

STRONG ECONOMIES, RESILIENT COUNTIES

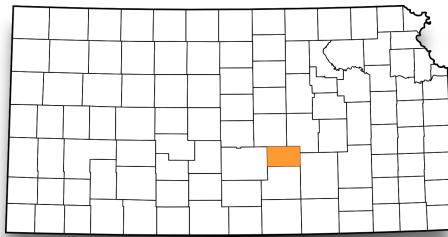
The Role of Counties in Economic Development



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HARVEY COUNTY, KANSAS

Logistics and Economic Development



Harvey County, Kan., a small county part of the Wichita metropolitan area, is attractive for industrial development because the large highly developable sites with easy access to rail and interstate highway transportation links. The county's largest employers include an agricultural implements manufacturer (AGCO), a cabinet manufacturer (Norcraft) and a turf equipment firm (Excel Industries). To reduce the costs of logistics and manufacturing in the area, Harvey County and the county seat, the City of Newton, established the Kansas Logistics Park (KLP), a new project aiming to provide a competitive advantage to manufacturing industries in the Midwest, which rely on availability of strong transportation links.

Similar to other counties in Kansas, Harvey County functions as an extension of the state government. Its three elected County Commissioners and managing County Administrator are responsible for tax collection, budgeting, program implementation and long-range planning. The county government also holds prerogative over planning and developing unincorporated lands. As a smaller government, Harvey County supplements its administration with eight citizen advisory boards, addressing topics spanning economic development, aviation and aging.

The Harvey County Economic Development Council (HCEDC) manages the county's industry and workforce development efforts for a unified, collaborative action among county stakeholders. Sixteen appointees govern the council, representing a cross-section of local governments and chambers. Harvey County and the City of Newton each hold three positions on the HCEDC board, while the Newton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Cities of Halstead, Hesston, Burton, Sedgwick, Walton and North Newton each hold two seats. Chief Administrators from these cities also serve on the board in non-voting, ex-officio capacities. Contributions from the respective governments fund the HCEDC and its three full-time staff.

Kansas Logistics Park

In late 2009, a commission representing Harvey County, Newton, HCEDC and officials from other cities announced the Kansas Logistics Park (KLP) located in Newton. Drawing on Central Kansas' history of rail and highway access, this project links industrial development with rail, highway and air transport hubs.

The park's central location allows businesses to take advantage of the overlapping connections to both rail and major interstates. Located between Interstates 35, 135

- **Population, 2013: 34,741**
- **County Board size: 3**
- **County Administrator**

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Manufacturing and aircraft employees at Kansas Logistics Park

manufacturers and aircraft companies, with more than 1,000 manufacturers within a 50-mile radius of the KLP.

The county, city and HCEDC formed a working group consisting of staff from all three entities that meet regularly to work on a variety of issues including strategic plan development, prospect recruitment efforts and the details of the KLP development. Harvey County handled land acquisition, issuing \$3.35 million in bonds in May 2011 to purchase the initial 400 acres. The City of Newton manages utility and public works connections to sites. HCEDC spearheads recruiting efforts and facilitates property sales. HCEDC coordinates incentives and finances among Harvey County's governments to link freight connections with brownfield space. The council aims to leverage transportation advantages in order to establish Harvey County as a logistics hub for firms within a day's travel—a 500-mile radius, including the metropolitan areas of Minneapolis, Memphis, San Antonio and Denver. This strategy stems from a 2008 study on how interstate traffic patterns impact Harvey County that highlighted the infrastructure geography strengths that make Harvey County an attractive logistics location, particularly among agricultural and manufacturing firms.

Harvey County and its partners remain focused on KLP's long-term potential. Recently, the city commission and county commission jointly established the Kansas Logistics Park Development Authority (KLPDA) in order to appoint a dedicated group of elected officials, HCEDC staff and eventually business leaders to managing KLP activities. The KLPDA provides a consistent administrative body and the power to issue city and county-backed debt. In 2013, the authority signed a partnership with the Port Authority of Kansas City, Mo., to promote further development of connections and transportation links in the region.

The Kansas Logistics Park is a new initiative that already offers several lessons from its development. County officials carefully considered strengths and opportunities for economic development in the area, forged long-term partnerships with city governments and economic developers and maintained flexibility and prudence as obstacles arose. As regional economies become more interconnected, the logistics park in Harvey County may play a role in facilitating economic development in the area and create local jobs in the process.

and 70, the park provides access to two Class 1 carriers in the nation's rail network and it includes a rail link to the Port of Catoosa. This Port is the nation's northernmost port access to the Gulf of Mexico that is ice-free year round. The proximity to these transportation points reduces logistics and shipping time and costs and time for manufacturers located in the park. In addition, the region has an abundance of qualified workers, suppliers,