

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

NEMAHA COUNTY KANSAS

MARCH 2023



PHOTO CREDITS: TIM STRATHMAN

SUBMITTED BY:

DICK HORTON CONSULTING AND STRATEGIC PARTNERS





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LETTER OF SUBMISSION



WELCOME

To the Citizens of Nemaha County

The county-wide planning process began with Resolution #2020-15 in September 2020. The basis for moving forward with the process was twofold: a) to replace an inactive Comprehensive Plan that was written 53 years ago in 1970; and b) to collect data that would allow current and future County Commissioners to make informed decisions. Examples of current and future issues and decisions that need to be addressed include

- Industrial energy
 - Quality of life preferences
 - Economic development
 - Growth and infrastructure
 - Parks and recreation
 - Retention of current citizens and attraction
 - of new citizens to the county
 - Social services
 - Transportation
 - Water supply
 - Natural resources
- As this Final Comprehensive Planning Document

becomes available for its use as a tool to guide future decisions, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge those of you who participated in the planning process. Certainly, not in priority order but we thank the following:

- The Nemaha County Planning Commission
- 945 households who participated in the statistically valid citizen survey
- More than 200 individuals who participated in stakeholder interviews which resulted in the local knowledge that was needed to create the statistically valid citizen survey instrument
- Local subject matter experts who willingly provided their local knowledge on important topics such as water, natural resources, transportation, social services, and parks and recreation

Now that the Comprehensive Plan is complete, we will quickly transition to its implementation. Of course, none of the implementation phase will be easy and it will take several years, if not decades, but it will happen if we are willing to use the data, we have collected during the planning process and rally around the NEMAHA COUNTY PREFERRED FUTURE as detailed in the survey results.

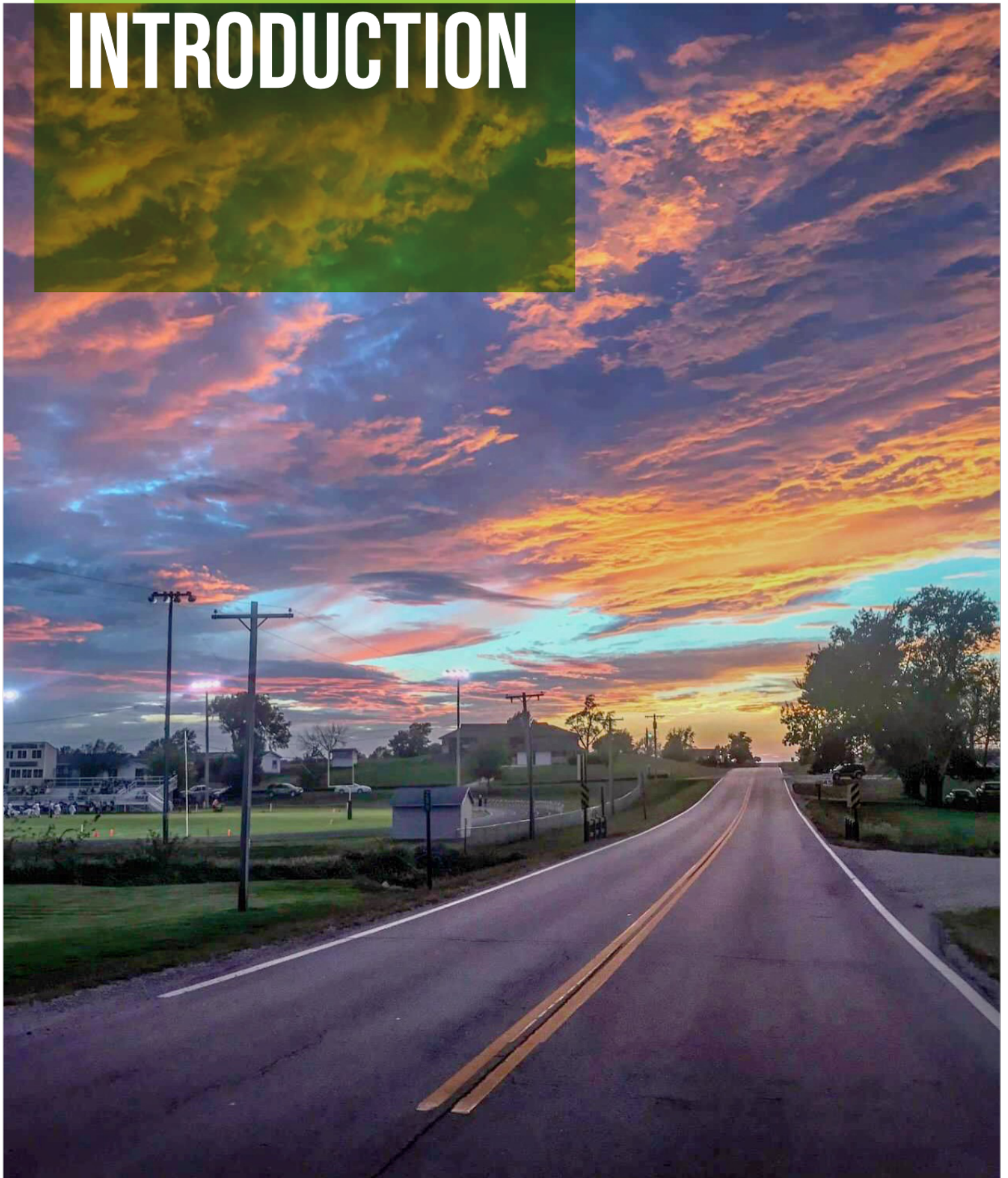
Thank you to the citizens of Nemaha County for participating in the planning process and your willingness to work together to continue to make our County a great place to live, work, and play!

Jason Koch, Presiding Commissioner, District 2

Dylan Keim, Commissioner, District 3

Benjamin Glace, Commissioner, District 1

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

In the five decades since an earlier comprehensive plan was authored, Nemaha County has experienced many changes. For example, the recent introduction of Industrial Energy, especially wind turbines, has sparked a county-wide discussion about the type of County that Nemaha County wants to be. Although several aspects of county-wide services, facilities, and quality of life wants/needs were evaluated, the primary focus of this 2023 Comprehensive Plan was to create a statistically valid citizen survey to be used to test citizen preferences on the quality of life that is desired and that preference as it is linked to future wind turbine development in the County.

WHY PLAN?

This plan will:

- Identify and Assess county-wide needs
- Identify and Assess citizen preferences on key issues
- Position the Planning and County Commissions to make informed decisions about future county-wide development

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process included four key stages. The four stages included: Connect, Assess, Evaluate, and Envision. The planning process began in the spring of 2022 with:

- an extensive citizen engagement process with the Planning Commission and individual key stakeholders to understand key issues about which citizens are concerned
- development of a citizen survey instrument and subsequent distribution to all households in the County
- analysis of 945 survey responses
- collection and analysis of data about the County's demographics/sociographics, natural resources, history, transportation, social services, water supply, and current land uses
- development of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan

GOALS

Goals for this Comprehensive Plan include:

Assess the preferences of Nemaha County citizens on a variety of topics to include:

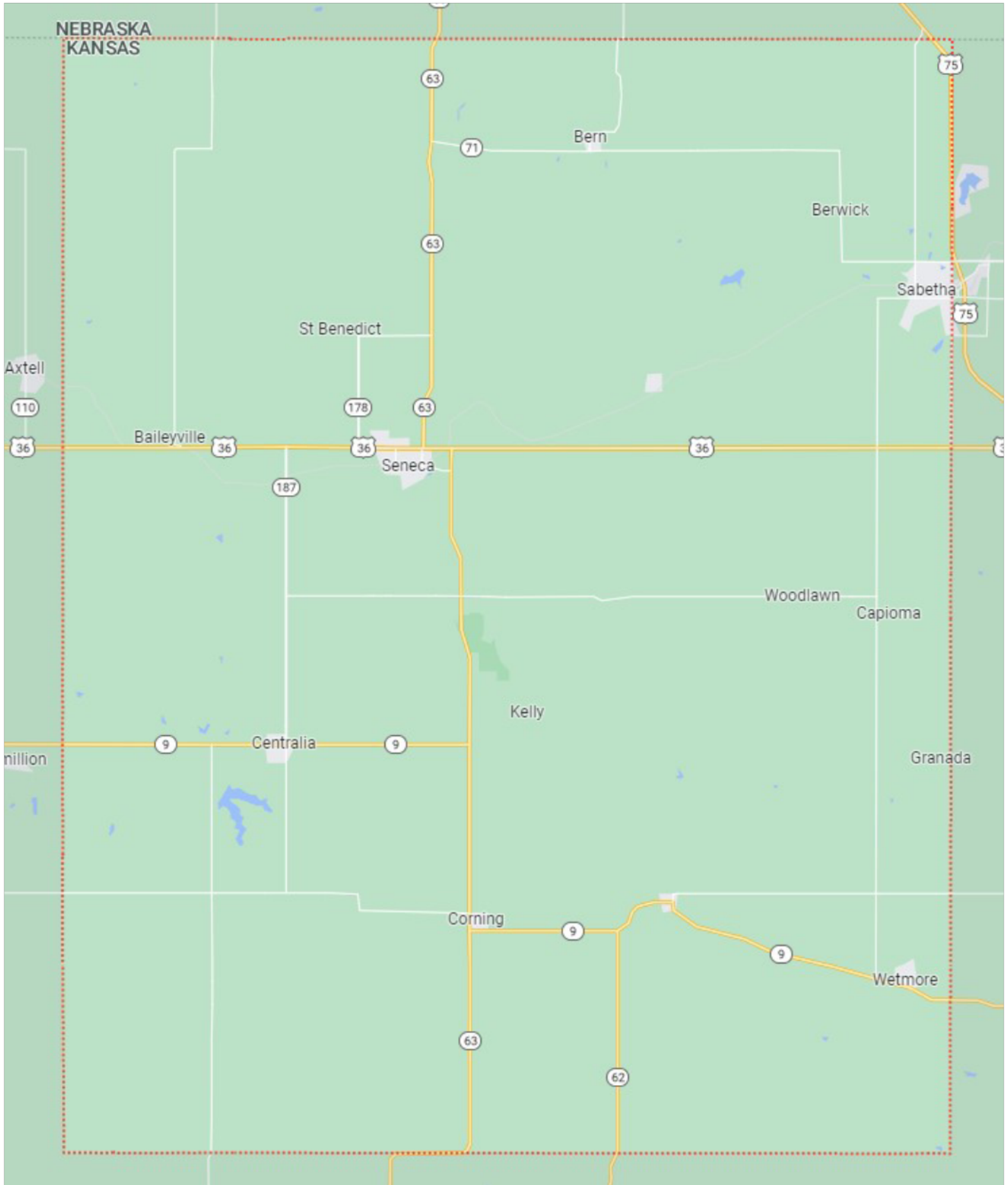
- Quality of Life, especially protecting rural character
- Strengths and Weaknesses of aspects of life in Nemaha County
- Satisfaction with Infrastructure
- Satisfaction with Services
- Future development

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This comprehensive plan document should be used by Nemaha County leaders as a guide to make informed decisions about how to manage the County and to allocate its resources as it moves forward.

DISCLAIMER

County budget constraints did not allow for the inclusion of several standard comprehensive plan components such as wastewater, utilities, housing, and education.



ASSESS: DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS



VISION STATEMENT



VISION STATEMENT

HONORING THE PAST, LEADING THE FUTURE - FAITH, FAMILY, AND BEAUTY

INTRODUCTION

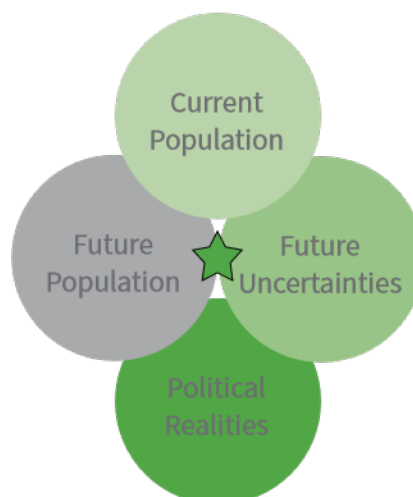
County Commissioners met on February 13, 2023, in a facilitated workshop by DHC for the sole purpose of creating a Vision Statement. The intended benefit of creating the Vision Statement was to support the process of all future policy decisions and resource allocation deliberations by using the Statement as a beacon against which current and future Commissioners can hold themselves accountable to the things that matter most in Nemaha County.

VISIONING METHODOLOGY

For future reference, the Vision Statement was developed by the Commissioners in consideration of several aspects that were incorporated into the workshop approach that focused on their understanding of the values, history, and preferred future of the citizens and County Government. Below is the Workshop Outline:

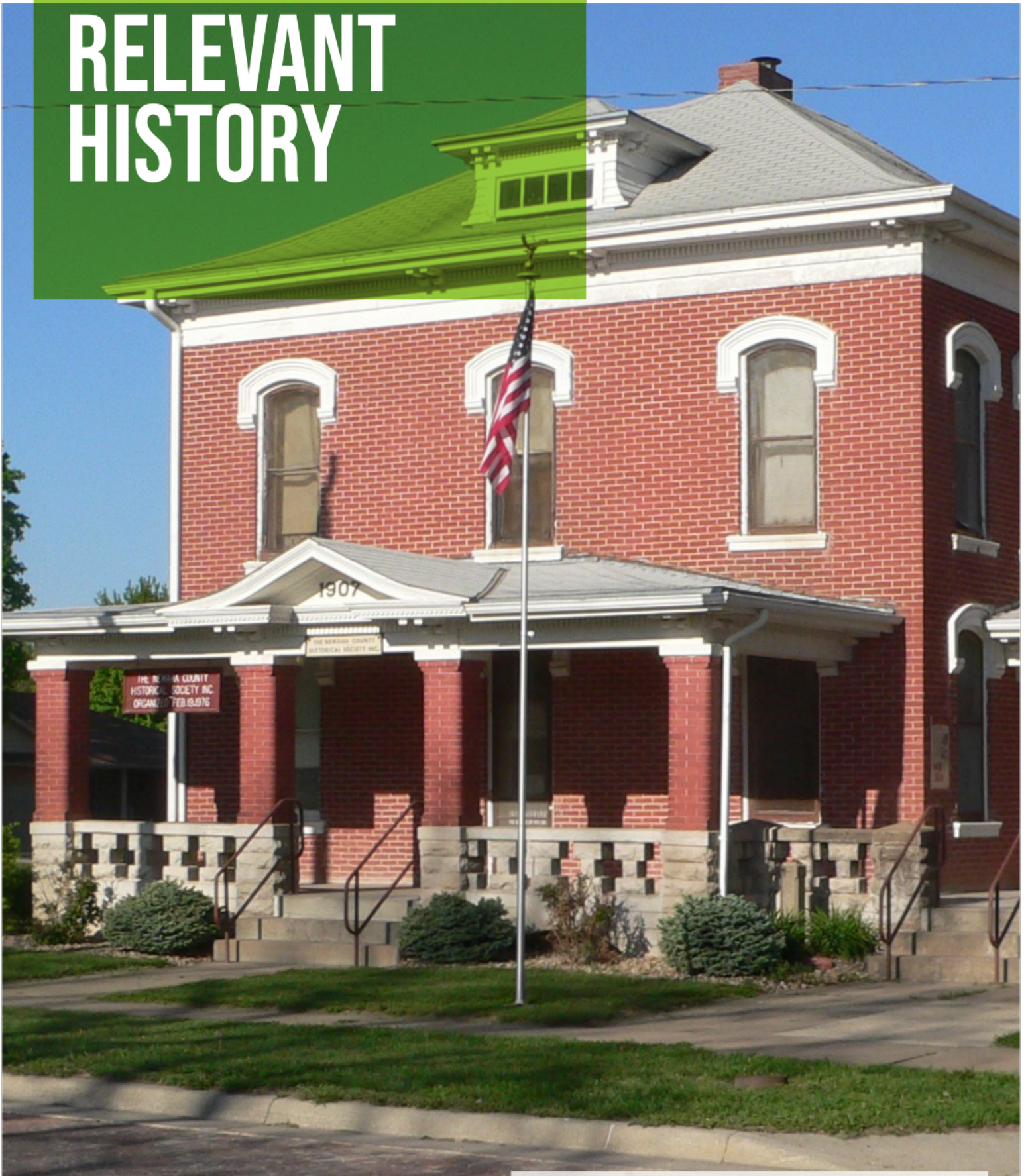
1. Definition of a Vision Statement versus a Mission Statement
 - Vision Statement details where we aspire to go
 - Mission Statement – Details the things we are doing to reach our goal/vision
2. Examples of high-profile company Vision Statements
 - Disney – To make people happy
 - Google – To provide access to the world’s information in one click
 - BBC – To be the most creative organization in the world
 - Microsoft – To help people and businesses throughout the world realize their full potential
3. DHC provided four Focus Areas that occupy much of what the Commissioners consider when deliberating on the issues before them at all of their meetings. As presented below in the graphic, those four focus areas include: Current Population, New/Future Population, Future Uncertainties, and Political Realities.

FOCUS AREAS



4. Focus Area Potential Actions to be considered as a Vision Statement is Developed:
 - a. To meet the needs and expectations of the current population, we will:
 - i. Collaborate with others?
 - ii. Protect?
 - iii. Be proactive?
 - b. To meet the needs and expectations of the future population, we will:
 - i. Engage our businesses and industries to learn from what they are seeing?
 - ii. Initiate an annual formal review of trends?
 - iii. Invite the Kansas Association of Counties to the County on an annual basis to share their subject matter expertise on trends
 - c. To meet the needs and expectations of future uncertainties, we will:
 - i. Provide leadership and training within the County to assess our staff and other resources capabilities to respond to uncertainties
 - ii. Identify non-county partners with whom we can collaborate in time of uncertainty
 - d. To manage political realities, we will:
 - i. Position ourselves to make informed decisions by utilizing the Comprehensive Plan Survey Data
 - ii. Open to community conversations on key issues
 - iii. Decisions made in consideration of VALUES
5. Other Topics that were mentioned during the Workshop
 - Why do I serve as a county commissioner?
 - How would you describe the county's history
 - What has changed in the last 10 years in the world, nation, regionally, and locally and how has that change affected Nemaha County?
 - Prouds – What are we most proud of?
 - Sorries – Is there anything that we wish we could change?
 - Opportunities – Beyond Nemaha County
 - Threats – Beyond Nemaha County
 - Values – What are our values that we lean on when the going gets tough?
 - Dream Session – If we are looking back 10 years from now, what changes did we make that led to national recognition for our efforts?
 - Our Vision – Reflecting on the discussion as detailed above, how would we create a vision statement that articulates our “preferred future”?

RELEVANT HISTORY



RELEVANT HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Development of the Comprehensive Plan will consider the County's history and how that history affects its future. Demographic traits, for example, provide insights about citizen preferences for leisure facilities and activities, the reach of local government, and zoning. This document captures much of the County's relevant history and summarizes it in the context of how it affects its preferred future.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Governmental Units - Nemaha County was established in 1855. It features 20 townships, eight incorporated cities (Bern, Centralia, Corning, Goff, Oneida, Sabetha, Seneca, Wetmore), ten unincorporated communities (Albany, Baileyville, Bancroft, Berwick, Capioma, Granada, Kelly, Neuchatel, St. Benedict, and Woodlawn).

Six school districts have land in Nemaha County, with three districts having most of the County within those districts. The three districts are Prairie Hills #113 in Sabetha; Nemaha Central #115 in Seneca; and Vermillion #380 which includes the Centralia School where students from Centralia and Corning attend.

Acres by Usage (as determined by the State of Kansas G.I.S. Specialists and coordinated by Rob Larkin, Nemaha County Executive Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency)

1. Cropland Acres – 294,806 (Includes land that was once farmed and has been planted back to grass includes the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres and some waterways)
2. Rangeland Acres – 141,959 (Non-cropland acres that may be hayed or grazed. May include timberland if part of a pasture.)
3. Other Agricultural Acres – 17,021 (Includes farmsteads, wasteland, lanes, wind towers, oil/gas equipment.)
4. Water Body - 510 acres – (Usually ponds/water bodies within the common land unit (CLU) that are greater than 2 acres)

None of the towns, roads, highways, and lakes are included in the common land unit figures.

Water Supply - The surface of the land, taken as a whole, is sufficiently rolling to ensure good drainage, and hence is suited for both grazing and agricultural purposes. Good water is abundant, in fact, it may be said of all of Northeastern Kansas, that very few of the prairie States are so generously supplied with streams.

Historic Trails – There are several historic trails in the County (Military Trail, Oregon-California Trail, Pony Express Trail, Cattle Trail).

Demographic Group/Political Party Affiliation - The County is strongly Republican.

Nemaha County Ancestry – The County has a higher percentage of German and Swiss descendants than any other county in Kansas. When the patriarchs and matriarchs of these families left Europe and settled here, they often did so because of the area's combination of adequate rainfall, rich soils and rolling hills reminiscent of their homelands.

One Bern area resident shared this family story: “When he came to Kansas, my grandfather rode his horse west from St. Joseph, and finally stopped in the hills a few miles southeast of what is now Bern. He always said he chose this location because of all the areas he’d ridden through on the many days of that 60-mile journey, the prairie grass here was the tallest - so tall he could tie it in a knot over his horse’s saddle!”

The strong influence in the area of these German and Swiss folks has always been accompanied by their innate and very powerful commitment to craftsmanship and quality. As the need for local trades quickly developed, these natural craftsmen found both opportunity and appreciation for their way of doing things they’d brought with them from Europe. Eventually, a number of locally founded manufacturing firms came into existence. Then and now, these same folks and their families continue to make powerful contributions to the success of all, in part because of their inherited and embraced sense of work ethic, quality and craftsmanship.

COUNTY HISTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY

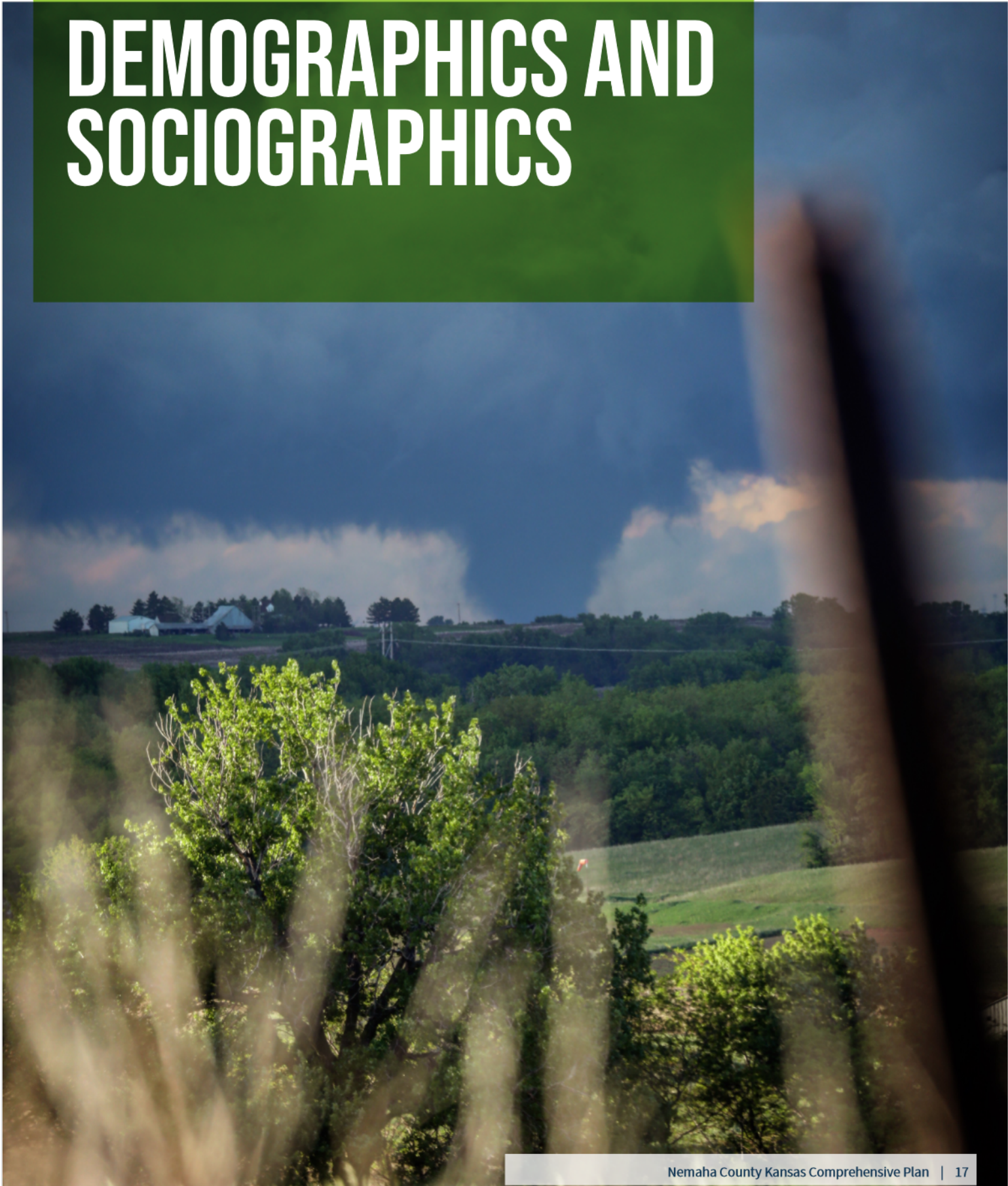
There is a lengthy list of contributors who have captured the history of the County dating back to 1855. One of those contributors was Ralph Tennal. For those who are interested, here is the source to his work: Tennal, Ralph. *History of Nemaha County, Kansas*. Lawrence, KS: Standard Publishing Co., 1916.

SUMMARY

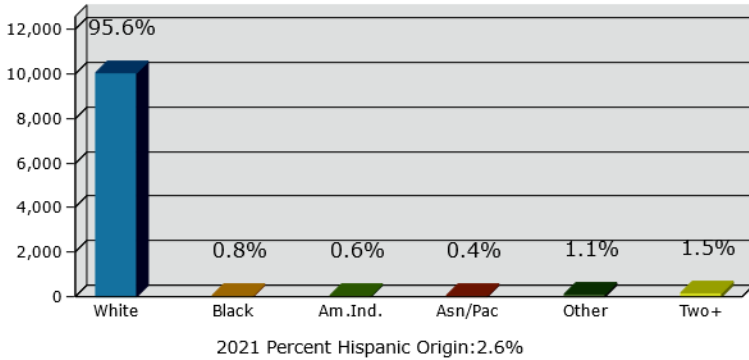
1. Historic trails provide an opportunity to organize special events that attract tourists and the possibility of new revenue coming into the County.
2. Natural resources such as water, wildlife, plants, and soil are both plentiful and of high quality, thus an attraction for current and future residents, businesses, and industries.
3. Ancestry plays an important role in the future development of the County as businesses and industries are always seeking a work force with a strong work ethic, quality workmanship and craftsmanship.
4. Cropland acres that include land that was once farmed and has been planted back to grass is the biggest usage in the County at 294,806 acres.

Source: Galen Ackerman (Nemaha County resident), Mandie Lang (Nemaha County Wildlife Biologist), Nemaha County Website, Rob Larkin of the USDA Farm Service Agency

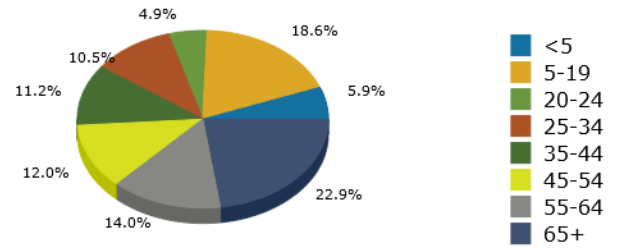
DEMOGRAPHICS AND SOCIOGRAPHICS



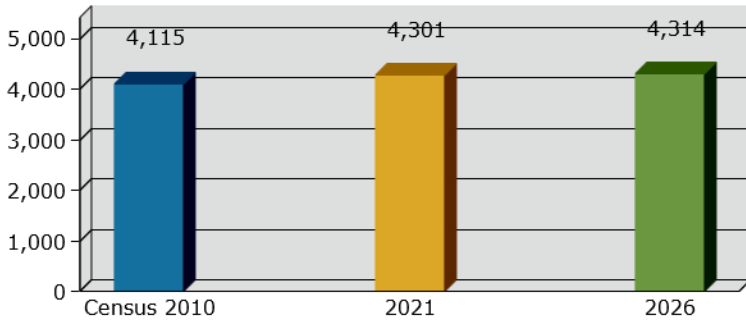
2021 Population by Race



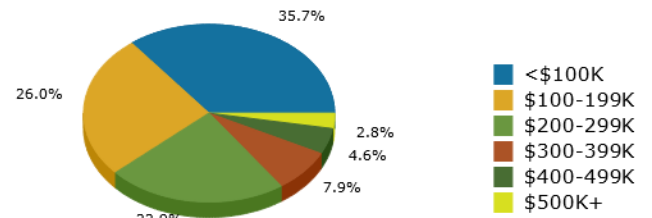
2021 Population by Age



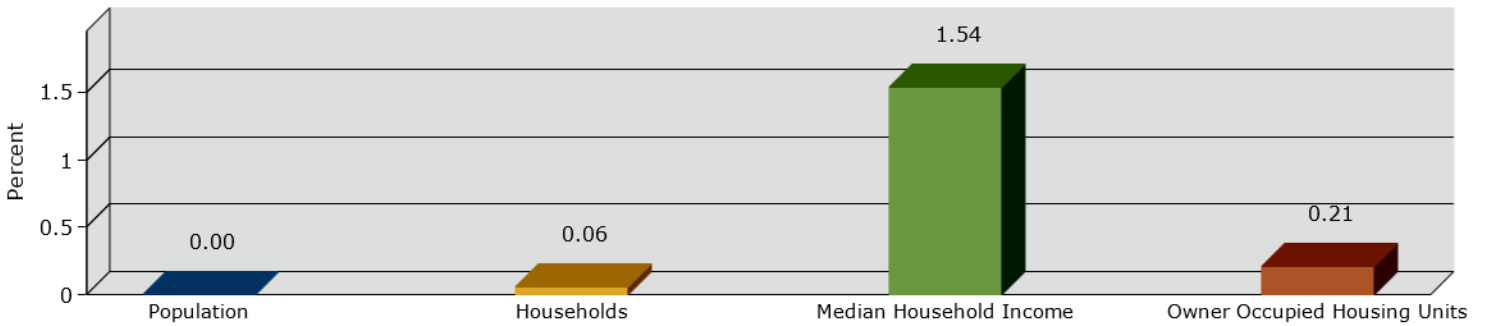
Households



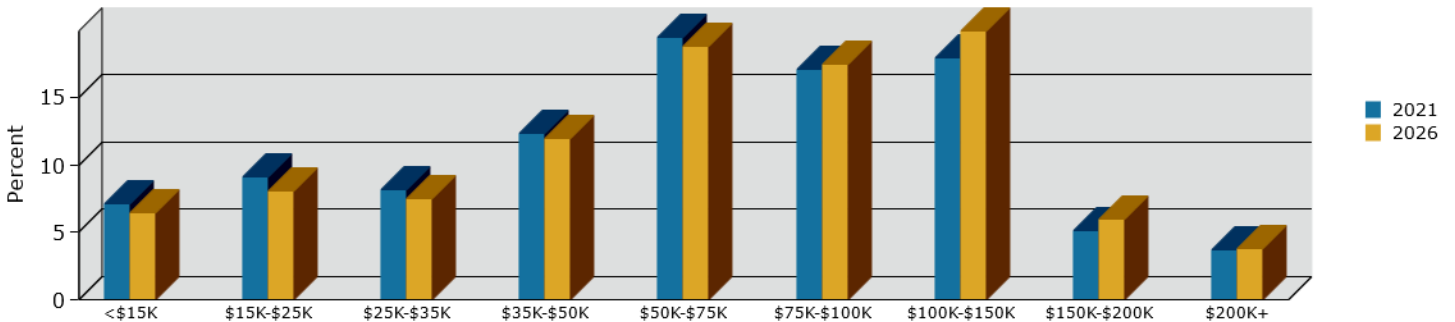
2021 Home Value



2021-2026 Annual Growth Rate



Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.



