



NCRPC NEWS

North Central Regional
Planning Commission

www.ncrpc.org
February 2007

Executive Board

Steve Errebo, Lincoln Co.
Mark Freel, City of Minneapolis
Dwight Frost, Jewell Co.
Marcia Funke, Washington Co.
Bill Garrison, Cloud Co.
Chuck Heidrick, Mitchell Co.
Judy Irvin, City of Salina
Mick Keating, Marshall Co.
Vicki Koepsel, Saline Co.
Jonathan Mitchell,
City of Ellsworth
Joe Nold, Dickinson Co.
Larry Paine, City of Concordia
Virgil Palen, Mitchell Co.
Abner Perney, City of Salina
Kermit Rush, Ellsworth Co.
Frank Rytych, Republic Co.
David Thurlow, Clay Co.

NCRPC Staff

John Cyr
Carol Torkelson
Connie Cyr
Doug McKinney
Margaret Cathey
Deb Ohlde
Debra Peters
Todd Tuttle
Sherry Angell
Pepper Roberg
Lori Thielen
Jeff Maska
Jeff Gansel
Dell Gier
Rod Thompson
Brett Beck

Upcoming Events

Thursday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting

Monday, March 12
Wednesday, May 30
NCK Leadership Development
(First two in a four-part series)
Eisenhower Presidential
Library, Abilene, KS

Thursday, March 29, 2 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting

CONTEST ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO REFLECT ON FUTURE OF RURAL KANSAS

The region's youth will be asked to reflect online on the future of rural Kansas as part of an award competition for high school seniors.

Three cash awards ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 will be given to top entries on the topic of "Rural Kansas...Tomorrow's Possibilities." The original work may be presented as a written commentary, photo essay, or video. Written work must be a minimum of 1,000 words and should be a fiction or non-fiction personal reflection/commentary. A photo or video format submission must contain at least 10 and no more than 20 photos or a video of no more than 10 minutes. All entries should be a reflection of the assigned topic.

The North Central Regional Planning Commission (NCRPC) of Beloit is sponsoring the contest.

"We hope to create a dialogue between the youth and other facets of the population regarding

the future of the region as well as provide a vehicle that encourages youth to become more fully aware of the sense of loyalty and affinity they have for their home," Debra Ohlde, NCRPC Community Development Specialist, said.

Entrants will be eligible for publication on the Eye on Kansas website (www.eyeonkansas.org), with non-renewable cash awards in the amount of \$1,000, \$750 and \$500 awarded to the top three entries.

"We encourage seniors to participate because we are committed to learning about their experiences in rural Kansas and sharing what they believe the future holds for our region," Ohlde said. "The added bonus is students have the opportunity to earn money to use for college expenses or to start an entrepreneurial venture."

Any high school senior who lives in and/or attends a public or private high school in the NCRPC's 12-

county service area is eligible — including the counties of Clay, Cloud, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Jewell, Lincoln, Marshall, Mitchell, Ottawa, Republic, Saline and Washington. Home school students in the same 12-county area may also participate.

A review panel will include representatives from the NCRPC, national non-profit organizations with an interest in rural America, Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas State University, Cloud County Community College, and state-based media organizations.

Entries should be submitted electronically by midnight on March 19, 2007. Written documents should be double spaced and 12-point font. For more information, contact Debra Ohlde at the NCRPC at 785-446-3775 or by emailing dcohlde@nckcn.com or visit eyeonkansas.org and click on the Rural Voices link. All entries must include the entry form located on the site.

NCK LEADERSHIP SERIES BEING SCHEDULED

The four-part NCK Leadership Series that was set to begin in December has been rescheduled.

Two sessions will be this spring at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Li-

brary in Abilene with two more being planned for the fall. The first session will be on March 12 and the second on May 30.

BoardSource Senior Governance Consultant Michael Daigneault, Washing-

ton, D.C., will facilitate the series.

The first session is "Constructive Partnership."

(Continued on page 2)



DID YOU KNOW?



Towns may get a helping hand and up to \$15,000 by applying to the "My Hometown Helper" Grant Program sponsored by the General Mills Foundation.

Individuals from communities and organizations can visit the program's website to submit an essay describing how the grant program would help improve their community project. Requests for funding must be sponsored by a municipal or civic organization or public school.

The program website lists some of the following ideas for project funding: computers for local libraries or schools, playground equipment, holiday decorations, new uniforms for teams, clean-up projects, and training for volunteer firefighters.

Applicants can request a one-time award of between \$500 and \$15,000 during any month through May 2007. Awards are based on the merit of the project, including its impact and support within your community. Applicants can check the website on the 15th of each month through June 15, 2007 to see what projects were awarded.

For more information, direct questions to betty-crocker@mail.genmills.com or visit www.myhometownhelper.com.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: GOALS BEING SET FOR FIVE-YEAR CEDS PLAN

The NCRPC is in the midst of developing its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the next five years with this document spelling out the goals and objectives the organization expects to achieve during that time. What follows is an explanation of the groups and individuals we have engaged or introduced this past year and what role they potentially play in our plans.

