



ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN

OCTOBER 2024

Manhattan Area
Chamber of Commerce

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PROCESS OVERVIEW

Economic
Growth
Plan

CURRENT SITUATION

Over the last decade, the Manhattan area has experienced little to no economic growth. Stagnation is now approaching decline, and decline is difficult to reverse within communities and regional economies.

A continued reliance on the same sources of growth will not sustain the Manhattan area, economically or fiscally.

A continued reliance on the same strategies will not reignite growth.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Assess our regional economy and our economic development ecosystem.
2. Define desirable economic growth.
3. Define a set of shared growth priorities to guide the community and its many partners.
4. Define a set of actionable recommendations to guide Chamber influence on economic growth.
5. Facilitate consensus and investment to succeed.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

1. ENGAGEMENT



MEETINGS &
BRIEFINGS

STAKEHOLDER
INTERVIEWS

BUSINESS
SURVEY

2. ASSESSMENT



REGIONAL ECONOMIC
BENCHMARKING

ECON. DEV. ECOSYSTEM
BENCHMARKING

THEMES &
STRATEGIC ISSUES

DELIVERABLE

ECONOMIC
ASSESSMENT

3. PLANNING



ECONOMIC GROWTH
PRIORITIES

POTENTIAL INITIATIVES &
INVESTMENTS

IMPLEMENTATION
GUIDELINES

DELIVERABLE

ECONOMIC
GROWTH PLAN

4. ADVICE



INVESTOR & PARTNER
COMMUNICATIONS

FUNDRAISING
ASSISTANCE

ON-CALL
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Russ Briggs
Matt Crocker
Chris Eichman
Neil Horton
Lowell Kohlmeier
Callie Marks
Tom Phillips
Patrick Schutter
Jason Smith
Marshall Stewart
Jake Wassenberg
Greg Willems

Briggs Auto
SPS Companies
MCM
Bayer Construction
KS StateBank
Charlson & Wilson
Business Advocacy Committee
BHS Construction
Manhattan Area Chamber
Kansas State University
Pepsi Cola of Manhattan
KSU Foundation

TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD

Sheilla Ellis-Glasper
John Ford
James Genandt
Shanna Goodman
Vernon Henricks
Jason Hilgers
Stephanie Peterson
Stephanie Pierce
Eric Reid
Daryn Soldan

Black Entrepreneurs of the Flint Hills
Riley County
Manhattan Area Technical College
Pottawatomie County Economic Development
Greater Manhattan Community Foundation
City of Manhattan
City of Manhattan
SparkMHK
USD 383
Manhattan Area Chamber

A photograph of a modern, multi-story building with a glass and metal facade, illuminated from within at dusk. The building is set against a dark sky. In the foreground, there is a paved walkway and a landscaped area with grass and small trees. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the building's lights providing the primary illumination.

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

1. Manhattan Area Business Survey
2. Regional Benchmarking
3. Ecosystem Benchmarking
4. Strategic Themes & Other Issues

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Manhattan Area Business Survey

A survey solicited feedback on regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats confronting the Manhattan area economy from 211 business and community leaders from April 15th to May 3rd, 2024.

Regional Benchmarking

Competitive dashboards (4) illustrate how the Manhattan, KS metropolitan statistical area (MANH) stacks up against four other regions that share similar attributes influencing their growth and competitiveness:

- ✓ **Ames (AMES):** Ames, IA metropolitan statistical area
- ✓ **Columbia (COLU):** Columbia, MO metropolitan statistical area
- ✓ **Morgantown (MORG):** Morgantown, WV metropolitan statistical area
- ✓ **Stillwater (STIL):** Stillwater, OK micropolitan statistical area

These dashboards illustrate regional growth and relative competitiveness in three key areas:

- ✓ **Economy:** job growth, business growth, output, entrepreneurship, research and development, etc.
- ✓ **Talent:** population growth, migration, educational attainment, degree completions, etc.
- ✓ **Place:** cost of living, tax burden, housing affordability, permitting activity, etc.

These same indicators of regional competitiveness with respect to Economy, Talent, and Place are also benchmarked against and illustrated relative to the **State of Kansas**.

Ecosystem Benchmarking

Peer organizations and their regional economic development ecosystems are profiled, examining ways in which the region's peers are structured to support desired economic growth.

- ✓ **Ames, IA MSA:** Ames Chamber of Commerce and its public-private partnerships
- ✓ **Columbia, MO MSA:** Columbia Chamber of Commerce and its public-private partnerships
- ✓ **Morgantown, WV MSA:** Morgantown Area Partnership and its public-private partnerships
- ✓ **Stillwater, OK MSA:** Stillwater Chamber of Commerce and its public-private partnerships

Strategic Themes & Other Issues

Strategic themes and other issues raised in the engagement phase are examined in greater detail and complemented by relevant quantitative analysis.

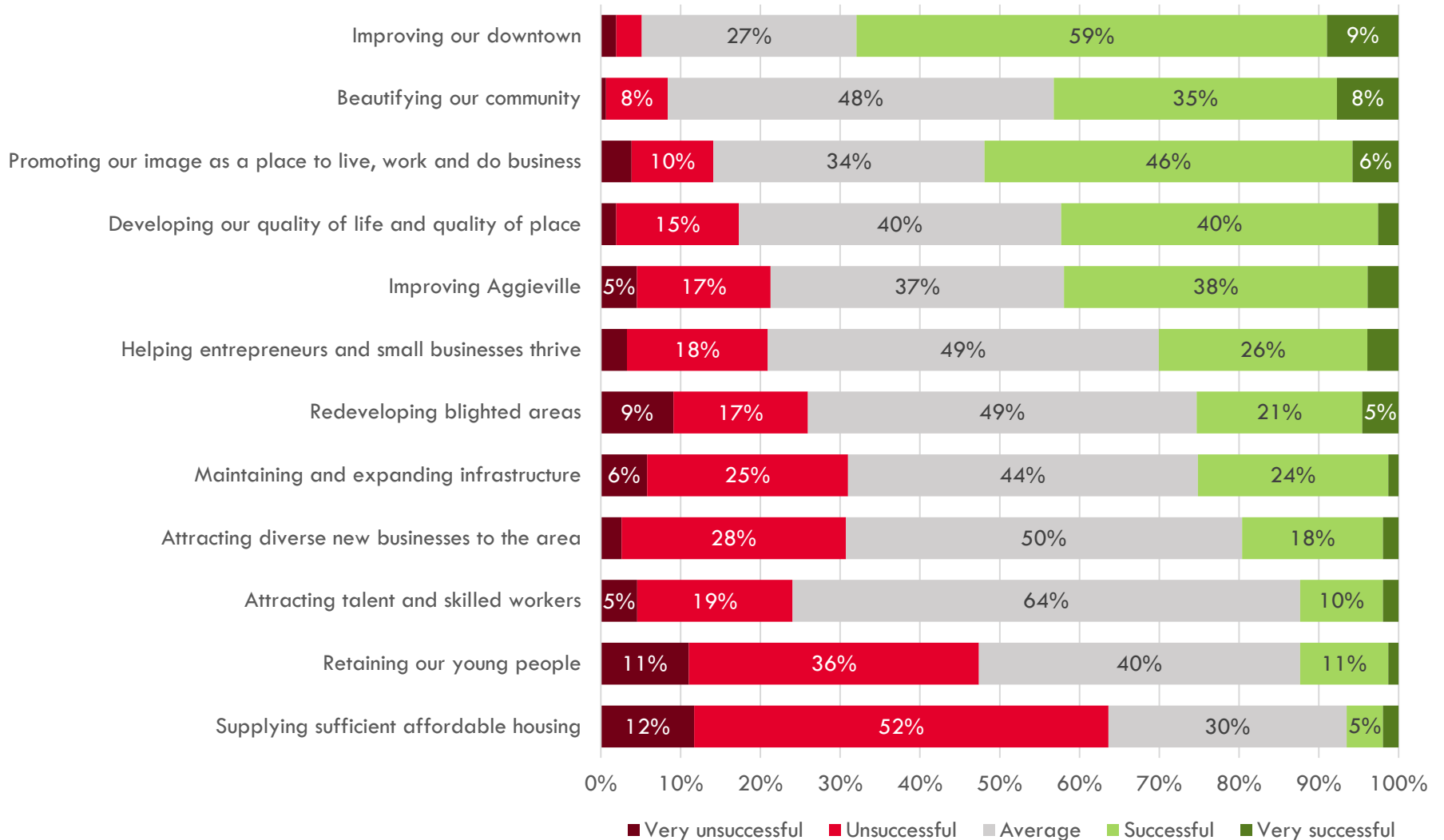
MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

