

## Chapter Four: Economic Development

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Economic development is of great concern to most communities, particularly to those like Arkansas City which are located outside major urban areas. Those communities are typically striving to preserve and create quality jobs for citizens, and to grow in population and economic base. The most livable communities are those which have strong, vibrant economies that encourage local enterprise, serve the needs of citizens and promote stable employment. Effective economic development seeks to achieve a balance between support for existing businesses and efforts to bring new businesses into the community.

### 4.2 VISION

Arkansas City will be a community with a good balance of white collar and blue-collar employment, with a broad range of occupations and professions. The City will support efforts to produce a well-educated and trained labor force, including entrepreneurs, and will place strong emphasis on the growth of those places of employment already in Arkansas City. A critical objective is to have ample employment opportunities to keep young people in the community or to encourage them to return to Arkansas City if they receive post-secondary education or training elsewhere. The City will also present itself as an attractive community for new businesses to start up or to relocate to.

Principles that will guide the community to this vision include the following:

- **Integrated Approach:** Local governments, businesses, educational institutions and the community must work together to create a vibrant economy, through a long-term strategy that:
  - ✓ encourages local businesses
  - ✓ serves the needs of citizens, workers and businesses
  - ✓ promotes stable employment and good incomes.
- **Focus:** Economic development efforts should recognize the community's preference for supporting existing businesses.
- **Long-Term Investment:** Economic development programs paid for with public dollars should be evaluated on their long-term benefits and impacts on the entire community, not on short-term job or income increases.
- **Public Investment:** The City's economic development efforts should help provide citizens with lifelong skills and learning opportunities by promoting investment in public schools and Cowley College.

- **Public Infrastructure:** A necessity for virtually all economic development is adequate infrastructure provided in whole or part courtesy of local taxpayers: streets, sidewalks, water, gas, electricity, sanitary sewers, stormwater sewers, etc.

#### 4.3 BACKGROUND

The **principal local economic development agencies** are:

- (1) Cowley First, Cowley County Economic Development Partnership
- (2) Cowley College
- (3) Arkansas City Chamber of Commerce
- (4) Arkansas City City Commission/Cowley County Board of County Commissioners
- (5) Kansas Small Business Development Outreach Center
- (6) Ark City Industries

#### **Strother Field**

Strother Field Industrial Park is the largest and most diverse industrial park in the area. 1,600 acres in size, it is located on U.S. Highway 77 and not only has the only local airport but also railroad access. Strother Field is located halfway between the cities of Arkansas City and Winfield -- the co-owners of Strother Field.

Businesses locating in the park typically purchase their sites and construct their buildings. Strother Field does lease land to some businesses, and leases some building space, usually warehouse or office space.

Strother Field is home to many of the largest employers in the area employing over 1,200 people, including General Electric Engine Services, Columbia Elevator Solutions Inc., Morton Buildings, Greif Inc., Winfield Consumer Products/Husky Liners, and Western Industries-Plastic Products Group Inc.

Services such as the, Four County Mental Health Center and the Cowley County Humane Society are also located at Strother Field.



The facility is identified as a regional airport within the Kansas Aviation System Plan, which allows Strother Field to accommodate regional economic activities. The airport has two runways, the North/South being 5500 feet in length and the crosswind being 3150 feet. The runways are lighted, and pilot controlled. Both runways have been rehabilitated in recent years.

#### **Goff Industrial Park**

Goff Industrial Park is a 450-acre park located just north of Arkansas City. Current tenants of this industrial park include Creekstone Farms

Premium Beef, a processing facility employing more than 1,100. Kan-Pak also has developed a new 200,000 square foot warehouse and distribution facility in the industrial park.

The City of Arkansas City has made major improvements to roads, water and sewer. Land is available for new construction, ranging in lots from one to 75 acres at prices considerably below that of metropolitan areas.

Water and sewer are provided by the City of Arkansas City, gas is provided by Kansas Gas Service and electric is provided by Evergy.

The industrial park is located less than one mile west of U.S. Highway 77 and is only 20 minutes from I-35.

