



2010 Economic Development Strategic Plan



Economic Development
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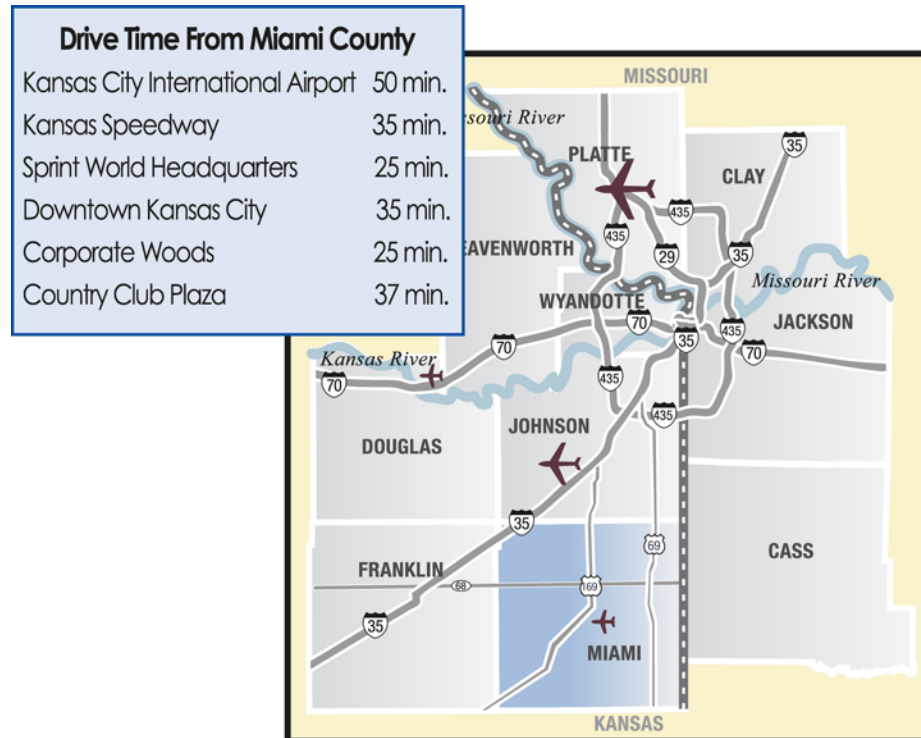
Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Review of Previous Strategic Plans	4
Tier One	4
Tier Two	4
Tier One Strategic Action Items	4
Relationship Building.....	4
Economic Data Collection and Resources.....	5
Infrastructure.....	6
New business identification and recruitment.....	7
Existing business retention and expansion.....	7
Tier Two Strategic Action Items	8
Workforce Training and Education.....	8
Housing.....	8
Tourism.....	9
2010 Strategic Plan.....	10
Department Summary	10
2010 Strategic Issues:	10
Tier One	10
Tier Two	10
Gathering Input	11
Tier One Strategic Action Items	11
Relationship Building.....	11
Economic Data Collection and Resources.....	12
Infrastructure.....	13
New business identification and recruitment.....	14
Existing business retention and expansion.....	15
Tier Two Strategic Action Items	16
Workforce Training and Education.....	16
Housing.....	16
Tourism.....	17
Appendix A - Contact Data Sheet.....	18
Appendix B - List of Incorporated Cities.....	19
Appendix C - Miami County Resolution of Support and Resolution Confirming Existence of a Regional Economic Development Organization.....	20
Appendix D - Articles of Incorporation for Greater Miami County Economic Development Corporation	21
Appendix E - By-Laws for Greater Miami County Economic Development Corporation.....	22
Appendix F - Statement of Purpose for Greater Miami County Economic Development Corporation	23
Appendix G - Operating Guidelines for Greater Miami County Economic Development Corporation	24
Appendix H - Community Resolutions of Support.....	25
Appendix I - Opinion Letter from Miami County	26
Appendix J - Schedule for Plan Revisions and Reviews	27
Appendix K - Strategic Plan Update Participants.....	28
Appendix L - Miami County Statistical Profile	29
Appendix M - Miami County Comprehensive Plan	30
Appendix N - Miami County Incentives Procedures.....	31

Introduction

The Miami County Economic Development Department is funded fully by the county's general fund. Leaders of Miami County have identified economic development as a vital component of sustaining and improving the rural county's quality of life.

