

# NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



## 2008 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

for

Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Marshall, Mitchell,  
Ottawa, Republic, Saline and Washington Counties in Kansas



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*Special Note: Unless otherwise cited, the source of all data seen or used in this document comes from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce. To learn more about this source go to its website at <http://www.bea.gov/>.*

## **Introduction**

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For the past 30 years the North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC) has worked diligently with the cities and counties of North Central Kansas in an effort to improve that area we call “home”. Most of our energy has been spent on helping individual places address needed infrastructure, although we have also developed the means by which we can help private enterprise access the financial resources they need to create, expand or save individual business operations. Taken as a whole, our work has certainly focused on the physical demands of the region we serve, but in today’s world, that is not enough.

Since 2000 the NCRPC has taken steps to better provide for human resource development and to prepare for the generational shift associated with the beginning retirement of the “Baby Boomers” and the coming of the “Gen X” and “Millennial” groups. This move was prompted by the fact individuals and organizations alike have requirements that are not being uniformly addressed by state programs or service providers within the region.

Individual leadership and board development, along with market identification, market access and development, production control systems, financial management techniques, workforce training, amongst others, are just some examples of services our communities need in order to remain competitive. And the mindset of those involved must be taken into consideration. The unique thing about human development is such services are consumables not tied to individual place, which means necessary educational and support mechanisms must be developed to make such services accessible to all. The NCRPC believes it can play a major a role in this arena, but only as a catalyst, not as a driver.

### Why is a regional approach significant, if not necessary?

We no longer live in a time when our rural cities can or should work in isolation as has been the past habit of most. Aptly defined regions can add value to the mix by providing the critical mass necessary for singular places to compete in the global economy. However, this mass becomes effective only if counties and cities first have the opportunity and desire to work with one another. A regional organization like the NCRPC offers the social network necessary to produce that opportunity. The desire remains the sole responsibility of the individual.

### How do we view economic development?

Economic development is one of the engines driving the overall process of community development process, for it affords residents of a community the opportunity to work and accumulate wealth. Its role is to produce sustainable economic prosperity within a defined geography. Success requires continuous growth in leadership and business services; the first to develop a vision of the future and to commit resources; the second to satisfy ever-evolving business needs. It is not something that can be done unilaterally, for it requires cooperation and planning. Nor is it something that happens over night, since requires long-term commitment and investment of both time and money by the stakeholders involved.

### How you can become involved?

We invite you to join us in our efforts to make North Central Kansas a better place to live. You are a stakeholder in this region and there are many opportunities for you to become involved, one being to provide input into our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy process.

As you read the contents of this document provided here, please feel free to contact the NCRPC office with any comments you might like to make concerning what it presents or with any suggestions you might have concerning the growth and development of North Central Kansas. The easiest means of making contact is to go to the “Contact Us” section of our website and follow the simple instructions provided.

## **Background**

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This document provides a description of the human and physical resources that compose the economic foundation of North Central Kansas and a detailed explanation of just what the North Central Regional Planning Commission proposes to do to address the development needs of the region.

### What is the CEDS?

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – or CEDS – is a plan and like any plan it provides an overview of a subject area and then lists out a series of goals and objectives to be achieved in order to address the defined needs of that subject area. In this case the CEDS is an articulated set of goals and strategies formulated to take advantage of the human and natural resources available in North Central Kansas as a means of improving the region's economy.

### The CEDS Process

The CEDS process is driven by the CEDS Committee and involves setting goals, examining options to reach them and the selection of courses of action. Done properly, it is continuous and guides the economic growth of the region by coordinating the efforts of the regional planning commission, local economic development agencies, local governments and private industry specific to the development of North Central Kansas.

### CEDS Organization & Management

The CEDS Committee is comprised of representatives from the North Central Regional Planning Commission, state agencies, community representatives, business leaders, social service agencies and other interested persons and oversees the CEDS process. Effort is made to have representation from all economic interests in the region. The organization and staffing for the NCRPC CEDS builds upon the existing regional development corporation. The CEDS Committee's aim is to oversee the future economic policies affecting the region and to introduce activities that have a positive impact on the region's economy. This is achieved by their direction and endorsement of all critical CEDS components including the development of goals, policies and projects. (See attached list of names and affiliations of Committee membership.)

The CEDS Committee meets a minimum of two times each year, once to review and approve the Committee's Annual Report and the second time to amend the Project Priority List. These meetings are in addition to special events or other needs that may arise.