#### **State and Federal Programs and Tax Incentives Available to Existing or New Businesses**

- Constitutional Tax Exemption per the authority granted cities by Article 11, Section 13 of the Kansas Constitution
- Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs)
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) (low interest subordinated loans for plant, equipment and infrastructure)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) per K.S.A. 12-1771 *et seq.* (cost of certain public improvements paid for from increased property tax revenues from a development)
- Community Improvement District per K.S.A. 12-6a26 *et seq.* (public funding of projects via sales tax, special assessments and bonds)
- Revolving Loan Fund financing for qualifying local enterprises.
- Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) (business development loan guarantees)
- Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Program (long-term subordinated loans)
- SBA 7(A) Loan Guarantee
- Property Tax Exemptions (per Kansas Constitution, or IRB properties)
- Neighborhood Revitalization Act (NRA) per K.S.A. 12-17,114 *et seq.* Program (tax rebate program for eligible businesses and residential properties located within designated district in Arkansas City)
- USDA low interest loans
- Workforce Training
  - Kansas Industrial Training Program
  - Kansas Industrial Retraining
  - State of Kansas Investments in Lifelong Learning (SKILL)
  - Kansas Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)

EMPLOYERS IN ARKANSAS CITY AND STROTHER FIELD									
BUSINESS	PRODUCT/SERVICE	2003	2013	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
ADM MILLING	GRAIN MILLING	100	80	83					
B.Y.I.S	BOILERS AND EQUIPMENT MFG.							4	4
CITY OF ARKANSAS CITY	MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT	158	150		117	117	119		120
COLUMBIA ELEVATOR (WITTUR)	METAL FABRICATION	165	50	60	69	59	59	57	55
COMMUNITY NATIONAL BANK	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION						15		31
COWLEY COLLEGE	EDUCATION	257	185	193	195			199	213
CREEKSTONE FARMS PREMIUM BEEF	BEEF PRODUCTION	620	720	660		830	1080	1110	1118
FOUR COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH	HEALTHCARE				126	120	90		92
GE AVIATION	AIRCRAFT ENGINE MAINT.	920	801	700		687	853	750	646
HUSKY LINERS (WINFIELD CONSUMER PROD.)	AUTO ACCESSORIES MFG.	119	109	105	130	151	146	150	204
JET AIRWERKS	JET ENGINE REPAIR		24	23		36	41	47	30
KAN-PAK	ASEPTIC BEVERAGE PROCESSOR	40	208	310		290	286	248	305
LG PIKE	METAL FABRICATION	39	51	59	55	50	45	46	47
MORTON BUILDINGS	PREMANUFACTURED BLDGS.	51	53	37		46	48		28
RCB BANK	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION						100		97
SKYLINE CORPORATION	MANUFACTURED HOMES	100	102	120		112	144	141	169
SOUTH CENTRAL MEDICAL CENTER	HEALTHCARE	150	216	205	218	203	205		259
TWIN RIVERS DEVELOPMENTAL	HEALTHCARE		104	104					
USD NO. 470	EDUCATION	450	463	435	423	439	443		453
UNION STATE BANK	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION						81		114
VECTOR TECHNOLOGIES	TOOL MFG.			31		65	70	75	60
WAL-MART ARKANSAS CITY	RETAIL						139		172
WESTERN INDUSTRIES	BLOW MOLDING MFG.	110	207	203	195	230	230	350	363

RETAIL SALES TAXES					
Year	City Sales Tax Rate	State Sales Tax Rate	City Sales Tax Collections	State Sales Tax Collections	Taxable Sales
2010	2.00%	5.3-6.3%	\$ 2,845,357.10	\$ 8,251,536	\$ 142,267,855
2011	2.00%	6.30%	\$ 2,904,013.40	\$ 9,147,642	\$ 145,200,670
2012	2.00%	6.30%	\$ 2,832,018.44	\$ 8,920,858	\$ 141,600,922
2013	2.00%	6.3-6.15%	\$ 2,960,698.08	\$ 9,215,173	\$ 148,034,904
2014	1.5-2%	6.15%	\$ 2,824,444.93	\$ 9,925,906	\$ 161,396,853
2015	1.50%	6.15-6.5%	\$ 2,365,752.61	\$ 9,975,590	\$ 157,716,841
2016	1.5-2.5%	6.50%	\$ 3,081,115.84	\$ 10,013,626	\$ 154,055,792
2017	2.50%	6.50%	\$ 3,708,240.65	\$ 9,641,426	\$ 148,329,626
2018	2.50%	6.50%	\$ 3,656,236.45	\$ 9,506,215	\$ 146,249,458
2019	2.00%	6.50%	\$ 3,276,556.48	\$ 10,648,809	\$ 163,827,824
2020	2.00%	6.50%	\$ 3,379,807.26	\$ 10,984,374	\$ 168,990,363
2021	2.00%	6.50%	\$ 3,421,693.32	\$ 11,120,503	\$ 171,084,666

Source: Kansas Dept. of Revenue and City of Arkansas City

\* \* Taxable Sales: These figures reflect the sales to which the city sales tax applied. The city sales tax base is slightly larger than the state sales tax, *e.g.*, residential utility fees are subject to city sales tax but not the state sales tax. These numbers were all calculated based on taxable sales to standardize the data so minor discrepancies may be found in the data, but this method was used to simplify the data as the intention is just to show the trends.