Housing Profile

Nemaha County, KS
 Nemaha County, KS (20131)
 Geography: County

Prepared by Esri

Population		Households	
2010 Total Population	10,178	2021 Median Household Income	\$64,764
2021 Total Population	10,516	2026 Median Household Income	\$69,908
2026 Total Population	10,516	2021-2026 Annual Rate	1.54%
2021-2026 Annual Rate	0.00%		

Housing Units by Occupancy Status and Tenure	Census 2010		2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	4,562	100.0%	4,788	100.0%	4,856	100.0%
Occupied	4,115	90.2%	4,301	89.8%	4,314	88.8%
Owner	3,226	70.7%	3,270	68.3%	3,305	68.1%
Renter	889	19.5%	1,031	21.5%	1,009	20.8%
Vacant	447	9.8%	487	10.2%	542	11.2%

Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value	2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	3,270	100.0%	3,305	100.0%
<\$50,000	562	17.2%	445	13.5%
\$50,000-\$99,999	605	18.5%	516	15.6%
\$100,000-\$149,999	562	17.2%	537	16.2%
\$150,000-\$199,999	288	8.8%	302	9.1%
\$200,000-\$249,999	298	9.1%	332	10.0%
\$250,000-\$299,999	452	13.8%	549	16.6%
\$300,000-\$399,999	258	7.9%	328	9.9%
\$400,000-\$499,999	152	4.6%	190	5.7%
\$500,000-\$749,999	77	2.4%	95	2.9%
\$750,000-\$999,999	6	0.2%	5	0.2%
\$1,000,000-\$1,499,999	8	0.2%	5	0.2%
\$1,500,000-\$1,999,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$2,000,000+	2	0.1%	1	0.0%

Median Value	\$141,637	\$175,579
Average Value	\$182,875	\$202,126

Census 2010 Housing Units	Number	Percent
Total	4,562	100.0%
In Urbanized Areas	0	0.0%
In Urban Clusters	1,209	26.5%
Rural Housing Units	3,353	73.5%

Data Note: Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.



Housing Profile

Nemaha County, KS
 Nemaha County, KS (20131)
 Geography: County

Prepared by Esri

Census 2010 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Mortgage Status		
	Number	Percent
Total	3,226	100.0%
Owned with a Mortgage/Loan	1,629	50.5%
Owned Free and Clear	1,597	49.5%

Census 2010 Vacant Housing Units by Status		
	Number	Percent
Total	447	100.0%
For Rent	117	26.2%
Rented- Not Occupied	12	2.7%
For Sale Only	42	9.4%
Sold - Not Occupied	39	8.7%
Seasonal/Recreational/Occasional Use	76	17.0%
For Migrant Workers	0	0.0%
Other Vacant	161	36.0%

Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Age of Householder and Home Ownership			
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	
		Number	% of Occupied
Total	4,115	3,226	78.4%
15-24	135	54	40.0%
25-34	543	361	66.5%
35-44	597	479	80.2%
45-54	866	722	83.4%
55-64	689	600	87.1%
65-74	496	434	87.5%
75-84	503	402	79.9%
85+	286	174	60.8%

Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Race/Ethnicity of Householder and Home Ownership			
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	
		Number	% of Occupied
Total	4,115	3,226	78.4%
White Alone	4,037	3,183	78.8%
Black/African American Alone	16	10	62.5%
American Indian/Alaska Native	13	7	53.8%
Asian Alone	4	2	50.0%
Pacific Islander Alone	2	0	0.0%
Other Race Alone	19	8	42.1%
Two or More Races	24	16	66.7%
Hispanic Origin	33	16	48.5%

Census 2010 Occupied Housing Units by Size and Home Ownership			
	Occupied Units	Owner Occupied Units	
		Number	% of Occupied
Total	4,115	3,226	78.4%
1-Person	1,287	801	62.2%
2-Person	1,465	1,281	87.4%
3-Person	467	387	82.9%
4-Person	448	368	82.1%
5-Person	280	242	86.4%
6-Person	108	98	90.7%
7+ Person	60	49	81.7%

2021 Housing Affordability	
Housing Affordability Index	235
Percent of Income for Mortgage	9.2%

Data Note: Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.



NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Our thanks to Mandie Lang, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist of Seneca for her contributions to this chapter on Natural Resources. Mandie shares concerns with water, wildlife, plants, and soil that current and all future County leaders must keep at the top of their priority list for resource allocation.

ASSETS

Water: Average rainfall in Nemaha County from 2015-2020 was 35.9” per year which is significantly higher than the state average of 31.03”. This allows us to grow crops without pivots and other irrigation strategies that exist more regularly out in western Kansas. We see a lot of our farmers using terrace systems with waterways or tile outlets in order to control excess water. In addition, there are approximately 20 streams in Nemaha County and 3 lakes: the Centralia Lake, Sabetha City Lake, and Nemaha County State Lake. Each of these bodies of water provides wildlife & plant habitat as well as recreational opportunities.

Wildlife: Our county is home to hundreds of species of game and non-game wildlife species. We are seeing some very slight increases in species like bobwhite quail and whitetail deer in recent years. Some of our common species include whitetail deer, grey and red squirrels, coyote, rabbit, bald eagles, American robin, Canada goose, wild turkey, raccoon, possum, red fox, and striped skunk. Though not prevalent, landowner reports include elk, cougar, and prairie chicken. Our county has been designated as critical habitat for the threatened species Western silvery minnow, Flathead chub, and Plains minnow. Nemaha County is a great spot for hunting and offers over 10,000 acres of walk-in hunting access through KDWP.

Plants: Nemaha County falls within the historic Tallgrass Prairie region within the Great Plains. Where this ecosystem persists in our county, we see hundreds of species of native grasses and wildflowers that provide countless benefits to soil, water, and wildlife. Common grass species in our area include Big bluestem, Little bluestem, Indiangrass, Switchgrass, and Sideoats grama. Common forbs & legumes include Black-eyed Susan, showy partridge pea, Heath aster, Illinois bundleflower, and Canada goldenrod. Farm Bill Programs, such as CRP, are helping farmers to put land back into native prairie landscapes that include a diversity of these native species. Streambanks and riparian areas are home to many native and naturalized tree species, and we do have some wetland areas designated within the county. Our primary non-agricultural land is in prairie vegetation, however, much more of our land is in row crop production. We are seeing more and more landowners implementing cover crops instead of leaving fields fallow, which is beneficial for soil quality, water retention, and many other aspects of the ecosystem.

Soil: Nemaha County soils are generally arable and good for farmland. The most common soil types include Pawnee clay, 3-7 percent slopes, eroded (21.9%), Burchard-Steinauer clay loams, 6-12 percent slopes (21.7%), Pawnee clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes (14.3%), and Kennebec silt loam, occasionally flooded (11.2%). Many farmers and ranchers are beginning to implement more and more soil health practices such as crop rotation, cover crops, nutrient management, and no till.

LAND: There are 460,000 acres of land in Nemaha County. As of a 2021 study by the Kansas Department of Agriculture, 400,274 of those acres, or approximately 87%, are agricultural land divided amongst 809 farms. Of this agricultural land, roughly 60% is in livestock and 40% is in cropland. The primary livestock in Nemaha County is cattle, and the primary cash crops are corn and soybeans.

CONCERNS

Water: Many of our streambanks face severe erosion as a result of the high rainfall and low infiltration rates in our area. We see a lot of runoff and ponding when we experience heavy rain events. Sediment, soil, and nutrients are often transported with this water flow which leads to more problems on and below the soil surface. Sporadic periods of drought do occur in our area; not as severely as the western portion of the state, but nevertheless leads to agricultural and residential concerns.

Wildlife: The biggest threats we are seeing to our wildlife populations currently include habitat degradation, fragmentation, and destruction. Many of these effects are taking place due to agricultural development, urbanization, and general indifference toward the land. This will go hand-in-hand with the plants section, but native Kansas wildlife needs native Kansas habitat and a lot of that is already gone or in danger of being destroyed. We hear landowners talking about how much wildlife they saw when they were younger and how they're sorry not to see them anymore, but the truth is that the landscape has changed so much since then due to human actions. Many landowners are involved in raising & releasing wildlife, however, the best chance we have to support and grow our wildlife populations is in habitat protection and restoration.

Plants: A significant portion of our native prairie has been broken up, primarily for agricultural and urban development. It is estimated that what used to be 170-million acres of tallgrass prairie throughout the Great Plains has now been reduced to only 4% of this acreage. Nemaha County is probably at the same level of remaining prairie landscape. Another great threat to our native vegetation is woody encroachment. Historically, trees were found primarily along streams and rivers; now we see them in every area of the county. While trees are not inherently bad, they are again, encroaching on the open grasslands that are already sparse in our area. Noxious weeds are also a common issue that encroach on our native vegetation. Some common invasive species that we are dealing with include Sericea lespedeza, Johnsongrass, Musk thistle, field bindweed, and Eastern red cedar.

Soil: Some soils do exhibit significant slope or high rock content that can prove difficult to farm. Soil erosion is a large problem faced by many of our farmers due to high wind and rain. Our office handles a lot of terracing contracts and underground outlets for farmers that are the current solution for soil erosion, but only transport water to a different area. Many farms have compaction and poor soil health which decreases the water holding capacity and infiltration rates in their soil, leading to the need for systems like these. Decreases in organic matter are also a large concern among farmers and ranchers, leading to poorer performance of their soils. Wind turbine, energy transmission line, and other large development projects have also led to some additional soil disturbance within the county.

Source: Mandie Lang, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist; 411 North Street, Seneca, KS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NEMAHA COUNTY MARKET ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The local economy affects every aspect of the County – from jobs and taxes to the quality of life. A healthy economic climate fosters greater income potential for residents; a supportive environment for business to succeed; and fiscal stability to maintain County and municipal services and infrastructure. The economic element of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on key components of the Nemaha County economy to include labor force conditions; an analysis of income, County taxes, business; and key economic indicators. These factors, along with an assessment of economic conditions form the basis for recommendations designed to contribute to sustaining a healthy economic climate in Nemaha County.

The following section provides a baseline assessment of key economic data that portrays the market conditions and includes how Nemaha County compares to competitive markets and its four neighboring counties in rural Northeast Kansas (Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, and Marshall counties). These assessments also serve as a basis for providing recommendations and determining the most suitable opportunities and target industries for the County.

A. INCOME, WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT

Household income and wages are the most direct measurement of the County’s economy. Nemaha County had a median household income in 2020 of \$61,091 according to the Kansas Department of Labor. (See Table A – “Income and Wages Overview”) The County’s median income is higher than its four neighboring counties and comparable to the statewide median household income. These wages reflect those jobs located within Nemaha County only and do not include the wages paid by employers in the nearby Brown County Sabetha Industrial Park. (Salary ranges for these employees are presented in Table C.) However, the County’s average wages are slightly lower than Brown County and the statewide average. The County’s 1.3% unemployment rate in 2022 is as low as possible and suggests any resident that needs a job could easily find one or find another job, if desired.

Interviews with local officials stated that “the only people unemployed are those who do not want to work.” As a result, there are only 98 unemployed persons in the County that are eligible for work. (See Table A) While this low unemployment rate reflects a strong economy, it creates a challenge for any County business seeking to expand or in attracting a new business to Nemaha County. Currently, Nemaha County’s unemployment rate has historically been lower than the State of Kansas. For example, in 2015 the State of Kansas average annual unemployment rate was 4.3% while Nemaha County was only 2.6%.

TABLE A: INCOME AND WAGES OVERVIEW

Kansas County	2020 Median Household Income	2020 Average Annual Wage	April 2022 Unemployment Rate	April 2022 Total Unemployed Persons
Nemaha County	\$61,091	\$46,778/yr.	1.3%	98 persons
Brown County	\$50,649	\$49,267/yr.	1.9%	119 persons
Doniphan County	\$51,953	\$46,473/yr.	1.6%	98 persons
Jackson County	\$58,686	\$38,036/yr.	1.3%	177 persons
Marshall County	\$52,293	\$45,365/yr.	1.7%	102 persons
State of Kansas	\$61,382	\$60,597/yr.	2.5%	36,788 persons

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Kansas Department of Revenue; Kansas Department of Labor.

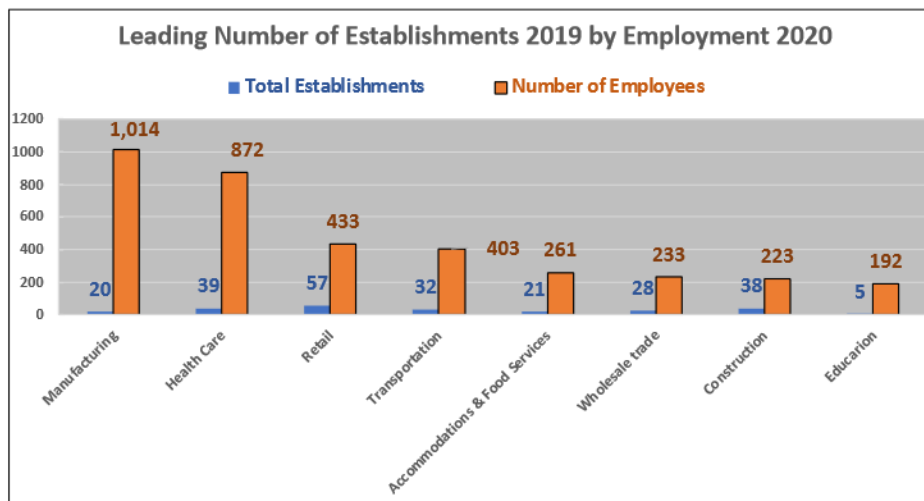
The retail sector contains the most business establishments in Nemaha County while manufacturing and health care have the highest payrolls in Nemaha County. Persons employed in wholesale trade and the finance and insurance sector earn, on average, the highest wages as most recently reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (See Table B and Graph – “Business and Employment Profile”). Average retail wages, and wages for persons in accommodation and food services were the lowest in Nemaha County and continue to be the lowest average wages throughout labor markets elsewhere. The manufacturing sector with 1,014 workers is the largest employer in Nemaha County. Data reflects the employment sector but does not necessarily mean people are in the employment sector within Nemaha County. Farm employment and average wages are not reported nor included in Kansas Department of Labor or U.S. Census data.

TABLE B: NEMAHA COUNTY BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

Employee Industry Sector	Total Establishments	2020 Employment	2020 Average Wage Per Employee
Manufacturing	20	1,014	\$50,036
Health Care	39	872	\$33,803
Retail	57	433	\$25,824
Transportation	32	403	\$56,945
Accommodations & Food Services	21	261	\$9,318
Wholesale trade	28	233	\$52,347
Construction	38	223	\$49,305
Education	4	188	\$29,968
Admin Support	15	181	\$43,331
Finance & insurance	28	177	\$52,141
All Others / Except govrmt.	37	168	\$21,863
Professional Services	28	110	\$48,382
Information Services	5	28	\$33,100
TOTAL / AVERAGE	352	4,291	\$46,778

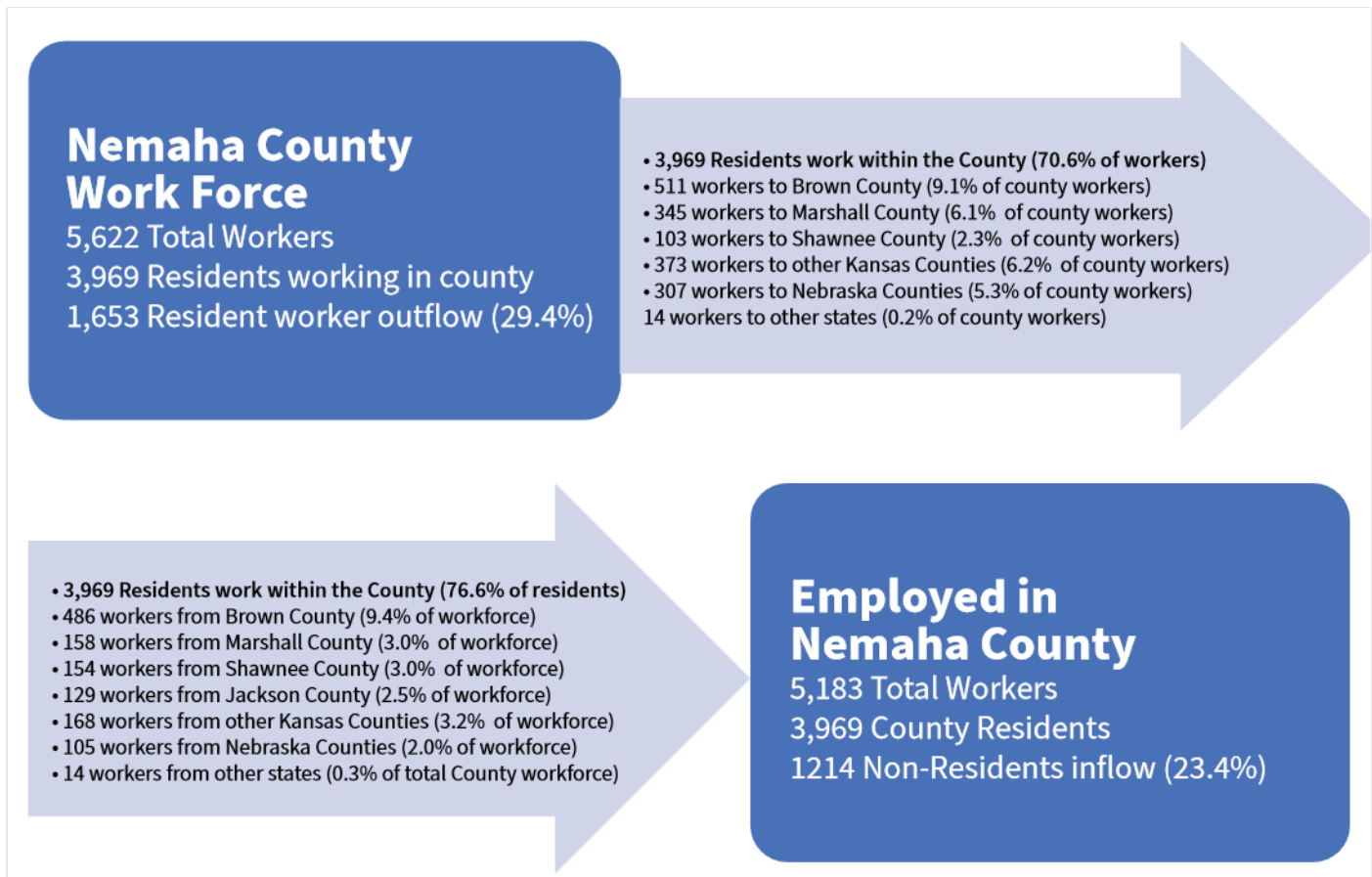
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Kansas Department of Labor.

U.S. Census data and the Kansas Department of Labor exclude farm employment reported as 915 persons in Nemaha County. While the retail sector has the highest number of business establishments in Nemaha County, wages for retail employees are among the lowest in the County.



C. COUNTY WORKFLOW DATA

More than three of every four Nemaha County residents are employed within the county. Brown County is the second highest place where residents are employed as summarized in outflow, where residents work, and inflow numbers, where those employed in the County reside. Approximately 5.3% of the County's residents commute to Nebraska. Other places of employment (outflow) and source of the County's workforce (inflow) are presented in the following graph



NEMAHA COUNTY RESIDENTS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE PLACE OF RESIDENCE 2015

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census 2015.

This workforce data is the latest available from the U.S. Census. Employment patterns in 2022, seven years later than these figures, are likely to have changed. However, there were 5,349 residents employed in May 2022 according to the Kansas Department of Labor, 166 more workers than the 5,183 persons reported employed in 2015 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

D. Manufacturing

As noted in the county's employment data, the manufacturing sector is the largest employment sector in Nemaha County. The average salary for persons employed in manufacturing is approximately seven percent higher than the countywide average. A survey of 11 firms representing 1,934 employees in Nemaha County as well as in the Sabetha Industrial Park (geographically in Brown County) was performed on behalf of this plan to gain insight and feedback concerning the area's manufacturing sector.

The survey found that approximately 28% of these employees reside in Nemaha County. More importantly, 9 of the 11 employers indicated their intention to expand in their current location in the next three years and one industry plans to expand in the next three to five years. These findings reflect that there is a strong satisfaction with and commitment to their current location and physical infrastructure. However, 10 of these companies’ representatives indicated that “adequate workforce” was their biggest challenge in their expansion plans. Only two of the industry spokespersons cited that adequate building and/or land was a challenge to their growth. None of the survey respondents stated that adequate financing was a challenge. The 2022 median salaries were \$51,321 for employees in the surveyed companies (See Table C: “Sabetha Industrial Park Nemaha County Employee Salary Ranges”) compared to the countywide average wage of \$46,778 reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2020 presented in Table B: “Nemaha County Business and Employment Profile”. Median salaries were calculated by using data from the 1,934 employees in the survey. Of those 1934, 50% are above \$51,321 and 50% are below. The average cannot be calculated since exact salaries are unknown, just the range.

TABLE C: SABETHA INDUSTRIAL PARK NEMAHA COUNTY EMPLOYEE SALARY RANGES

Salary Range	Number of Employees	Percent of Total
\$39,999 or less	482	25%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	429	22%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	318	16%
\$60,000 to \$64,999	91	5%
\$65,000 to \$74,999	154	8%
\$75,000 or more	459	24%
Total	1,934	100%

Source: Dick Horton Consulting 2022.

E. RETAIL SALES AND RETAIL PULL FACTORS

It is meaningful for local officials to know the relative health of their retail sector. Whether people live in a small town or a major metropolitan area, they have the power to spend their money where they choose. This notion is especially important to most cities and counties, since many local government services (sheriff, public health, road maintenance, etc.) are heavily dependent on tax revenue from local retail sales.

Losing retail dollars when residents shop elsewhere is commonly measured using a calculation known as a “pull factor.” Pull factors can be used as indicators of the relative health of a community’s retail sector and is a measure of how well local retail stores can capture the sales of local and non-local people. Because it compares actual retail spending in a county to that county’s population, it is used to assess whether people are coming into the county to shop, or if people are leaving the county to shop elsewhere. Shopping online can also have repercussions for sales tax collections. A pull factor of 1.10 would indicate that the retail sector is attracting non-resident consumers equal to 10% of the county’s population. If a county has a pull factor of less than 1.00, it is not capturing the retail sale expenditures of the residents. In this case, retail spending is leaking out of the county and being spent in other locations.

Nemaha County’s retail pull factor is 0.84. A pull factor below 1.00 in non-urban communities is common among Kansas’s rural counties. (See Table D – “Retail Sales Overview”) However, the City of Sabetha’s 2021 retail pull factor was 1.10 indicating the city is serving as a commercial center and attracting shoppers from beyond the city. (It should be noted that 25% of Sabetha’s retail sales are generated in the east portion of the city in Brown County.) Nemaha County’s pull factor is more than three of its four neighboring Kansas counties except for Marshall County. (The retail pull factor for the City of Seneca is not reported by the Kansas Department of Revenue. The City of Seneca’s sales tax rate is 9.0%.)

TABLE D: RETAIL SALES OVERVIEW

County	2021 Retail Pull Factor	2020 Retail Sales Tax Collections (in millions \$)	2021 Sales Tax Rate
City of Sabetha	1.10	\$2.9	9.0% (Nemaha County) 8.5% (Brown County)
Marshall County	0.94	\$11.5	7.0%
Nemaha County	0.84	\$11.7	8.0%
Brown County	0.84	\$10.2	7.5%
Jackson County	0.60	\$10.3	7.9%
Doniphan County	0.43	\$5.3	7.5%

Source: Kansas Department of Revenue; County and City Retail Pull Factors.

F. AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Agriculture is obviously a driving force and the major component of the Nemaha County economy. Kansas has a strong agricultural tradition that predates its statehood. Over 40% of the state economy comes from agriculture. Kansas is a leader in wheat, grain sorghum and beef production. In Kansas, over 45 million acres are used in agriculture. This includes 21 million acres that are planted to crops and over 14 million acres used for grazing animals. The Kansas Department of Agriculture 2022 Annual Report states that “72 agriculture and agriculture-related sectors directly contribute \$47.3 billion in output and 135,786 jobs to the Kansas economy.” The top commodities in the state include cattle and calves, wheat, corn, sorghum, and soybeans, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Nemaha County had 262,000 harvested acres in 2020. (See Table E - “Agricultural Land Production”) Soybeans represent the largest crop harvested in Nemaha County.

There are about 58,600 farms in Kansas of which 84.6% are family owned. The average size of a Kansas farm is 781 acres in operation. The average farm in Nemaha County is 495 cultivated acres, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Nearly 88% of the land in the state is used for agriculture. This percentage is comparable to Nemaha County where 87.2% of the land is devoted to farmland. However, there has been a gradual decline in the percentage of acreage harvested statewide and in Nemaha County that was 90.2% of the county’s land most recently reported in 2017.

Soybean prices in 2021 are at recent highs. However, the USDA projects that crop prices for soybeans, corn and wheat are projected to decline from 2021/22 peaks to levels more consistent with pre-pandemic prices.

TABLE E: AGRICULTURAL LAND PRODUCTION

The following graph reflects the amount and diversity of Nemaha County’s agricultural industry in comparison to its neighboring Kansas counties.

County	Percent of Land Area in Farms	2020 Total Acres Harvested	Market Value of Crops (in \$ millions)	Market Value of Livestock (in \$ millions)
Nemaha	87.2%	262,000	\$76.1	\$121.3
Brown	85.3%	311,595	\$112.1	\$18.8
Marshall	81.8%	499,934	\$32.5	\$92.9
Jackson	79.7%	334,572	\$40.2	\$30.8
Doniphan	70.5%	177,485	\$76.6	\$4.6

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture; National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Despite this economic strength, the demographic trend among farmers is a matter of concern facing Nemaha County. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that the average age of principal farm operators in Nemaha County is 53 years of age while the U.S. Census reported in 2020 that the average age for all county residents is 42.5 years of age. Consequently, it is important to support and encourage younger residents in Nemaha County to embrace farming.

Broadband access for all farmers is also critical to the Nemaha County agricultural industry. As stated by the Kansas Farm Bureau:

“Rural broadband is a critical pathway to global markets for agriculture and other industries. Farmers and ranchers depend on broadband just as they do highways, railways, and waterways. Farmers need increased mobile broadband coverage to be more efficient, economical, and environmentally sustainable. Broadband connectivity allows farmers and ranchers to use cloud-connected equipment that indicates soil conditions, weather, and the positioning of equipment. This key information not only helps them make data-driven business decisions, but it also helps improve sustainability by allowing farmers to very specifically target their water, fertilizer and crop protection use and plant seeds to achieve optimal yield.”

G. OTHER INDUSTRIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The petroleum industry is also a major contributor to the economy of Kansas. While not a major economic factor in Nemaha County, the county is the leading oil producer among the five neighboring counties in northeast Kansas. Hundreds of thousands of oil wells drilled in the state since the late 19th century have produced more than **6.7 billion barrels** of oil through 2019. Nemaha County reported 23 wells contributing 4.4 million barrels to the state through 2021, according to the Kansas Geological Survey. Nemaha County produced 43,000 barrels in 2019.

Nemaha County is home to the Sabetha Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) that is available to support industries in Sabetha as requested. Economic incentives are important to supporting and expanding existing businesses. Nemaha County as well as the cities of Sabetha and Seneca have neighborhood revitalization plans and offer tax abatements/refunds. <https://nmcoks.us/appraiser>.

By contractual agreement with Nemaha County, the Soldier Creek Wind Farm makes an annual Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) directly to the County. The initial 2020 payment was \$1,250,000. For Contract Years 1 through 10, the annual payment is \$900,000. For Years 11 through 20, the annual payment is \$1,250,000. For Years 21 through 30, which marks the end of the agreement, the annual payment is \$1,110,000.

H. BANKING AND FINANCE

The number and resources of Nemaha County's banking industry are important to both county residents and businesses. (See Table F – "Banking Conditions Summary") The ability to provide financing through local institutions is critical to a local economy, especially in non-urban settings that often have fewer options for consumers. This capability is reflected in the number of locally based financial institutions and their available deposits. Nemaha County's five locally owned banking institutions with their headquarter operations in Nemaha County (such as Community National Bank and the State Bank of Bern and the First Heritage Bank headquarters in Centralia) have a larger amount of bank deposits than Nemaha County's peer counties. This banking count does not include local branch banks such as Bank of Blue Valley (headquarters in Overland Park, and other bank branches in the county). This financial strength not only contributes to the economic health of these institutions but provides lending capabilities to Nemaha County's consumers and businesses.

TABLE F: BANKING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

County	2021 Number of Institutions	2021 Number of Branch Offices	2021 Total Bank Deposits (in millions \$)
Nemaha	7	14	\$944
Marshall	8	13	\$647
Brown	6	10	\$426
Doniphan	5	7	\$226
Jackson	3	6	\$365

Source: University of Kansas Statistical Abstract 2021; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Deposits of all FDIC-Insured Institutions by County.