The Manhattan Area Business Survey (2024) solicited feedback on regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats confronting the Manhattan area economy from 211 business and community leaders from April 15th to May 3rd, 2024.



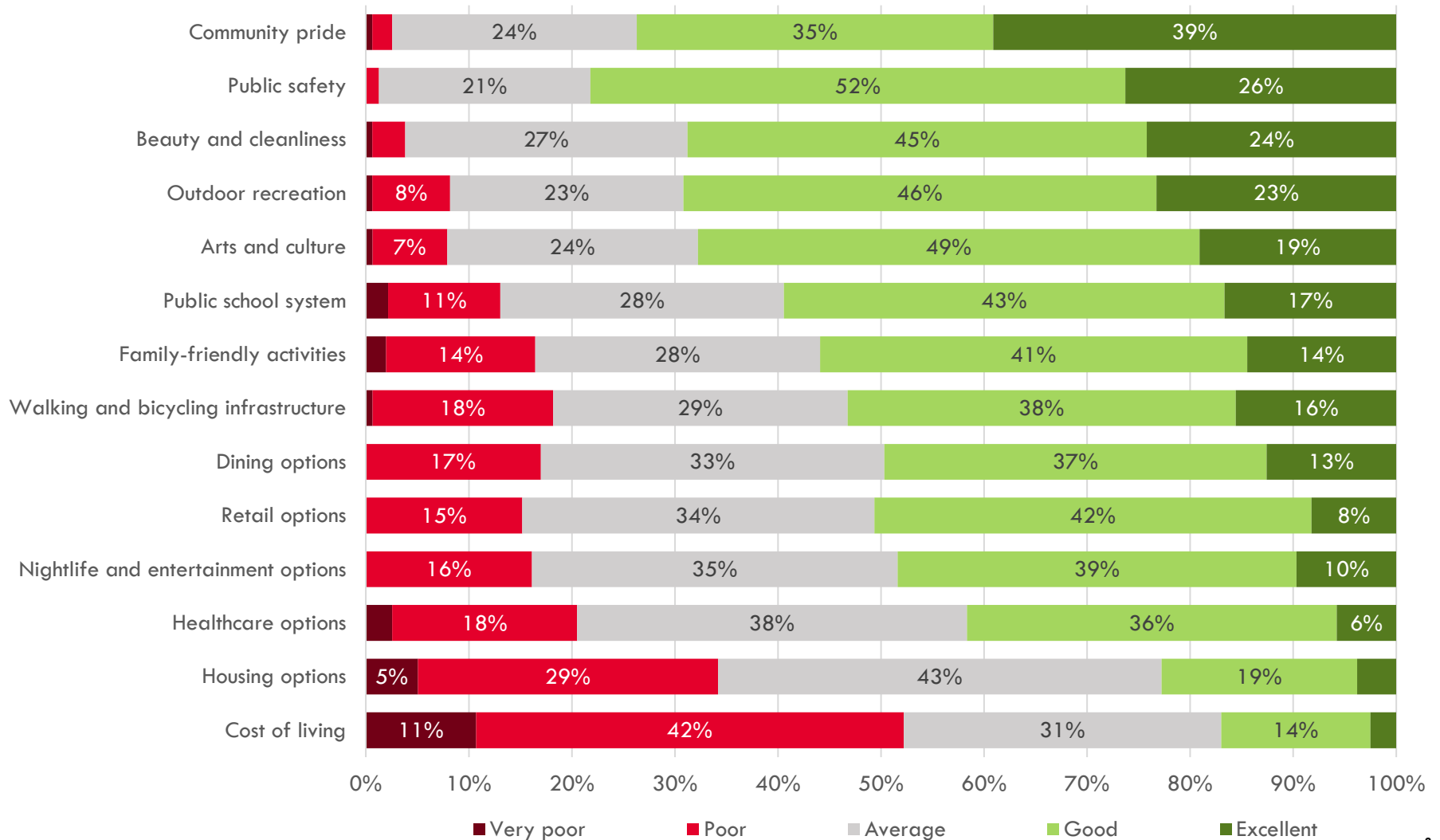
MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

“Please indicate the degree to which you feel the community has been successful in supporting the following objectives and outcomes.”



MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

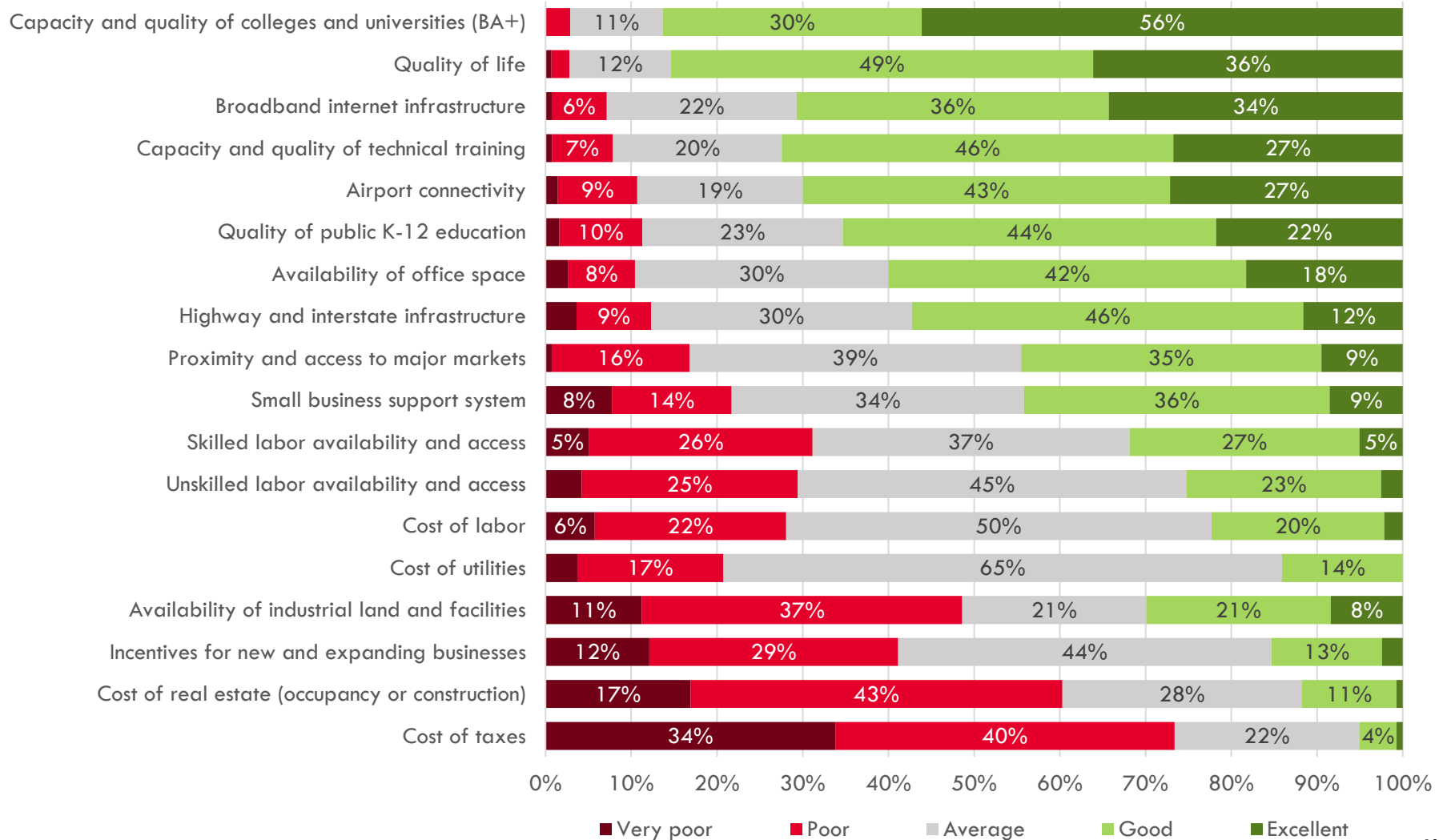
“Please evaluate the following attributes of the community’s quality of life.”



MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

“Please evaluate the competitiveness of the following attributes of the community's business climate.”

*Asked of 194 business owners, sole proprietors, executives, or managers involved in hiring decisions.



MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

“Do you have any additional or clarifying comments that you would like to share regarding the business climate in the Manhattan area?”

“The amenities are very good in town...We also have no issues finding qualified professionals to partner with in the Manhattan community, and enjoy productive relationships with many of the local small businesses.”

“The Manhattan community is so welcoming and friendly.”

“Once people experience Manhattan, they become advocates of the community.”

“Manhattan is a mecca for small businesses, entrepreneurship, and community interaction for those who are willing to invest the time and energy.”

“People want to live or work in Manhattan. The biggest constraint I have seen is the cost of living. Taxes are high and it is difficult for someone starting out to find an affordable place to live.”

“The business climate is good, but the mix of business is a struggle. The lack of industrial facilities and other businesses that bring in revenues from external sources is a real problem.”

“Don't have shovel ready land available and our incentives are poor to attract businesses.”

“Local officials seem to be more concerned with telling people what they can't do instead of helping to find ways to accomplish what is wanted.”

“We are taxed to death and another issue is the time it takes to get permits turned around is beyond unacceptable.”

“I'm also worried about incentives for...existing businesses. I'd love to see an ambassador program through the Chamber or state that gives businesses a representative to 1:1 share resources with, be a sounding board...point me in the direction I need, whether that's grants, loans, legal, workforce, etc.”

“There are several areas of town where commercial rent is rapidly becoming untenable for small businesses. The city government will readily provide assistance to corporate chain businesses to enter the Manhattan community, but they provide almost zero support/incentives for small local businesses.”

“Real estate taxes are way too high. Younger people cannot afford to buy a home.”

“As the owner of a small retail business, I feel that much more attention is given to attracting new businesses rather than supporting existing ones. There should be increased focus on keeping businesses that have contributed to the community for years.”

“We need to get our main road construction completed and do a better job of controlling our local taxes. I may choose to retire in a more tax friendly State and city, which is a shame.”

MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

NET PROMOTER SCORE: “How likely are you to recommend the Manhattan area to a friend or colleague as a desirable place to live and work?” (0 = not at all likely; 10 = extremely likely)

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

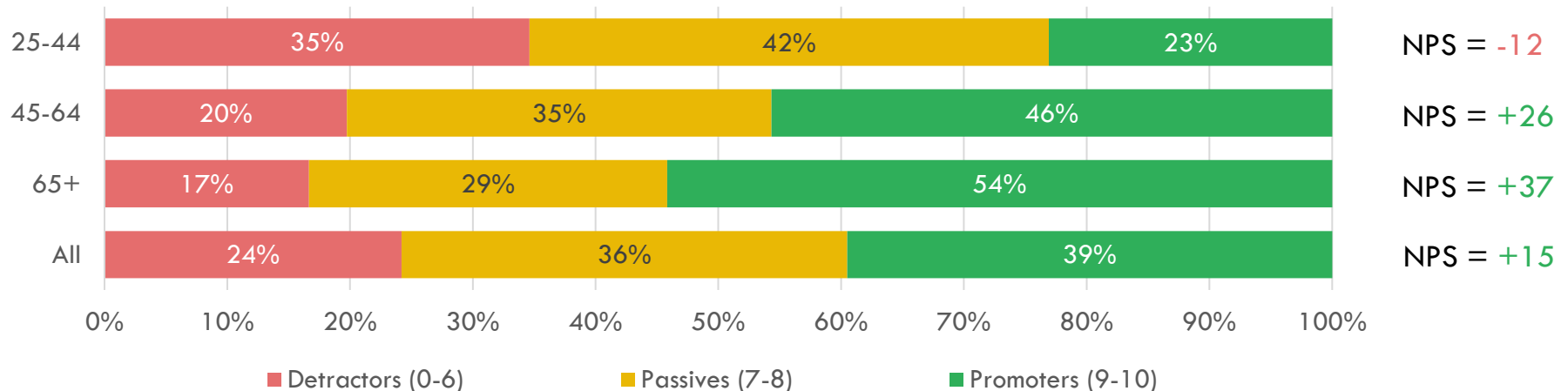
Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measure of **customer loyalty** or **community attachment** used by companies or communities to measure the likelihood that a customer or resident will recommend a product or place on a scale of zero (0) to ten (10).



Examples from the Corporate World:

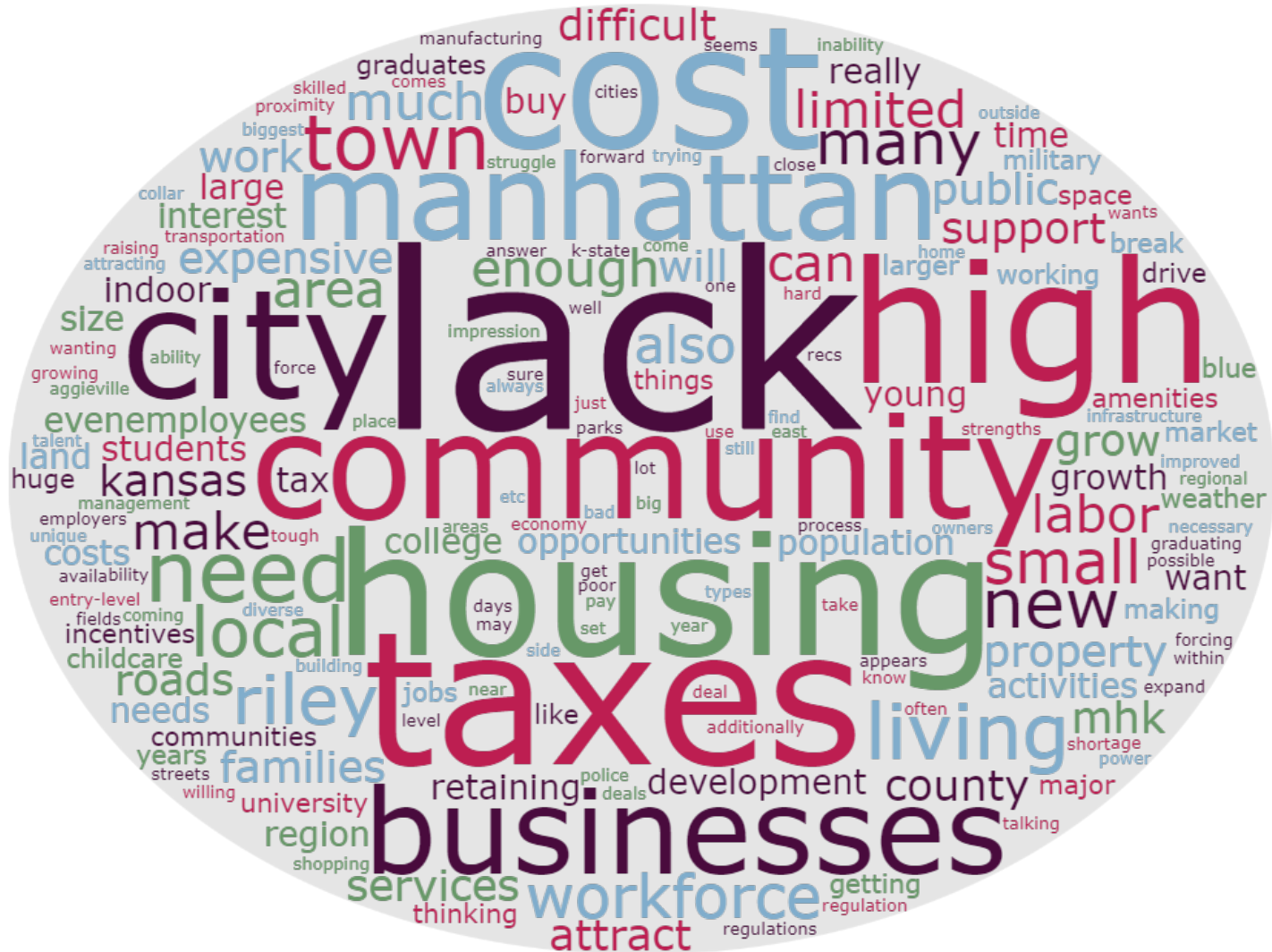
High NPS: Costco (+79), USAA (+78), Netflix (+77), Samsung (+67), Chick-fil-a (+58), John Deere (+54)

Low NPS: Comcast (-17), AT&T (-15), Enterprise Rent-A-Car (-11), McDonalds (-8), Wells Fargo (-2)



MANHATTAN AREA BUSINESS SURVEY

“What do you think are the community's greatest weaknesses or deficiencies to overcome as a place to do business?”