GIS – We have engaged the North Central Kansas Technical College and two private sector service providers, ImageAmerica and Pictometry, in a discussion on the financial impact a regional approach to GIS might have. While most recognize the use of GIS in capital improvements planning and management, people still struggle with the initial cost of such a system coupled with the on-going expense of operations. It is our belief that

From the Director's Desk



John Cyr has been Executive Director since 1986.

such a system would more than pay for itself in five years through increased operational efficiency, user fees, and grants resulting from the ability to justify capital projects.

Homeland Security – The NCRPC is now the fiscal agent for two regional homeland security councils with all of our 12 counties included in the coverage. Since these councils are composed of emergency responders, our participation enables us to hear the needs of the medical community, EMS systems, law enforcement, fire control, and others, and to weave

that information into our CEDS. Performing such a role allows us to fulfill one goal we have historically performed, that being to provide "Technical Service" to our membership. The information gleaned also allows staff to better prepare grant applications for funding from federal and state sources.

Rural Business Development Tax Credits – This has presented a struggle for the past two years as we learn how to both place the credits and then apply the money donated to our regional economic development program. Such effort enables us to raise funds that would not otherwise be available for area projects and allows staff to become better familiar with fund raising itself, a skill that might prove useful in the future.

A complete set of CEDS goals and objectives will be discussed at our February 22nd board meeting.

(Continued from page 1)

It will explore the relationship between the Board and Executive Director.

The second session will be "Strategic Thinking When Creating a Culture of Inquiry."

The series will continue in Fall 2007 with "Ethics and Transparency in the Operation of a Non-Profit Organization" and "Continuous Learning and Revitalization."

More details will be available soon.

COMMERCE ANNOUNCES NEW FY 2007 CDBG GRANT AWARDS

Kansas Department of Commerce has announced its fiscal year 2007 CDBG grant awards.

The following are the projects and amounts awarded to cities within the 12-county NCRPC service area. Kan-Step awards were not announced at publishing time.

Housing:

- Blue Rapids, \$377,304 Rehabilitation/Demo.

- Narka, \$368,400 Rehabilitation/Demo.

Water and Sewer:

- Belleville, \$400,000 Water
- Hanover, \$235,950 Water
- Beattie, \$183,162 Sewer

Community Facilities:

- Holyrood, \$335,205 Emerg. Service Facility
- Congratulations to these cities for their efforts.

WIND FARM ON THE HORIZON IN REGION

One of Kansas' newest wind farms will be located in North Central Kansas. The project site is located 25 miles west of Salina, just north of Interstate 70 between Ellsworth and Lincoln.

In a press release issued jointly by TradeWind Energy, LLC, of Lenexa, Kan., and Sunflower Electric Power of Hays, Kan., it was reported that Sunflower has agreed to purchase 50.4 megawatts of energy generated by wind turbines at its Smoky Hills Wind Farm.

The contract between Sunflower and TradeWind Energy is a 20-year renewable energy purchase agreement. Construction completion is anticipated prior to the end of 2007 with energy being available to Sunflower at that time.

Stanley Walker, director of the Lincoln County Economic Development Foundation, explains that the project consists of multiple phases and timelines.

Phase I is expected to be capable of generating 100 megawatts of power when completed. Construction will start in March with the first turbines scheduled to arrive at the site in August. Project completion is anticipated by December. Approximately 15 landowners and 10,000 acres are involved in Phase I.

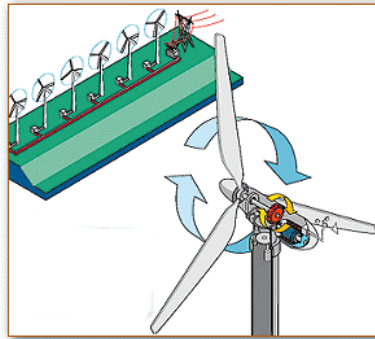
Completion of Phase II to be completed later is expected to be capable of generating 250 megawatts of power.

Walker says the Lincoln County Economic Development Foundation began to

HOW DOES A WIND TURBINE WORK?

This aerial view of a wind power plant shows how a group of wind turbines can make electricity for the utility grid. The electricity is sent through transmission and distribution lines to homes, businesses, schools, and so on. These three-bladed wind turbines are operated "upwind," with the blades facing into the wind. The other common wind turbine type is the two-bladed, downwind turbine.

So how do wind turbines make electricity? Simply stated, a wind turbine works the opposite of a fan. Instead of using electricity to make wind, like a fan, wind turbines use wind to make electricity. The wind turns the blades, which spin a shaft, which connects to a generator and makes electricity. Utility-scale turbines range in size from 50 to 750 kilowatts. Single small turbines, below 50 kilowatts, are used for homes, telecommunications dishes, or water pumping.