In addition to local financial institutions, Nemaha County also offers non-traditional financing for new business ventures. The Glacial Hills Business Resource Center in Sabetha has a 17,000 square foot incubator for entrepreneurs in northeast Kansas starting or growing their businesses. The business resource center provides support services including office leases, financial and business planning. The Resource Center also manages a revolving loan fund available to small businesses in Nemaha County and five surrounding counties. The Glacial Hills Resource Center revolving loan fund is for use by those businesses who have been declined financing by a traditional lender.

I. PROPERTY TAXES AND STATE ASSESSED UTILITIES

Property tax rates are not only important to supporting local public services but influence the willingness or ability of new businesses to be created or attracted to any community. The County’s real estate property assessed value in 2022 was \$169.8 million, a 6.4% increase in value over 2021. These figures influence a local jurisdiction’s property tax rates. Nemaha County’s millage rate is third among the five northeast area counties. However, when combined with schools, area municipalities and special districts, Nemaha County has the second lowest overall real estate property tax rate among its peer counties. (See Table G.) State Assessed Utilities such as railroads, pipelines, telecommunication, electric utilities and electric cooperatives generate substantial property tax revenue for Nemaha County.

TABLE G: AREA PROPERTY TAX RATES

County	2021 County Property Tax Mill Levy	2021 Combined Countywide Mill Levy	Property Tax for a Home Valued at \$150,000
Nemaha	41.995	107.66	\$1,785
Jackson	74.106	145.68	\$1,800
Marshall	49.094	132.83	\$1,965
Doniphan	38.607	111.56	\$1,635
Brown	31.037	100.40	\$1,800

Source: Kansas Department of Revenue; Nemaha County Appraisers Office.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A Nemaha County SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) has been performed and includes how Nemaha County compares to competitive markets and its four neighboring counties in rural Northeast Kansas (Brown, Doniphan, Jackson, and Marshall). (See Table H.)

TABLE H: NEMAHA COUNTY SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
High median household income	No Interstate highway in the county
High level of banking institutions and bank deposits	Limited number of unemployed residents to support new or expanding businesses
Size and diversity of the agricultural industry	Limited availability of reliable high speed broadband service in most rural areas
Low Nemaha County unemployment rate	
Very high concentration of PetFood Manufacturing and related industries	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Ability for local financial institutions to finance new or expanding businesses	Lack of precipitation in any year impacts agricultural production and prices
New State of Kansas emphasis on new initiatives to support agriculture industry	Average age and aging of the farmer population
Support for business startups through the Glacial Hill Business Resource Center	Annual fluctuation in crop and livestock prices and changing consumer preferences
	Limited workforce; low unemployment may limit ability for companies to expand
	Aging skilled workforce

TARGET INDUSTRY ASSESSMENT

Target industries are specific industrial sectors most suitable for a particular state, region or county based on the area's workforce characteristics, geographic location, transportation systems, available infrastructure, and other economic and demographic characteristics. In 2021, the Kansas Department of Commerce adopted the "Framework for Growth," a target industry study created to determine the state's priorities and business recruitment strategies for the Kansas economy.

The independent state study concluded that:

"The "Framework for Growth" identifies a set of target sectors that will create a balanced portfolio of growth opportunities for which Kansas is positioned to capture. These targets were based on the future growth projections, the comparative advantage of Kansas, and the potential impact on the aspiration across employment growth, wage growth, and impacts on lagging regions. The five target sectors identified are areas that the state can and should play a more active role in supporting and promoting through implementation of the framework."

The five target industries recommended for Kansas in the framework study are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Aerospace
- Distribution, Logistics, and Transportation
- Food and Agriculture
- Professional and Technical Services

These industrial sectors are actively supported by the Kansas Department of Commerce through business recruitment, training programs, and financial incentives representing the strongest opportunities for future growth.

No single county or region is suitable for all five target sectors. Therefore, each county should build its economic strategy around the sector or sectors in which it has the greatest strengths. Of these five target industries, the most significant for Nemaha County is the food and agriculture sector. This conclusion is based on the assessment of the following as they relate to Nemaha County:

1. **Advanced manufacturing** requires prime and large industrial parks with complete infrastructure. Although Sabetha has an industrial Park (Commerce Drive Industrial Park), the park is in the Brown County portion of Sabetha. A new site in Nemaha County would further local employment opportunities as well as increase the county tax base.
2. **Aerospace** is most suitable for the Wichita metropolitan area because of the number of existing airplane-related industries with a long-term presence there and the existing workforce trained for this sector. Sedgwick County is the historic home to the aviation industry and has more than 10,000 workers trained in this field.
3. **Distribution, logistics, and transportation** operators and services are available in Nemaha County. Most new logistics hubs are more commonly located within counties and cities situated along either Interstate 70 or Interstate 35. Despite having US 36 and multiple trucking companies, Nemaha County is at a competitive disadvantage to attract additional trucking companies given the county's distance to the interstate highway system.
4. **Food and agriculture** industries are the prime opportunities consistent with the Nemaha County economy and geography especially since 87.2% of the county's land is devoted to agriculture.

5. **Professional and technical services** are most suited for urban areas with a large and highly educated workforce such as available in Douglas, Johnson, and Wyandotte Counties. However, as remote working has significantly increased as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, there are increasing opportunities for county residents to be employed in these sectors without the need for a traditional “brick and mortar” workplace. Furthermore, at least two companies in the Sabetha area illustrate the feasibility of growing these important sectors.

The statewide report recognizes that the agriculture sector in Kansas is a global leader and innovator. According to the Kansas Department of Agriculture, the 66 agriculture and food sectors provide nearly \$68 billion in total economic contribution to Kansas. Eighty-eight percent of all Kansas land (over 46 million acres) is farmland with another 16 million acres serving as pastureland for grazing animals.

The state framework report further describes the agricultural sector that:

“Technology, consumer demands, alternative proteins, geopolitical changes, trade policy changes, sustainability, and many other factors pose challenges to our agriculture industry, but they also provide an opportunity for growth. Kansas is globally recognized as a premier region for cattle production, but this heavy reliance on a single industry poses natural risks to Kansas. Consumer preferences are rapidly shifting with American consumers eating a third less beef today, eating double the amount of chicken and many are seeking alternative protein choices; these changing preferences present an opportunity for Kansas. Kansas must explore opportunities for further economic diversification while supporting the vibrancy and competitiveness of its food and agriculture sector.”

Additionally, technology adoption continues to transform agriculture and food manufacturing at a rapid pace. Recent technology is increasing farm and processing productivity, generating higher crop yields, and securing livestock health. The state must prepare and equip Kansas farmers and food manufacturing workers with new skills to succeed, including technical and analytical expertise.

The specific strategic opportunities for the agriculture sector include:

- Providing technical assistance to support the growth of small businesses.
- Ensuring consistent, reliable broadband access so producers can integrate recent technologies.
- Creating nontraditional lending sources to support startups and succession planning for family farms.
- Strengthening relationships with and access to export markets for food and agricultural products.
- Establishing a center of excellence for alternative crop development and value-added opportunities.
- Strengthening the premier animal health services corridor in the world by expanding the value chain.
- Developing centers of excellence for ag tech innovation and applications.
- Encouraging sustainability initiatives that aid operations.

TABLE I: ESTIMATED ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURE IN NEMAHA COUNTY

Sector	Total Output	Total Employment
Dog and cat food manufacturing	\$348,144,000	284.14
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots and dual-purpose ranching and farming	\$83,453,000	385.55
Animal production, except cattle and poultry and eggs	\$54,567,000	264.47
Other animal food manufacturing	\$53,394,000	42.87
Grain farming	\$51,093,000	128.70
Oilseed farming	\$50,775,000	29.93
Farm machinery and equipment manufacturing	\$50,496,000	90.63
Dairy cattle and milk production	\$17,705,000	23.04
Food product machinery manufacturing	\$16,463,000	52.59
All other crop farming	\$2,642,000	51.39
Landscape and horticultural services	\$1,696,000	24.74
Meat processed from carcasses	\$1,446,000	3.00
Bread and bakery product, except frozen, manufacturing	\$1,249,000	8.88
Support activities for agriculture and forestry	\$1,104,000	38.59
Veterinary services	\$868,000	12.28
Frozen cakes and other pastries manufacturing	\$779,000	8.88
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	\$450,000	3.03
Dry, condensed, and evaporated dairy product manufacturing	\$437,000	0.39
Poultry and egg production	\$379,000	0.39
Other snack food manufacturing	\$271,000	0.37
Roasted nuts and peanut butter manufacturing	\$177,000	0.37
Vegetable and melon farming	\$115,000	0.61
Commercial logging	\$81,000	1.66
Forestry, forest products, and timber tract production	\$27,000	0.36
Fruit farming	\$11,000	0.07
Commercial hunting and trapping	\$9,000	1.13
Tree nut farming	\$3,000	0.02

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In summary, based on a high level of bank deposits, and dominance of the agricultural industry and low unemployment, Nemaha County is in a relatively strong economic position in the coming years. The following recommendations are needed to maintain and strengthen the county’s economy:

1. Continue to support the Glacial Hill Business Resource Center, as requested.
2. Invest in, secure, support, and offer reliable broadband access in public places around the county, especially for schools, hospitals, and county buildings and facilities.
3. Prepare and adopt a County economic development incentive policy where and when appropriate.
4. Stay informed as the state develops a center of excellence for alternative crop development and value-added opportunities through the USDA and communicate through communities and ensure the information is openly distributed to the County’s farm community members.
5. Actively support the National FFA chapters in Nemaha County. The county government and school districts need to ensure these chapters are actively recognized, funded, and promoted to strengthen their local membership.
6. Support and promote the resources and advanced training programs of the USDA.
7. Encourage and assist when appropriate any effort to connect all Nemaha County households to broadband. As stated above on page 30, “Broadband access for all farmers is also critical to the Nemaha County agricultural industry. As stated by the Kansas Farm Bureau”.

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

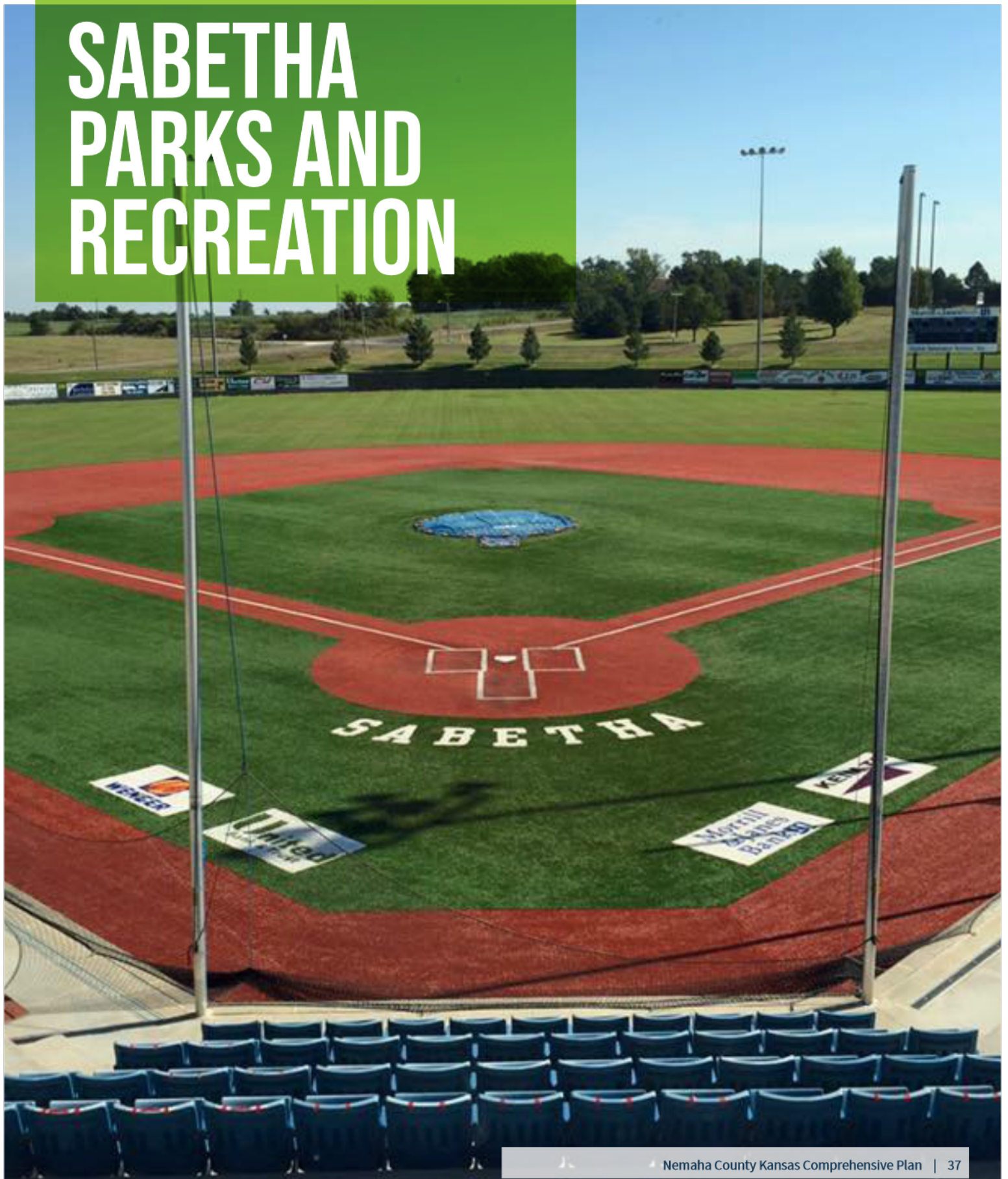
There are multiple parties that need to participate in implementing these recommendations beyond the Nemaha County government. The county’s school districts, chambers of commerce and utility providers are also essential to ensure these recommendations are actively pursued. Boxes with an “X” indicate a primary role for implementing these recommendations.

Key Partners Recommendation	Nemaha County Government	Nemaha County School Districts	Area Chambers of Commerce	Area Utility Companies
Support the Glacial Hills Business Resource Center as requested	X		X	
Expand broadband access throughout the County	X	X		X
Prepare and adopt an economic development incentive policy	X			
Stay informed and utilize centers for excellence as they develop	X		X	
Actively support all local National FFA chapters	X	X		
Promote USDA training to County farmers			X	

SUMMARY

Implementation of these actions will support the Nemaha County economy, expand employment opportunities, and sustain a strong tax base.

SABETHA PARKS AND RECREATION



SABETHA PARKS AND RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

The city of Sabetha, private providers, and other not-for-profit providers add quality to life to both the citizens of Sabetha and the surrounding area. The current facilities and recreation programs evolved over the years and have met the need as far as we know. In the future, there will be requests for new facilities and programs; however, there is a delicate balance between what is wanted versus the community's ability to pay for it and sustain it. This report will anticipate future needs, within reason, and provide future leaders with the ability to make informed decisions about how best to invest into the quality of life for Sabetha.

GOVERNANCE

Management and supervision of the Sabetha Department of Parks and Recreation is under the direction of a Director of Parks and Recreation with advice and support, as needed, from a Recreation Board.

FUNDING

Annual funding for the Department of Parks and Recreation is allocated from the City's general fund. Some additional funding is provided by fees and charges from programs and rentals.

FACILITY INVENTORY – SABETHA

Amenity	Number by City	Number by Others	Needed
Sports Complex	1		
Community Center	2		
Softball Fields	1		
Baseball Fields	4		
Soccer Fields	1		
Tennis Courts	4		
Pickleball Courts			
Outdoor Aquatics	1	0	0
Splash Pad (s)	1		
Trails	1		
Indoor Recreation	2		
Indoor Movies			
Playgrounds	2		
Disc Golf			
Outdoor Basketball			
Golf Course	0	1 by Sabetha Golf Club	0
Bowling			
Trap Shooting	1		
Fishing, hunting, camping	Two Lakes		
Skate Park	1		

OTHER PRIVATE AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT PROVIDERS

1. Faith Community
2. School District
3. Pony Creek Lake
4. Sabetha Lake
5. Sabetha Golf Club

NATIONAL PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

As an evaluation guide, a community like Sabetha’s recreation programs can be evaluated by their life stage, program types, and program formats. For an example:

Program Types	Program Formats	Life Stages
Visual/Graphic Arts	Self-Directed	Preschool
Performing Arts	Spectator	Elementary School
Crafts	Competitive	Middle School
Dance	Recreation	High School
Drama	Social	Young Adult
Environmental Activities	Self-Improvement	Adults
Music		Middle-aged Adults
Sports		Senior Adults
Aquatics		Families
Hobbies		
Trips, Travel, Tourism		
Social Recreation		
Special Events		

SABETHA PROGRAMMING – YOUTH SPORTS

1. 7- & 8-Year-Old Baseball
2. Tri-County Junior Baseball League
 - a. 7 & 8 year old coach pitch
 - b. 9 & 10 year old
 - c. 11 & 12 year old
 - d. 13 & 14 year old
3. Sabetha High School Baseball
4. American Legion Baseball
5. 8 & Under Coach Pitch Softball
6. Grades 3 & 4 Softball
7. Grades 5 & 6 Softball
8. NEKS Girls Softball League
 - a. Jr. High/Middle Schools grades 7 & 8
9. Sabetha High School Softball
10. Tee Ball
 - a. Boys & girls ages 4-6
11. Northeast Kansas Soccer Association - Fall Soccer
 - a. Boys and girls in grades K-6

INDOOR RECREATION

- Sabetha Wellness Center (user and/or membership fee)
- School District has two gyms at the high school, and one at the middle school

OUTDOOR AQUATICS

- Sabetha Aquatic Park

SPECIAL EVENTS

- The Department does not organize and produce special events.

PARTNERSHIPS

- The Department does not acknowledge any formal or informal partnerships.

PARKS INVENTORY

- Two parks with playgrounds (one is attached to the library park, the other one is between 4th and 6th street with the splash pad)
- 6th street park with an old ball field used for practices – neighborhood park with splash pad, playground, and an open field area
- Sports complex (3 baseball/softball fields) two small playgrounds, use outfields for soccer in the fall

TRAILS

- Along 6th street from Main to 192nd street – 8 city blocks long

MAINTENANCE

- Park system maintenance is provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

FUTURE NEEDS

- 6th street park needs new pavilion, sand volleyball, basketball court

SENECA PARKS AND RECREATION



SENECA PARKS AND RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

The city of Seneca, private providers, and other not-for-profit providers add quality to life to both the citizens of Seneca and the surrounding area. The current facilities and recreation programs evolved over the years and have met the need as far as we know. In the future, there will be requests for new facilities and programs; however, there is a delicate balance between what is wanted versus the community's ability to pay for it and sustain it. This report will anticipate future needs, within reason, and provide future leaders with the ability to make informed decisions about how best to invest into the quality of life for Seneca.

GOVERNANCE

Management and supervision of the Seneca Department of Parks and Recreation is under the direction of a Director of Parks and Recreation with advice and support, as needed, from a Recreation Committee.

FUNDING

Annual funding for the Department of Parks and Recreation is allocated from the city's general fund. Some additional funding is provided by fees and charges from programs and rentals.

FACILITY INVENTORY – SENECA

Amenity	Number by City	Number by Others	Needed
Sports Complex	0	0	1
Community Center	0	0	1
Softball Fields	1 at Pearson 1 at JayCee	0	0
Baseball Fields	1 at Swisher Field 1 at Seneca West	0	1 field
Soccer Fields	3 between Swisher and Seneca West	0	0
Tennis Courts	2 at Skoch Park	0	0
Pickleball Courts	2 at Skoch Park	0	0
Outdoor Aquatics	1 pool at Skoch Park	0	0
Splash Pad (s)	0	N/A	N/A
Trails	0	Nemaha Wildlife Area	Yes
Indoor Recreation	0	1 gym at SPPS Middle School 1 gym at Nemaha Central Middle School 2 gyms at Nemaha Central High School 1 gym at County Community Building	Yes
Indoor Movies	0	Seneca Twin Theatre	0
Playgrounds	2	2 at Schools/Churches	0
Disc Golf	1 at Skoch Park	N/A	0
Outdoor Basketball	1 court at Skoch Park	2 at Schools/Churches	0
Golf Course	0	1 (18-hole course) at Spring Creek	0
Bowling	0	36 Alleys (8-lane bowling alley)	0
Trap Shooting	0	Seneca Gun Club	0
Fishing, hunting, camping	0	Nemaha Wildlife Area	0

OTHER PRIVATE AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT PROVIDERS

1. Faith Community
2. School District
3. Seneca Gun Club
4. 36 Alleys
5. Nemaha Wildlife Area
6. Seneca Twin Theatre
7. Nemaha County
8. Spring Creek
9. Main Street Fitness
10. Mens and Womens Bowling Leagues
11. Mens and Womens Golf Leagues

NATIONAL PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

As an evaluation guide, a community like Seneca’s recreation programs can be evaluated by their life stage, program types, and program formats. For an example:

Program Types	Program Formats	Life Stages
Visual/Graphic Arts	Self-Directed	Preschool
Performing Arts	Spectator	Elementary School
Crafts	Competitive	Middle School
Dance	Recreation	High School
Drama	Social	Young Adult
Environmental Activities	Self-Improvement	Adults
Music		Middle-aged Adults
Sports		Senior Adults
Aquatics		Families
Hobbies		
Trips, Travel, Tourism		
Social Recreation		
Special Events		

SENECA PROGRAMMING – YOUTH SPORTS

1. Youth Basketball
2. Youth Baseball
3. Youth Blastball
4. Youth Flag football
5. Youth Soccer
6. Youth T-ball
7. Youth Softball
8. Youth Volleyball

SENECA PROGRAMMING – ADULT SPORTS

1. Women’s Volleyball
2. Women’s Softball

SENECA PROGRAMMING – ADULT CO-ED

1. Corn Hole

INDOOR RECREATION

- Use small gyms at the two middle schools
- The high school has two gyms
- The K of C Building

SPECIAL EVENTS

1. Coins for a Cause 5K
2. Octoberfest
3. City Wide Garage Sales
4. Smokin' Hawgs BBQ & Bike Fest
5. Nemaha Free County Fair, Cruise Night, Car Show, and Parade
6. Chamber Golf Tournament
7. Highway 36 Treasure Hunt – garage sales
8. Seneca Spooktacular
9. Murder Mystery & Ladies Night Out
10. Veterans Day Celebration
11. Santa Comes to Town
12. Kids Movie Matinee
13. Wine About Winter
14. Relay for Life
15. Baileyville Benefit
16. Saints Peter and Paul Labor Day Picnic
17. Nemaha County Fair
18. Seneca Car Show

PARTNERS

Resources that are under the supervision of the Department of Parks and Recreation lend themselves to a variety of activities throughout the year. At this time, there are no formal or informal partnerships; however, it is understood that the Department will always respond to reasonable requests in a helpful way.

PARKS INVENTORY

- Skoch Park – Neighborhood Park
- North City Park -Neighborhood Park
- South City Park – Mini Park

MAINTENANCE

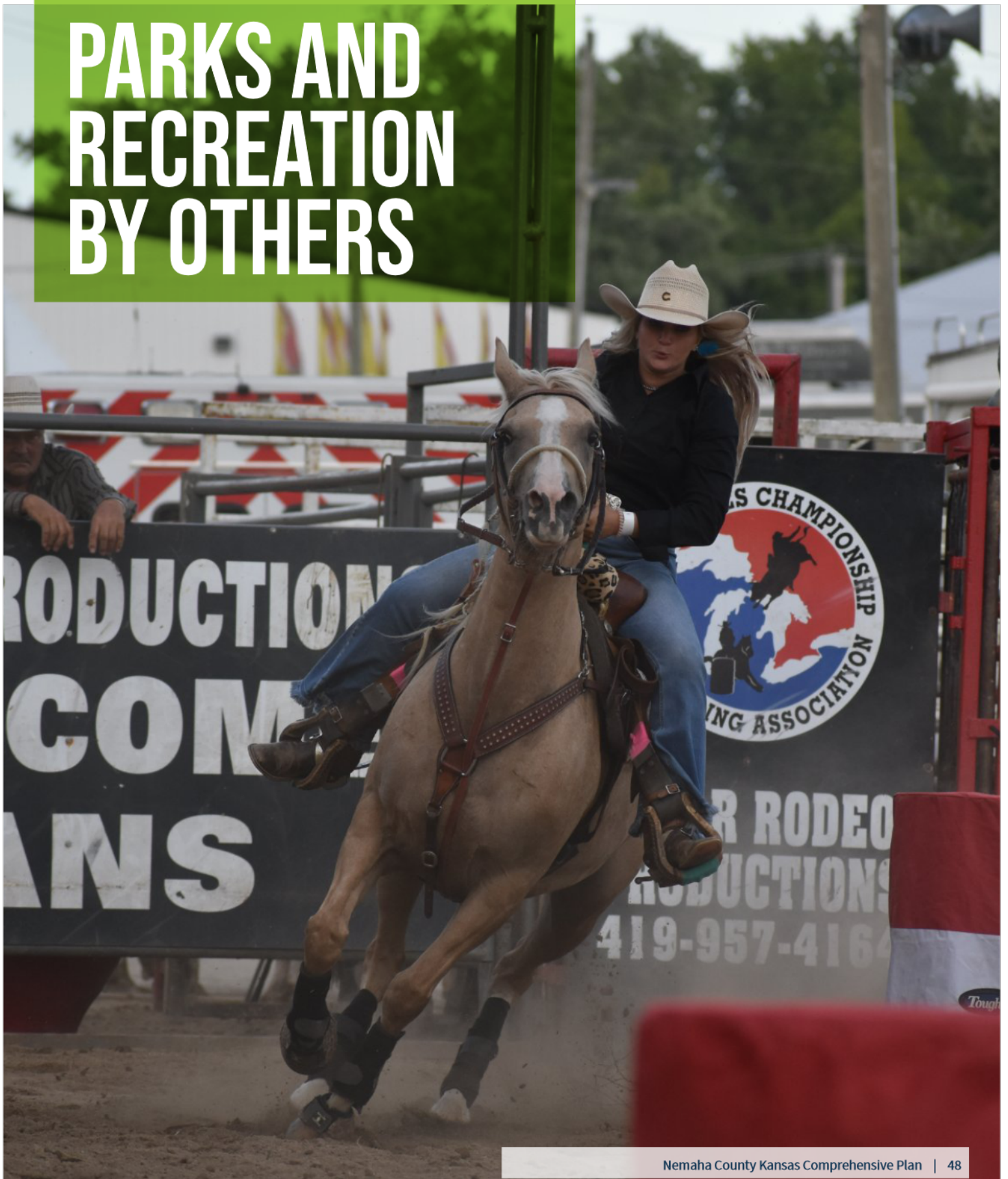
Park and recreation facility maintenance is provided by the city's public works crew.

FUTURE NEEDS

- Community Center
- Splash Pad
- Additional field at Skoch Park
- A variety of programs for all age groups



PARKS AND RECREATION BY OTHERS



PARKS AND RECREATION

PROVIDED BY OTHERS

NEMAHA COUNTY

- Fairgrounds at Seneca

MUSEUMS

- Bancroft Railroad and School Museum
- Seneca
 - Nemaha County Historical Museum
 - Military Museum
 - Pony Express Museum
 - Fire Museum
 - Hand Dug Well

COLLEGES

- Highland Community College Western Center
- Mr. Deters owns a track that some people walk on that is adjacent to the college

VERMILLION #380 SCHOOL DISTRICT (CENTRALIA & CORNING)

CENTRALIA

- Two gyms
- One football field and practice field
- A 5-lane track around the football field, it is not a competition track
- Limited public access to the gyms; however, there is a Wednesday night men's basketball program

SAINTS PETER & PAUL SCHOOL

- One gymnasium, limited public use that is available on a scheduled basis
- The gym is occasionally used for Seneca recreation league basketball

NEMAHA CENTRAL #115 SCHOOL DISTRICT/SENECA

- Nemaha Central Elementary and Middle School
- Marshall-Nemaha Special Education Co-Op
- Nemaha Central High School
 - Two gyms at the high school
 - One gym at the grade school
 - One running track
 - There is some availability to the community –must fill out a form

PRAIRIE HILLS #113 SCHOOL DISTRICT IN SABETHA

- Wetmore –one gym and a track
- Axtell –one gym and a track
- Sabetha Middle School –share with the high school
- Sabetha Elementary - playgrounds
- Sabetha High School - two gyms and a track
- Facilities are available for rent subject to District use first

CENTRALIA

- Centralia Lake
- Athletic Programs
- Running track and athletic fields at the school
- Park and the pool
- City-owned baseball and softball fields
- Downtown Library
- Museum at city hall

CORNING

- Playground and park
- Athletic fields in the NE part of town
- Community center with a library in it
- A basketball court in the old city hall
- A museum in the park

GOFF

- Children’s playground at old school grounds on north end of town
- A park including covered picnic area on south side of Highway 9
- Toy Museum
- Ball field and an annual tournament
- Community Building that includes a museum

WETMORE

- Swimming pool
- A park and picnic area along the north side of Highway 9
- A running track and athletic fields at the school
- Library
- Car Museum

BERN

- City Park
- Ball Field
- Museum in city hall
- Library
- Indoor gym in the old school building
- Bern community building for indoor walking and an exercise room

ONEIDA

- City Park
- Community Building
- Tractor-pulling field

BAILEYVILLE

- Ball Field
- Tennis/Pickleball Court
- Park –playground and shelter house

ST. BENEDICT

- St. Mary's Catholic Church (Art and one of eight wonders in Kansas)
- Ball Field

SOCIAL SERVICES



SOCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

An important component of the development of the Comprehensive Plan was the opportunity for citizens to share their concerns and opportunities for Nemaha County through Planning Commission Meetings, conversations with the County Commissioners, stakeholder interviews, and direct mail messages to the consultant. Often mentioned during that citizen engagement process was the need for a greater emphasis on Social Services. When referenced during that process, it was clear that many citizens are concerned with societal issues, thus the need to take a proactive stance on the identification of the most prolific societal issues in Nemaha County and the need to coordinate social service provider resources to have the greatest impact on the management and reduction of those issues.