Located in the southern tier of the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area, the region is experiencing pressure from all sides. Bordering counties include Anderson, Johnson, Douglas, Franklin and Linn in Kansas along with Cass and Bates in Missouri.



The county once faced the challenges of a declining population but has now begun facing the new challenges created by a growing economy. The 18th largest county in Kansas, Miami County has been among the top five fastest growing counties for almost a decade. Based on Kansas' certified population counts from 2000 and 2008, the county grew at more than twice the rate of the entire state.

The county remains rural in character with many new residents selecting the county as their new home based on quality of life factors. These intangible traits were supported by lower land costs that allowed residents to move from suburban settings to a more spacious area for a comparable investment. As Miami County landowners begin investing the capital needed to fund infrastructure improvements to their property, those land price differentials are likely to lessen.

As a regional hub for development, Miami County's Economic Strategic Plan is an effort to responsibly plan for the future while providing guidance to the volunteers and staff responsible for improving the county's economic climate.

Miami County's economic development efforts first took seed in 1991. Then known as the Miami County Economic Development Corporation, the group worked with what was then known as the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing. The plan initially created in 1993 was later reviewed and updated in 1997. The Kansas Center for Community Economic Development assisted the organization with its 1999 review. During those years, the non-profit entity was funded jointly by donations and by local governmental entities.

During December of 2000, the organization dissolved and became a function of county government. The Greater Miami County Economic Development Corporation was created as an arm of the Miami County's Economic Development Department. The governing board established for the corporation also functions as an advisory board for the county department's staff.

This plan is the result of many hours volunteered by local leaders dedicated to sustain and expanding their community's economic base. It is an update to the 2004 and 2007 plans submitted to the Kansas Department of Commerce.

Review of Previous Strategic Plans

As an update to the 2004 and 2007 plans, it is important to first note the plan's successes and challenges. The hard work of the local leaders, volunteers and county staff members resulted in progress in several areas.

In 2007, the strategic issues included two tiers of priorities.

Tier One

- *Relationship Building* -- Build relationships between community leaders representing Miami County's economic interests on a regional, state and national level
- *Economic Data Collection and Resources* -- Gather and maintain economic data providing crucial information for businesses considering an expansion or new location including a retail and commercial analysis to assist with identifying potential opportunities
- *Infrastructure* -- Aid communities facing infrastructure challenges that limit economic development opportunities including utilities and transportation networks
- *New business identification and recruitment* -- Assist communities with their business recruitment efforts
- *Existing business retention and expansion* -- Assist communities with their business retention efforts

Tier Two

- *Workforce Training and Education* -- Monitor workforce trends while identifying opportunities and resources for training
- *Housing* -- Aid communities utilizing economic development tools to revitalize existing neighborhoods and develop new housing stock
- *Tourism* -- Promote Miami County's successes and tourism opportunities

Community leaders identified tasks within each tier with established partners and timeframes for completion. Progress toward those goals was measured in monthly, quarterly and annual reports sent to representatives of each community.

Tier One Strategic Action Items

Relationship Building

Build relationships between community leaders representing Miami County's economic interests on a regional, state and national level

Achievements included:

- The county's chambers of commerce coordinated meetings to provide community members with legislative updates during the session.
- County and local leaders encouraged others to participate in Leadership Miami County and will serve as resources to the organizing committee.
- The countywide interlocal government meeting included an opportunity for elected officials and their lead staff members to discuss local initiatives.
- City and county representatives met to discuss specific development issues.