Source: www.cleanpowernow.org

examine the potential for wind energy in the area as early as 2001.

"We arranged for a forum with Jim Ploger, Energy Manager with the Kansas Corporation Commission," Walker says. "The presentation was well attended by over 40 landowners and interested parties and after such a positive response we decided to pursue wind energy as an initiative."

The Foundation realized it first needed willing landowners in a continuous block of land, availability of a high-capacity transmission line, and a measured wind potential indicating there would be enough wind to support the generation of electricity.

"Some of our board members attended a state

wind energy conference and were introduced to the people of TradeWind, which was at that time a startup called Kansas Wind Power," Walker says. "They had an interest in the area and took over project development at that time, which really brought all three of the needed components together."

The Foundation expects many benefits as a result of the project including increased commercial and retail activity during construction, money paid to the county, potential increased tourism and benefits to landowners.

"We've already seen a benefit of the land being leased," Walker says. "That has been an early and continuing benefit."

MEET THE BOARD

David Thurlow was elected to the Clay County Board of Commissioners in 2000 and has served on the



Thurlow

NCRPC Board since 2003. He has been a farmer-stockman for 32 years, operating a farm south of Wakefield where he also has a cow-calf operation and finishes hogs.

David received a degree in agriculture from Kansas State University with an animal science emphasis.

A native of Wakefield, he also serves on the Wakefield Farmer's Co-op Board of Directors. As a County Commissioner, he has been actively involved with the construction of three major river bridges in Clay County.

David says he enjoys partnering with the Planning Commission.

"I enjoy meeting other commissioners, working with people with very positive attitudes and learning what is new in the area," David says.

David and his wife, Marilyn, have three children, Amanda, Allison and Justin. Their daughters are both married and David and Marilyn have two grandchildren.

He enjoys collecting toy tractors and implements and has about 150 toys in his collection.

BELLEVILLE EXPANSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Lambriar Animal Health Care, LLC (LAHC) recently completed its expansion into Belleville. LAHC is a national wholesale distributor of animal health care products, medications, vaccines, and pharmaceuticals through catalog and website sales.

When the business outgrew its existing facilities in Fairbury, Nebraska, it decided to expand parts of its operation to 814 K Street, Belleville. LAHC refers to the new location as Wholesale Kennel Supply.

The City of Belleville assisted in facilitating the expansion by applying on behalf of the company to the Kansas Department of Commerce's Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development Category (CDBG-ED) to provide a low-interest loan of \$485,000 to LAHC. The application was approved and included grant funds to hire the North Central Regional Planning Commission as the certified administrator to oversee the

documentation requirements of the CDBG-ED Program.

The CDBG-ED Program gave 2 years for LAHC to spend the funds as outlined in the application, provide a minimum of \$250,000 in match and create a minimum of 14.5 FTE jobs of which 52% would benefit low-to-moderate income families.

The Belleville expansion included a call center/sales department, dog food distribution, kennel supply sales, and purchase of the former Precision Dynamics building, which provides 2,500 square feet of office space and 62,000 square feet of warehouse space. The remaining 8,000 square feet will be used to construct pre-engineered kennel buildings for the professional breeder market.

"Expanding to Belleville has created the opportunity to not only hire more salespeople, but also develop other aspects of our business to further us towards our goal of being a



Owners Doug and Julie Lambert are pictured in Lambriar Animal Health Care LLC's new facility located along U.S. Highway 81 in Belleville.

one-stop shop for our customers," Julie Lambert, LAHC Economic Development Consultant and project coordinator, said.

Lambert also said participation in the CDBG-ED program was beneficial.

"It gave us the financial flexibility we needed to expand and invest in inventory to drive more sales and create more jobs, rather than having to invest our cash reserves in real property, until we had sufficient cash flow to support that activity," Lambert said.

The CDBG-ED portion of the expansion was recently completed with the follow-

- ing results:
- \$485,000 in loan funds have been used as outlined in the application.
- The business provided more than \$500,000 in matching funds.
- LAHC created 15 FTE

jobs including a warehouse, delivery driver and sales positions, whose job it is to make outbound calls to prospects to sell veterinary supplies. Those jobs benefited more than the 52% low-to-moderate income families required.

"We are pleased to be doing business in Belleville," Lambert said. "The community leaders were instrumental in moving the process along smoothly and we were able to accomplish our goals and close the project out early."