REGIONAL BENCHMARKING

Manhattan, KS Metropolitan Statistical Area

Ames, IA MSA

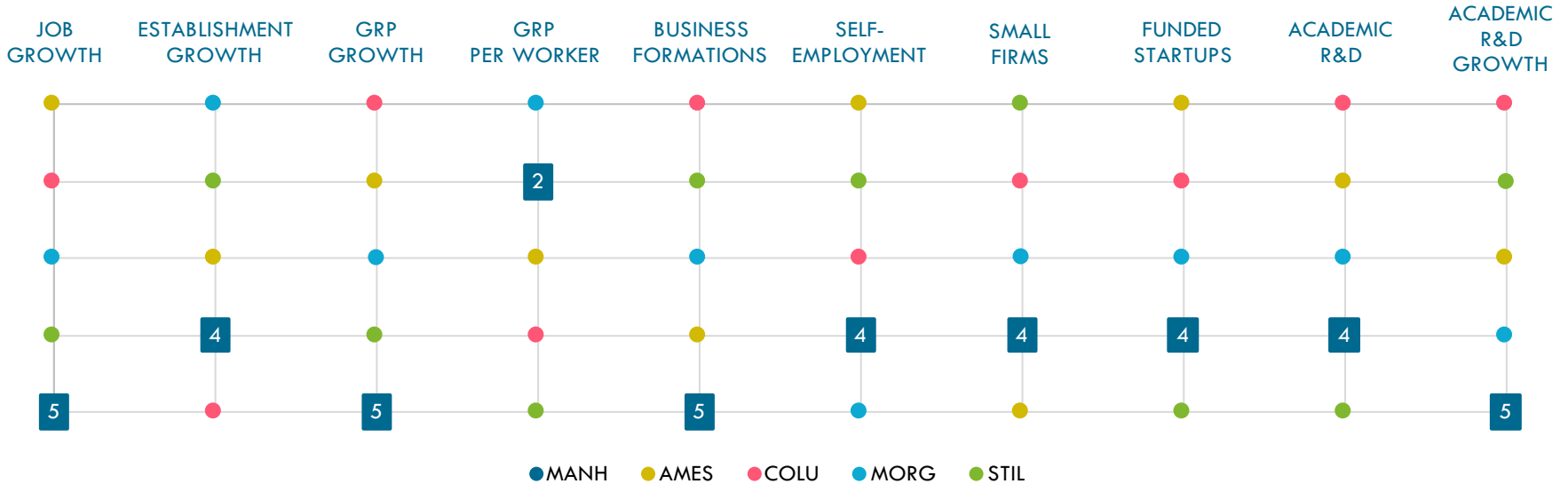
Columbia, MO MSA

Morgantown, WV MSA

Stillwater, OK MSA

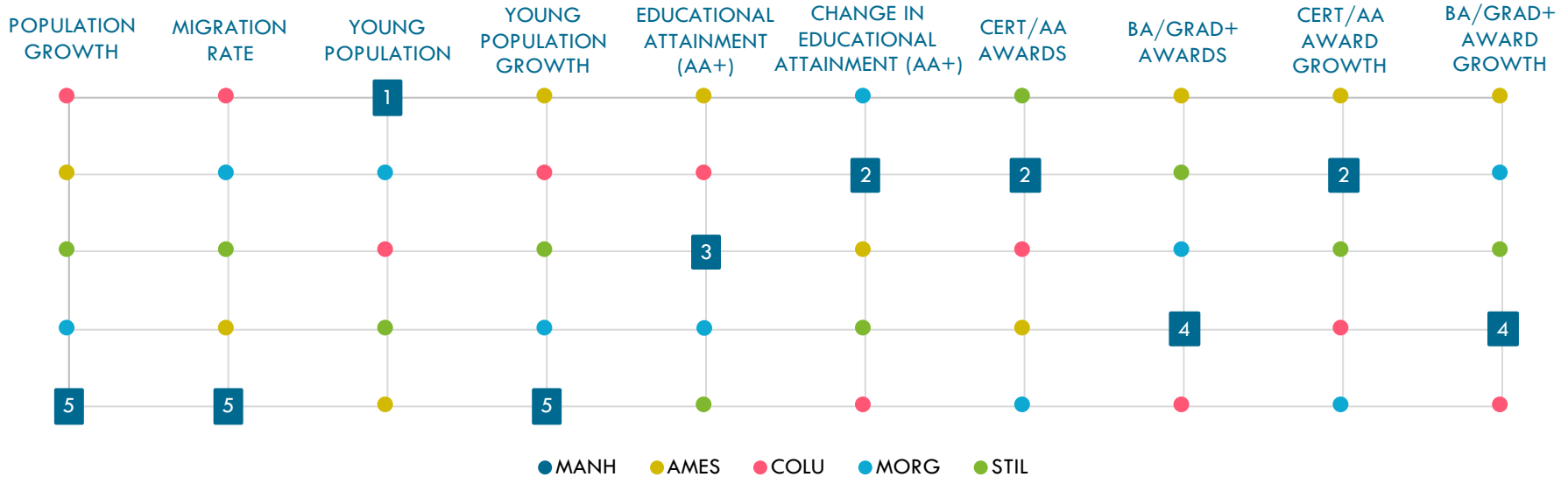


REGIONAL DASHBOARD: ECONOMY



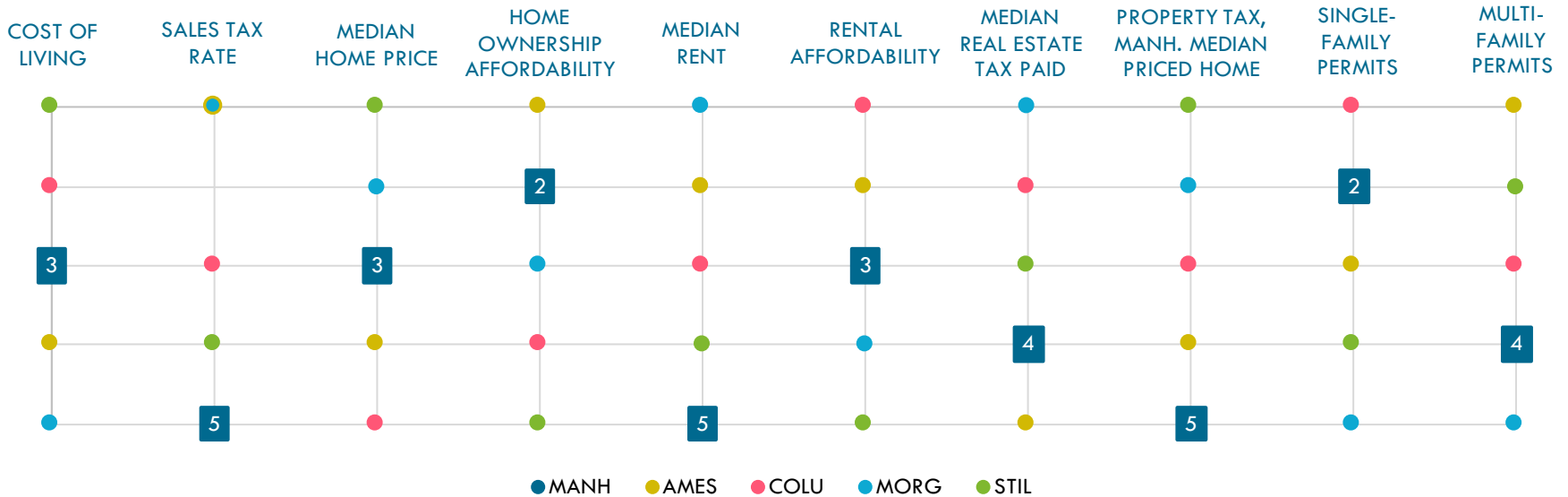
JOB GROWTH	ESTABLISHMENT GROWTH	GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT (GRP) GROWTH	LABOR PRODUCTIVITY (GRP PER WORKER)	BUSINESS FORMATIONS
1. AMES (10.1%) 2. COLU (8.2%) 3. MORG (7.8%) 4. STIL (7.7) 5. MANH (0.0%)	1. MORG (27.0%) 2. STIL (20.9%) 3. AMES (20.6%) 4. MANH (14.9%) 5. COLU (12.4%)	1. COLU (62.9%) 2. AMES (55.1%) 3. MORG (51.8%) 4. STIL (28.3%) 5. MANH (26.1%)	1. MORG (\$113,346) 2. MANH (\$106,132) 3. AMES (\$103,521) 4. COLU (\$100,548) 5. STIL (\$79,341)	1. COLU (12.8) 2. STIL (9.8) 3. MORG (8.7) 4. AMES (7.7) 5. MANH (6.0)
SELF-EMPLOYMENT	SMALL FIRMS	FUNDED STARTUPS	ACADEMIC R&D EXPENDITURES (MIL)	ACADEMIC R&D EXPENDITURE GROWTH
1. AMES (6.2%) 2. STIL (5.4%) 3. COLU (4.9%) 4. MANH (4.4%) 5. MORG (4.1%)	1. STIL (11.4) 2. COLU (11.1) 3. MORG (10.1) 4. MANH (9.1) 5. AMES (9.0)	1. AMES (43) 2. COLU (36) 3. MORG (22) 4. MANH (9) 5. STIL (6)	1. COLU (\$432.3) 2. AMES (\$393.2) 3. MORG (\$214.1) 4. MANH (\$213.0) 5. STIL (\$195.0)	1. COLU (82.9%) 2. STIL (45.0%) 3. AMES (36.5%) 4. MORG (28.1%) 5. MANH (16.3%)

REGIONAL DASHBOARD: TALENT



POPULATION GROWTH	YOUNG POPULATION (25-39)	EDUC. ATTAINMENT (AA+)	CERT/AA DEGREE COMPLETIONS	BA/GRAD+ DEGREE COMPLETIONS
1. COLU (8.9%) 2. AMES (6.4%) 3. STIL (4.3%) 4. MORG (4.1%) 5. MANH (-1.3%)	1. MANH (22.7%) 2. MORG (21.5%) 3. COLU (20.1%) 4. STIL (18.6%) 5. AMES (18.1%)	1. AMES (57.7%) 2. COLU (53.9%) 3. MANH (50.8%) 4. MORG (46.6%) 5. STIL (46.3%)	1. STIL (7.3) 2. MANH (5.0) 3. COLU (2.4) 4. AMES (1.0) 5. MORG (0.6)	1. AMES (64.5) 2. STIL (53.5) 3. MORG (35.7) 4. MANH (22.8) 5. COLU (20.5)
MIGRATION RATE	YOUNG POPULATION (25-39) GROWTH	CHANGE IN EDUC. ATTAINMENT (AA+)	CERT/AA DEGREE COMPLETIONS GROWTH	BA/GRAD+ DEGREE COMPLETIONS GROWTH
1. COLU (4.4%) 2. MORG (3.0%) 3. STIL (3.0%) 4. AMES (1.9%) 5. MANH (-18.4%)	1. AMES (8.2%) 2. COLU (6.4%) 3. STIL (3.7%) 4. MORG (2.9%) 5. MANH (-6.1%)	1. MORG (10.5%) 2. MANH (7.8%) 3. AMES (7.4%) 4. STIL (5.2%) 5. COLU (4.6%)	1. AMES (186.4%) 2. MANH (129.2%) 3. STIL (102.0%) 4. COLU (37.2%) 5. MORG (30.2%)	1. AMES (29.6%) 2. MORG (1.5%) 3. STIL (-5.6%) 4. MANH (-32.4%) 5. COLU (-50.1%)