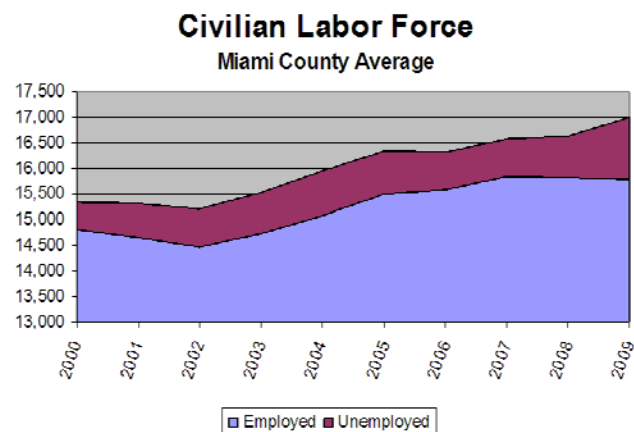
- County staff was actively involved in organizations such as Kansas City Area Development Council and Kansas Economic Development Association.
- County staff was an active participant in local, regional and national training programs to improve skills and network with peers.
- Lead staff members from the county's chambers of commerce and the Economic Development Director met to exchange ideas and consider joint projects.
- Members of the Economic Development Advisory Board regularly reported to their area of representation.
- County departments were encouraged to form "roundtable" groups with local jurisdictions to discuss issues of common interest.
- The county's chambers of commerce and Miami County Economic Development Department exchanged newsletters and articles to keep one another informed of projects.
- Local governing boards exchanged meeting agendas to keep one another informed of pending decisions.
- County departments were encouraged to form "roundtable" groups with local jurisdictions to discuss issues of common interest.
- Training and support for the region's nonprofits was provided in an effort to help them fill community needs.

Economic Data Collection and Resources

Gather and maintain economic data providing crucial information for businesses considering an expansion or new location including a retail and commercial analysis to assist with identifying potential opportunities

Achievements included:

- Economic indicators, costs of living and demographics were obtained from CERI, Kansas Public Policy and Research, Docking Institute and other research sources.
- A mechanism was created allowing local entities and developers to create trade area profiles.
- Refined and implemented a process for each city to regularly submit and receive updated demographic data.
- LocationOne was used as the primary repository of data on available sites and buildings.
- Building permit data was tracked for each community and the county. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.
- Labor force availability and climate was tracked for the region. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.
- Personal and real property assessed valuation data for each city and the county was tracked for trends. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.
- Mill levy data for each city and the county was tracked for trends. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.



- Sales tax revenue for each city and the county was tracked for trends. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.
- Crime rates were monitored for each city and the county was tracked for trends. Data generated was shared with local jurisdictions.
- Key economic climate indicators were identified and tracked for peer counties and communities.
- The planning department created a survey method for gathering customer satisfaction feedback with the data assisting the department by identifying possible changes.
- Staff worked with other regional partners to consider a program of “site certification.”
- A mechanism was created allowing local entities and developers to generate trade area profiles.
- A process was refined and implemented for each city to regularly submit and receive updated demographic data.
- The demographic data collected was used to update marketing materials for the county and its communities.
- Staff assisted the planning department with the creation of a survey to measure client satisfaction.

Infrastructure

Aid communities facing infrastructure challenges that limit economic development opportunities including utilities and transportation networks

Achievements included:

- Information regarding grant sources and loan programs was shared with county and local officials.
- Staff members participated in discussions related to other regional development proposals to evaluate their countywide impact.
- Emergency medical service and police protection were valued as a primary infrastructure component with service area and statistics monitored for potential improvements.
- The county allocated funds for cost-share assistance for local infrastructure improvements. Application for use of these funds will be made by the local jurisdiction and considered by the county commissioners. These funds were also available for improvements to the Areas of Regional Significance.
- Staff members participated in discussions related to K-68’s study including the transportation network and land use.
- Staff members and volunteers detailed and maintained site characteristics for Miami County’s Areas of Regional Significance. When development within the county is considered, an emphasis was placed on developing these sites. New sites were instituted when appropriate.
- Staff met with utility providers to target Areas of Regional Significance where infrastructure improvements will make site development more likely.
- Staff members participated in discussions related to K-68’s study including the transportation network and land use.

New business identification and recruitment

Assist communities with their business recruitment efforts

Achievements included:

- Retail economic indicators were tracked and shared with local officials.
- Information regarding potential projects was shared with each city's identified economic development official. Assistance was provided as needed to communities pursuing the potential project.
- Data regarding existing development sites and buildings was updated.
- A web site was created for the City of Fontana to promote and recruit businesses to the community.
- Assistance updating economic development incentive policies was provided to communities. This included educational efforts regarding incentive types and their application.
- Communities were assisted in targeting primary and supporting businesses for recruitment.
- Communities were assisted in identifying service gaps for potential recruitment opportunities.
- Familiarization tours were offered help acquaint urban developers with opportunities within the county.
- Relationships were developed with commercial real estate agents, site consultants and similar professionals through one-on-one activities including county tours.

