations & Definitions

- The Economic Development Commission will be referred to as “Commission”
- The Strategic Planning Board will be referred to as “Board”
- The Economic Development Plan, Work Plan and Strategic Plan will be referred to as “Plan”
- Doniphan County will be referred to as “County”
- Highland Community College will be referred to as “HCC”
- The Doniphan County Health Department & Home Health will be referred to as “Health Dept.”
- The Housing Assessment Tool will be referred to as “HAT”
- Bike Across Kansas will be referred to as “BAK”
- **Assisted Living** is defined by the Kansas Department of Aging as:
  - Assisted living facilities, also known as supportive housing, offer a group residential setting for older adults who want their own living space. Residents may need help with dressing, bathing, eating, and toileting, but do not require the intensive medical and nursing care provided in a Nursing Home.
    - **Nursing homes** provide 24-hour care at a subacute level for a variety of needs and for individuals who can no longer live independently. A nursing home setting may also be appropriate for people who need extended post-operative care or complex medical monitoring.
- A **Home-Plus** is defined by the Kansas Department of Aging as:
  - any residence or facility caring for not more than 12 individuals not related within the third degree of relationship to the operator or owner by blood or marriage unless the

resident in need of care is approved for placement by the secretary for children and families, and who, due to functional impairment, needs personal care and may need supervised nursing care to compensate for activities of daily living limitations. The level of care provided to residents shall be determined by preparation of the staff and rules and regulations developed by the Kansas department for aging and disability services

- **Food Desert** as defined by the USDA:
  - The USDA defines what's considered a food desert and which areas will be helped by this initiative: To qualify as a "low-access community," at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract population must reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store (for rural census tracts, the distance is more than 10 miles).
- **Hydroponics** for this plan is defined as:
  - growing plants without soil
- A **Co-operative** as in reference to a **grocery co-operative model** for this plan is defined as:
  - An autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.
- **Current Status** of the six Key Initiatives is defined as:
  - What has been done and what do we already know
- **'Rails to Trails** program is defined as:
  - Creating a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to build healthier places for healthier people.
- **Bike Across Kansas** is defined as:
  - BAK is an annual, eight-day, bicycle tour across the state of Kansas. BAK promotes health and wellness through bicycling, the history and beauty of the Kansas, and the warm hospitality of the Kansas towns and people.
- **Starter home** as referenced in Key Initiative 3 is defined for this plan as:
  - A relatively small, economical house or condominium that meets the requirements of young people buying their first home, priced in the \$100,000- \$150,000 range.
- **SWOT** is defined as:
  - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- **SMART Goals** is defined as:
  - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Bound
- **The MINK Corridor** is defined as:
  - MINK (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) Missouri River Corridor, Inc. works as a multi-state collaboration to leverage resources and spark new investments to support growth and opportunity for rural communities in the areas of housing, entrepreneurship, transportation and tourism to reverse the downward economic and demographic trends.
- **ROZ designation** is defined as:
  - Rural Opportunity Zone - The law designates 77 counties in Kansas as Rural Opportunity Zones (ROZ), providing a 100 percent state income tax waiver for up to five years and repayment of up to \$3,000 per year (\$15,000 maximum) in outstanding student loans.

- To be eligible for the state income tax waiver, individuals must have lived outside the state for at least the past five years prior to moving to a ROZ county and have Kansas source income of less than \$10,000 per year over the past five years.
    - To be eligible for student loan repayment, individuals must have graduated from an accredited post-secondary institution and move to a ROZ county. The student loan repayment incentive is open to both Kansas and non-Kansas residents.
- **NAICS code** is defined as:
  - The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.
- **LocationOne Information Services (LOIS)** is:
  - The powerful LOIS GIS sites and buildings database tool was created by Economic Development Professionals for Economic Development Professionals. LOIS is based on full compliance with the International Economic Development Council's (IEDC) Site Selection Data Guidelines. LOIS meets the needs of site selectors and real estate consultants.
  - LOIS is an easy way for community and economic development organizations to showcase their communities to site selectors and real estate consultants by employing GIS technology to create customizable searches, maps and reports.

## E. Resources for Task Forces and Source Links

The following is a list of resources that the Commission has identified so far. However, this list will inevitably expand as we dive further into our initiatives and task forces.

- **Housing Resources (Key Initiative 3)**
  - Neighborhood Revitalization Program
  - Housing Assessment Tool (HAT)
  - For Developers
    - Affordable Housing Program (AHP)
    - Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO)
    - Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
    - Private Activity Bond Program (PAB)
    - Rural Housing Incentive District (RHID) Act
    - Rural Housing Rental Program
  - For Government Entities, Cities, Counties, and Non-profits:
    - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program
    - Housing Preservation Grant Program
    - Moderate Income Housing (MIH) Program
    - The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program
  - For Individuals:
    - First Time Homebuyer Program (FTHB)

- USDA Direct Home Loan Program
    - USDA Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program
    - USDA Home Repair Program
    - Weatherization Assistance Program
  - For Lenders:
    - Community Development Program (CDP)
    - Community Housing Program (CHP)
    - Homeownership Set-aside Program (HSP)
  - Additional Links:
    - <http://kansascommerce.com/KansasHousing>
    - <https://www.rd.usda.gov/ks>
- **Job Creation State Programs & Incentives (Key Initiative 4)**
  - Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) Program:
    - <http://www.kansascommerce.com/141/Promoting-Employment-Across-Kansas-Progr>
  - KDOC Workforce Training Programs
    - Kansas Industrial Training (KIT) / Kansas Industrial Retaining (KIR)
      - <https://kansascommerce.gov/257/Kansas-Industrial-Training-KIT>
      - [https://kansascommerce.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7449/KITKIR-Program\\_Guidelines](https://kansascommerce.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7449/KITKIR-Program_Guidelines)
- **Community Development Grant (Key Initiative 3 & 6)**
  - <https://www.statefarm.com/about-us/community-involvement/community-grants/good-neighbor-citizenship-grants>
  - <https://newsroom.statefarm.com/2017-neighborhood-assist-sub/>
- **Business and Community Finance Incentives (All Initiatives)**
  - <http://www.kansascommerce.com/93/Business-Community-Finance-Incentives>
  - <https://www.dpcountyks.com/business/edev-resource-center/incentives>
- **Other sources and references**
  - <https://www.kdads.ks.gov/commissions/commission-on-aging/aging-and-disability-resource-centers/service-information/housing-and-long-term-care>
  - <http://www.hpm.umn.edu/nhregsplus/ALF%20oby%20State/Kansas%20ALF.pdf>
  - <https://www.doniphanproud.com>
  - <http://doniphanproud.civikhub.com/>
  - [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/seniors](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/seniors)

## F. Survey Results - Attachment

Please see the survey results attachment. All results from the open ended and comment questions are not displayed. Rather, a “wordle”, or cluster of the most popular words used within a piece of text, is displayed to give an overall general understanding of the survey responses. Notice, the bigger and bolder a word in the “wordle” is, the more times it was used in people’s survey responses.