REGIONAL DASHBOARD: PLACE



COST OF LIVING INDEX	MEDIAN HOME PRICE	MEDIAN RENT	MEDIAN REAL ESTATE TAXES PAID	SINGLE-FAMILY PERMITS
1. STIL (91.2) 2. COLU (92.7) 3. MANH (96.0) 4. AMES (96.1) 5. MORG (97.2)	1. STIL (\$213,922) 2. MORG (\$225,851) 3. MANH (\$236,394) 4. AMES (\$243,716) 5. COLU (\$287,689)	1. MORG (\$859) 2. AMES (\$888) 3. COLU (\$942) 4. STIL (\$957) 5. MANH (\$1,005)	1. MORG (\$1,236) 2. COLU (\$1,878) 3. STIL (\$2,032) 4. MANH (\$2,968) 5. AMES (\$3,355)	1. COLU (40.7) 2. MANH (24.1) 3. AMES (22.8) 4. STIL (17.4) 5. MORG (1.7)
SALES TAX RATE (NON-FOOD)	HOME OWNERSHIP AFFORDABILITY	RENTAL AFFORDABILITY	PROPERTY TAX, MANH. MEDIAN-PRICED HOME	MULTI-FAMILY PERMITS
1T. AMES (7.000%) 1T. MORG (7.000%) 3. COLU (7.975%) 4. STIL (9.313%) 5. MANH (9.450%)	1. AMES (3.33) 2. MANH (3.57) 3. MORG (3.63) 4. COLU (3.83) 5. STIL (4.19)	1. COLU (47.9%) 2. AMES (49.8%) 3. MANH (53.5%) 4. MORG (57.9%) 5. STIL (59.5%)	1. STIL (\$2,639) 2. MORG (\$3,119) 3. COLU (\$3,201) 4. AMES (\$3,223) 5. MANH (\$4,254)	1. AMES (26.9) 2. STIL (23.6) 3. COLU (19.6) 4. MANH (12.2) 5. MORG (8.8)

BENCHMARKING: MANHATTAN MSA & THE STATE OF KANSAS

	MANHATTAN MSA	STATE OF KANSAS	DEVIATION	MANHATTAN-KANSAS INDEX
CERTIFICATE & ASSOCIATES DEGREE COMPLETIONS GROWTH	129.2%	-16.7%	145.9%	771.7
BACHELORS & GRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETIONS PER RESIDENT	22.8	5.7	17.1	399.7
ACADEMIC R&D EXPENDITURES PER RESIDENT	\$1,581	\$452	\$1,129	350.0
CHANGE IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (% OF ADULTS W/ ASSOCIATES OR HIGHER)	7.8%	6.3%	1.5%	124.3
SINGLE FAMILY PERMITS ISSUED PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	24.1	20.2	3.9	119.2
YOUNG POPULATION (25-39)	22.7%	19.2%	3.5%	118.0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (% OF ADULTS WITH ASSOCIATES OR HIGHER)	50.8%	44.2%	6.6%	114.9
COST OF LIVING INDEX	96.0	98.2	-2.2	102.3
ESTABLISHMENT GROWTH	14.9%	15.2%	-0.3%	98.0
MEDIAN RENT	\$1,005	\$975	\$30	97.0
MULTI FAMILY PERMITS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	12.2	12.7	-0.5	95.9
MEDIAN REAL ESTATE TAXES PAID	\$2,968	\$2,828	\$140	95.3
MEDIAN HOME PRICE	\$236,394	\$224,950	\$11,444	95.2
SINGLE-FAMILY AFFORDABILITY (MEDIAN HOME PRICE/MEDIAN INCOME)	3.56	3.23	0.33	90.7
CERTIFICATE & ASSOCIATES DEGREE COMPLETIONS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	5.0	5.6	-0.6	88.6
GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT (GRP) PER WORKER	\$106,132	\$120,177	-\$14,045	88.3
RENTAL AFFORDABILITY (% OF RENTERS SPENDING >30% OF INCOME ON RENT)	53.5%	46.6%	6.9%	87.1
SELF-EMPLOYMENT (% OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT)	4.4%	6.3%	-1.9%	69.4
SMALL FIRMS (FEWER THAN 5 EMPLOYEES) PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	9.1	13.7	-4.6	66.4
BACHELORS & GRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETIONS GROWTH	-32.4%	-20.8%	-11.6%	64.3
BUSINESS FORMATIONS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	6.0	10.5	-4.5	56.7
GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT (GRP) GROWTH	26.1%	50.9%	-24.8%	51.3
FUNDED STARTUPS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	6.7	18.3	-11.6	36.6
ACADEMIC R&D EXPENDITURES GROWTH	16.3%	76.6%	-60.3%	21.3
JOB GROWTH	0.0%	5.1%	-5.1%	-0.3
POPULATION GROWTH	-1.3%	2.2%	-3.4%	-58.7
YOUNG POPULATION (25-39) GROWTH	-6.1%	2.1%	-8.2%	-287.7
MIGRATION RATE	-18.4%	-3.5%	-14.9%	-524.8

OUTPERFORMING THE STATE

UNDERPERFORMING THE STATE

■ = ECONOMY
 ■ = TALENT
 ■ = PLACE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM BENCHMARKING

Manhattan, KS Metropolitan Statistical Area

Ames, IA MSA

Columbia, MO MSA

Morgantown, WV MSA

Stillwater, OK MSA



ORGANIZATIONAL BENCHMARKING

	Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce	Ames Chamber of Commerce	Columbia Chamber of Commerce	Morgantown Area Partnership	Stillwater Chamber of Commerce
Structure	501(c)6 & 501(c)3s	501(c)6 & 501(c)3	501(c)6	501(c)6 & 501(c)3	501(c)6
Key Functions	Chamber, ED, CVB, SBDC	Chamber, ED, DWTN, Seed Capital	Chamber	Chamber, ED, DWTN, Redevelopment	Chamber, ED
Counties Represented	2	2	1	1	1
Population Represented	134,714	127,954	183,610	105,822	82,794
Revenues (c6) or (c4)	\$3,071,160	\$2,802,627	\$389,835	\$763,526	\$1,057,894
Revenues (c3)	\$14,402	\$182,833	N/A	\$102,988 (DWTN); \$400,418 (Redev.)	N/A
Staff Members (FTEs)	14	22	10	7	5
Board Members (voting)	31	23	30	32	18
Members	900+	700+	1,000+	500+	500+

Ecosystem Overview: Public-Private Partnerships

The [Ames Chamber of Commerce](#) and its affiliates advance a coordinated approach to regional economic development in Boone and Story County. The Chamber and its affiliate organization, the [Ames Economic Development Commission](#) (AEDC), are co-branded entities that serve Story County. Through contractual relationships with regional partners in Boone County, the Chamber and the Economic Development Commission serve as the primary point of contact for economic development projects across the two-county region and provide staff support for both the Boone County Economic Growth Corporation and the Nevada Economic Development Council (county seat of Story County).

The Chamber also operates the [Ames Main Street](#) program aiding downtown development and the private [Ames Seed Capital, LLC](#) investment fund.

The Ames Convention & Visitors Bureau – an independent 501(c)(6) organization – is supported by an annual budget of \$2,138,419 and nine (9) full-time staff.

Development Review: Process & Policy

The City of Ames' development review process is anchored by a [Development Review Committee](#) (DRC) made up of City staff in eight departments. The DRC serves as a one-stop shop so that developers do not need to contact and work with various departments and staff members individually. According to the City: *“DRC members seek to understand the customer’s objectives and also consider the development project with respect to their areas of expertise and the City codes, standards, and policies they are charged with implementing. DRC members coordinate with each other and with customers to develop in a way that is consistent with the City’s codes and plans.”*

In 2023, the City approved additional funding to AEDC to support a new position – a City Business Development Coordinator – that would be housed at the Chamber/AEDC and would serve as a liaison providing guidance to prospective businesses and developers as they navigate the development review process. The Coordinator provides regular updates on project status to the City Manager and works with the City’s DRC to advance projects.

In April 2024, the Ames City Council approved a new [short-term partial property tax abatement](#) for new owner-occupied residential construction in an effort to stimulate growth and housing development. A five-year abatement schedule (Year 1: 100%; Year 5: 20%) applies to the first \$500,000 in assessed value. The program terminates on December 31, 2027.

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

Ecosystem Overview: Public-Private Partnerships

The [Columbia Chamber of Commerce](#) primarily supports member networking, advocacy and government affairs, and leadership development.