Existing business retention and expansion

Assist communities with their business retention efforts

Achievements included:

- Information regarding state and local incentives was maintained and provided to businesses.
- Sources of professional consulting were cultivated and offered as resources to businesses.
- Local entities encouraged "shop-at-home" policies.
- Training and technical assistance was provided through group settings.
- Data regarding existing development sites and buildings was updated.
- Roundtable conversations by industry and business size were hosted to discuss issues of common interest and the region's economic climate.
- Visits were made to existing businesses to gather data about their operations and potential for expansion. Support was offered to assist with their retention and expansion. Programs such as BREES and Synchronist were utilized to maximize the information.
- Supplemental financing alternatives were sought for businesses seeking new investment or expansion.



Tier Two Strategic Action Items

Workforce Training and Education

Monitor workforce trends while identifying opportunities and resources for training

Achievements included:

- Information regarding state and local incentives was maintained and provided to businesses.
- Data regarding educational achievement and commuting patterns was tracked and distributed to local officials.
- Input regarding trends in education, including vocational training was obtained from the region's secondary and post-secondary educational institutions.
- Roundtable conversations were hosted for firms to discuss common workforce and human resources issues.

Housing

Aid communities utilizing economic development tools to revitalize existing neighborhoods and develop new housing stock

Achievements included:

- Information regarding state programs and regional nonprofit groups was maintained and provided to businesses.
- Roundtable conversations were hosted to gauge the region's housing climate.
- Assistance was provided to Louisburg Chamber of Commerce in the creation of a rental-listing directory.
- Regional housing trends were monitored and provided to local officials.
- Neighborhood revitalization programs were explored.
- Develop and distribute a marketing piece encouraging developers to select Miami County for a future project.



Tourism

Promote Miami County's successes and tourism opportunities

Achievements included:

- Brochures promoting the county's attractions were distributed to regional outlets.
- Information regarding community events was shared between locations to assist with cross promotion.
- State and national tourism efforts were be monitored for potential integration into local activities.
- Press releases noting area achievements and activities were distributed to regional media outlets.
- A tracking method was created and maintained to determine tourism's impact on the county.
- A countywide approach to events such as the Kansas Sampler festival was implemented when feasible.
- A county "brand" and shared vision will be identified for integration throughout the organization.
- Methods of utilizing social media to promote the county's assets were explored and implemented if approved.



2010 Strategic Plan

The 2010 Economic Development Strategic Plan has been crafted with input from a variety of sources. Community volunteers, elected officials, advisory board members and county employees all assisted with its development.

The plan's update comes at a time when business and community leaders are rethinking ways of operating and seeking greater efficiencies.

Members of the advisory board and the county commission kicked off the update process by reviewing the 2007 plan and clarifying issues for 2010. Those discussions included evaluating what has worked in the past and what needs to be created for success in the future. Input from each community's city staff, elected officials and civic leaders were sought to determine what tasks should be tackled and which entity should be made responsible for progress.

Department Summary

To focus the county's definition of economic development, members of the Miami County Commission concurred with a definition of economic development offered by members of the advisory board. That overall goal reads: *Economic development involves activities that stimulate a long-term improvement in the county's tax base and employment level.*

2010 Strategic Issues:

Following meetings with each community's economic development representative, a list of strategic issues was compiled for inclusion in the plan. Members of the advisory board and Miami County Commissioners grouped the strategic issues into priority tiers as a way to help allocate resources and time.

Tier One

- *Relationship Building* -- Build relationships between community leaders representing Miami County's economic interests on a regional, state and national level
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Tier Two

- *Workforce Training and Education* -- Monitor workforce trends while identifying opportunities and resources for training

- *Housing* -- Aid communities utilizing economic development tools to revitalize existing neighborhoods and develop new housing stock
- *Tourism* -- Promote Miami County's successes and tourism opportunities

Gathering Input

With the strategic issues identified, members of the advisory board and staff turned to the local leaders for input on what activities should be undertaken in each area. Members of chambers of commerce, county economic development committees, elected officials; county staff and city staff members were polled for ideas that would shape the region's future.