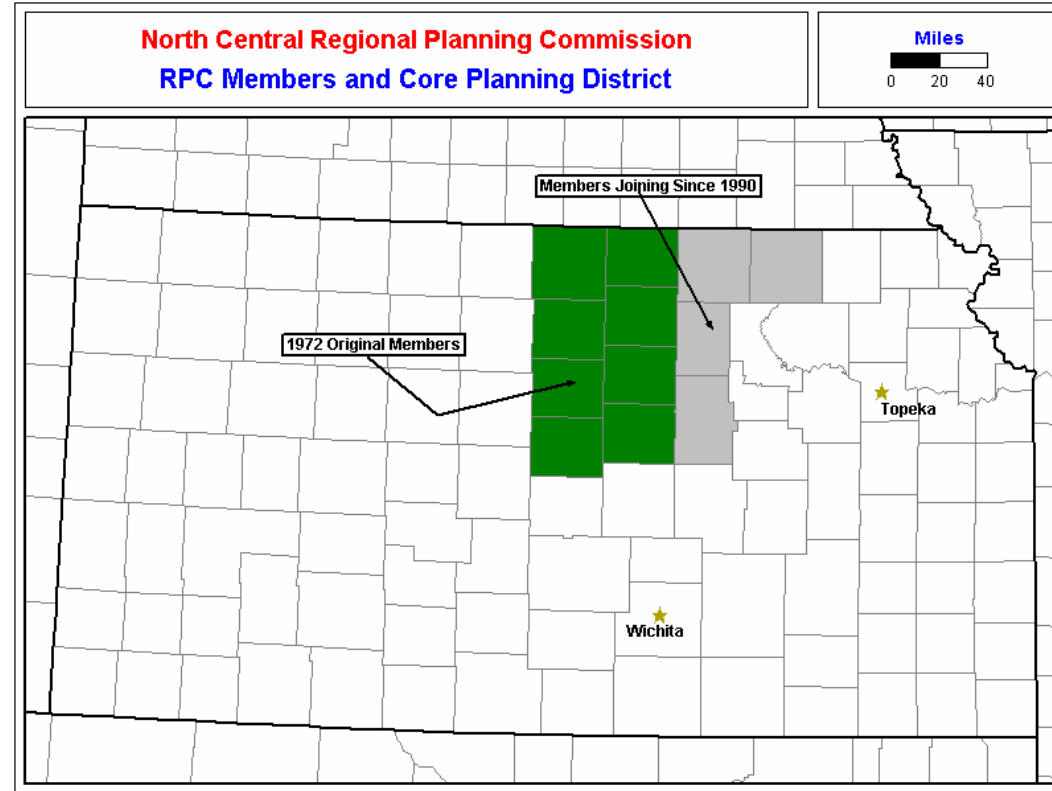
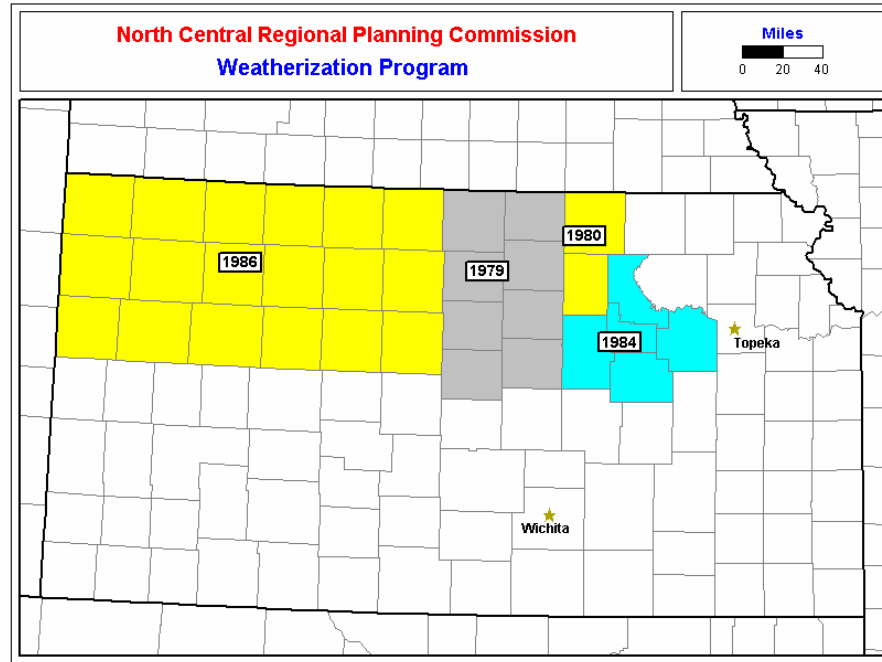
For more information on the business, visit www.LambriarVetSupply.com.

Know others who would like to receive this newsletter? Prefer e-mail format? Send contact information to thielen@ncrcn.com. Feedback is always welcome.