INVENTORY OF CURRENT COUNTY HEALTH RESOURCES

Current County Health Resources were identified in 2021 in the Community Health Needs Assessment that was developed on behalf of the Nemaha Valley Community Hospitals. Direct access to services in Nemaha County are:

1. Health Services at Seneca and Sabetha Hospitals
2. Mental Health Services in Seneca
3. Clinics in Centralia, Corning, Wetmore, Sabetha, and Seneca
4. Food Programs at Sabetha and Seneca
5. Harvesters Community Food Network– Centralia, Sabetha, Seneca, Wetmore
6. Nemaha County Home Health & Hospice at Sabetha
7. Nemaha County Community Health Services at Sabetha & Seneca
8. Nemaha County Health Department at Seneca
9. Sabetha Community Hospital recent additions for Emergency Department and Rehabilitation Department
10. Nemaha Valley Community Hospital fundraising for improvements in the areas of a new nursing wing, updated mechanical systems, increased safety measures for everyone, and enhancements to the surgery, emergency, radiology departments.

SOCIAL SERVICE DATA SOURCES

This report acknowledges the data contributions from Kansas Kids Count, the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, and the 2021 Nemaha County Community Health Needs Assessment.

COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

County Health Rankings are provided by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute with funding provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Nemaha County ranks very high when compared to all 104 ranked Kansas Counties. The County ranks #3 for Health Outcomes and #5 for Health Factors. Health Outcomes and Health Factors are detailed in the table below.

Health Outcomes	
Mortality	Length of Life
Morbidity	Quality of Life
Health Factors	
Health Behaviors	Tobacco Use, Diet/Exercise, Alcohol Use, Sexual Activity
Clinical Care	Access to Care / Quality of Care
Social & Economic Factors	Education, Employment, Income, Family/Social support, Community Safety
Physical Environment	Environmental quality

2022 County Health Rankings for the 104 Ranked Counties in Kansas

County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors	County	Health Outcomes	Health Factors
Allen	90	93	Doniphan	65	75	Jackson	35	69	Morris	22	40	Saline	32	42
Anderson	81	91	Douglas	8	2	Jefferson	7	31	Morton	77	80	Scott	62	29
Atchison	49	82	Edwards	104	47	Jewell	67	74	Nemaha	3	5	Sedgwick	70	79
Barber	78	89	Elk	82	101	Johnson	1	1	Neosho	94	90	Seward	79	94
Barton	74	70	Ellis	12	10	Kearny	88	81	Ness	45	32	Shawnee	54	56
Bourbon	95	87	Ellsworth	10	51	Kingman	100	44	Norton	75	41	Sheridan	17	11
Brown	69	77	Finney	83	92	Kiowa	47	34	Osage	44	72	Sherman	27	25
Butler	20	39	Ford	60	86	Labette	96	96	Osborne	16	53	Smith	39	19
Chase	48	61	Franklin	50	65	Lane	51	35	Ottawa	43	37	Stafford	25	58
Chautauqua	97	102	Geary	85	84	Leavenworth	13	45	Pawnee	71	50	Stanton	73	66
Cherokee	101	98	Gove	19	46	Lincoln	24	54	Phillips	40	24	Stevens	38	78
Cheyenne	55	36	Graham	93	62	Linn	91	100	Pottawatomie	2	4	Sumner	80	68
Clark	41	15	Grant	46	67	Logan	52	43	Pratt	63	17	Thomas	86	12
Clay	26	22	Gray	11	18	Lyon	53	60	Rawlins	34	38	Trego	56	30
Cloud	37	55	Greeley	31	20	Marion	23	14	Reno	61	76	Wabaunsee	4	13
Coffey	15	21	Greenwood	99	83	Marshall	36	48	Republic	58	23	Wallace	NR	NR
Comanche	42	33	Hamilton	66	57	McPherson	5	6	Rice	18	52	Washington	64	16
Cowley	84	88	Harper	87	95	Meade	103	59	Riley	9	7	Wichita	28	3
Crawford	89	85	Harvey	29	9	Miami	6	26	Rooks	33	27	Wilson	92	99
Decatur	30	49	Haskell	76	73	Mitchell	14	28	Rush	68	63	Woodson	72	97
Dickinson	57	64	Hodgeman	21	8	Montgomery	98	103	Russell	59	71	Wyandotte	102	104

QUALITY OF LIFE AND HEALTH FACTORS

As quantified in the table below, Nemaha County ranks slightly better than the State of Kansas on quality of life factors and varies both above and below on health behaviors.

	Nemaha (NM) County	Trend	Error Margin	Top U.S. Performers	Kansas
Quality of Life					
Poor or fair health	15%		13-18%	15%	17%
Poor physical health days	3.5		3.2-3.7	3.4	3.6
Poor mental health days	4.4		4.0-4.7	4.0	4.5
Low birthweight	5%		4-7%	6%	7%
Additional Health Outcomes (not included in overall ranking) 					
Health Factors					
Health Behaviors					
Adult smoking	18%		15-21%	15%	17%
Adult obesity	32%		31-34%	30%	36%
Food environment index	7.8			8.8	6.7
Physical inactivity	28%		25-31%	23%	27%
Access to exercise opportunities	35%			86%	73%
Excessive drinking	19%		18-20%	15%	20%
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths	43%		22-61%	10%	19%
Sexually transmitted infections	136.8			161.8	524.7
Teen births	18		13-24	11	22

Social Determinants of Health

What Are Social Determinants of Health?



COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

The 2021 Nemaha County Community Health Needs Assessment concluded that access to mental health care is the number one priority in the County. This compares with the number one priority of previously completed planning assessments.

Nemaha County, KS				
2021 CHNA Priorities - Unmet Needs				
CHNA Wave #4 Town Hall - May 20, 2021				
NVCH and SCH Primary Service Areas (32 Attendees, 124 Total Votes)				
#	Community Health Needs to Change and/or Improve	Votes	%	Accum
1	Access to Mental Health	23	18.5%	19%
2	Suicide Prevention	14	11.3%	30%
3	Affordable Housing	11	8.9%	39%
4	Child Care Options (Infants)	11	8.9%	48%
5	Drug & Alcohol Abuse	11	8.9%	56%
6	Exercise / Fitness Options	11	8.9%	65%
7	Lack of "Owning Your Own Health"	8	6.5%	72%
8	Youth Health Education	8	6.5%	78%
9	Cancer	7	5.6%	84%
	Total Votes	124	100%	

COMMUNITY HEALTH RANKINGS

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Annual Report compares Nemaha County Health Outcome and Health Factor Rankings (Table 1), Mental Health Indicators (Table 2), and Preventive Health Indicators (Table 3) with other Northeast Kansas Counties.

Table 1: Health Outcomes and Health Factors

#	KS Rankings - 105 Counties	Definitions	Nemaha Co. (KS)	TREND	NE KS RURAL NORM (N=16)
1	Health Outcomes		8		40
	Mortality	Length of Life	16		48
	Morbidity	Quality of Life	5		38
2	Health Factors		5		40
	Health Behaviors	Tobacco Use, Diet/Exercise, Alcohol Use, Sexual Activity	49		51
	Clinical Care	Access to Care / Quality of Care	10		30
	Social & Economic Factors	Education, Employment, Income, Family/ Social support, Community Safety	3		40
3	Physical Environment	Environmental quality	39		61

Kansas NE Rural Norm (N=16) includes the following counties: Atchison, Brown, Clay, Cloud, Doniphan, Geary, Jackson, Jefferson, Marshall, Nemaha, Ottawa, Pottawatomie, Republic, Riley, Wabaunsee

Table 2: Mental Health Indicators

Tab		Mental - Health Indicator	Nemaha Co.	Trend	State of KS	NE Rural Norm (N=16)	Source
6	a	Depression: Medicare Population, percent, 2017	14.6%		18.9%	16.3%	Kansas Health Matters
	b	Age-adjusted Suicide Mortality Rate per 100,000 population, 2016-2018 (lower is better)	18.8%		18.6%	25.0%	Kansas Health Matters
	c	Mental Behavioral Hospital Admission Rates per 100,000, 2016-2018	37.1		75.1	57.3	Kansas Health Matters
	k	Percent of Medicare Part D Beneficiaries Receiving Opioids Supply >10 Days	28.7%		37.8%	39.7%	Kansas Health Matters
	d	Average Number of mentally unhealthy days, 2017	3.3		3.7	3.6	County Health Rankings

Table 3: Preventative Health Indicators

Tab		Preventative - Health Indicator	Nemaha Co.	Trend	State of KS	NE Rural Norm (N=16)	Source
10	a	Access to exercise opportunities, percent, 2019	40.8%		76.0%	54.5%	County Health Rankings
	b	Adults with diabetes, monitoring, percent, 2016	8.2%		86.0%	10.0%	County Health Rankings
	c	Mammography annual screening, percent, 2017	51.0%		63.0%	45.9%	County Health Rankings
	d	Percent Annual Check-Up Visit with PCP	TBD		TBD	TBD	TBD
	e	Percent Annual Check-Up Visit with Dentist	TBD		TBD	TBD	TBD
	f	Percent Annual Check-Up Visit with Eye Doctor	TBD		TBD	TBD	TBD

SUMMARY

Health outcomes and health factors rank very high in Nemaha County when compared to all 104 Ranked Kansas Counties. The County ranks #3 for Health Outcomes and #5 for Health Factors.

Access to exercise opportunities in Nemaha County ranks low as a health behavior and preventative health indicator when compared to the State of Kansas. This indicator was also noted in the Parks and Recreation Document which emphasized the need for more indoor opportunities such as a walking track.

WATER SUPPLY



WATER SUPPLY

INTRODUCTION

If we continue business as usual, it is not going to end well, says Jim Butler, a Kansas Geological Survey Geohydrologist in his testimony to Kansas State Lawmakers in September 2022 as a member of the Special Committee on Water. Although Nemaha County's future water supply is in good condition, especially when compared to other areas in Western Kansas, according to Elmer Ronnebaum of the Kansas Rural Water Association, there are still enough challenges that the County must remain vigilant of this issue and constantly position itself to support efforts by others and allocate resources from time to time to ensure a future that is not faced with a water crisis.

REFERENCES

Credit is given to those who supplied the data for this document. Contributions by Elmer Ronnebaum of the Kansas Rural Water Association and contacts at the Rural Water Districts and individual cities provided accuracy and specificity about current water supply conditions as noted herein.

POTENTIAL WATER SUPPLY ISSUE - WATER DISTRIBUTION

Nemaha County's distribution system includes all the pipes (waterlines) from the source to each customer. That would include any pumping stations, pressure reducing valves, waterline valves to close off sections of pipeline during an outage most generally due to a pipeline break or repair to allow for the repair and also minimize loss of service to other customers and the water storage tanks, some of which may be the standpipe type or elevated tanks. In other words, all features of a water system other than the sources (wells, treatment plants).

WATER SUPPLY INVENTORY – RURAL WATER DISTRICTS

Rural Water District #1: RWD #1 was constructed in the 1960's. The District operates five somewhat low-producing wells. The District serves users in the northeastern portion of the County east of the Nemaha River. Approximately 25 years ago, the District was able to locate an additional well supply northeast of Bern with the well-being located in Nebraska. The maintenance of the well supply there has been somewhat troublesome due to iron content and very fine flour sand which requires a filtration system. The District also has an emergency connection to the City of Bern.

In Their Own Words – The infrastructure PVC pipe is aging, and it fails when the ground moves. They have adequate water for now.

Rural Water District #3: RWD #3 supplies users in a large portion of the County and additional customers in eastern Marshall County. Formed in 1971, the District supplies water to approximately 1,250 benefit users and the cities of Centralia and Corning and provides supplemental water to the former Rural Water District #2 at Baileyville. That District was assumed by RWD #3 in February 2016. RWD #3 went into operation in late 1975 with a source being three wells southwest of Centralia. Subsequent well fields were developed several miles west of the original wells and another wellfield later northwest of Goff. The District has made upgrades several times to serve the need of additional water supply to include the replacement of five of the system's six storage tanks from standpipes to elevated tanks. Additional improvements are proposed in the long-range planning of the District. Those improvements consist of upgrades to transmission lines and possible replacement of one well at the Goff wellfield. All of the District's wells pull water from a glacial valley that ranges from 314 to 370 feet deep; each well is set to pump 400 GPM.

In Their Own Words – *RWD #3 has a long-term comprehensive plan prepared by a professional engineering firm. The Plan is not available to the public for review.*

Rural Water District #4 began service in 1995. It provides water to 275 customers in the eastern portion of the County with additional customers in northwest Jackson County.

In Their Own Words – The District is doing pretty well at this time. They have added two new wells to their previous number of two which gives them a total of four. Their biggest need is for generators to ensure water supply if there is a power outage, and they are working on that need at this time.

WATER SUPPLY INVENTORY – CITIES AND AREAS

Baileyville Area: The Baileyville Area is supplied generally from the City of Seneca with supplemental supply from Rural Water District #3.

Bern: Bern operates three wells and purchases water from Rural Water District #1.

In Their Own Words – *The infrastructure is aging. A new EPA directive to inventory their system for lead and copper is causing concern.*

Centralia: Centralia is supplied by Rural Water District #3.

The area south of the Centralia Lake – This area is served by Rural Water District #3, Pottawatomie County. That District was organized in 1976 with the source being from new wells located southwest of Centralia and developed by the City of Onaga. The District more recently drilled its own wells northeast of Lillis and disconnected from Onaga.

Corning: Corning is supplied by Rural Water District #3.

Goff: The City of Goff has recently constructed a well water source north of Goff. However, they presently operate one well for emergency only with their well #3 being plugged. The primary source for the City is purchased from Rural Water District #4, Nemaha County. The City serves fifty-six customers in 2022.

In Their Own Words - *Distribution lines in town are the city's responsibility as was a recent update of the water tower. They usually need to look for grants to complete capital projects.*

Oneida: Oneida operates one well north of town and has connections with Rural Water District #1 and also Rural Water District #3 for emergency supply.

In Their Own Words - *Water main replacement is needed.*

Sabetha: The Sabetha water source is Pony Creek Lake north of the City. The City's water treatment plant is located on the northern side of the city.

In Their Own Words – *They rate their system as average. To improve to a higher rating, they could use another water tower and purchase all of the water they do not own from the State at Pony Creek Lake.*

Seneca: Seneca operates a total of seven wells east and southeast of Seneca. Seneca is also fortunate to have Maxwell Springs located approximately one mile east. The Springs free flow approximately 125,000 gallons of water to the city each day. The water sources combine in a clear well on First Street and from there is pumped to the city's elevated storage tank.

Seneca Water Treatment Plant: The Seneca City Council voted in September 2022 to build a new water treatment plant. The new plant will reduce manganese and other contaminants in the City's drinking water. Partial funding of the project may be provided by the Kansas Water Supply Loan Fund which is administered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

In Their Own Words - *Biggest need is to replace mains because the old part of town has a lot of cast iron pipes. Need another water tower, especially if they expand to the west as they are on the verge of not having enough pressure.*

Wetmore: Wetmore operates two wells and has an emergency connection to Rural Water District #4.

In Their Own Words - *No concerns at this time, seem to have plenty of water.*

FUTURE FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

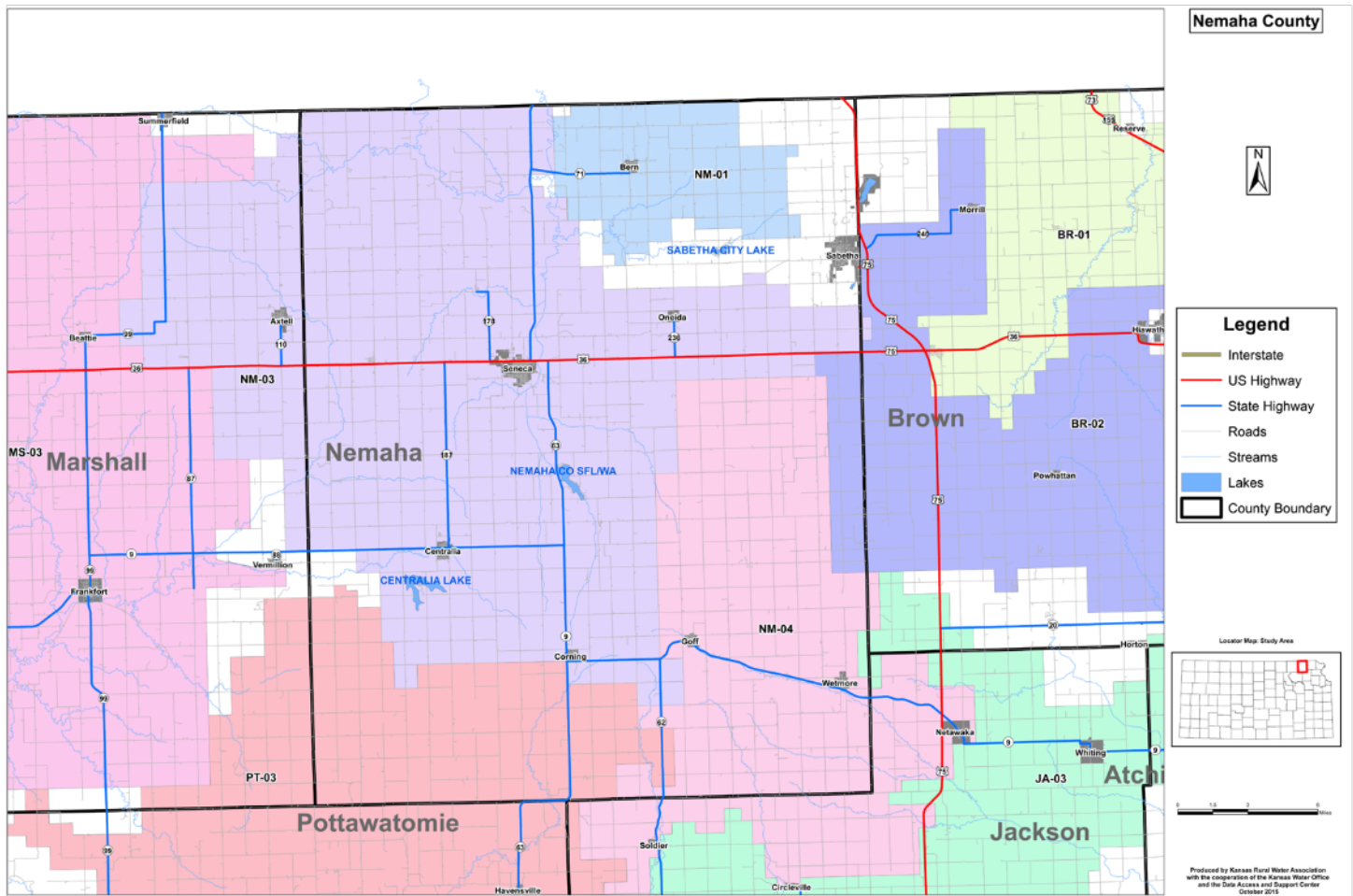
One current funding source to upgrade the water distribution system in Nemaha County is the American Recover Act (ARA). The intent of ARA is to assist with water and wastewater utilities. An important use of ARA funds would assist with installation of backup generators, etc. for resilience of the systems.

WATER SUPPLY SUMMARY

Water supply in Nemaha County is rated as “good” by Elmer Ronnebaum, General Manager of the Kansas Rural Water Association. While the rural water districts and cities in Nemaha County presently have good supply sources, upgrades to the distribution systems to meet ever-increasing demand will continue to be necessary. Those improvements include increase in pipeline size, looping of lines, and increased water storage capacity. Funding sources with subsidized interest rates exist today that were not available when most of the systems were originally constructed. Communities with low-producing wells may need to seek additional sources by contracting with professional geologists to do well exploration (smart test drilling). Generally speaking, the public water systems (cities and RWDs) have done a good job to provide either full service or emergency services through numerous interconnections between the rural water districts and cities. Some systems have long-range capital improvement plans while others do not. Due to consolidation of livestock facilities, some of the rural water districts are not going to be able to directly provide the necessary water supply unless the large users provide their own additional on-site storage.

NEMAHA COUNTY RURAL WATER DISTRICTS MAPPING LINK

<https://krwa.net/ONLINE-RESOURCES/RWD-Maps/Nemaha>



LAND USE



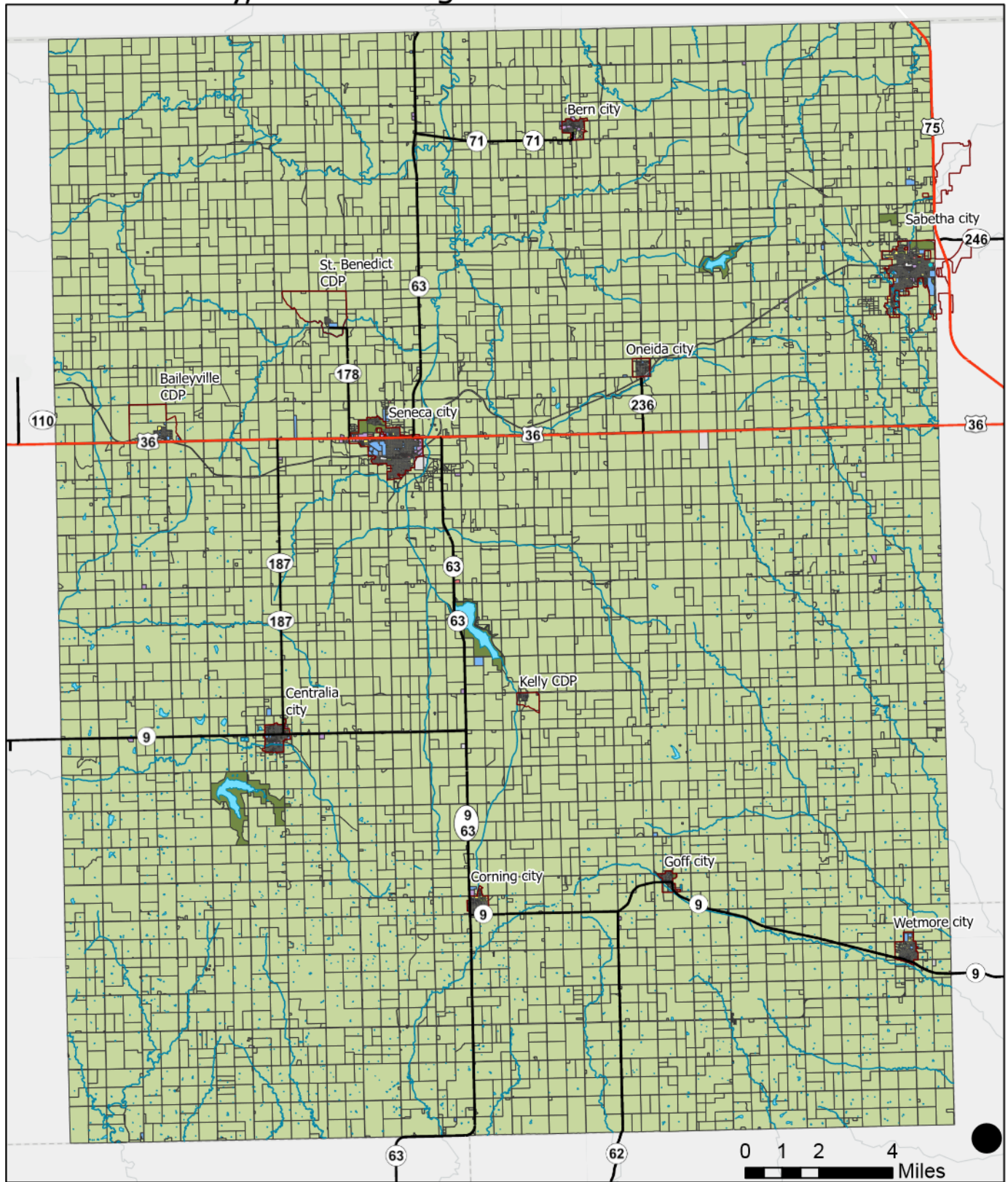
LAND USE METHODOLOGY AND LAND USE MAP

NEMAHA COUNTY, KS EXISTING LAND USE MAPS METHODOLOGY

The Nemaha County, KS Existing Land Use maps were created using GIS software and the county assessor's tax information which categorizes parcels according to a property type description that assigns a general land use category to determine how the parcel will be taxed. There are 8,716 total parcels in Nemaha County. Further distinction of land uses was gathered through an analysis of structures and land from Google Maps. Due to this process of land use classification, some parcels' designated land use may vary from what is provided by the county's tax assessor database. In addition, there are 243 residential parcels which are outside municipal boundaries and are illustrated as an Agricultural land use. The Land Use Categories and Components provides examples of uses that are included in each land use category.

Nine places, or towns, were selected to demonstrate a more detailed comparison of existing land use. They are sorted by the 2020 US Census population from highest to lowest. The (7) places under 1,000 population are demonstrated at the same scale to accurately compare geographic size, while the two largest towns, Sabetha and Seneca, are illustrated at a smaller scale to include the entire municipality. One Census Designated Place (CDP) is included in this comparison. CDPs are "a statistical geography representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name" (census.gov).

Nemaha County, KS - Existing Land Use



Legend

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Agricultural Use | Industrial | Utility | Streams |
| Commercial | Institutional | City Limits | Lakes and Ponds |
| Residential | Parks/Recreational/Preservation | | State Highway |
| | Vacant | | U.S. Highway |

Land Use Categories and Components

AGRICULTURAL

- Crop farming
- Pasture
- Other agriculture activities

INSTITUTIONAL

- Government Uses
- Schools
- Hospitals
- Cemeteries
- Social/cultural facilities
- Religious Assemblies
- Museums

UTILITY

- Water towers
- Landfills
- Electric/gas/water equipment

PARKS/RECREATIONAL/PRESERVATION

- Public parks
- Playgrounds
- Sports fields
- Campgrounds
- State parks
- Wildlife preservation areas
- Outdoor community rec activities

COMMERCIAL

- Retail
- Offices
- Restaurants
- Lodging
- Automotive services

VACANT

- Land with no defined use

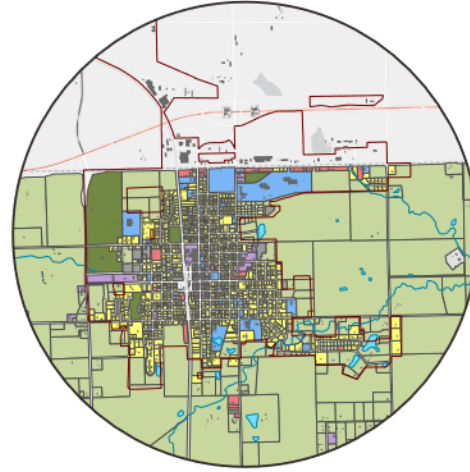
RESIDENTIAL

- Single-family home
- Multi-family home
- Nursing home
- Mobile home

INDUSTRIAL

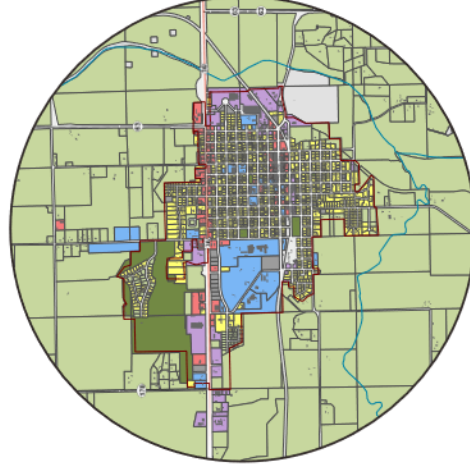
- Manufacturing/processing
- Construction yards
- Large vehicular yards
- Warehouses

Nemaha County, KS - Town and County Land Use



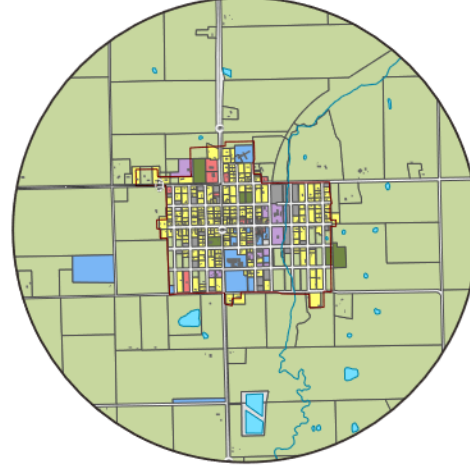
Sabetha

Population: 2,545



Seneca

Population: 2,139

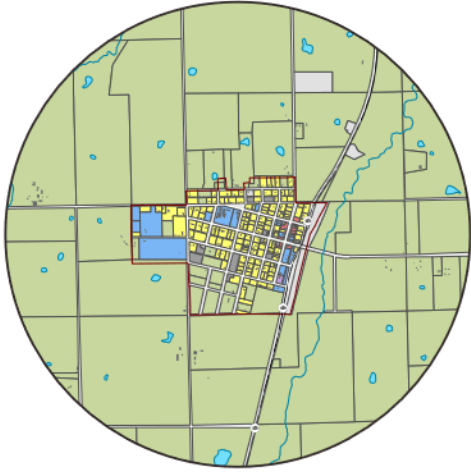


Centralia

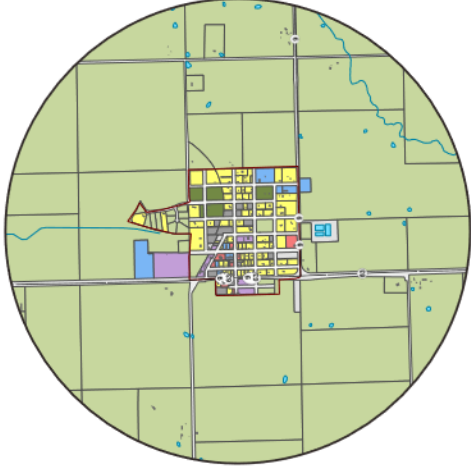
Population: 485



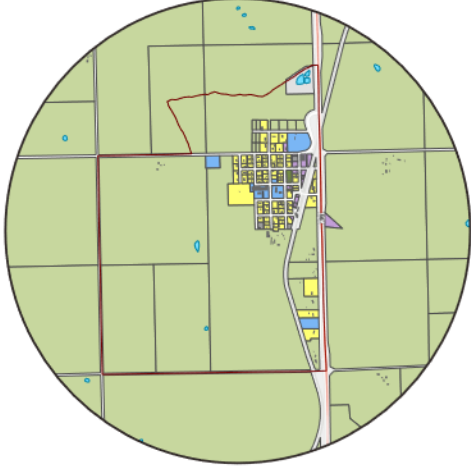
Nemaha County, KS - Town and County Land Use Cont.