Meetings were conducted one-on-one and in small groups at sites throughout the county. Members of the advisory board and Miami County Commissioners reviewed a draft copy of the plan before a final version was prepared for distribution.

Tier One Strategic Action Items

Relationship Building

Build relationships between community leaders representing Miami County's economic interests on a regional, state and national level

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
The county's chambers of commerce will coordinate meetings to provide community members with legislative updates during the session.	Chambers of commerce	Monthly, January through April	Existing
The countywide interlocal government meeting will include an opportunity for elected officials and their lead staff members to discuss local initiatives. A fall elected officials dinner will also be planned.	County and local governing boards	Monthly	Existing
County staff will be actively involved in organizations such as Kansas City Area Development Council, Mid America Regional Council, Southeast Kansas Inc. and Kansas Economic Development Association.	Economic Development Director	Quarterly	Existing
County staff will actively participate in local, regional and national training programs to improve skills and network with peers.	Economic Development Director	Annually	Existing
Lead staff members from the county's chambers of commerce and the Economic Development Director will meet to exchange ideas and consider joint projects.	Economic Development Director and chambers of commerce	Quarterly	Existing

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Members of the Economic Development Advisory Board will regularly report to their area of representation. Electronic versions of the quarterly report will also be made available to community members upon their request.	Economic Development Advisory Board members	Quarterly	Existing
The county's chambers of commerce and Miami County Economic Development Department will exchange newsletters and articles to keep one another informed of projects.	Economic Development Director and chambers of commerce	Monthly	Existing
Provide training or support for the region's nonprofits in an effort to help them fill community needs.	Economic Development Director, K-State Extension and Nonprofit Organizations	Annually	Existing
Identify community development grant programs and provide that information to the pertinent agencies.	Economic Development Director and community entities	As needed	2010

Economic Data Collection and Resources

Gather and maintain economic data providing crucial information for businesses considering an expansion or new location including a retail and commercial analysis to assist with identifying potential opportunities

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Economic indicators, costs of living and demographics will be obtained from CERI, Kansas Public Policy and Research, Docking Institute and other research sources. Economic indicators include labor force data, assessed valuations, home sales, building permits, mill levies, sales tax revenue, education rates, transient guest tax receipts and crime rates.	Economic Development Director and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Monthly	Existing
LocationOne will be used as the primary repository of data on available sites and buildings.	Economic Development Director and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Monthly	Existing
Utilize the data collected to update marketing materials for the county and communities.	County and local governing boards, Economic Development Director, Economic Development Advisory Board Members and Chambers of Commerce	Annually	Existing

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Work with other regional partners to implement a program of "site certification."	Economic Development Director, Advisory Board Members, KCADC, KDOC and Chambers of Commerce	July	2011

Infrastructure

Aid communities facing infrastructure challenges that limit economic development opportunities including utilities and transportation networks

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Staff members will participate in discussions related to other regional development proposals to evaluate their countywide impact.	County and local governing boards, Miami County Engineer, Miami County Planner and Economic Development Director	As needed	Existing
The county will allocate funds for cost-share assistance for local infrastructure improvements. Application for use of these funds will be made by the local jurisdiction and considered by the county commissioners. These funds may also be used for improvements to the Areas of Regional Significance.	County and local governing boards	Annually	Existing
Staff members will participate in discussions related to K-68's study including the transportation network and land use.	Louisburg City Leaders, Paola City Leaders, Miami County Engineer and Economic Development Director	As needed	Existing
Staff members and volunteers will detail and maintain site characteristics for Miami County's Areas of Regional Significance. When development within the county is considered, an emphasis will be placed on developing these sites. New sites will be instituted when appropriate.	Economic Development Director, Miami County Planning, utility providers and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Annually	Existing
Meet with utility providers to target Areas of Regional Significance where infrastructure improvements will make site development more likely.	Economic Development Director, Miami County Planning and utility providers	As needed	Existing