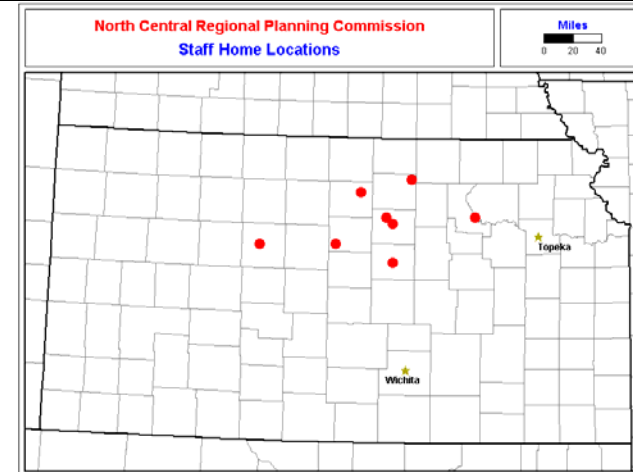
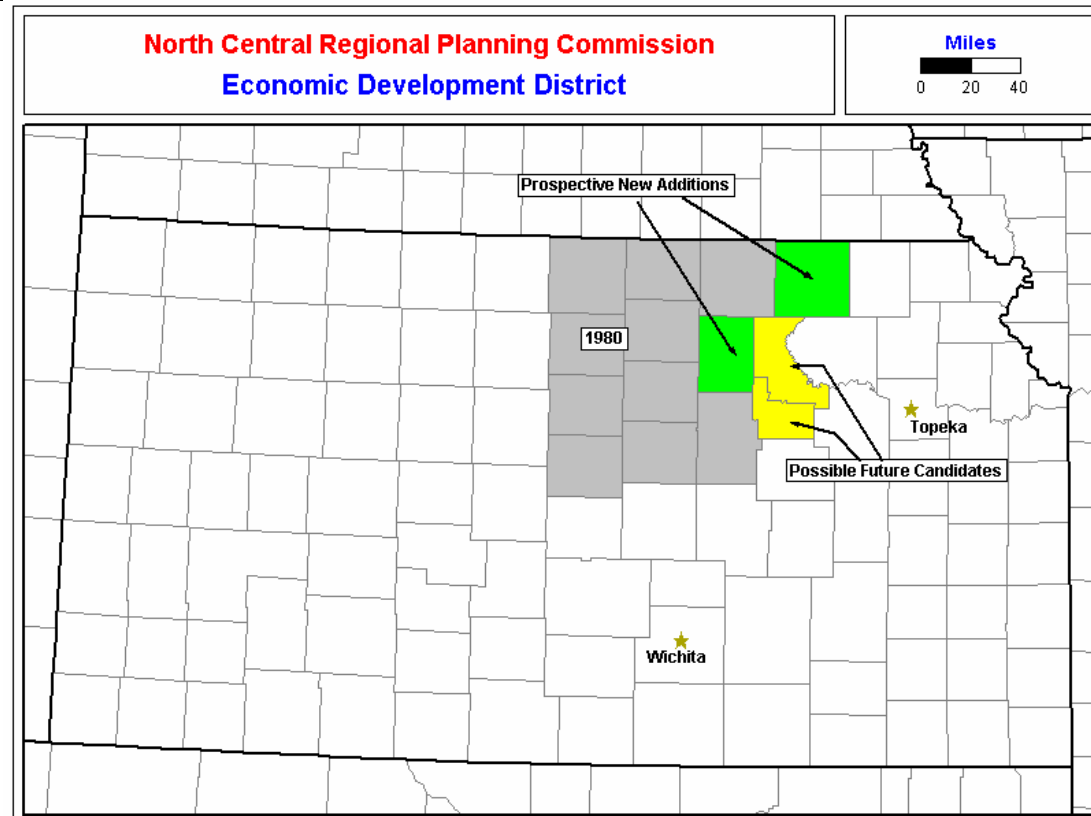
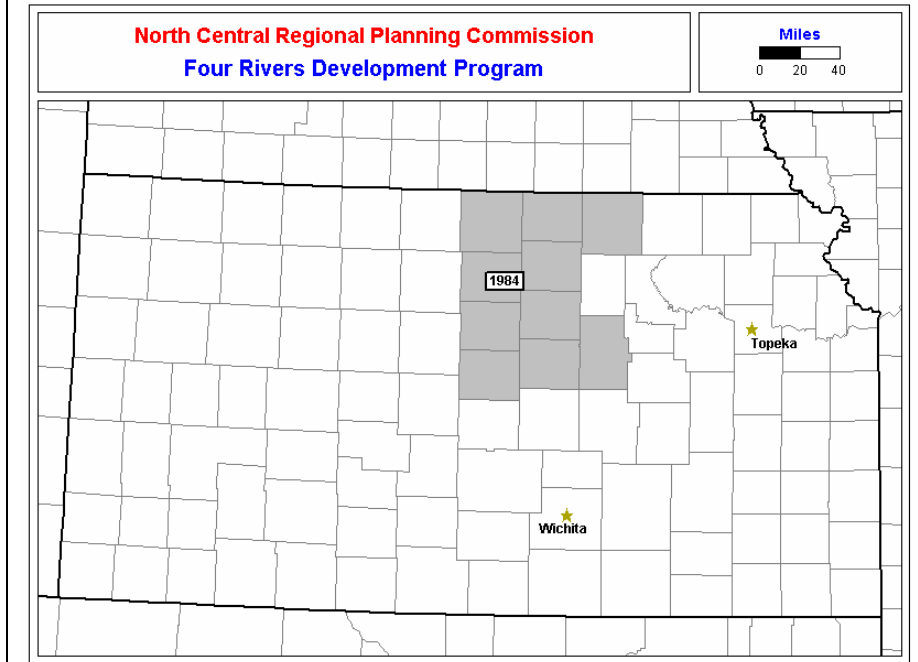
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2007 Snapshot of NCRPC Geographic Activity