Retail Sales Taxes tell the story about how much money is being spent by consumers in the retail section of the economy. The percentage of retail purchases the citizens of a community make in their home community is a commonly used indicator of economic strength. The State of Kansas produces a report titled, "City Trade Pull Factors" that provides different measures of retail market data for larger cities in the state, including Arkansas City.

The report most recently available, covering the period of July 2020-June 2021, measured (1) City Trade Pull Factor, (2) Income-Adjusted City Trade Pull Factor, (3) Trade Area Capture, and (4) Percent of County Trade. Those measures, and how Arkansas City rated, are explained below.

- (1) **City Trade Pull Factor:** This measure is computed by dividing the per capita sales tax of a city by the statewide per capita sales tax. A factor of 1.0 shows that for every dollar a city resident spends outside that city, a nonresident spends a dollar at a local retail business. A score higher than 1.0 shows that the balance of trade is favorable for a city, a score lower than 1.0 shows otherwise. The most recent Trade Pull Factor for Arkansas City was 0.93.
- (2) **Income-Adjusted City Trade Pull Factor:** The City Trade Pull Factor is not adjusted for differing income levels in each business community. The Department of Revenue also provides a variation of the Trade Pull Factor that takes income levels into consideration. The most recent Income-Adjusted City Trade Pull Factor for Arkansas City was 1.33.

- (3) **Trade Area Capture:** This measure of the customer base served by a city is calculated by multiplying the city's population by the Trade Pull Factor. Arkansas City's Trade Area Capture is 10,838.
- (4) **Percent of County Trade:** is a factor that shows the percent capture of countywide retail trade the city has. Arkansas City captured 44.1% of the Cowley County retail trade over the July 2020-June 2021 period.

<b>OCCUPATIONS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED - 16 YEARS AND OLDER</b>			
<b>OCCUPATION:</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2019</b>
TOTAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYED POPULATION 16 YEARS AND OVER	5,220	5,224	4,914
MANAGEMENT, BUSINESS, SCIENCE AND ARTS OCC.	1,066	1,226	1,345
SERVICE OCC.	1,081	1,230	1,214
SALES AND OFFICE OCC.	1,095	1,133	782
NATURAL RESOURCES, CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE OCC.	675	665	482
PRODUCTION, TRANSPORTATION & MATERIAL MOVING OCC.	1303	970	1,091
<b>INDUSTRY:</b>			
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING, HUNTING, AND MINING	48	100	176
CONSTRUCTION	349	276	179
MANUFACTURING	1,349	1141	975
WHOLESALE TRADE	95	194	134
RETAIL TRADE	526	520	479
TRANSPORTATION, WAREHOUSING, AND UTILITIES	283	165	249
INFORMATION	13	96	90
FINANCE AND INSURANCE, AND REAL ESTATE AND RENTAL AND LEASING	206	206	131
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND MANAGEMENT, AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES	250	241	212
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, & HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	1,097	1,250	1,239
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND RECREATION, AND ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES	582	772	710
OTHER SERVICES, EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	177	137	195
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	245	126	145
<b>POPULATION 16 YEARS AND OLDER:</b>	<b>9,307</b>	<b>9,362</b>	<b>9,034</b>
IN LABOR FORCE	5,621*	5,831	5,254
EMPLOYED	5,221*	5,224	4,914
UNEMPLOYED	651*	603	315
ARMED FORCES	--	4	25
NOT IN LABOR FORCE	3,686**	3,531	3,780

\*Due to differences in tables, these numbers were calculated based on percentages.

\*\*This number was not in a table but was derived by simple subtraction.