[Regional Economic Development Inc. \(REDI\)](#) is a public-private partnership supporting economic development in the City of Columbia and Boone County. Founded in 1988, REDI is funded by the City of Columbia, Boone County, the University of Missouri and private investors. REDI serves as the primary point of contact for economic development projects (relocations, expansions) in the City of Columbia and Boone County. It also operates the City's Supplier Diversity Program and houses the Missouri Women's Business Center, the Missouri Procurement Technical Assistance Center, and the REDI Innovation Hub co-working space.

REDI is supported by an annual budget of nearly \$400,000; however, its eight (8) full-time staff members are City employees whose salaries and benefits are *not* included in REDI's budget. Aligned with its programs, REDI staff is heavily oriented towards small business assistance and acceleration.

The Columbia Convention & Visitors Bureau – a department of the City of Columbia – is supported by an annual budget of \$3,318,773 and eight (8) full-time staff.

Development Review: Process & Policy

The City of Columbia recently restructured its Community Development department in 2023, removing the Housing Programs division (implementation of federal and local affordable housing and community development funds) and the Neighborhood Services division (code enforcement), and placing them in a new department. This will in part help Community Development focus more clearly on its remaining functions: the Building & Site Development division (permitting, inspections, development review) and the Planning division (zoning, annexation, historic preservation, etc.).

For Commercial Development Plan Reviews, the City has [established a goal](#) of “*completing the initial review within ten (10) working days and subsequent reviews within five (5) working days. Day 1 begins when the plans have been accepted for review through the Initial Screening Process (ISP). Our goal is to process plans through ISP the next working day after plans have been submitted. When workload is heavy and plans are submitted late in the day, it may occasionally take two working days to move plans through ISP.*”

Single-family and two-family dwelling construction are subject to the City's “one-stop permit process” that is “organized with the professional home builder in mind” and intended to expedite the issuance of building permits for one- and two-family residential construction.

MORGANTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA

Ecosystem Overview: Public-Private Partnerships

The [Morgantown Area Partnership](#) is a self-described “public private alliance” formed in 2020 supporting economic and community development in the Morgantown area (Monongalia County).

The Partnership encompasses four entities including the Morgantown Area Chamber of Commerce, the Monongalia County Development Authority, the Morgantown Area Economic Partnership, and the Campus Neighborhoods Revitalization Corporation (Sunnyside Up). The Development Authority and Sunnyside Up retain independent nonprofit status and corresponding governance but have joined the Partnership by way of co-branding, co-location, and other forms of strategic and operational alignment.

The Partnership also operates the Main Street Morgantown program.

The Greater Morgantown Convention & Visitors Bureau – an independent 501(c)(6) organization – is supported by a \$1,833,902 annual budget and eight (8) full-time staff.

Development Review: Process & Policy

Recent state legislation has tackled the issue of delays in permitting at the local government level.

[Senate Bill 782](#) was signed into law on March 27th, 2024. Its purpose is to “define local permitting deadlines and extensions for applications for a permit, license, variance, or any other type of prior approval from a governing body or planning commission of a municipality or county for an action related to the development or improvement of property.” Specifically, the following language was added to West Virginia Code:

“If an applicant submits a request to a governing body or planning commission of a municipality or county, then the governing body or planning commission of the municipality or county must approve or deny the applicant’s request within 60 days.” A “request” is defined as an “application for a permit, license, variance or any other necessary prior approval related to the development or improvement of property.” Absent any additional approvals that may be required from state or federal agencies, the request must be approved or denied within 60 days of receipt, or it is automatically approved.

This legislation in West Virginia is akin to a well-known [Minnesota statute](#) that imposes similar deadlines (“the 60-day rule”). It is also similar to recent Georgia legislation ([HB 493 aka the Private Permitting Review & Inspection Act](#)) that revises existing time limits placed on local government reviews while allowing developers to retain private-party inspectors if local government staff is unable to complete reviews within a timely (30-day) period.

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

Ecosystem Overview: Public-Private Partnerships

The [Stillwater Chamber of Commerce](#) operates the [Stillwater Economic Development](#) program via contract with the City of Stillwater to perform economic development activities on its behalf.

The [Stillwater Economic Development Authority](#) (SEDA) primarily supports the distribution of tax increment finance (TIF) revenues that are collected to support the implementation of the Stillwater Downtown/Campus Link Project Plan, adopted in 2018 with the intent of aiding corridor revitalization and job creation in and around downtown Stillwater.

The community relies heavily on regional and state resources to support targeted economic development. The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and its [Greater Oklahoma City Partnership](#) provide regional economic development project management and marketing services for a ten-county region encompassing Stillwater and Payne County.

Visit Stillwater Inc. (CVB) – an independent 501(c)(6) organization – is supported by an annual budget of \$823,747 and two (2) full-time staff.

Development Review: Process & Policy

The City of Stillwater offers [expedited permitting and certificates of occupancy](#) for industrial projects.

In April 2024, the Stillwater City Council approved a [resolution](#) creating a committee that will examine the City's incentive policies and seek to create new business incentives in four predefined areas around the City of Stillwater to help catalyze job creation.

Stillwater's various development-related fees underwent significant review and adjustment in 2017. Stillwater City Council voted 5-0 to pass an ordinance that would gradually increase various permit fees over a three-year period. This was done in response to a financial review of the Development Services Department which showed that fee structures covered just 23 percent of departmental operating costs. Council supported a new fee structure that would more than double the total fee on the median-priced single-family home in an effort to promote cost-recovery, ensuring that the department covered 75 percent of its costs through permitting fees.

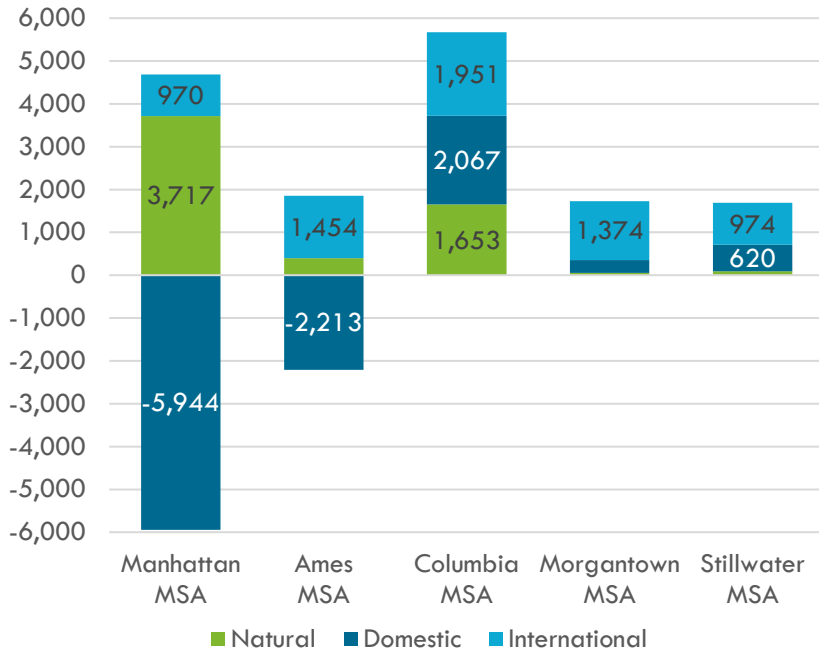
STRATEGIC THEMES & OTHER ISSUES

1. Population Dynamics: Growth & Change
2. Economic Composition & Diversification
3. Development Readiness: Sites & Spaces
4. University Ecosystems
5. Housing Markets