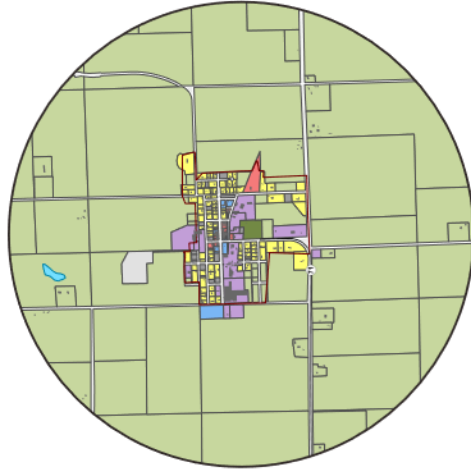
Wetmore
Population: 348



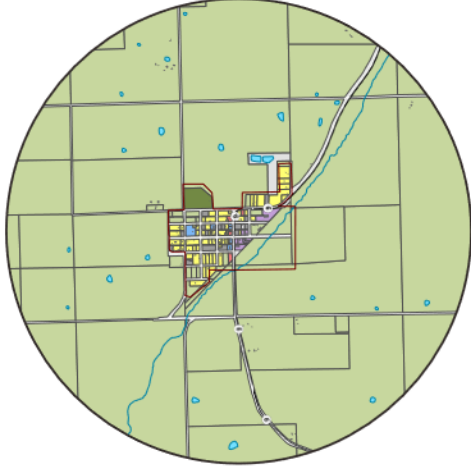
Corning
Population: 212



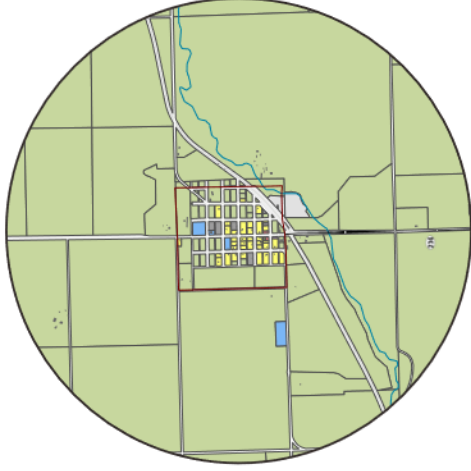
Baileyville CDP
Population: 182



Bern
Population: 161



Goff
Population: 106



Oneida City
Population: 61



All populations derived from 2020 Census

TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT



TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

Central to the future growth and sustainability of Nemaha County is adequate transportation. On a personal level, transportation is needed for services and activities, employment, shopping, and social events. On a business level, a transportation network makes the Nemaha County market more competitive when it can widen the number of opportunities for suppliers and buyers.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

To provide users of County roads with a level of service that supports their need to travel safely in all weather conditions.

TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

Access to Nemaha County and to destinations away from the County is provided by its proximity to the junctions of US 36, KS 63, KS 9 and US 75 and only 1 hour to I-29, I-35 and I-70. State highways provide access from these highways to local communities.

TRANSPORTATION MODES

Available in or accessible to citizens are several transportation modes: motor vehicles, transit (bus, train, air), bicycle, and pedestrian.

Airports

- Seneca Municipal Airport Seneca
- Sabetha Municipal Airport (adjacent to Sabetha Industrial Park but in Brown County)
- National and International Air Service is available at Kansas City International Airport which is 1.5 hours from the County. Also available in Topeka and Manhattan.

Bus Service

- County Bus Service - Residents of All Ages can ride the Nemaha County bus on a first come first serve basis. Costs within the Seneca city limits are \$1 for 3 stops and \$0.25 per additional stop. Outside the city limits the cost is calculated at \$0.40 per mile. Hours of Operations are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
- Greyhound Bus Service for county residents is available at Topeka which is 1.25 hours from the county

Train Service

- Train Service is available for county residents at Kansas City and Topeka by Amtrak which is 1.25 hours from the County.

Pedestrian

- Sidewalks and Trails are provided on a limited basis at Sabetha and Seneca and in some Towns in the County.

Highways and Interstates

- The County is served by US Highway 36, KS 63, KS 9, and US 75
- The County is only one hour from Interstates 29, 35, and 70

COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP ROAD AND BRIDGE INVENTORY AND COSTS

Inventory and related data for the County and Townships is provided by the Nemaha County Road and Bridge Department Staff.

2021 County Budget	
Annual Road and Bridge Operating Budget	\$3,678,072
Number of Road and Bridge Employees	17

Miles of County Roads	
Concrete	0
Asphalt	97
Gravel/Rock	241
Earth	0
Total	338

Major Maintenance Work	
Chip Seals Miles	62
Overlay Miles	0
Recycle Miles	0

Major Construction		
Paved Road Miles	0	
Gravel Road Miles	0	
Bridges Replaced	3	\$209,247.14
Culverts Replaced	0	

2021 Annual County Maintenance Costs	
Asphalt/Concrete Road Maintenance	\$1,175,875.44
Gravel/Earth Road Maintenance	\$1,395,183.56
Bridge Maintenance	\$91,578.75
Total Maintenance Costs	\$2,662,637.75

2021 Annual County Construction Costs	
Road Construction	0
Bridge Construction/Rehabilitated	\$210,756.59
Culvert Construction	\$91,578.75
Total Construction Costs	\$302,335.34

2021 Total Annual County Costs	
Total Maintenance Costs	\$2,662,637.75
Total Construction Costs	\$302,335.34
Overhead and Administration	\$335,095.89
Total County Costs	\$3,320,068.98

2021 Annual Township Maintenance and Construction Costs	
Number of Townships	20
Number of Miles of Maintained Township Roads	959
Concrete Roads	0
Asphalt Roads	3 miles
Gravel Roads	469.5 miles
Earth Roads	486.5
Township Road Maintenance Costs	\$1,898,430
Township Road Construction	0
Total Township Costs	\$1,898,430

COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Township roads are maintained by the use of a tax levied on Township residents
- Townships maintain their low to mid-traffic roads and the County maintains the high traffic roads in each of the Townships
- The County maintains all tubes that are 48” and above and all bridges in the County to include all Townships

ROAD MAINTENANCE ISSUES

Often mentioned during the stakeholder involvement process, to include Road and Bridge Department Staff, on the topic of County road maintenance was the impact of Soldier Creek Wind Project on road conditions. Below are comments that were shared most often:

- Wind Energy Companies have paid for damage that has been reported but not all damage has been consistently reported
- Wind Energy Companies do not always use the roads that were assigned to them as haul roads
- The Wind Energy Companies have been hard on the roads. They built Township roads up and made them like a rock road but not maintained so they are reverting back to dirt roads and they are turning back to earth. (Townships, with wind turbines within its area, receive money each year from at least one Wind Energy Company to use to maintain the rock roads the Wind Energy Company built up).
- Some bridges and tubes are being damaged too by the Wind Energy Companies.
- Road damage and complaints can be filed using the Soldier Creek Wind Farm Complaint Form included within the Soldier Creek Complaint Resolution Agreement. A representative of Soldier Creek Wind, LLC will respond to the complaint within five (5) business days during the course of normal business hours. Soldier Creek Wind, LLC company vehicles including combined vehicles less than 10,000 lbs are not limited by the road use agreement and can utilize any road within the county 2(A). For vehicles over 10,000 lbs any unauthorized use of roadway can result in Developer penalties in the amount of \$5,000.00 for each subsequent undisputed documented occurrence of a violation. Section 3(H)iii Soldier Creek Project contracts/agreements are available on the Nemaha County website.

- Some feel that a County Engineer, or an engineer on a retainer is needed. For example, it seems the only time roads are graded is in the heat of the summer when they are very hard and all the rock in the center of the road so users grind up more rock to lime. This condition results in extremely dusty roads that in many cases you just stop because of lack of visibility. Would seem that as in Marshall County, adding gravel would add some reduction of dust. There are wash boards and chug holes in the center of the roads that will make your vehicle turn sideways if passing over them directly.
- There are 13 miles of County asphalt road from Bern to Highway 75. Would help if the Bern/Sabetha road was a State highway and truck traffic could use it. Right now, they have to go around to come into Bern on Highway 71 from the west. Also, would help if the County took over that one-half mile of Township rock road from Hwy 71 north to the Alpha Plant It's a small, narrow rock road used by truckers because the City doesn't want them on city streets. When it rains, and there are two semi's at a time on that road, they slide in the ditch and have trouble making the corner. The State could widen the corner with a turning lane and the County could pave the road north.

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)

The County Road and Bridge Budget for 2021 was \$3.2678 Million. County staff feels that the LOS provided for road users is good. Results of the statistically valid survey showed that 53% of citizens are satisfied with the quality of roads and bridges.

TRANSPORTATION SUCCESS STORIES

- Keim Transportation Services serves the entire United States. Keim specializes in shipping freight via flatbed and dry van cargo on 53 ft. aluminum trailers.
- Alpha owns a pet food factory in Bern and LANI (the mill that makes the premix for pet food). Historically, it is not unusual to ship more than 50 loads per day in and/or out of those combined facilities when the facilities are operating on a 24/7 schedule. This semi traffic in and out of Bern is via US Hwy 71, a small, narrow two-lane road with no significant shoulder.”
- In addition to Alpha, there are other petfood related industries such as ADM (formerly Crosswind Foods) and Fairview Mills located in Nemaha County who ship and receive multiple loads of pre-mix and finished goods on a daily basis. There are also multiple other commercial agricultural feed operations who ship and receive many loads of grain and agricultural feed-mix on a daily basis located within the county such as Valley View Milling, Sabetha and Seneca Ag Partners, Hartter Feed and Seed, and Countryside Feed. All of these ag-based industries have their own commercial truck fleets in addition to local independent haulers in the region
- Other Transportation Companies include:
 - Keim TS
 - Hammes Trucking
 - Michael Bennett Trucking
 - Seneca Transportation, Inc.
 - Nichols Trucking
 - Wiers Trucking
 - Wayne Edelman Trucking, LLC
 - Victor Holthaus Trucking, Inc.
 - S & B Trucking
 - Moore Trucking
 - LJM Trucking
 - Northeast Transit LLC
 - Marten Kenneth
 - Schlegel, Inc.
 - Brad Stallbaumer Trucking, Inc.
 - Hammes Douglas Trucking G
 - Zimmerschied Trucking, LLC

OPPORTUNITIES

- While Nemaha County is not on an interstate, it is crossed west to east by US 36 and KS 9 and from south to north by KS 63. US 75 crosses south to north just east of the eastern edge of the County, actually crossing into the County at the Northeast corner of the County. The County is only 1 hour from I-29, I-35 and I-70. This provides citizens, businesses, and industries proven access to the service that is needed.
- Extension of Highway 75 as a four-lane highway from Holton to Nebraska would provide better and safer access to and from the County.
- Support is needed for electric charging stations as motor vehicles move away from gasoline engines to electric. Both Sabetha and Seneca have electric charging stations.

CONCLUSION

The County has thrived as a location for agricultural and manufacturing businesses. Its access to transportation as detailed in this document offers citizens who have chosen to live in the County the options that are needed to meet their individual and community goals. Results of the county-wide survey show that 53% are satisfied with the quality of bridges and 48% are satisfied with the quality of roads.

CONNECT: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CITIZEN PREFERENCES



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Development of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan was citizen-driven. Notably was the involvement of the Planning Commission, participation by key stakeholders, 945 households who responded to the county-wide survey, and direction from the County Commissioners on all matters of importance.

PLANNING COMMISSION INVOLVEMENT

- The Planning Commission met monthly to discuss all aspects of the planning process, for example:
 - Identification and organization of key stakeholder interviews with the consultant who should be interviewed to identify key issues that should be included in the county-wide citizen survey
 - how key issues, especially industrial energy, could be tested in the county-wide survey by carefully crafting survey questions
 - to monitor the progress of other components of the comprehensive plan such as the County's history, the County's demographics/sociographics, natural resources, history, transportation, social services, water supply, and current land uses

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Over 200 citizens, representing more than 30 stakeholder categories, were interviewed in person and via email by the consultant. Thanks to the effort by the Planning Commission, the consensus is that an opportunity to provide input was equitably offered. Below is the scheduled interview list:

1. Commissioner Keim
2. Commissioner Koch
3. Commissioner Scoby
4. County Department Heads
5. Township Trustees, District 1
6. Township Trustees, District 2
7. Township Trustees, District 3
8. Governmental Agencies & Libraries
9. Not for Profit Agencies
10. 4-H Ambassadors
11. City Administrators or Mayors
12. Soldier Creek with Turbines
13. Service Industries
14. Production Ag
15. Finance, Insurance, Legal
16. Not Soldier Creek - never leased
17. Nemaha Co. Freedom Alliance

18. Fire and EMS
19. Healthcare
20. Not Soldier Creek-currently or formerly in wind lease
21. Retail
22. Soldier Creek non-participating
23. Manufacturing, Industrial Controls & Technical
24. Agribusiness
25. Soldier Creek - leased W/O Turbines
26. Small Business
27. Chamber of Commerce, City Government, Industrial Development
28. Utilities
29. Older Adults
30. Faith Community
31. School Administrators
32. Transportation
33. Construction
34. High School Students, Sabetha
35. High School Students, Seneca
36. High School Students, Wetmore
37. High School Students, Centralia

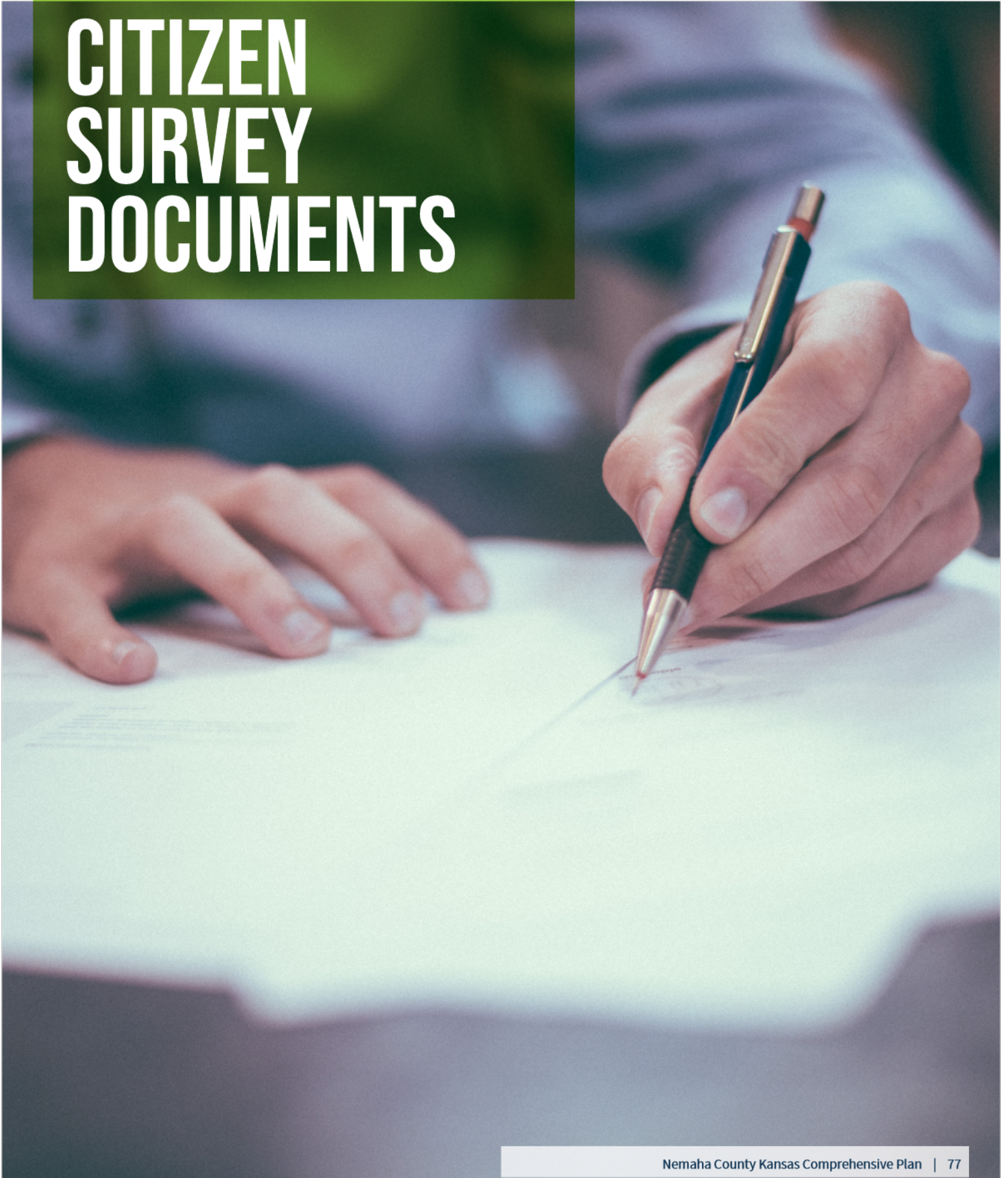
CITIZEN SURVEY PUBLIC PRESENTATION

The ETC Institute facilitated a public presentation of the final citizen survey results on January 30, 2023

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PRESENTATION

- After the Draft Comprehensive Plan is approved by the Planning Commission it will be presented at two public hearings. Notification will be placed in county newspapers at least 20 days prior to public hearings.
- Public hearing input will be considered by the Planning Commission before submitting a certified copy of the Comprehensive Plan and written summary of the public hearings to the County Commissioners.
- After receiving the certified copy of the Comprehensive Plan from the Planning Commission, the County Commission will take the action it deems appropriate for the adoption of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan.

CITIZEN SURVEY DOCUMENTS



Executive Summary

2022 Nemaha County Comprehensive Planning Survey Executive Summary

Overview

ETC Institute administered a comprehensive planning survey for Nemaha County during the months of fall 2022. The survey will help Nemaha County identify needs and preferences of residents as they begin developing a new comprehensive plan for the county.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to households in Nemaha County. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at *NemahaCountyKSCompPlanSurvey.org*. and entering their unique ID code as printed on their mailed survey.

The goal was to receive a minimum of 400 completed surveys from households in Nemaha County. This goal was far exceeded, with a total of 945 households in Nemaha County completing a survey. The overall results for the sample of 945 households have a precision of at least +/- 2.8% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and amenities
- Benchmarks comparing survey results to national averages (Located in the APPENDICES)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey (Located in the APPENDICES)
- Responses to open-ended questions (Located in the APPENDICES)
- A copy of the survey instrument

The major findings of the survey are summarized on the following pages.

Nemaha County Overall Resident Satisfaction

Rating Quality of Life: Respondents were asked to rate 6 aspects to the quality of life in Nemaha County: as a place to live, raise children, receive an education, work, retire, and overall quality of life. The aspects rating the highest (rating either “excellent” or “good”) were Nemaha County as a place to raise children (90%), as a place to live (87%), and the overall quality of life in Nemaha County (85%). All items received mostly “excellent” or “good” ratings.

Strengths and Weaknesses: Respondents were asked to rate the strength/weakness of 10 aspects of life in Nemaha County. Respondents felt the greatest strengths of Nemaha County (rating either “major strength” or “strength”) were as a safe place to live (89%), place to raise a family (85%), and for agri-business (81%).

Infrastructure: Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with five types of infrastructure in Nemaha County. Respondents were most satisfied (rating either “satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with the quality of bridges (50%) and cellular phone service (48%).

Services: Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with nine types of services in Nemaha County. Respondents were most satisfied (rating either “satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with emergency services (84%), quality of healthcare (68%), and quality of home health care (48%).

Views Regarding the Future of Nemaha County

Top Priorities. Respondents were first asked to rate the importance of 13 issues currently facing Nemaha County. Quality of schools (85%), maintaining/strengthening family values (80%), and attraction/retention of youth and young families (78%) received the most “very important” ratings. Each of the items received mostly “very important” ratings. Then respondents were asked to select the three most important issues for Nemaha County to address over the next five years. These were the items selected most often:

1. Quality schools (34%)
2. Affordable Housing (32%)
3. Attraction/retention of youth and young families (27%)

Retaining and Attracting Residents: Respondents felt the most important traits (rating “very important”) to retaining and attracting residents to Nemaha County were quality schools (85%), job opportunities (84%), and availability of a variety of types of housing (62%). When asked to select the top three most important traits, the same items were chosen most often.

Development in Nemaha County: Respondents were asked to rate their level of support for four types of potential developments in Nemaha County. Respondents were most supportive (rating “very supportive”) of agriculture or agriculture-related development (78%), manufacturing (68%), and retail (67%).

Industrial Wind and Solar Energy

Project Decisions: Respondents were asked to select all the groups they believe should have a say in whether future industrial wind projects are sited in Nemaha County. Over half of respondents felt that any and all residents of the County (63%) and nearby rural homeowners (51%) should be part of the decision-making process.

Support for Additional Industrial Wind Turbines. Respondents were asked to rate their level of support for the addition of more industrial wind turbines in Nemaha County. Most respondents (60%) were either very opposed (48%) or somewhat opposed (12%). When asked how setbacks and restrictions for additional industrial wind turbine projects should be governed, most respondents (51%) said no further industrial wind projects should be allowed anywhere in the County.

Effects of Soldier Creek Industrial Wind Project. Respondents were asked to indicate how they felt the Soldier Creek Industrial Wind Project has affected the county. Respondents most often agreed it helped generate revenue for leased landowners (42%) and the county and township (27%). Respondents felt it most hurt community togetherness (61%), rural character (54%), and aesthetic value (53%).

Support for Industrial Wind Energy Development/Generation. Most respondents (52%) indicated that they do not support industrial wind energy development/generation.

Support for Industrial/Residential/Private Business Solar Development/Generation: The highest percentage of respondents (35%) do not support industrial solar development/generation followed by 34% supporting it in Nemaha County. Almost half of respondents (48%) support residential/private business solar development/generation.

Nemaha County Recreation Facilities and Amenities

Accessibility: Respondents were asked to rate their accessibility to recreation facilities and activities. Respondents felt they had the most access (rating either “excellent” or “good”) to outdoor parks and recreation facilities (63%) and the least access to community arts, theater, music and dance (20%).

Organizations Providing Facilities: Respondents most often felt that the city should have a role in providing recreation facilities (78%) followed by the county (52%) and private sector (54%).

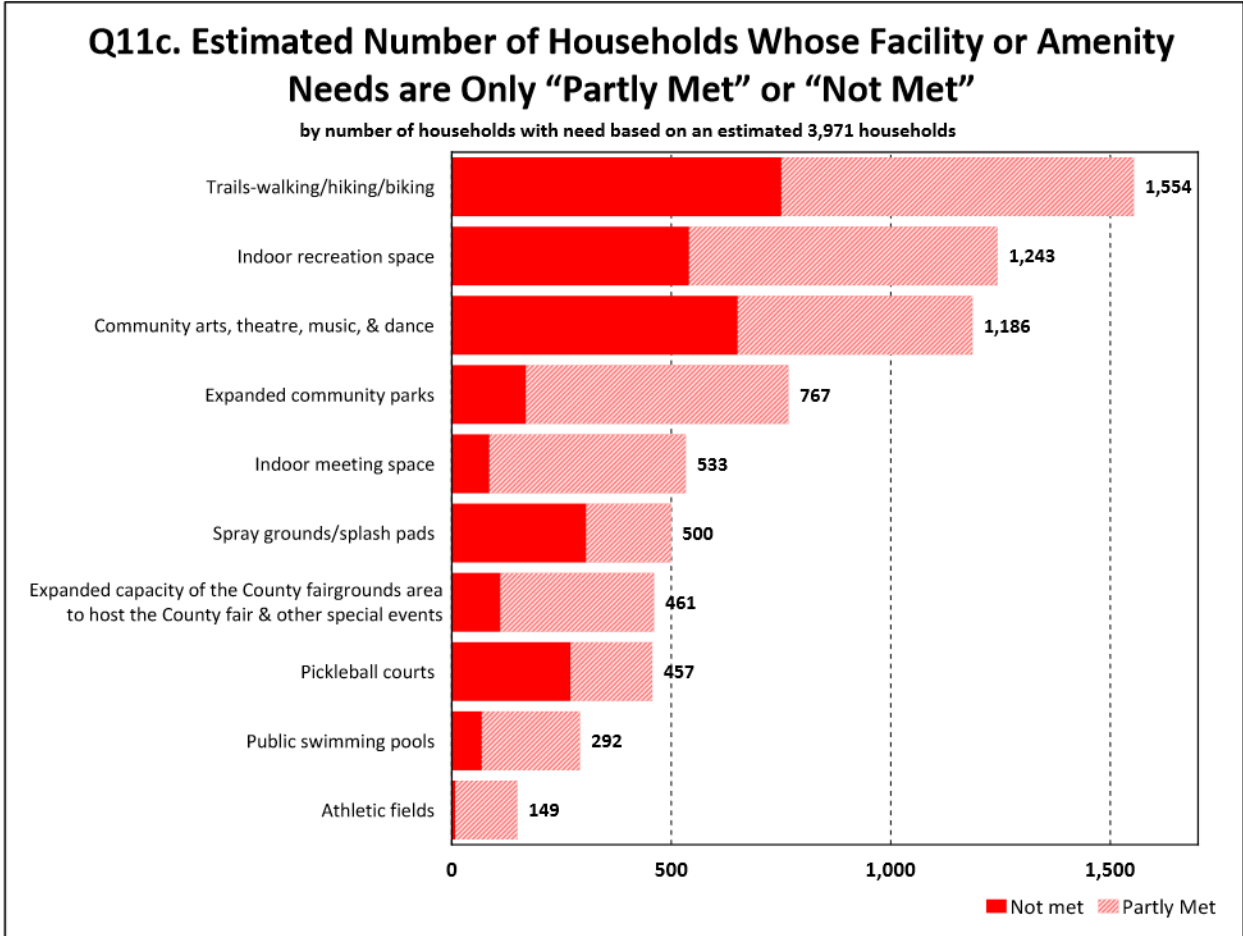
Amenity and Facilities Needs and Priorities

Amenity or Facility Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 10 amenities or facilities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities.

The three amenities or facilities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need:

- 1. Trails—walking/hiking/biking – 1,554 households
- 2. Indoor recreation space – 1,243 households
- 3. Community arts, theatre, music, & dance – 1,186 households

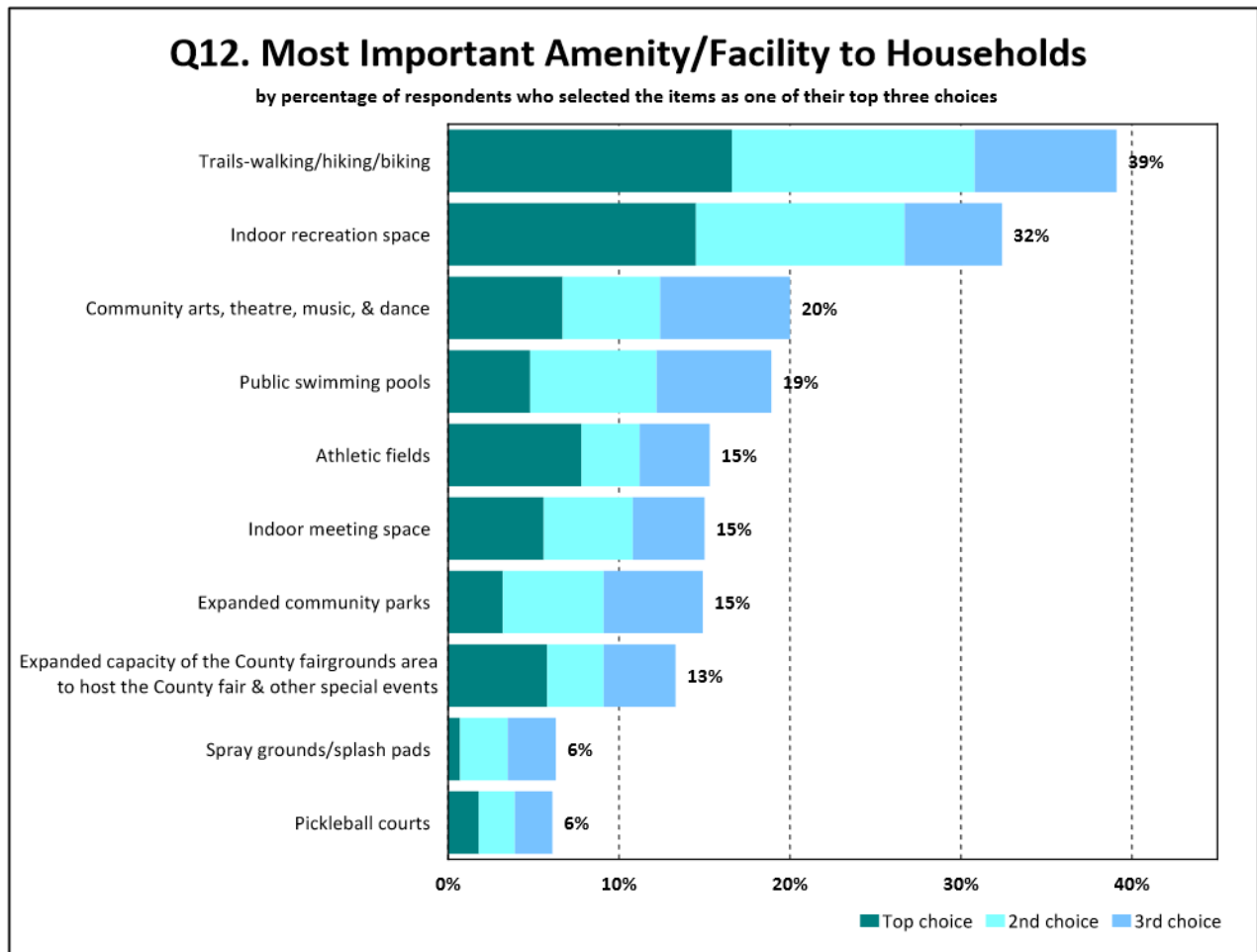
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 10 amenities and facilities assessed is shown in the chart below.



Amenities or Facilities Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each amenity or facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each item. Based on the sum of respondents’ top three choices, these were the three amenities or facilities ranked most important to residents:

1. Trails—walking/hiking/biking (39%)
2. Indoor recreation space (32%)
3. Community arts, theatre, music, & dance (20%)

The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top three choices is shown in the chart below.