Source: American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates 2010, 2015, 2019

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOMES						
	2010		2015		2019	
	Households	Families	Households	Families	Households	Families
<b>Total</b>	4,571	2,949	4,674	2,978	4,641	2,782
<b>Less than \$10,000</b>	9.4%	4.2%	9.4%	5.7%	7.2%	4.1%
<b>\$10,000 to \$14,999</b>	7.6%	5.9%	7.3%	4.2%	6.6%	2.9%
<b>\$15,000 to \$24,999</b>	19.0%	14.3%	14.8%	13.7%	12.7%	8.3%
<b>\$25,000 to \$34,999</b>	14.2%	13.1%	13.1%	11.8%	13.4%	12.2%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	16.1%	18.5%	18.4%	17.7%	16.4%	16.2%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	16.9%	20.5%	18.9%	25.5%	20.7%	25.8%
<b>\$75,000 to \$99,999</b>	9.7%	13.3%	7.3%	8.0%	9.3%	11.7%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	5.4%	7.5%	7.0%	8.6%	9.4%	11.8%
<b>\$150,000 to \$199,999</b>	1.2%	1.8%	3.4%	4.3%	2.7%	4.5%
<b>\$200,000 or more</b>	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	1.6%	2.3%
<b>Median income (dollars)</b>	\$34,844	\$44,897	\$38,757	\$47,978	\$42,576	\$54,051
<b>Mean income (dollars)</b>	\$44,231	\$53,154	\$49,195	\$56,332	\$54,857	\$65,940

POVERTY			
PERSONS & PERCENTAGES OF PERSONS IN POVERTY:	2012	2015	2019
PERCENTAGE OF ALL PERSONS	23.2%	24.2%	17.4%
PERSONS UNDER 18	34.8%	37.6%	23.5%
PERSONS AGE 18-64	20.6%	22.1%	16.5%
PERSONS OVER AGE	12.4%	9.2%	10.2%
PERCENTAGE OF ALL FAMILIES	15.3%	18.1%	12.2%
FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER	55.9%	46.4%	29.6%

Source: American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates 2010, 2015, 2019

Source: American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates 2012, 2015, 2019

Income is the biggest driver of the local economy. It is important to monitor these trends to help us ensure we are focusing on enhancing the correct sectors of the local economy. Household and Family Incomes appear to be on a rising trend for Arkansas City. This has had a positive effect on the poverty rate as well. The exception to this appears to be in persons over age 65 that seem to be experiencing more poverty in 2019 than in 2015. This appears to be the same as nationwide trends as this population group rapidly grows and resources become scarcer. This is when senior housing can come into play to help stabilize discretionary spending among this group.

#### **4.4 COWLEY FIRST VISION 20/20 COMMUNITY PLAN**

The 2010 Vision 20/20 Community Plan prepared by Cowley First gave considerable attention to the economic state of Cowley County. Excerpts from the Community Plan are found at Appendix F.

The Plan identified strategies to sustain and expand the County's economic base, identifying the following concerns and strategies:

##### **Community Concerns:**

- Support home-grown business and industry
- Attract new business and industry
- Overcome barriers to successful workforce recruiting
- Stimulate and support entrepreneurship
- Provide incentives to develop more retail businesses
- Promote county tourism attractions and agri-tourism
- Strengthen regional economic partnerships
- Retain local wealth and direct it to future needs
- Continue to provide property tax exemptions for new and expanding industry

##### **Strategy Statements:**

- Secure adequate, long-term funding for the Cowley First Economic Development Partnership
- Retain and expand existing industry
- Overcome barriers to successful workforce recruiting and development, especially in housing, child services and perceptions of quality of life
- Promote entrepreneurship development through a network of services to stimulate and support startup business ventures
- Promote rural development through expansion of tourism activities and initiatives in agri-tourism
- Target and recruit new businesses and industries that will create jobs
- Expand the number and variety of retail businesses in the county
- Grow endowments for the purpose of retaining wealth in the community and directing its use to future community needs

In a survey conducted by Cowley First countywide in 2010 and having 338 responses from Arkansas City, questions were asked of people's perception of the economy, and the business climate. Among the questions and responses were:



	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
There is a shortage of good jobs	63%	30%	6%	1%	0%
Home-grown business and industry should be supported	53%	40%	6%	0%	1%
There is a need for more retail	47%	31%	17%	4%	1%
There is a shortage of quality restaurants	55%	27%	13%	4%	1%
Cowley County has good employment opportunities	1%	13%	--	52%	35%

These survey responses indicate a widespread recognition of the need for more and better jobs in the community.