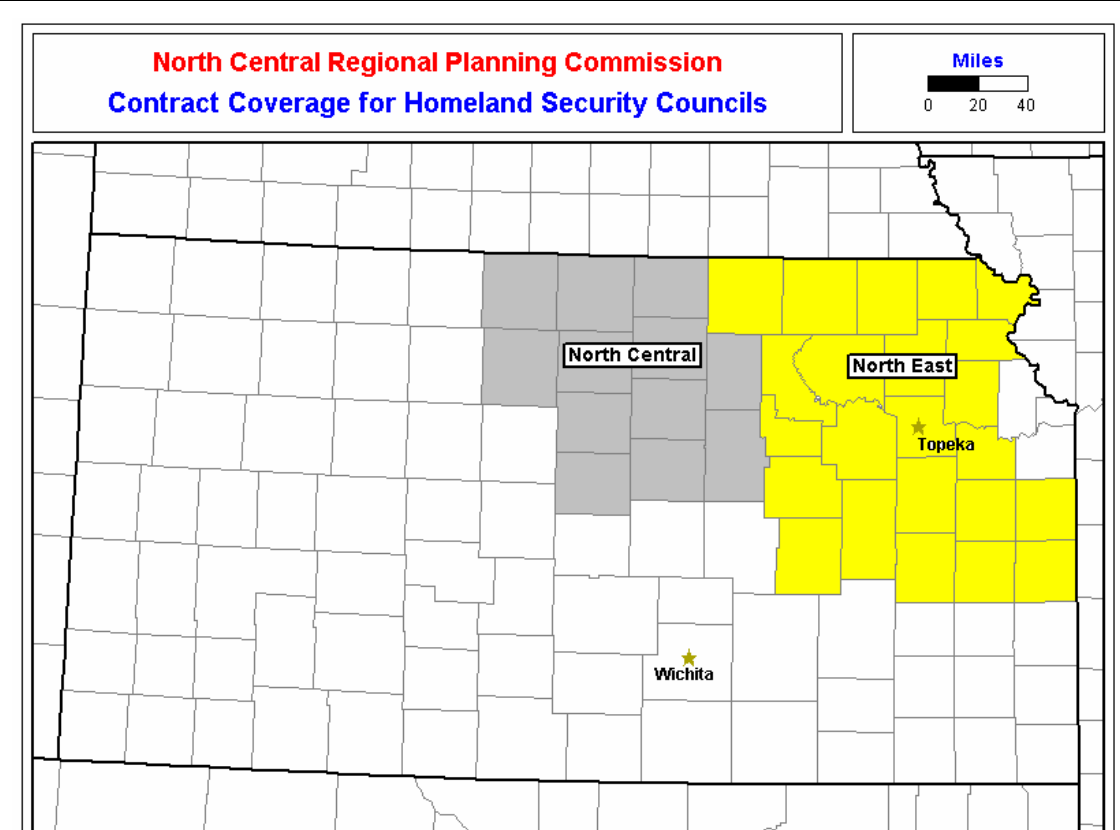
Tax Credit Coverage Area on Reverse Side