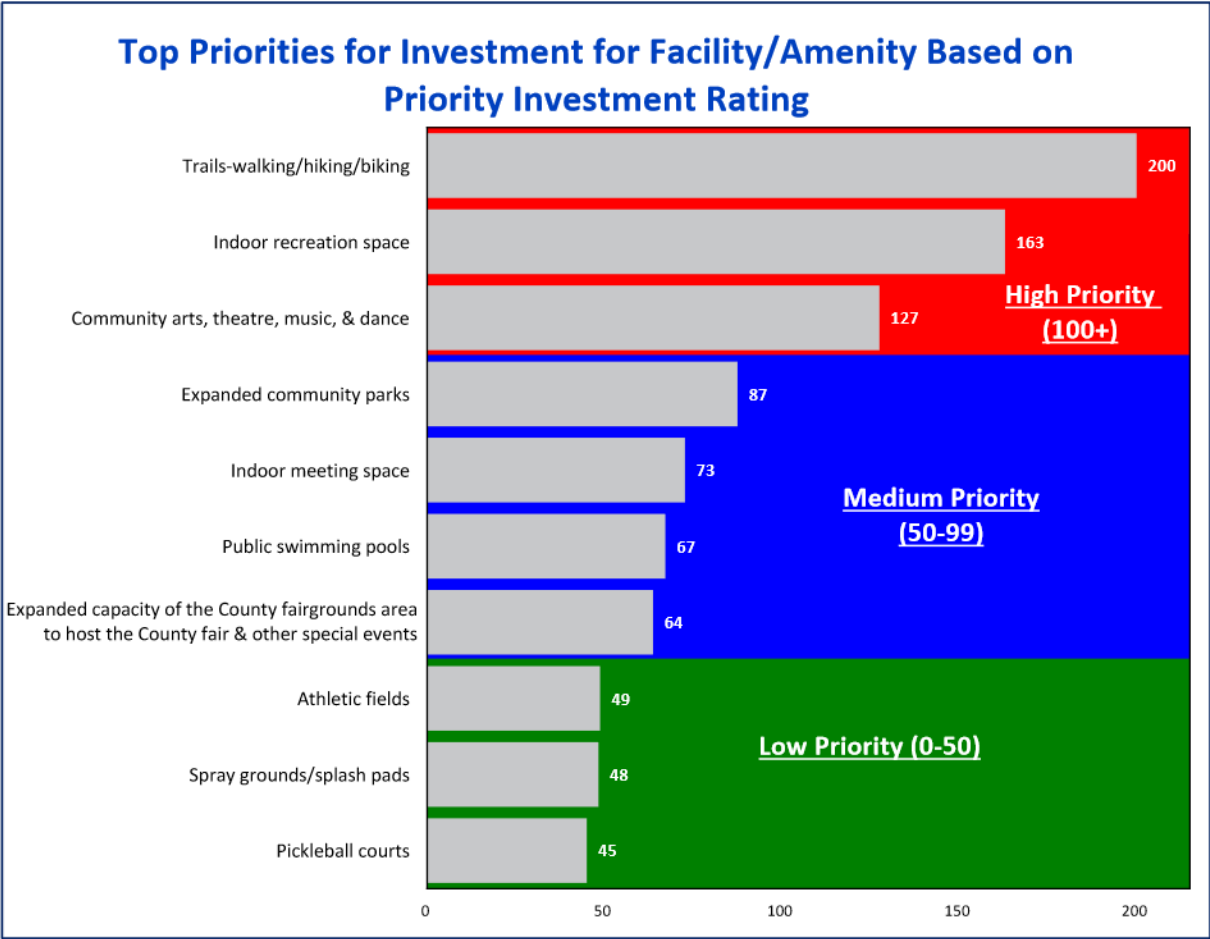


Priorities for Facility Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on amenities/facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the amenity/facility. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following facilities/amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Trails—walking/hiking/biking (PIR=200)
- Indoor recreation space (PIR=163)
- Community arts, theatre, music, & dance (PIR=127)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 10 amenities or facilities assessed on the survey.



Charts & Graphs

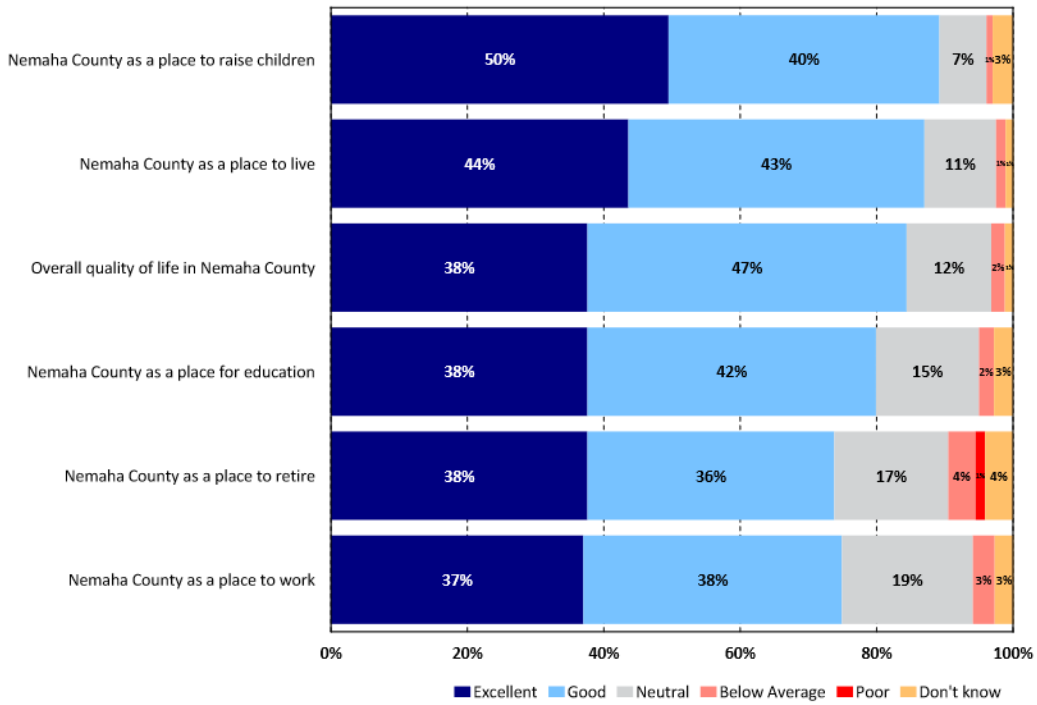
CITIZEN SURVEY

“NOT PROVIDED” DATA

Survey Question and Number	“Not Provided” Responses	Percentage of “Not Provided” Responses as a percentage of Total Number of Responses
17 – Do you support industrial wind energy development/generation?	12	1.3%
18 – Do you support industrial solar development/generation?	16	1.7%
19 – Do you support residential/private business solar development/generation?	20	2.1%
21 – How many years have you lived in Nemaha County?	33	3.5%
23 – What is your gender?	13	1.4%

Q1. Rating Aspects of Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

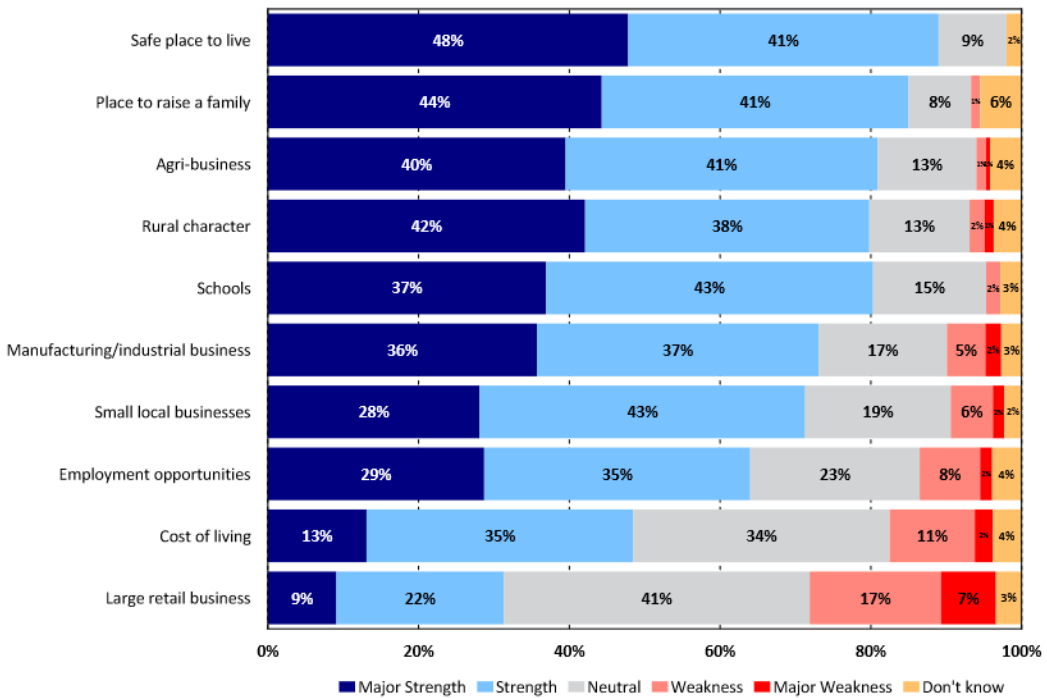


ETC Institute (2022)

11

Q2. Rating Strengths and Weaknesses of Life in Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

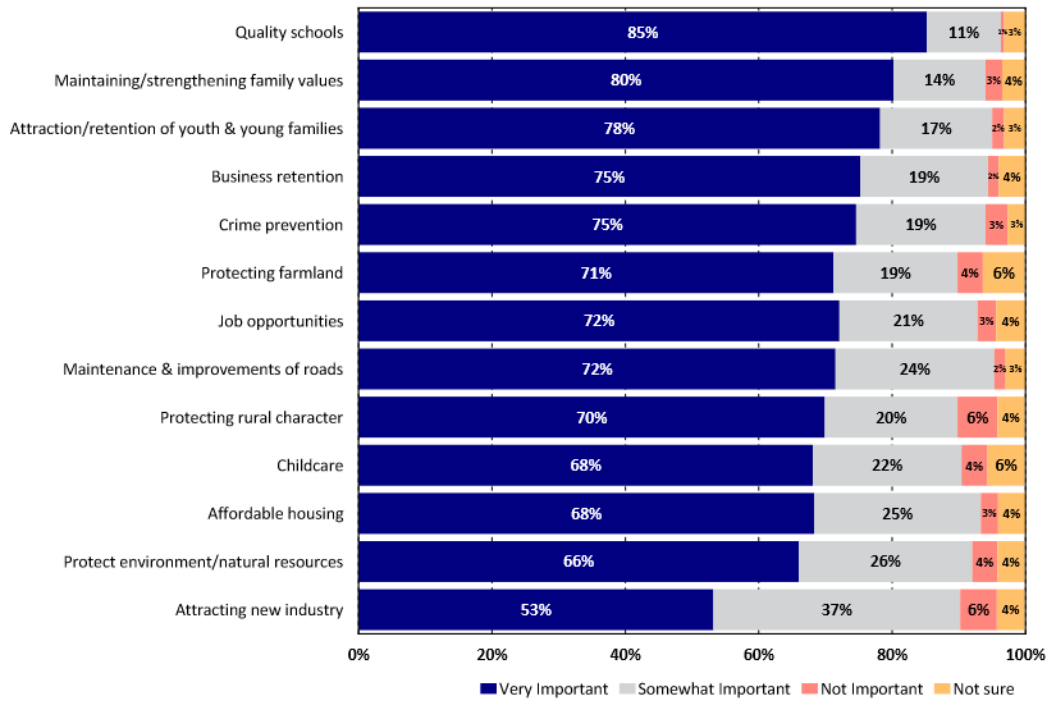


ETC Institute (2022)

12

Q3. Rating Importance of Issues Facing Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

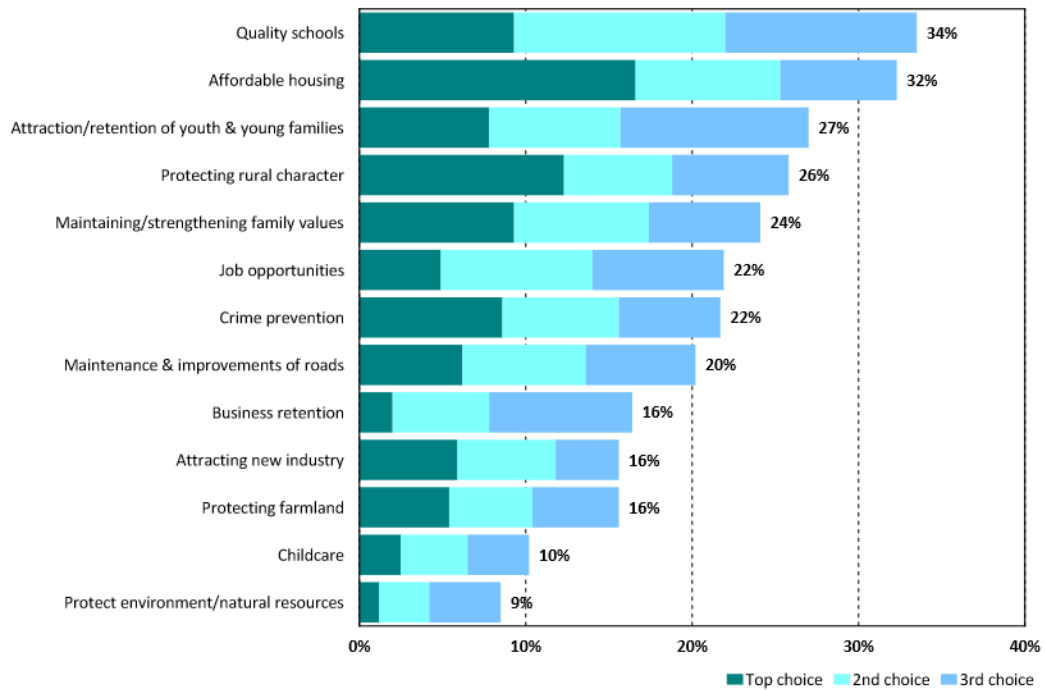


ETC Institute (2022)

13

Q4. Most Important Issues For Nemaha County To Address Over The Next Five Years

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices

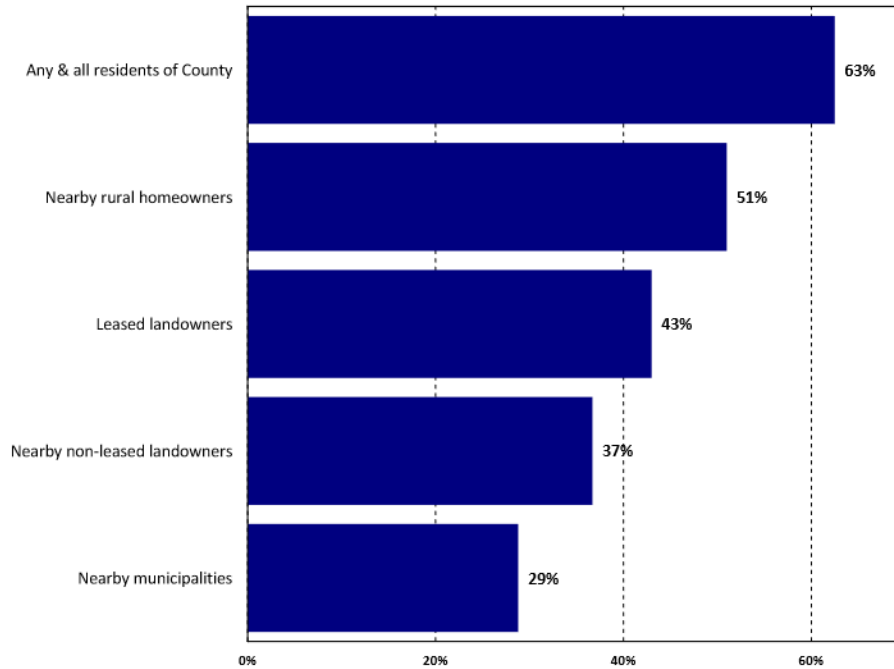


ETC Institute (2022)

14

Q5. Which of the following groups do you believe should have a say in whether future industrial wind projects are sited in Nemaha County?

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)

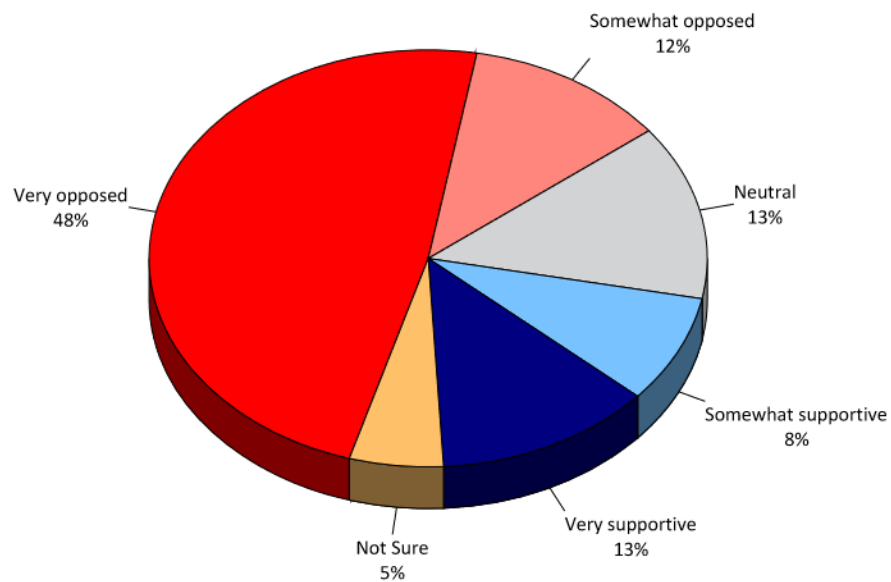


ETC Institute (2022)

15

Q6. How supportive would you be of the addition of more industrial wind turbines in Nemaha County?

by percentage of respondents

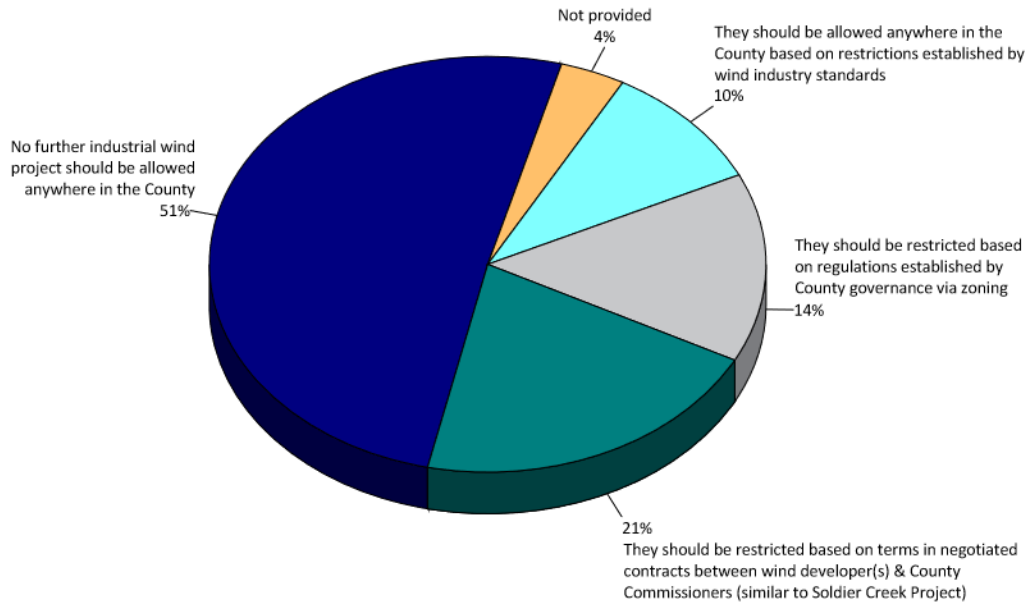


ETC Institute (2022)

16

Q7. If additional industrial wind turbine projects were being considered for Nemaha County, by what means do you feel setbacks and other restrictions should be governed?

by percentage of respondents

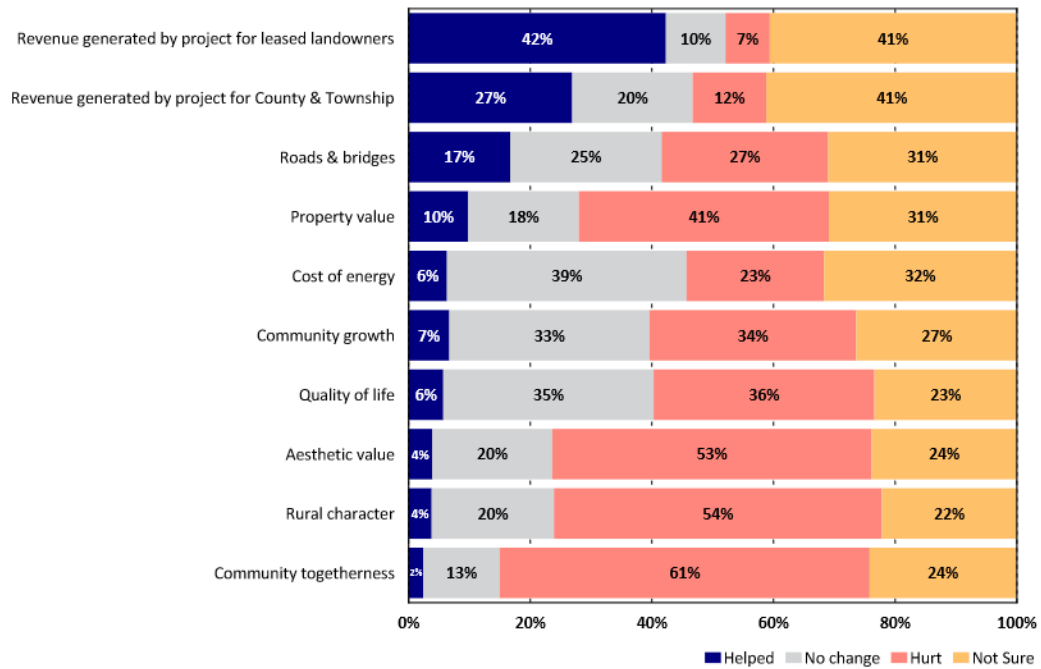


ETC Institute (2022)

17

Q8. How do you feel the Soldier Creek Industrial Wind Project has affected each of the following aspects of the County?

by percentage of respondents

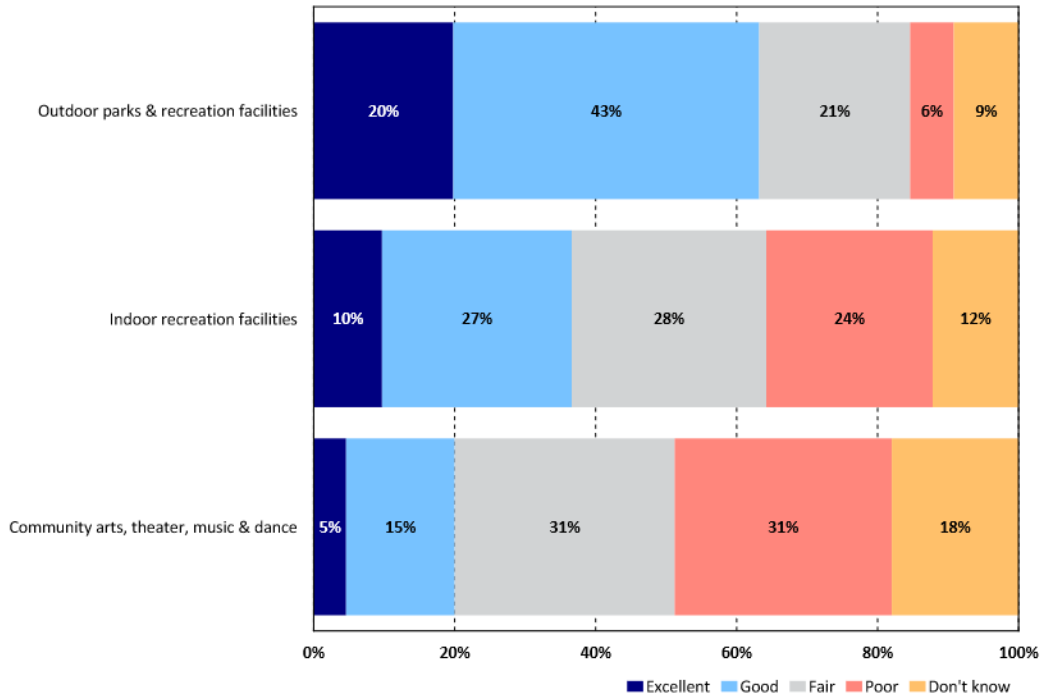


ETC Institute (2022)

18

Q9. Overall, how would you rate your access to the following in Nemaha County?

by percentage of respondents

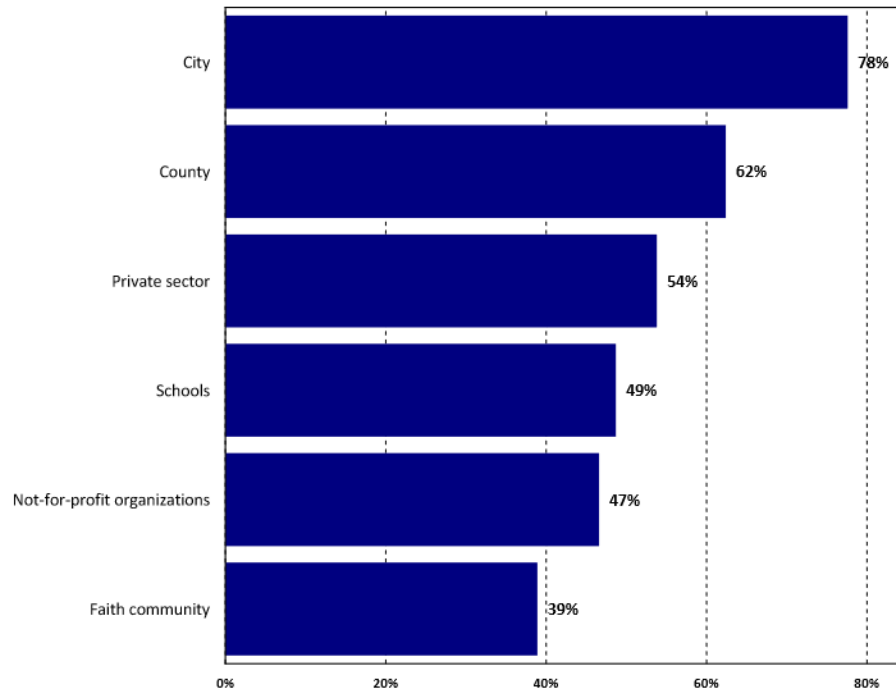


ETC Institute (2022)

19

Q10. What organization(s) should have a role with providing recreation facilities?