The 2010 survey also measured opinions on the level of support for certain economic development strategies to be pursued by the City. The Arkansas City responses:

<b>Economic Development Strategies</b>	<b>Strongly Support</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Strongly Oppose</b>
Incentives to attract new business & industry to Cowley County	30%	56%	8%	3%	2%
Incentives to develop additional retail stores/restaurants	30%	46%	17%	5%	2%
Incentives to encourage local industry to expand	18%	63%	12%	5%	2%
Funding for adult education and job skill training	21%	50%	23%	5%	1%
Additional funding for elementary and secondary education	30%	37%	22%	9%	3%
Funding for micro-loan programs to support locally owned businesses	14%	46%	31%	6%	2%
Additional funding for post-secondary education	23%	36%	26%	13%	3%
Funding to support an entrepreneurship (small business) center to provide technical assistance to locally owned businesses	15%	44%	31%	8%	3%
Funding to promote tourism attraction in the county	10%	39%	36%	12%	3%
Property tax exemption for new or expanding industry	12%	39%	24%	19%	6%

#### 4.5 2013 SURVEY RESPONSES AND COMMENTS RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The 2013 community survey asked a number of questions to reveal how citizens viewed the present local economy – and what actions they would support the City taking in the future.

While many other survey questions relate at least indirectly to Arkansas City’s present and future economic condition (e.g., satisfaction with Arkansas City as a place to work, safety and law enforcement, access to good schools, health care services and shopping), the responses noted below are from questions asking how important a community’s economy was in deciding where to live, and where Arkansas City should invest in its economic future.

One survey question asked citizens to select from a list of 14 factors those which most influenced their decision to live in Arkansas City. The top three responses were:

Location near family and friends	279
Friendly, small-town, atmosphere	244
Cost of living is stable and affordable	210

The principal set of survey questions on the topic of economic development asked citizens to identify which of 12 categories of business and industries should receive “significant” or “some” promotion by the City government, and which ones should receive no such efforts. The results showed, in part:

What effort, if any, should the City make to promote:		No Effort	Some Effort	Significant Effort
A.	Manufacturing	6%	38%	<b>56%</b>
B.	Retail business and services throughout the City	6%	44%	<b>50%</b>
C.	Business and services downtown	8%	44%	<b>48%</b>
D.	Business/services along Highway US 77/Summit St., north of downtown	19%	<b>54%</b>	27%
E.	Business/services along Highway US 77/Summit St., south of downtown	23%	<b>47%</b>	31%
F.	Tourism and historic preservation	17%	<b>57%</b>	26%
G.	Health care	12%	<b>47%</b>	41%
H.	Entertainment and the arts	24%	<b>54%</b>	22%
I.	Transportation	18%	<b>56%</b>	25%
J.	Warehousing/distribution	30%	<b>55%</b>	15%
K.	Recruitment of workers to Arkansas City	23%	<b>47%</b>	30%
L.	Partnerships with Cowley College	11%	44%	<b>45%</b>

It is significant that 7 out of 10 respondents approved of at least some City-initiated promotion for all of the listed categories. Clearly among those responding to the survey, there is support for investment by the City government in promoting the retention and/or expansion of employment opportunities.

Citizens were asked what was the appropriate level of City efforts with respect to encouraging job creation and economic development:

The City should use public funds:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A.	To operate job training programs	11%	23%	<b>30%</b>	25%	10%
B.	To encourage job creation through local business expansion	3%	8%	23%	<b>50%</b>	16%
C.	To encourage job creation through new businesses	3%	6%	16%	<b>51%</b>	23%
D.	To encourage job creation through business relocation	4%	11%	33%	<b>38%</b>	14%
E.	By preparing business sites (water, sewer, streets, etc.) that are ready for immediate development	5%	18%	<b>35%</b>	34%	7%
F.	To encourage Cowley College to train and educate the local workforce	6%	7%	21%	<b>46%</b>	21%
G.	Only when it is demonstrated that community benefits exceed public dollars invested	2%	8%	34%	<b>37%</b>	18%
H.	To encourage investment in construction of housing	6%	17%	<b>40%</b>	31%	7%
I.	To encourage the construction of low-income housing.	12%	19%	<b>34%</b>	28%	7%
J.	To pursue more retail development	3%	8%	28%	<b>40%</b>	21%
K.	The City should not be involved in economic development	27%	<b>29%</b>	28%	11%	5%

These responses indicate strong public support for City efforts to attract new employees to Arkansas City, and to help in their training.