New business identification and recruitment

Assist communities with their business recruitment efforts

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Information regarding potential projects will be shared with each city's identified economic development official. Assistance will be provided as needed to communities pursuing the potential project.	Local economic development representatives, Economic Development Director and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	As needed	Existing
Assistance updating economic development incentive policies will be provided to communities. This will include educational efforts regarding incentive types and their application.	Local economic development representatives, Economic Development Director and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Annually	Existing
Communities will be assisted in targeting primary and supporting businesses for recruitment.	Local economic development representatives, Economic Development Director and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Every six months	Existing
Develop relationships with commercial real estate agents, site consultants and similar professionals through one-on-one activities such as tours of the county.	Local economic development representatives, Economic Development Director, SIOR, real estate agents and property owners, and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Monthly	Existing
Small familiarization tours will be planned to help acquaint urban developers with opportunities within the county.	Local economic development representatives, Economic Development Director, real estate agents and property owners, and Economic Development Advisory Board Members	Annually	Existing

Existing business retention and expansion

Assist communities with their business retention efforts

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Information regarding state and local incentives will be maintained and provided to businesses.	Economic Development Director, Small Business Development Center and Kansas Department of Commerce	As needed	Existing
Sources of professional consulting will be cultivated and offered as resources to businesses.	Economic Development Director, Small Business Development Center and Kansas Department of Commerce	As needed	Existing
Training and technical assistance will be provided through group settings.	Economic Development Director, Small Business Development Center, Fort Scott Community College and Johnson County Community College	Quarterly	Existing
Roundtable conversations by industry and business size will be hosted to discuss issues of common interest and the region's economic climate.	Local economic development representatives, business owners, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Every six months	Existing
Visits will be made to existing businesses to gather data about their operations and potential for expansion. Support will be offered to assist with their retention and expansion. Programs such as BREES and Synchronist will be utilized to maximize the information.	Local economic development representatives, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Monthly	Existing
Continue to seek supplemental financing alternatives for business development and expansion.	USDA, Network Kansas, local economic development representatives, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Every six months	Existing

Tier Two Strategic Action Items

Workforce Training and Education

Monitor workforce trends while identifying opportunities and resources for training

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Information regarding state and local incentives will be maintained and provided to businesses.	Economic Development Director, Small Business Development Center, USDA and Kansas Department of Commerce	As needed	Existing
Input regarding trends in education, including vocational training will be obtained from the region's secondary and post-secondary educational institutions.	Economic Development Director, school superintendents, Fort Scott Community College and Johnson County Community College	Every six months	Existing
Roundtable conversations will be hosted for firms to discuss common workforce and human resources issues.	Local economic development representatives, Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Representative, local businesses, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Every six months	Existing

Housing

Aid communities utilizing economic development tools to revitalize existing neighborhoods and develop new housing stock

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Information regarding state programs and regional nonprofit groups will be maintained and provided to businesses.	Economic Development Director and Kansas Department of Commerce	As needed	Existing
Roundtable conversations will be hosted to gauge the region's housing climate.	Local economic development representatives, Chamber of Commerce staff members, builders, realtors, bankers, local planning officials and Economic Development Director	Every six months	Existing
Develop and distribute a marketing piece encouraging developers to select Miami County for a future project.	Local economic development representatives, Home Builders Association of Greater Kansas City, Kansas City Regional Association of Realtors and Economic Development Director	Annually	Existing

Tourism

Promote Miami County's successes and tourism opportunities

Task	Who should be involved	Frequency	Initiate
Brochures promoting the county's attractions will be distributed to regional outlets.	Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	As needed	Existing
Information regarding community events will be shared between locations to assist with cross promotion.	Local tourism committees, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Monthly	Existing
Regional, state and national tourism efforts will be monitored for potential integration into local activities.	Local tourism committees, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Monthly	Existing
Press releases noting area achievements and activities will be distributed to regional media outlets.	Local economic development representatives, Chamber of Commerce staff members, County Administrator and Economic Development Director	As needed	Existing
A tracking method will be created and maintained to determine tourism's impact on the county.	Local tourism committees, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Quarterly	Existing
A countywide approach to events such as the Kansas Sampler festival will be considered when feasible.	Local tourism committees, Chamber of Commerce staff members and Economic Development Director	Annually	Existing
Methods of utilizing social media to promote the county's assets will be explored and implemented if approved.	County Commissioners, County Administrator and Economic Development Director	Annually	2011