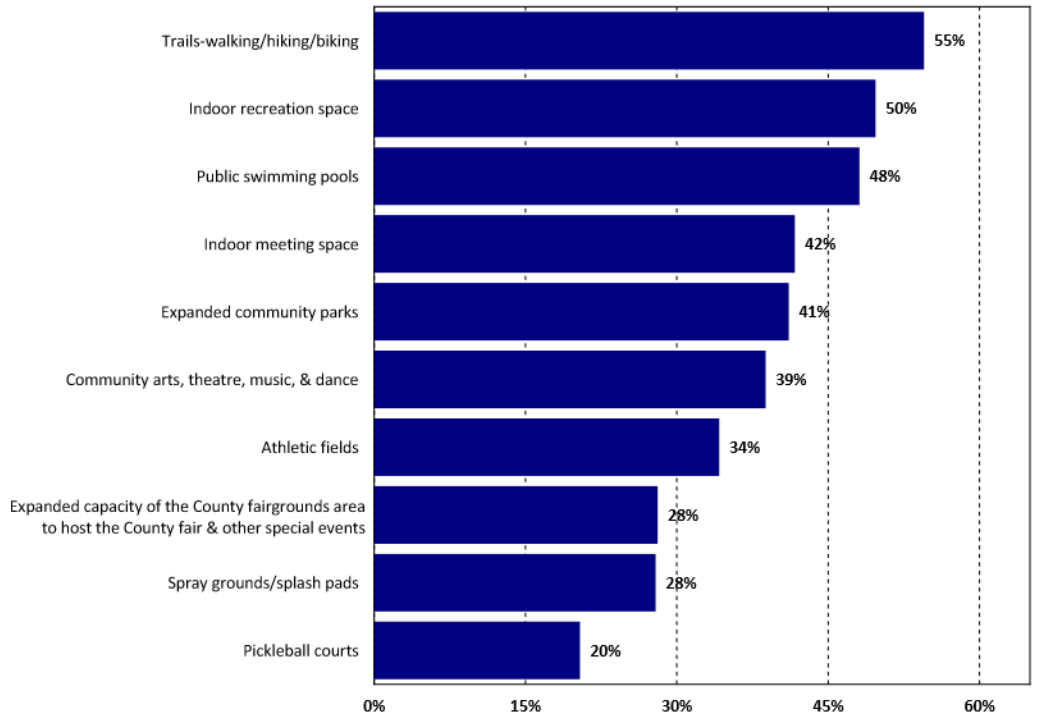
by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



ETC Institute (2022)

20

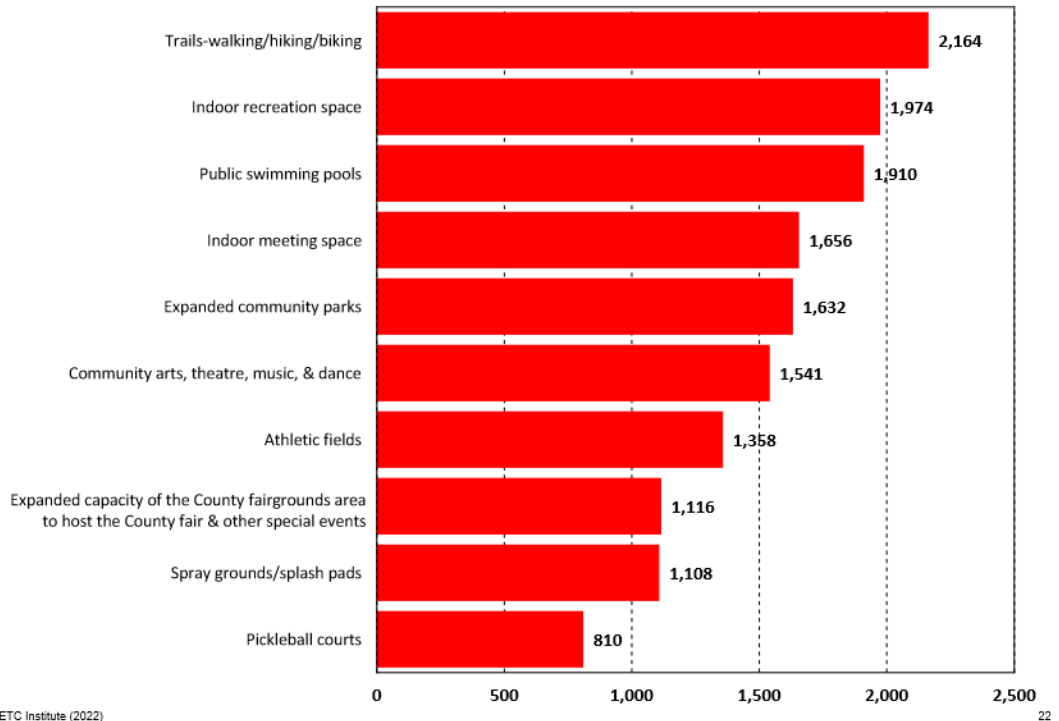
Q11. Respondents With Need for Recreation Facility or Amenity by percentage of respondents



ETC Institute (2022)

21

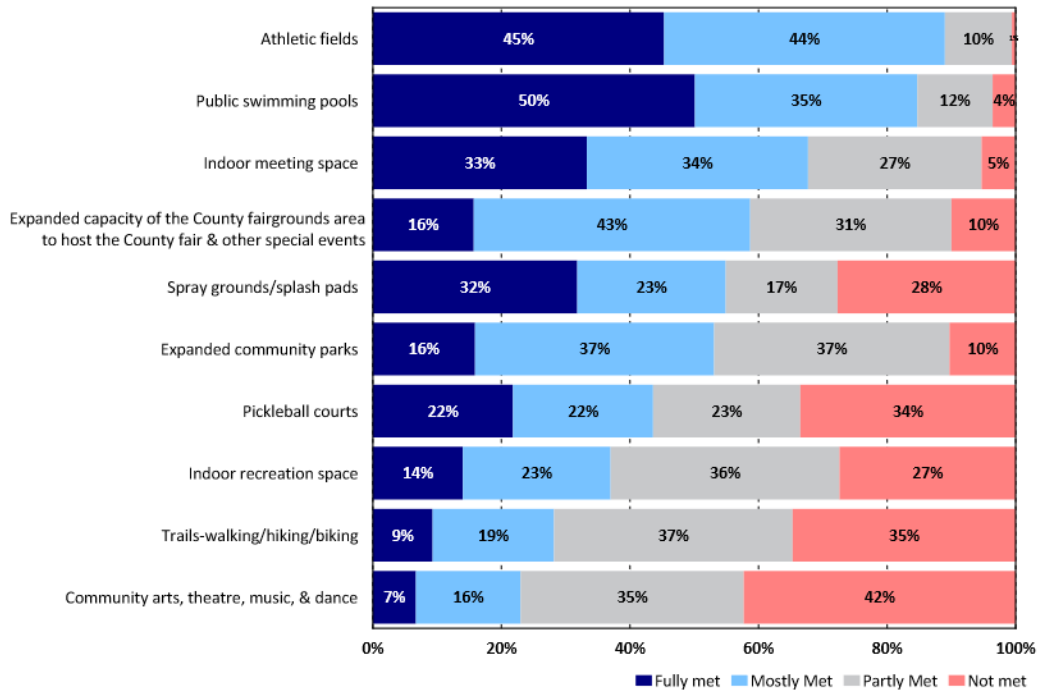
Q11a. Estimated Number of Households With Need for Facility or Amenity by number of households based on an estimated 3,971 households



ETC Institute (2022)

22

Q11b. How Well Households' Need For Amenity or Facility Is Currently Being Met by percentage of respondents who answered "Yes" to Q11

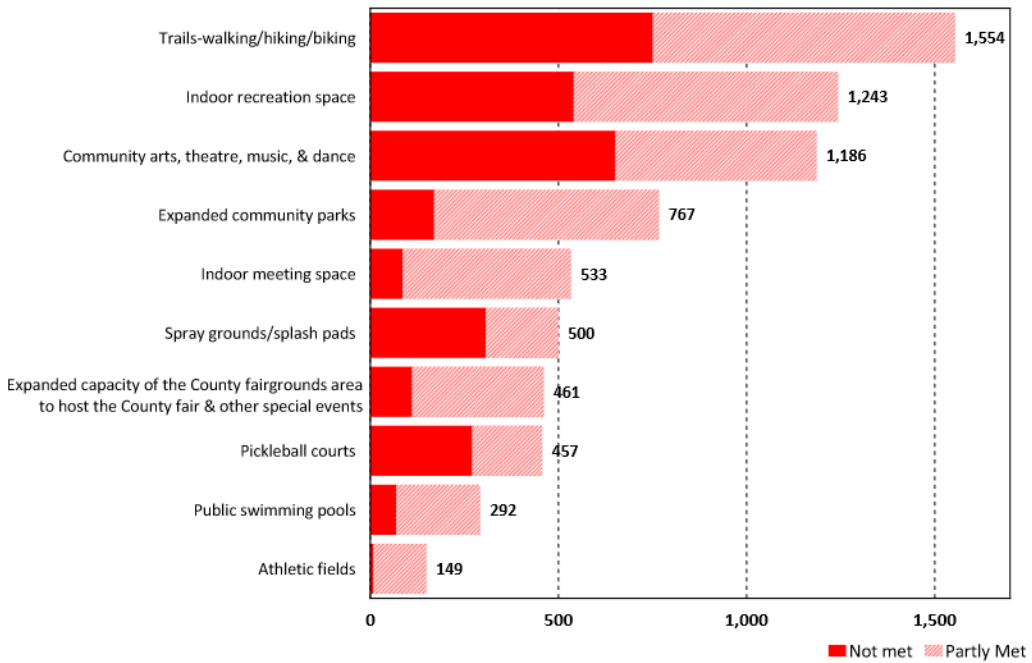


ETC Institute (2022)

23

Q11c. Estimated Number of Households Whose Facility or Amenity Needs are Only "Partly Met" or "Not Met"

by number of households with need based on an estimated 3,971 households

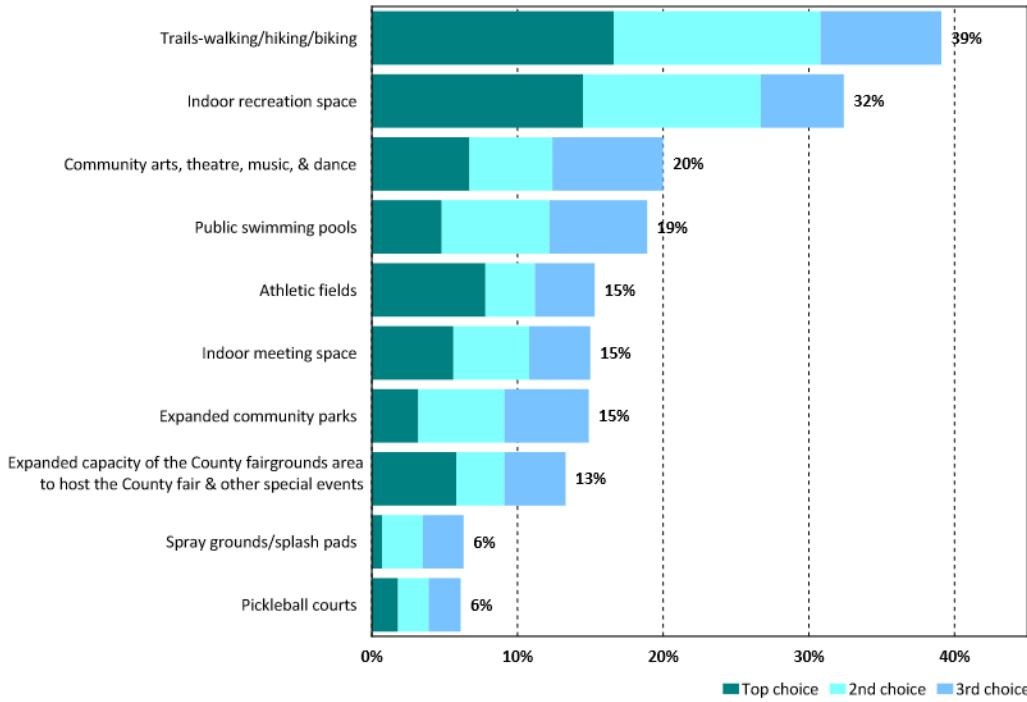


ETC Institute (2022)

24

Q12. Most Important Amenity/Facility to Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices

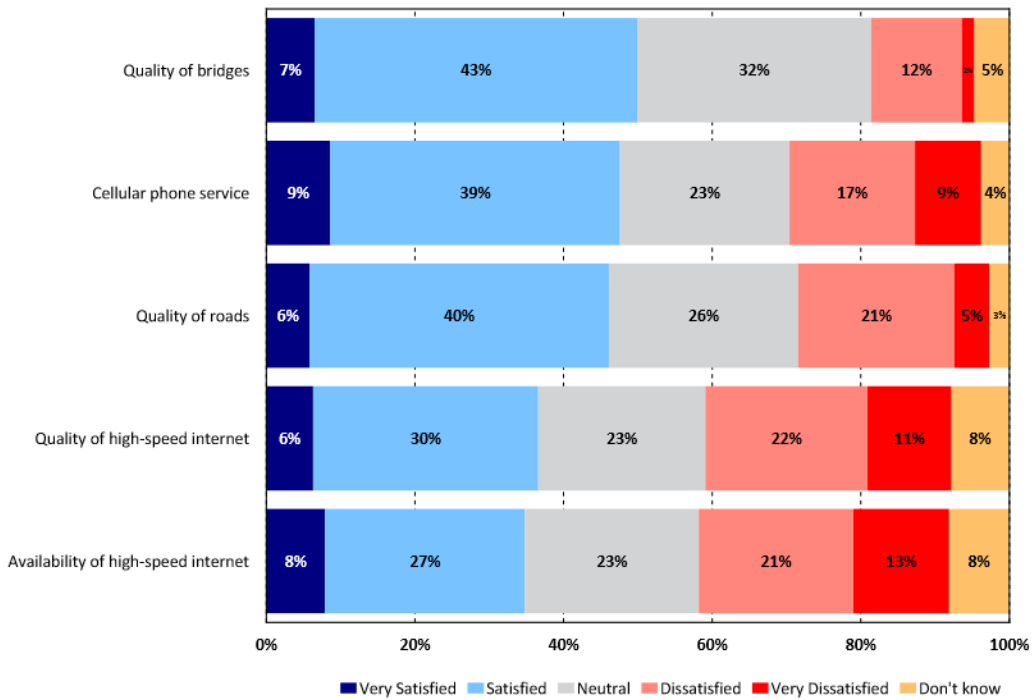


ETC Institute (2022)

25

Q13. Level of Satisfaction Regarding Infrastructure in Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

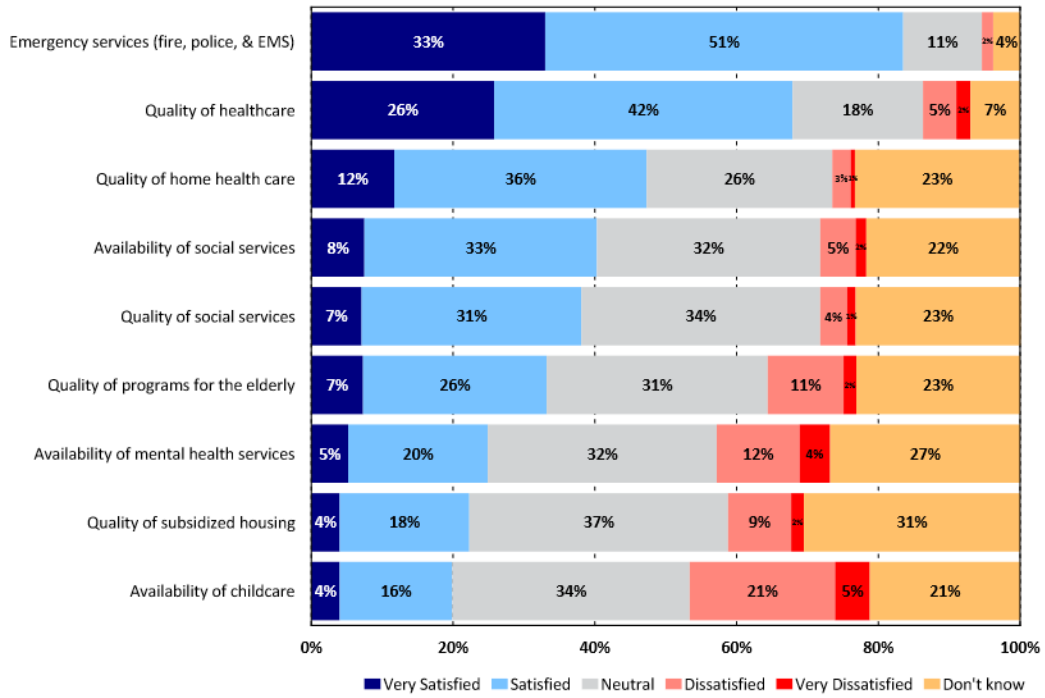


ETC Institute (2022)

26

Q14. Level of Satisfaction Regarding Services in Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

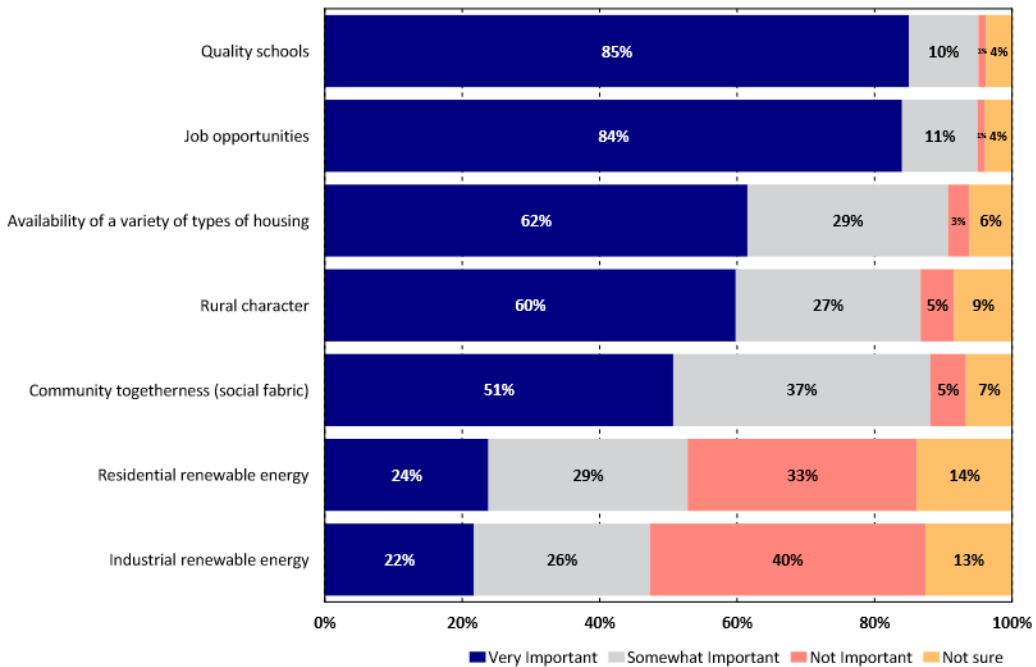


ETC Institute (2022)

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Q15. Please rate how important you feel each of the following traits are in retaining Nemaha County residents and attracting non-County residents to Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

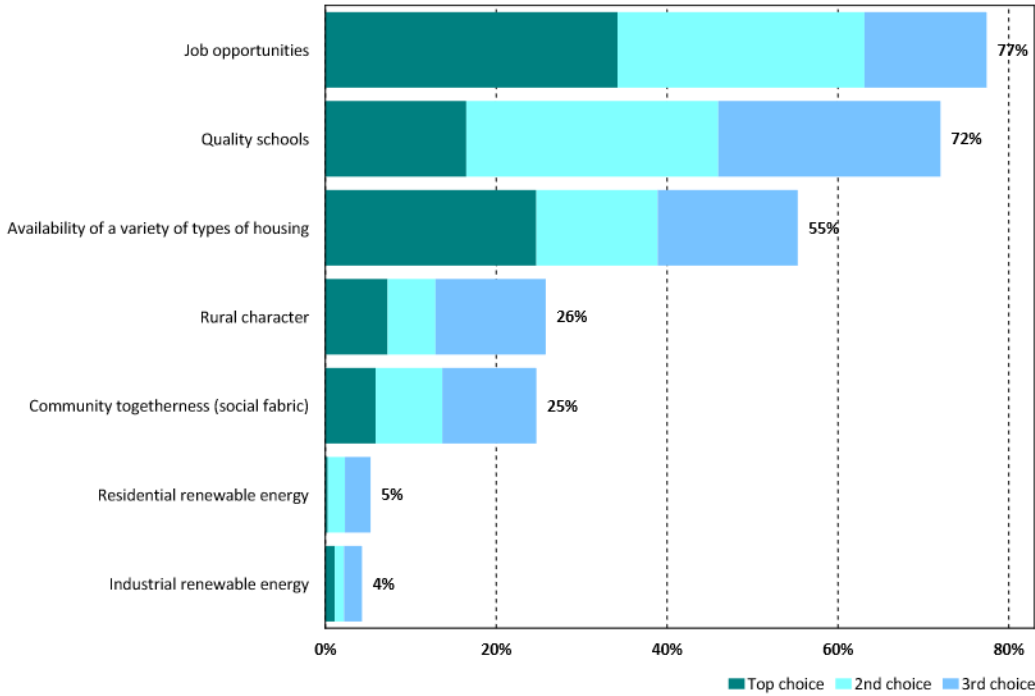


ETC Institute (2022)

28

Q16. Traits Most Important To Respondents

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices

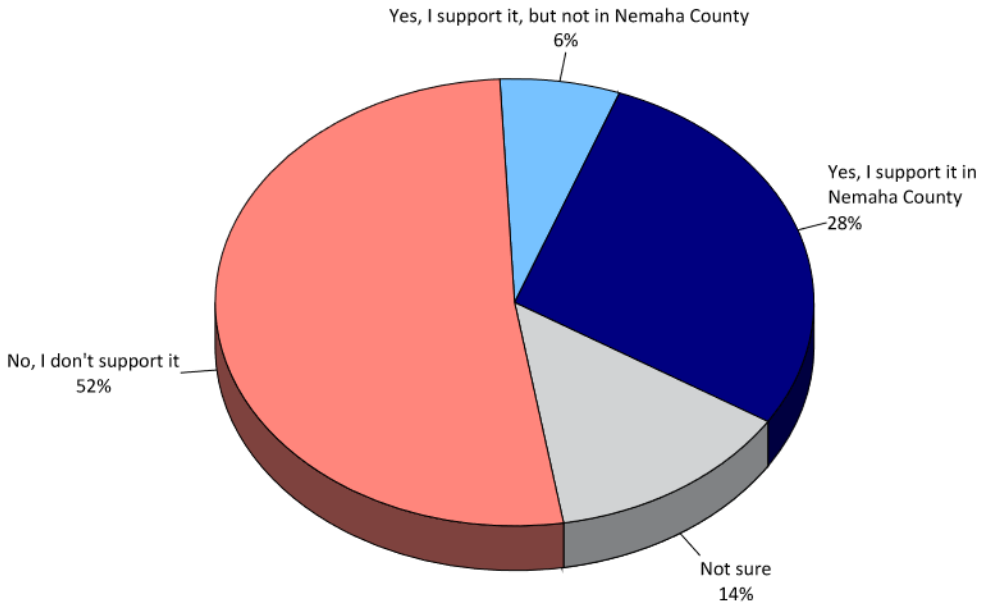


ETC Institute (2022)

29

Q17. Do you support industrial wind energy development/generation?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

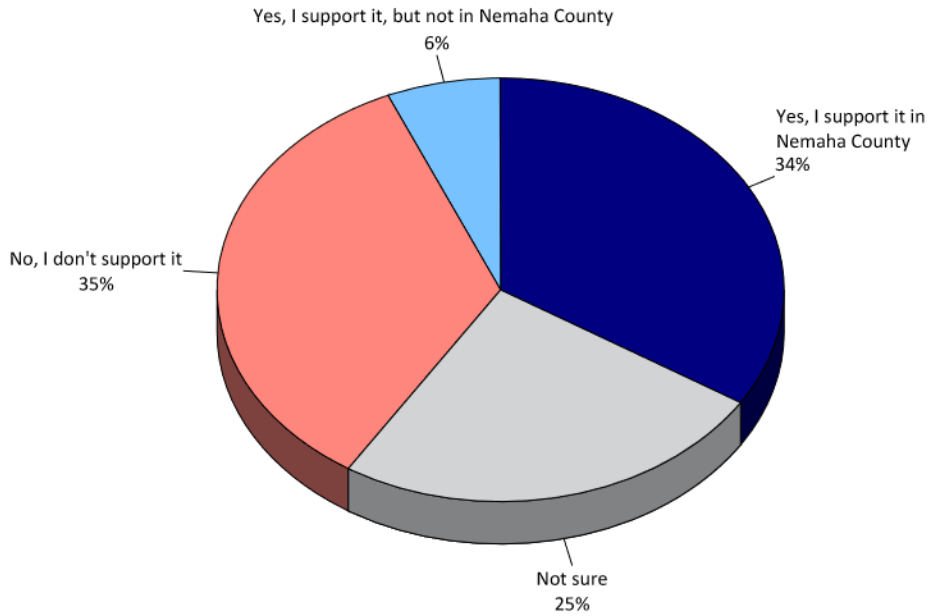


ETC Institute (2022)

30

Q18. Do you support industrial solar development/generation?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

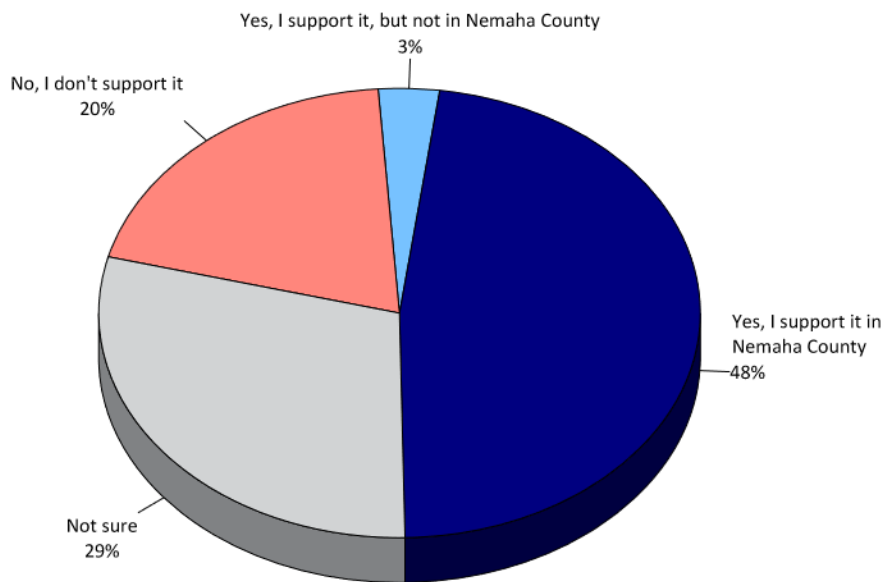


ETC Institute (2022)

31

Q19. Do you support residential/private business solar development/generation?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

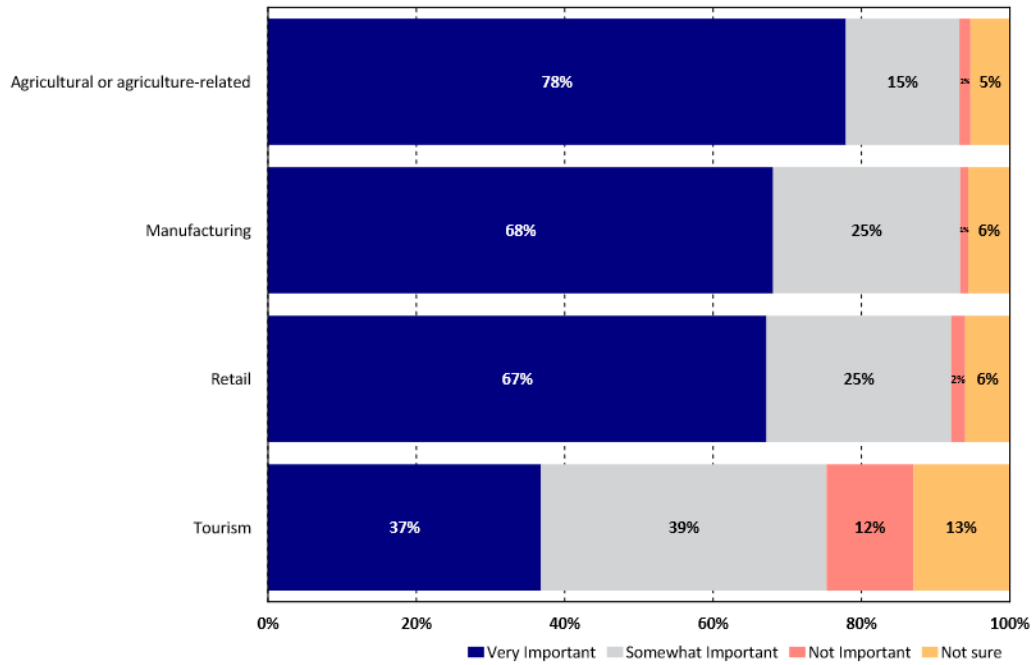


ETC Institute (2022)

32

Q20. Please indicate your level of support for the following types of development in Nemaha County

by percentage of respondents

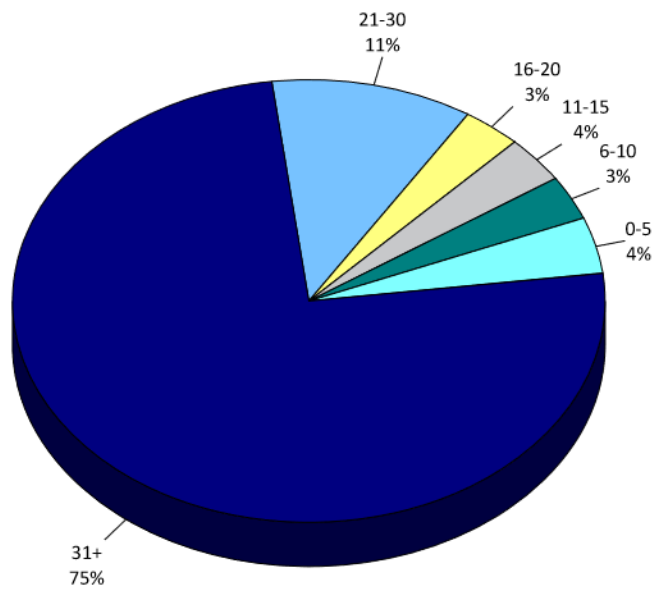


ETC Institute (2022)

33

Q21. How many years have you lived in the Nemaha County?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

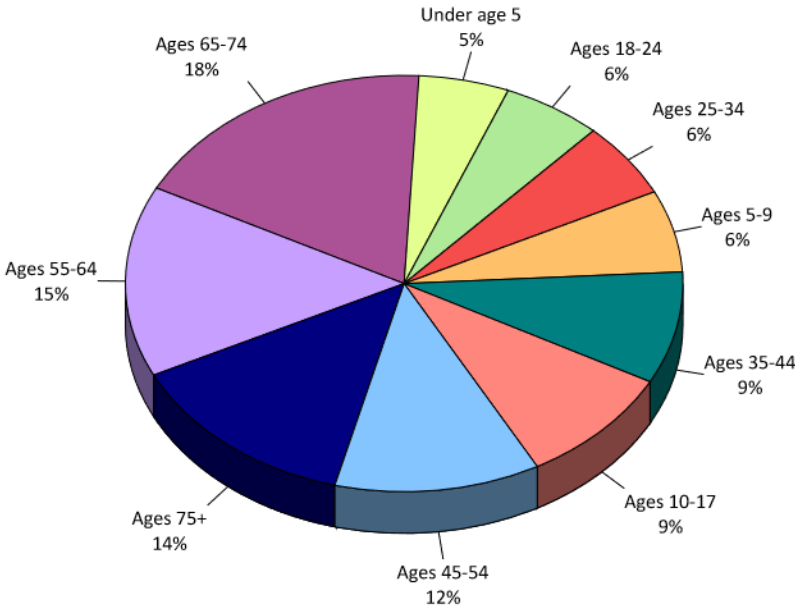


ETC Institute (2022)

34

Q22. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are in the following age groups?

by percentage of persons in household

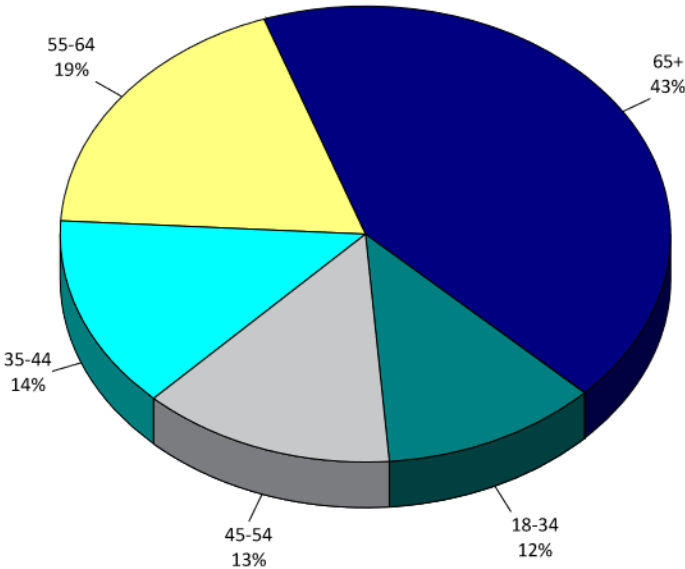


ETC Institute (2022)

35

Q23. Respondent Age

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

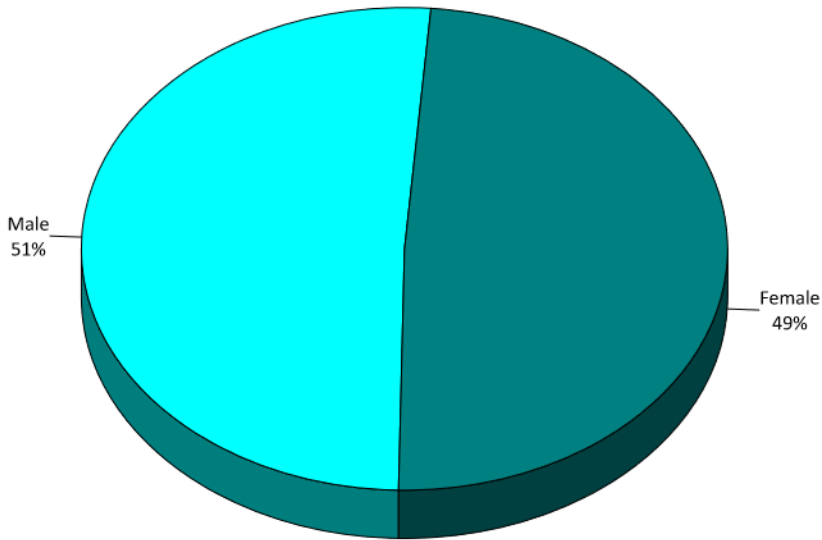


ETC Institute (2022)

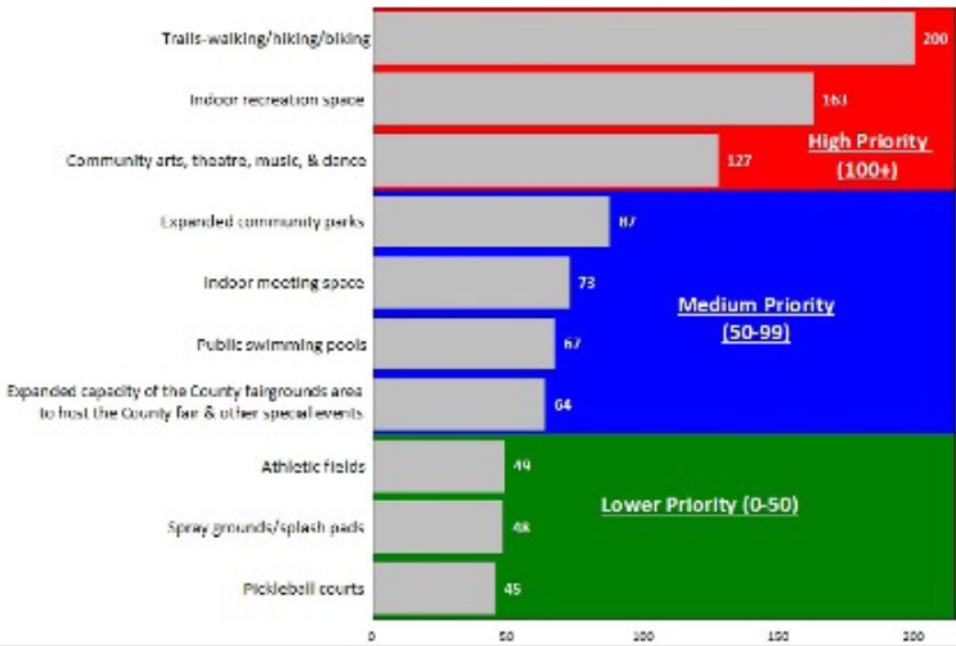
36

Q24. Your Gender

by percentage of respondents



Top Priorities for Investment for Facility/Amenity Based on Priority Investment Rating



Top Priorities for Facilities and Amenities

Priority Investment Rating

Priority Investment Rating

Nemaha County, Kansas

The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide governments with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating was developed by ETC Institute to identify the facilities and programs residents think should receive the highest priority for investment. The priority investment rating reflects the importance residents place on items (sum of top 4 choices) and the unmet needs (needs that are not met or only partly met) for each facility/program relative to the facility/program that rated the highest overall. Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need and the importance of facilities and programs, the PIR weights each of these components equally.