The 2013 Survey also asked:

	Not Willing	Somewhat Willing	Very Willing
How willing would you be to pay increased taxes or fees for: Improved employment opportunities	29%	40%	32%

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
What is your level of agreement with: The City should encourage development within the City by offering incentives to redevelopment of properties	5%	7%	30%	42%	16%

## Survey Comments:

The 2013 survey invited citizens to offer any comment they had about the condition of the City or its future. Some of those comments are noted below and others appear at Appendix B.

- *We need more manufacturing. We need more jobs to keep our people working close to home. Probably have 65% of the people working out-of-town. If you want more taxes for your City, get some good jobs here. Keep your kids here where they can make a good living and your town will grow on its own.*
- *If the City is doing a good job maintaining services, economic development will happen.*
- *What we need is a greater opportunity for jobs that pay higher wages and full-time employment. Many people work two jobs just to make ends meet.*
- *By protecting our local retailers from competition from national retailers we have lost our position as a retail center to places like Ponca City and Derby. City and Chamber of Commerce need to work together. City officials could actively support Chamber efforts personally.*
- *When I saw fourth generations of people moving away from this community that is steeped in its old traditions and its pride from the past due to lack of jobs, lack of income, increasing stressors of more costs for less fulfillment you really have to wonder, how much longer a town of this size, with so little to offer the up and coming businesses or the children born and raised here will last. I know it is partially the signs of the times, however without attracting new blood that wants to stay here through aggressively seeking new quality job opportunities, I am very concerned for the livelihood of those of us that aren't being hired by the schools, or college or meat packing plant as these seem to be the "diamond" jobs in our fair city.*
- *We need to encourage new business with no taxation for 10 years. Provide water, garbage, etc. free of charge for large manufacturing.*
- *Our biggest challenge is creating and sustaining jobs that will give people a wage that they can live on -- more than minimum wage.*
- *Our city has a culture. Let's take pride in it. Where are our programs to support local businesses? Many small cities have strong "shop local" movements to support local, independent businesses, but I don't see anything here. Many of our historic businesses are dying out.*

## 4.6 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the 2013 Plan, the City has been actively working to recruit new business and industry. The City has been able to work with Cowley First to build new relationships with businesses. In recent years, the City has seen major expansions at Creekstone Farms Premium Beef and a new 200,000 square foot KanPak warehouse both at the Goff Industrial Park. Creekstone Farms continues to expand as this plan is being developed.

## 4.7 GOALS & ACTIONS

Economic growth should not be a goal for its own sake but should reflect the desires of the community as a whole, to better provide for the common good. For instance, population growth, coupled with more employment opportunities, will result in an expanded tax base. In addition, targeted growth can result in raised incomes, increasing the standard of living. Growth can also result in a more diversified economy, minimizing the negative effects of cyclical economic trends. It is important that a dedicated, stable source of funding exist for economic development purposes. Without funding for economic development initiatives, without the ability to actively recruit businesses to Arkansas City, and without

the means to extend the infrastructure necessary to accommodate new business growth, the community is vulnerable to economic stagnation and decline.

Goals or actions are organized around priorities. Generally, where specific actions build on a goal, they will be listed immediately following the goal. Some goals may not have specific actions. Short term priority means it should be achieved within the next 5 years. Medium term priority means it should be achieved within 5-10 years. A long-term priority means it should be achieved in 10 or more years.

GOAL/ACTION	PRIORITY		
<b>Maintain coordination among community partners to coordinate goals and establish a funding stream for Economic Development</b>	<b>Short</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Long</b>
Apply or participate in at least 3 economic development grants.	X		
Work with Economic Development partners to secure funding and establish a local grant fund.	X		
Become a Main Street Community	X		
Work with Visit Ark City To promote tourism opportunities	X		
<b>Attract new industries and businesses that complement our economy utilize our labor force</b>	<b>Short</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Long</b>
Create an incubator program	X		
Bring in two new restaurants	X		
<b>Retain businesses and support their expansion</b>	<b>Short</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Long</b>
Rehabilitate one historic building	X		
Develop/Utilize database of vacant commercial buildings	X		
<b>Enhance the quality and availability of the local workforce to meet the employment needs of a variety of businesses</b>	<b>Short</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Long</b>
Work with Cowley First and USD 470 to ensure the businesses are getting into schools	X		
Work with Cowley College to create and enhance vocational and technical training programs	X		
Conduct local job fairs to encourage high school graduates to remain in Arkansas City	X		