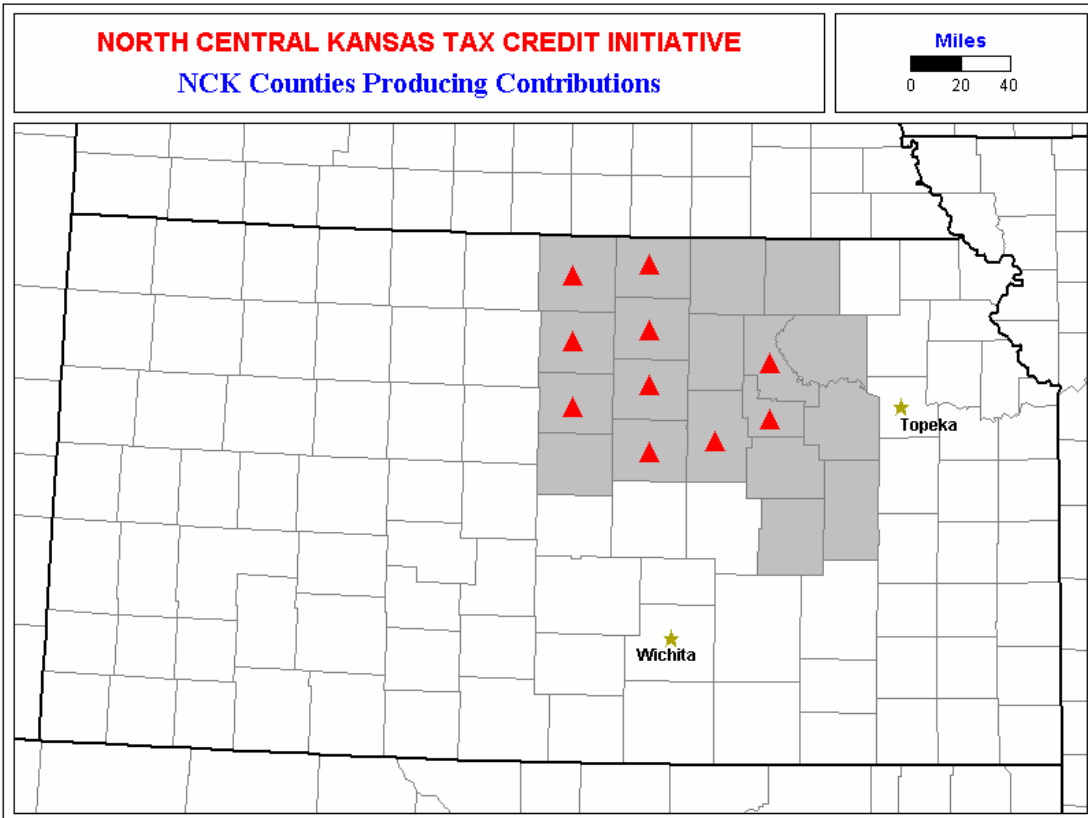
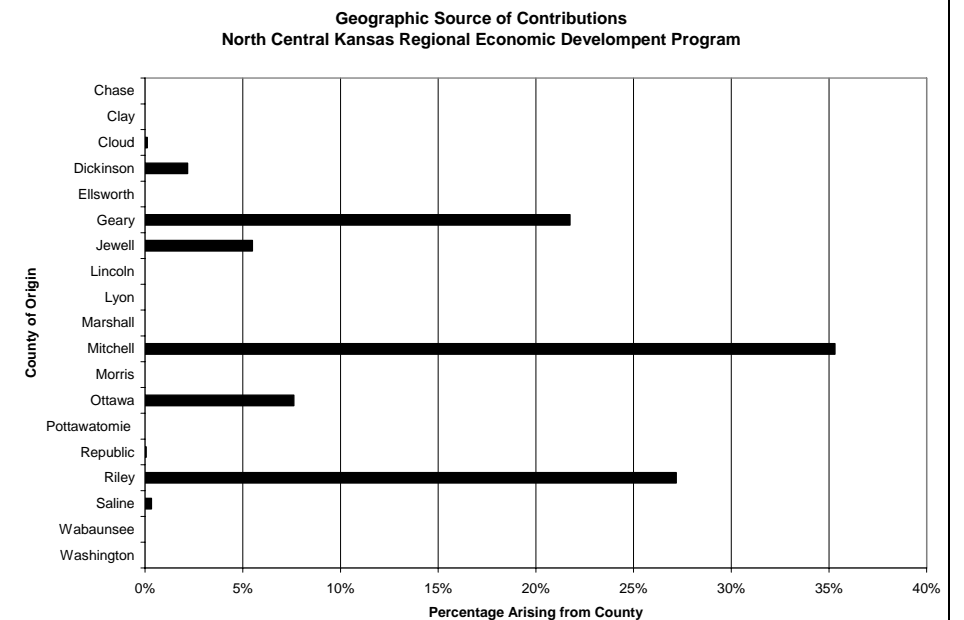
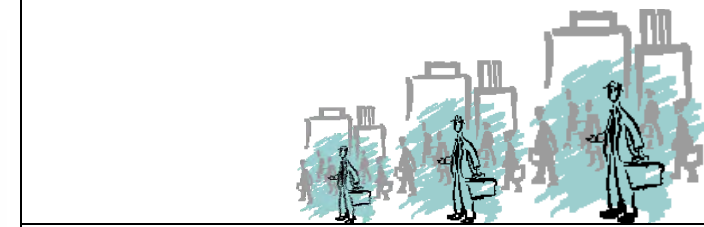
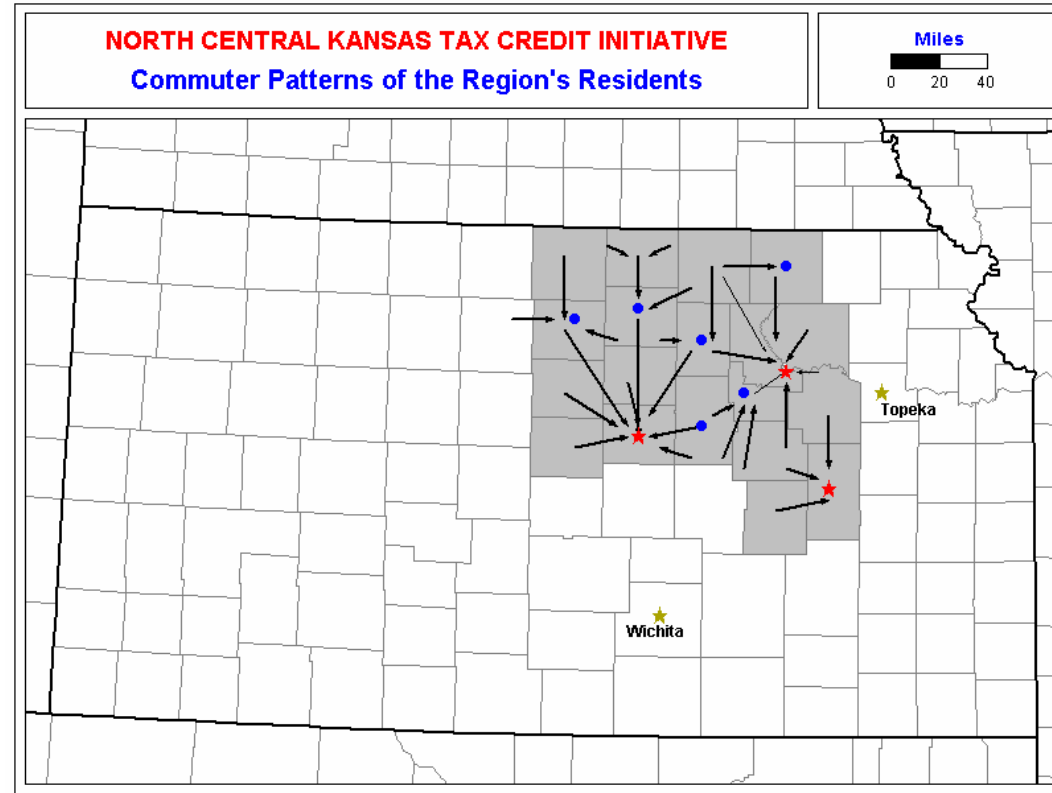
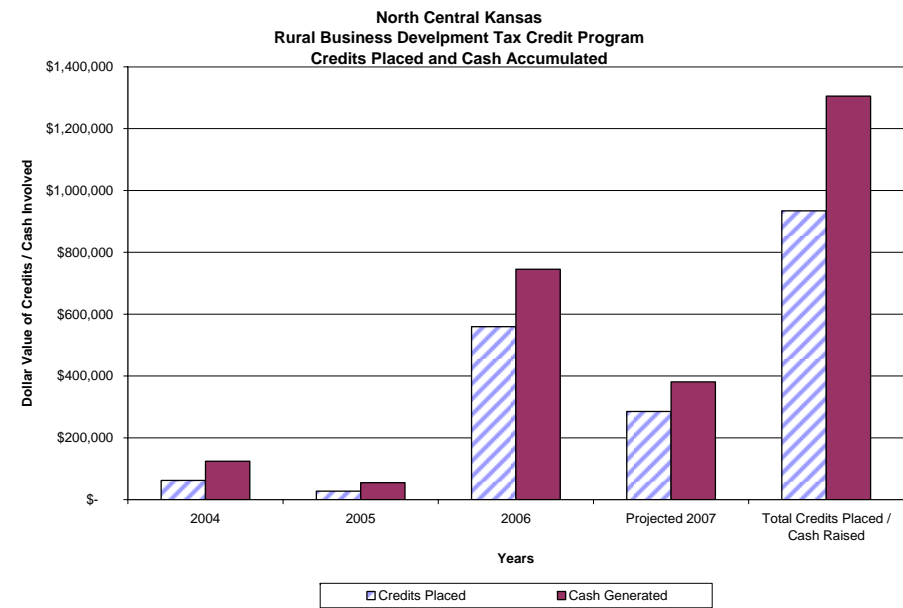
SUCCESS 1986 - Present

\$225.0 Million Infrastructure
\$70.0 Million Private Business Finance
\$18.0 Million Home Energy Improvements

1,400+ Jobs Created
11,000+ Homes Improved



Rural Business Development Tax Credit Program: The NCRPC is responsible for delivering this program to 19 counties. The information illustrated here shows the progress made thus far in placing the Kansas State Tax Credits and the amount of funds generated for our regional economic development initiative.



ACCUMULATED FUND BUDGETS
As of January 2007

Leadership Development.....	\$ 46,435
Business Services / Technology...	\$ 232,177
Job Creation	\$ 557,224
Administration.....	\$ 92,871
Total Funds Raised.....	\$ 928,706

Total Expenditures To-Date

Business Services / Technology...	\$ 26,117
Administration.....	\$ 3,418

- LESSONS LEARNED**
- 90% of success related to credit value
 - 5% of success related to NCRPC name recognition
 - 5% of success related to expressed regional goals regarding economic development