The PIR reflects the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating and the Importance Rating as shown in the equation below:

$$\text{PIR} = \text{UNR} + \text{IR}$$

For example, if the Unmet Needs Rating for Community Gardens were 98.9 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for Community Gardens were 21.6 (out of 100), the Priority Investment Rating for the Farmer's Market would be 120.5 (out of 200).

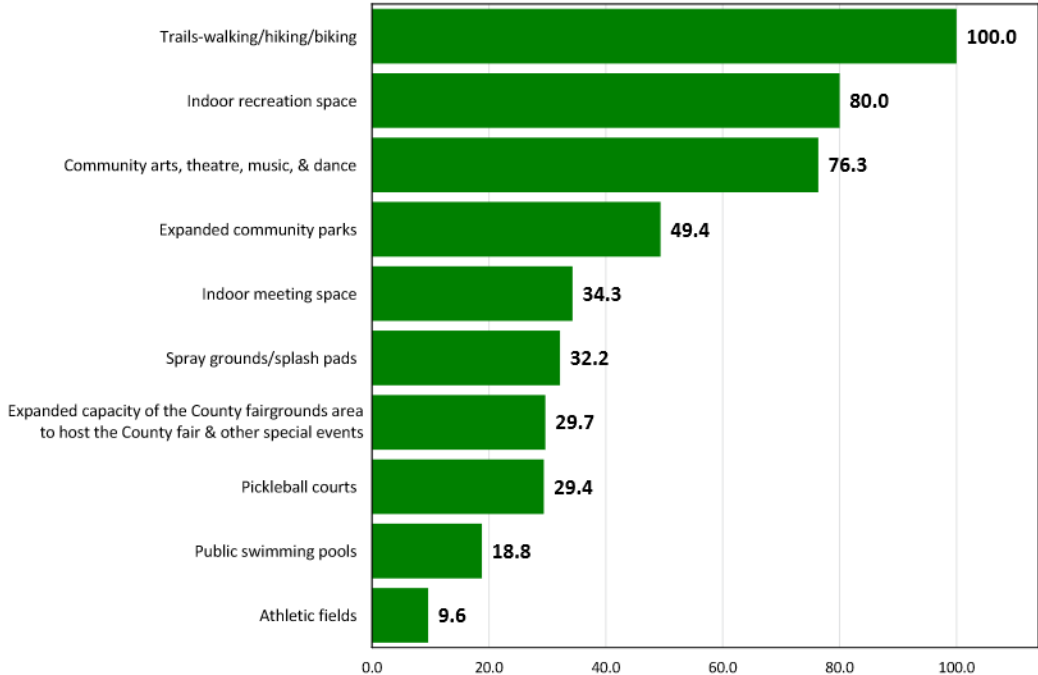
How to Analyze the Charts:

- **High Priority Areas** are those with a PIR of at least 100. A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- **Medium Priority Areas** are those with a PIR of 50-99. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- **Low Priority Areas** are those with a PIR below 50. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

The following pages show the Unmet Needs Rating, Importance Rating, and Priority Investment Rating for facilities and programs.

Unmet Needs Rating for Facility

the rating for the item with the most unmet need=100
the rating of all other items reflects the relative amount of unmet need for each item compared to the item with the most unmet need

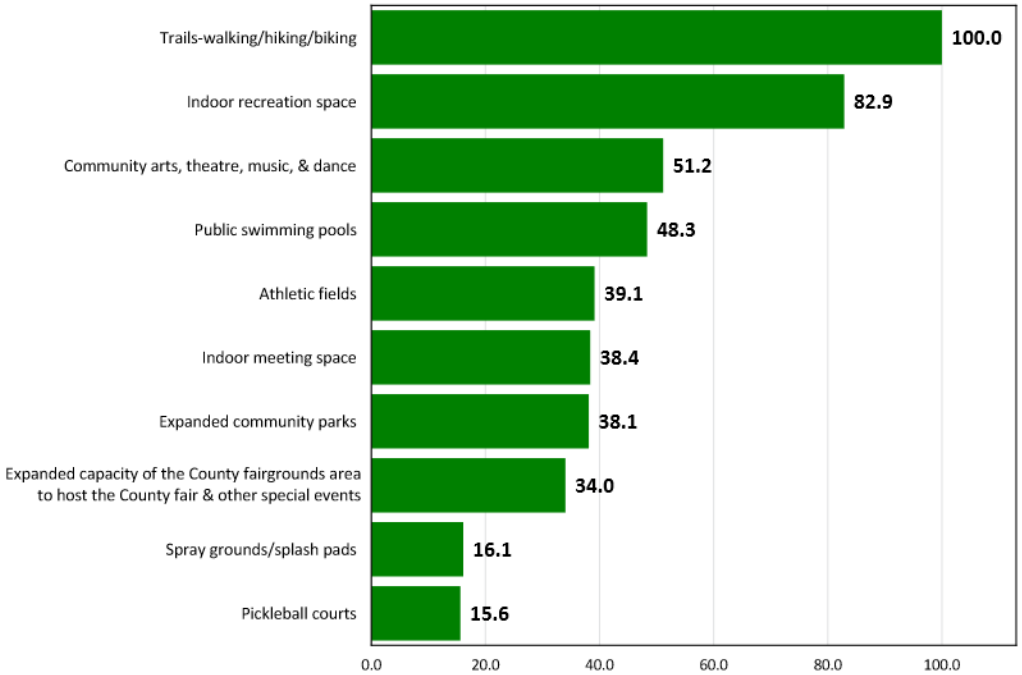


ETC Institute (2022)

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Importance Rating for Facility

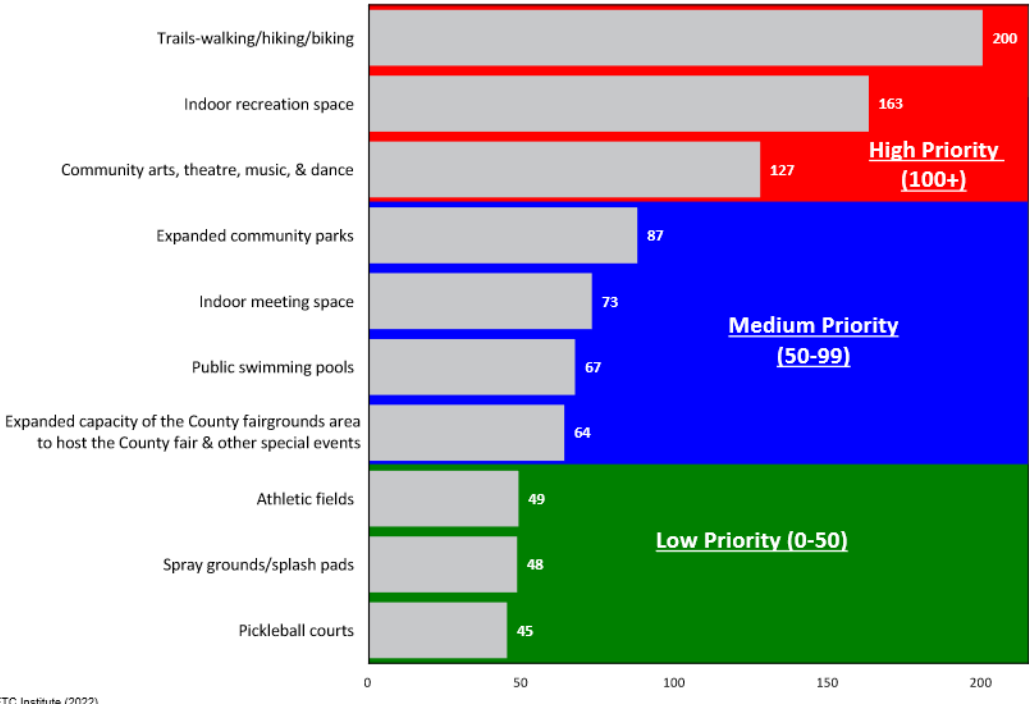
the rating for the item rated as the most important=100
the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important



ETC Institute (2022)

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Top Priorities for Investment for Facility/Amenity Based on Priority Investment Rating



ETC Institute (2022)

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Survey Instrument



Commissioner Gary Scoby, District 1
Commissioner Jason Koch, District 2
Commissioner Dylan Keim, District 3

Nemaha County Kansas

Nemaha County Citizens:

Welcome to the Nemaha County **Citizen Survey!** In 2019 the County Commissioners authorized the formation of an advisory committee to study the state of the County. That original committee has now developed into your Planning Commission with equal representation from each Commissioner District. The Planning Commission has developed this comprehensive survey from the results of interviews with more than 200 county residents representing a wide array of special interest groups.

You now are being provided a unique opportunity to voice your thoughts on a wide range of topics. Each Nemaha County household is receiving this survey and we ask that you complete and return it within a week. The survey was intentionally designed to be completed in a short amount of your time.

Your responses on desired goals and priorities will be compiled with those from the approximately 4,000 other County households and then analyzed by ETC Institute of Olathe, Kansas. ETC is one of the nation’s leading firms in the field of local government research. The results will provide citizen opinion and feedback for future County planning efforts, programs, and services.

The firm will present the results to the County later this year and a complete final report will be available online. Your survey responses are and will remain confidential.

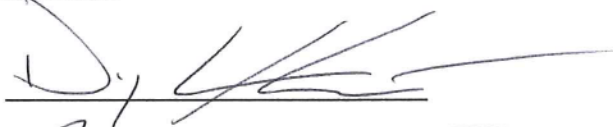
Please return your completed survey within the next week using the postage-paid envelope provided. If you prefer, you may complete the survey online by scanning the QR code on your paper survey, or by going to: NemahaCountyKsCompPlanSurvey.org To complete your survey online in a secure manner, you will need to input the unique ID code you will find printed on your paper survey.

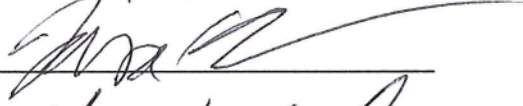
If you have any questions, please contact Dick Horton, consultant to the Planning Commission, at 816.210.3818 or at richardhorton971@gmail.com

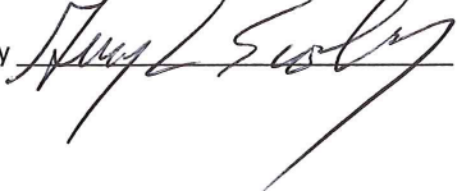
Thank you in advance for your participation and interest in the future of our County!

Sincerely,

Nemaha County Commissioners

Chairman, Dylan Keim 

Co-Chair, Jason Koch 

Member, Gary Scoby 

Nemaha County Planning Commission:

Michael Schmelzle, *Chairman*
Galen Ackerman, *Vice Chairman*

Freda Dobbins
Charity Henry
Lynette Strathman
Martin Schmelzle
Brent Alverson
Bob Ruddick
Andy Grove

Nancy Gafford, *Recording Secretary*



2022 Nemaha County Comprehensive Plan Survey



Nemaha County wants your participation to identify needs and preferences of residents as they begin developing a new Comprehensive Plan for the County. Your input is vital to the ongoing effort to provide quality services for those who live, work, and play in the County. This survey will take only 10 minutes to complete.

You can complete this survey in two different ways:

1. You can fill out this paper survey and mail it back in the postage-paid, reply envelope.
2. You can take the survey online by visiting NemahaCountyKSCompPlanSurvey.org or by scanning the QR code. In order to take the survey online, please input the following unique ID code: _____

If you have questions, please contact Jason Morado with ETC Institute at (913) 254-4514. We greatly appreciate your time!

1. Please rate Nemaha County using a scale of 5 to 1 where 5 means Excellent and 1 means Poor with regard to each of the following.

How would you rate Nemaha County...	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Poor	Don't Know
1. Nemaha County as a place to live	5	4	3	2	1	9
2. Nemaha County as a place to raise children	5	4	3	2	1	9
3. Nemaha County as a place for education	5	4	3	2	1	9
4. Nemaha County as a place to work	5	4	3	2	1	9
5. Nemaha County as a place to retire	5	4	3	2	1	9
6. The overall quality of life in Nemaha County	5	4	3	2	1	9

2. Using a scale of 5 to 1 where 5 is a Major Strength and 1 is a Major Weakness, please rate each of the following aspects of life in Nemaha County.

	Major Strength	Strength	Neutral	Weakness	Major Weakness	Don't Know
01. Cost of living	5	4	3	2	1	9
02. Employment opportunities	5	4	3	2	1	9
03. Place to raise a family	5	4	3	2	1	9
04. Rural character (Low population density, farming, ranch land, nature, and natural resources. Uncluttered viewsheds and night skies, generally quiet environment, close-knit communities.)	5	4	3	2	1	9
05. Safe place to live	5	4	3	2	1	9
06. Schools	5	4	3	2	1	9
07. Small local businesses	5	4	3	2	1	9
08. Large retail business	5	4	3	2	1	9
09. Agri-business	5	4	3	2	1	9
10. Manufacturing/industrial business	5	4	3	2	1	9

3. Please rate how important you feel each of the following issues currently facing Nemaha County are using a scale of 3 to 1 where 3 means Very Important and 1 means Not Important.

		Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
01.	Affordable housing	3	2	1	9
02.	Attracting new industry	3	2	1	9
03.	Crime prevention	3	2	1	9
04.	Job opportunities	3	2	1	9
05.	Maintenance and improvements of roads	3	2	1	9
06.	Protecting farmland	3	2	1	9
07.	Protecting rural character (Low population density, farming, ranch land, nature, and natural resources. Uncluttered viewsheds and night skies, generally quiet environment, close-knit communities.)	3	2	1	9
08.	Quality schools	3	2	1	9
09.	Maintaining/strengthening family values	3	2	1	9
10.	Childcare	3	2	1	9
11.	Protect environment/natural resources	3	2	1	9
12.	Business retention	3	2	1	9
13.	Attraction/retention of youth and young families	3	2	1	9

4. Which THREE of the issues from the list in Question 3 above do you feel are MOST IMPORTANT for Nemaha County to address over the next five years? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 3.]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____

5. Which of the following groups do you believe should have a say in whether future industrial wind projects are sited in Nemaha County? [Check all that apply.]

- (1) Leased landowners
- (2) Nearby non-leased landowners
- (3) Nearby municipalities
- (4) Nearby rural homeowners
- (5) Any and all residents of the county

6. How supportive would you be of the addition of more industrial wind turbines in Nemaha County?

- (5) Very supportive
- (4) Somewhat supportive
- (3) Neutral
- (2) Somewhat opposed
- (1) Very opposed
- (9) Not sure

7. If additional industrial wind turbine projects were being considered for Nemaha County, by what means do you feel setbacks and other restrictions should be governed?

- (1) They should be allowed anywhere in the county based on restrictions established by wind industry standards.
- (2) They should be restricted based on terms in negotiated contracts between the wind developer(s) and County Commissioners (similar to Soldier Creek Project).
- (3) They should be restricted based on regulations established by county governance via zoning.
- (4) No further industrial wind project should be allowed anywhere in the county.

8. The Soldier Creek industrial wind project was recently constructed in Nemaha County. How do you feel this project has affected each of the following aspects of the County?

How has this project affected:		Helped	No Change	Hurt	Not Sure
01.	Revenue generated by project for county and township	3	2	1	9
02.	Revenue generated by project for leased landowners	3	2	1	9
03.	Aesthetic value	3	2	1	9
04.	Community togetherness (social fabric)	3	2	1	9
05.	Cost of energy	3	2	1	9
06.	Roads and bridges	3	2	1	9
07.	Rural character (Low population density, farming, ranch land, nature, and natural resources. Uncluttered viewsheds and night skies, generally quiet environment, close-knit communities.)	3	2	1	9
08.	Community growth	3	2	1	9
09.	Quality of life	3	2	1	9
10.	Property value	3	2	1	9

9. Overall, how would you rate your access to the following in Nemaha County.

How would you rate your access to:		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
1.	Outdoor parks and recreation facilities	4	3	2	1	9
2.	Indoor recreation facilities	4	3	2	1	9
3.	Community arts, theater, music and dance	4	3	2	1	9

10. What organization(s) should have a role with providing recreation facilities? [Check all that apply.]

- (1) City (3) Schools (5) Private sector
 (2) County (4) Faith community (6) Not-for-profit organizations

11. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has a need for each of the following recreation facilities or amenities by circling either Yes or No. If Yes answer the question in the shaded area to the right.

	Facilities/Amenities	Do you have a need for this facility/amenity?		If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?			
		Yes	No	Fully Met	Mostly Met	Partly Met	Not Met
01.	Athletic fields	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
02.	Expanded capacity of the County fairgrounds area to host the county fair and other special events	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
03.	Indoor recreation space	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
04.	Indoor meeting space	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
05.	Pickleball courts	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
06.	Spray grounds/Splash pads	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
07.	Trails - walking/hiking/biking	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
08.	Expanded community parks	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
09.	Public swimming pools	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
10.	Community Arts, Theatre, Music, and Dance	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
11.	Other: _____	Yes	No	4	3	2	1

12. Which THREE of the facilities/amenities from the list in Question 11 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? [Write in your answers below using the item numbers from the list in Question 11, or circle "NONE."]

1st: _____ 2nd: _____ 3rd: _____ NONE

13. Please rate your satisfaction using a scale of 5 to 1 where 5 means Very Satisfied and 1 means Very Dissatisfied, with the following aspects of infrastructure in Nemaha County.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
1. Quality of roads	5	4	3	2	1	9
2. Quality of bridges	5	4	3	2	1	9
3. Quality of high-speed internet	5	4	3	2	1	9
4. Availability of high-speed internet	5	4	3	2	1	9
5. Cellular phone service	5	4	3	2	1	9

14. Please rate your satisfaction using a scale of 5 to 1 where 5 means Very Satisfied and 1 means Very Dissatisfied, with the following services in Nemaha County.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
1. Availability of social services	5	4	3	2	1	9
2. Quality of social services	5	4	3	2	1	9
3. Quality of home health care	5	4	3	2	1	9
4. Quality of healthcare	5	4	3	2	1	9
5. Availability of mental health services	5	4	3	2	1	9
6. Quality of programs for the elderly	5	4	3	2	1	9
7. Quality of subsidized housing	5	4	3	2	1	9
8. Availability of childcare	5	4	3	2	1	9
9. Emergency services (fire, police, and EMS)	5	4	3	2	1	9

15. Please rate how important you feel each of the following traits are in retaining Nemaha County residents and attracting non-County residents to Nemaha County using a scale of 3 to 1 where 3 means Very Important and 1 means Not Important.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
1. Availability of a variety of types of housing	3	2	1	9
2. Community togetherness (social fabric)	3	2	1	9
3. Job opportunities	3	2	1	9
4. Quality schools	3	2	1	9
5. Industrial renewable energy	3	2	1	9
6. Residential renewable energy	3	2	1	9
7. Rural character	3	2	1	9

16. Which THREE of the traits from the list in Question 15 do you feel are MOST IMPORTANT in retaining Nemaha County residents and attracting non-County residents to Nemaha County? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 15.]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____

17. Do you support industrial wind energy development/generation?

- ____(1) Yes, I support it in Nemaha County ____ (3) No, I don't support it
 ____ (2) Yes, I support it, but not in Nemaha County ____ (4) Not sure

18. Do you support industrial solar development/generation?

- ____(1) Yes, I support it in Nemaha County ____ (3) No, I don't support it
 ____ (2) Yes, I support it, but not in Nemaha County ____ (4) Not sure

19. Do you support residential/private business solar development/generation?

- ____(1) Yes, I support it in Nemaha County ____ (3) No, I don't support it
 ____ (2) Yes, I support it, but not in Nemaha County ____ (4) Not sure

20. Please indicate your level of support for the following types of development in Nemaha County using a scale of 3 to 1 where 3 means Very Supportive and 1 means Not Supportive.

	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Supportive	Not Sure
1. Agricultural or agriculture-related	3	2	1	9
2. Manufacturing	3	2	1	9
3. Retail	3	2	1	9
4. Tourism	3	2	1	9
5. Other: _____	3	2	1	9

Demographics

21. How many years have you lived in the Nemaha County? _____ years

22. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

Under 5 years: _____ 18-24 years: _____ 45-54 years: _____ 75+ years: _____
 5-9 years: _____ 25-34 years: _____ 55-64 years: _____
 10-17 years: _____ 35-44 years: _____ 65-74 years: _____

23. What is your age? _____ years

24. Your gender: _____(1) Male _____(2) Female

25. Please share any additional comments you feel are important to this Comprehensive Plan.

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!
 Please return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:
 ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, Kansas 66061

Your responses will remain completely confidential. The address information will ONLY be used to validate responses and to help identify geographic areas with special interests. Thank you.

ENVISION



ENVISION

INTRODUCTION

The 2023 Nemaha County Comprehensive Plan represents the preferred future as expressed by its citizens through the entire public engagement process, by subject matter experts who reside and are professionally employed in the County, and the consultant team.

ENVISION ROADMAP

The consultant’s interpretation of the facts that were harvested during the planning process indicate a roadmap the County Commissioners should follow as the Plan is implemented:

County Commission as a Protector

Intentionally, the citizen survey asked several questions about the benefits of residing in Nemaha County. When compared with ETC’s National Benchmarks, the County rated above or well above average on every metric with the exception of as a place to live where it rated slightly below the national average by 4%. The facts harvested from the citizen survey provide direction for the current and all future County Commissions to protect the County from initiatives that detract from the expressed preferences of its citizens. Over-arching values as expressed in the survey by 83% who said that it is a strength, are captured in this statement as authored by the Planning Commission: *Rural character in Nemaha County is defined as - Low population density, farming, ranch land, nature, and natural resources. Uncluttered viewsheds and night skies, generally quiet environment, close-knit communities.*

Administration and Management

1. The Commissioners should begin, or continue as needed, to take an aggressive approach to the management of the County’s business
2. An aggressive approach to the management of the County’s business can be direct or as a facilitator working with its partners
3. The timing is right for the Commissioners to make a final determination on industrial energy, especially wind turbines. The survey provides citizen preferences on the topic.
4. Direct oversight of the County’s core services is always vital while other important but non-core services can be facilitated with subject matter expert partners
5. Examples of Core and Non-Core Services

Core Service Examples	Non-Core Service Examples
County Management	Housing
Infrastructure (Roads, Bridges, Water)	Childcare
Fair	Social Services
Safety and Security	Parks and Recreation
Natural Resources	Home Health Care

Core Service Investment

1. Infrastructure investments will always be a significant percentage of the County's budget and survey results quantify the improvement that is needed to elevate citizen satisfaction

Non-Core Service Investment

1. Non-core services are extremely important for the sustainability of the County. If the County can identify or create a dedicated funding source to support non-core services, the dollars are needed; however, the County can also support non-core services by acting as a facilitator and encouraging the creation of committees to hi-light key issues and report to the Commission on an annual basis

Economic Development

The following recommendations are needed to maintain and strengthen the county's economy:

1. Continue to support the Glacial Hill Business Resource Center, as requested.
2. Converse with existing broadband providers to determine their existing plans for improving service to ALL Nemaha County residents. Based on those responses, consider whether the County should invest in, secure, support, and offer reliable broadband access in public places around the county, especially for schools, hospitals, and county buildings and facilities.
3. Review all existing Nemaha County economic development incentives. Prepare and adopt additional County economic development incentive policies where and when appropriate.
4. Work with in-County commodity groups, Agri businesses and producers to stay informed as the state develops a center of excellence for alternative crop development and value-added opportunities through the USDA and communicate through communities and ensure the information is openly distributed to the County's farm community members.
5. Actively support the National FFA chapters in Nemaha County. The county government and school districts need to ensure these chapters are actively recognized, funded, and promoted to strengthen their local membership.
6. Consider if and how the County might best support and promote the resources and advanced training programs of the USDA.

Natural Resources

The survey rated the protection of the environment and natural resources below all the other potential issues on the list; however, the consultant believes that the low rating is related to citizens' lack of knowledge on the subject. An ongoing community awareness program should be organized and hi-lighted annually at a County Commission Meeting.

Water Supply

The survey did not test citizens' concerns with the water supply; however, local subject matter experts weighed in to provide in-depth understanding of local conditions and an opportunity for the County Commission to be directly involved or as a facilitator with its partners.

Local Subject Matter Expert Verbatim Comments - Water supply in Nemaha County is rated as "good" by Elmer Ronnebaum, General Manager of the Kansas Rural Water Association. While the rural water districts and cities in Nemaha County presently have good supply sources, upgrades to the distribution systems to meet ever-increasing demand will continue to be necessary. Those improvements include an increase in pipeline size, looping of lines, and increased water storage capacity. Funding sources with subsidized interest rates exist today that were not available when most of the systems were originally constructed. Communities with low-producing wells may need to seek additional sources by contracting with professional geologists to do well exploration (smart test drilling). Generally speaking, the public water systems (cities and RWDs) have done a good job to provide either full service or emergency services through numerous interconnections between the rural water districts and cities. Some systems have long-range capital improvement plans while others do not. Due to consolidation of livestock facilities, some of the rural water districts are not going to be able to directly provide the necessary water supply unless the large users provide their own additional on-site storage. The County should heed these concerns and serve directly or as a facilitator to mitigate them.

Transportation

The County has thrived as a location for agricultural and manufacturing businesses. Its access to transportation as detailed in this document offers citizens who have chosen to live in the County the options that are needed to meet their individual and community goals. Quality/satisfaction with roads and bridges was tested in the survey and citizens rated bridges at 53% and 48% for roads.

Citizen Preferences expressed in the county-wide survey

Citizen preferences provide factual data that the Commissioners should use to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

- Residents Have a Very Positive Perception of Nemaha County
 - 92% Rated Nemaha County as an Excellent or Good Place to Raise a Family
 - 88% Rated Nemaha County as an Excellent or Good Place to Live
- Most Important Issues for the County to Address Over the Next Five Years:
 - Quality Schools
 - Affordable Housing
 - Attracting/Retaining Youth and Young Families
 - Protecting Rural Character
 - Maintaining/Strengthening Family Values
- 64% of Respondents Are Opposed of the Addition of More Industrial Wind Turbines in Nemaha County; 22% Are Supportive
- Top Priorities for Parks and Recreation Facilities and Amenities:
 - Walking/Hiking/Biking Trails
 - Indoor Recreation Space
 - Community Arts, Theatre, Music, Dance
- Most Important Factors in Retaining Residents and Attracting New Residents:
 - Quality Schools
 - Job Opportunities
 - Availability of a Variety of Types of Housing

CORE SERVICES



CORE SERVICES



APPENDICES

The 2023 Nemaha County Comprehensive Plan APPENDICES will be a separate document from the Comprehensive Plan Document. Each stand-alone document can be found at the County Website:

<https://www.nmcoks.us/planning-commission>

- Citizen Survey Benchmarks
- Citizen Survey Open-Ended Responses
- Citizen Survey Tabular Data
- Nemaha County Commission District Map
- Nemaha County Township Map
- Nemaha County Roads and Cities Map
- Nemaha County Fire Districts Map
- Nemaha County Unified School Districts Map
- Nemaha County Electric Map
- Nemaha County EMS Districts Map
- Location Map of Nemaha County to other Counties
- Nemaha County Citizen Survey Promotional Newspaper Ad



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