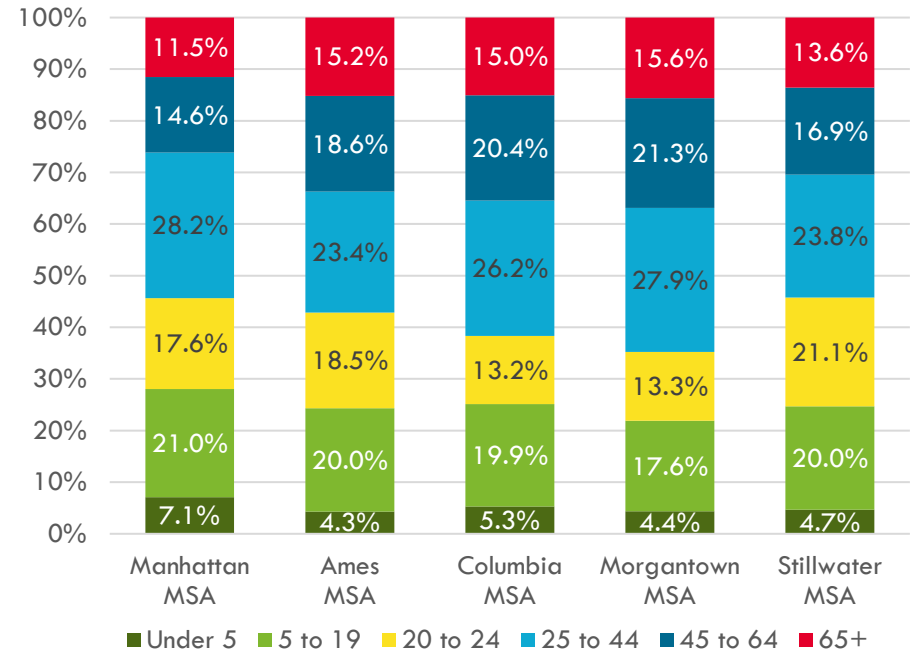


POPULATION DYNAMICS: GROWTH & CHANGE

Components of Population Change (2020 – 2023)



Age Composition (2023)



Birth Rates & Family Dynamics (2022)

MSA	Births per 1,000 women aged 15-50	Households w/ children under 18
Manhattan MSA	53.4	32.5%
Ames MSA	44.0	22.9%
Columbia MSA	43.0	25.9%
Morgantown MSA	54.1	26.5%
Stillwater MSA	26.1	24.0%

The Manhattan area's population stagnation is unquestionably driven by domestic net outmigration. It holds a tremendous advantage relative to its peers with respect to its young workforce, an attribute buoyed by the presence of Fort Riley. Young families are starting in the Manhattan area at a considerably higher rate than its peers, illustrated by the region's above average birth rates, households with children, and population under the age of five. The challenge for the Manhattan area is to translate this advantage with respect to young families – born largely from Fort Riley and Kansas State University – into a prosperous and sustainable adult workforce via desirable growth in diverse array of industries.

ECONOMIC COMPOSITION & DIVERSIFICATION

The Manhattan area's peers – university-anchored communities – benefit tremendously from the presence of certain private sector, export-oriented activities that bring new income into the area to complement their tax-exempt anchor institutions. These other sources of employment help retain graduates, attract new residents, diversify the tax base, and support the growth of other predominantly local-serving sectors (retail, restaurants).

Ames is home to a diverse manufacturing sector in addition to the National Centers for Animal Health. Columbia is home to numerous corporate headquarters and concentrated insurance employment (Shelter Insurance, 1,200+ jobs; State Farm, 500+ jobs). Morgantown is also home to diverse base of homegrown headquarters and a variety of private health care related research and service employment leveraging the presence of the Centers for Disease Control. The Stillwater region benefits from the wealth generated from its oil and gas industry but similar to the Manhattan area, lacks a presence of multiple for-profit employers larger than 250 employees.

Location Quotients by Industry by MSA (2023)

	Manhattan MSA	Ames MSA	Columbia MSA	Morgantown MSA	Stillwater MSA	Peer MSA Average	Diff. from Peer Average
Government	3.07	2.53	1.92	1.64	2.88	2.24	0.83
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1.15	3.09	0.54	0.16	0.70	1.12	0.03
Other Services (exc. Public Administration)	0.95	0.70	0.83	0.85	0.94	0.83	0.12
Accommodation & Food Services	0.89	0.85	1.21	1.09	1.41	1.14	-0.25
Retail Trade	0.84	0.96	1.09	1.01	1.08	1.04	-0.20
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction	0.71	0.46	0.08	2.95	3.13	1.66	-0.95
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	0.62	0.63	0.59	0.72	0.47	0.60	0.02
Finance & Insurance	0.61	0.42	1.56	0.33	0.50	0.70	-0.09
Manufacturing	0.59	1.05	0.66	0.41	0.41	0.63	-0.04
Health Care & Social Assistance	0.58	0.60	0.86	1.81	0.43	0.93	-0.35
Transportation & Warehousing	0.51	0.47	0.58	0.35	0.38	0.45	0.07
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	0.49	0.58	0.69	0.68	0.66	0.65	-0.16
Administrative & Support Services	0.43	0.56	0.53	0.76	0.56	0.60	-0.17
Educational Services	0.43	0.32	0.83	0.38	0.28	0.45	-0.02
Wholesale Trade	0.38	0.62	0.64	0.44	0.40	0.53	-0.15
Information	0.35	0.66	0.57	0.56	0.35	0.54	-0.19
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0.23	0.73	1.51	1.12	0.35	0.93	-0.70

Location quotients (LQs) measure the relative concentration of employment in given industry. Specifically, the measure the share of employment in a given region in a given industry divided by that same industry's share of employment nationwide. Location quotients greater than 1.0 indicate a relative concentration of employment when compared to the average American community; such specialization is potentially suggestive of competitive advantage. Location quotients less than 1.0 indicate a relative lack of regional employment when compared to the average American community.

ECONOMIC COMPOSITION & DIVERSIFICATION

Amidst its economic stagnation, the Manhattan area has started to experience economic diversification; losses in government employment were offset by nearly equivalent gains in a variety of private sector industries. The challenge for the Manhattan area moving forward is to accelerate this growth in other private sector industries such that it will reduce the area's reliance on sales tax receipts while simultaneously supporting the competitiveness of retailers and restaurants by bringing new wealth to the community. Growth in these diverse export-oriented industries and the comparatively high-wage occupations they employ will also help retain college graduates and attract new working-age professionals to the community.

Employment Growth, Location Quotient (LQ), and Average Annual Wage (2013 – 2023), Manhattan, KS MSA

	Jobs (2013)	Jobs (2023)	Net Change (2013 - 2023)	% Change (2013 - 2023)	Location Quotient (2023)	Avg. Annual Wage (2023)
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1,884	3,373	1,489	79%	0.62	\$75,509
Transportation & Warehousing	739	1,705	966	131%	0.51	\$49,799
Other Services (exc. Public Administration)	3,117	3,582	465	15%	0.95	\$36,295
Health Care & Social Assistance	5,391	5,694	303	6%	0.58	\$44,151
Finance & Insurance	1,671	1,895	224	13%	0.61	\$70,791
Construction	3,239	3,435	196	6%	0.78	\$62,677
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	834	1,028	194	23%	1.15	\$46,999
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	915	1,071	156	17%	0.79	\$49,025
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	561	649	88	16%	0.49	\$22,322
Management of Companies & Enterprises	190	261	71	37%	0.23	\$68,944
Utilities	373	419	46	12%	1.63	\$105,757
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction	158	187	29	18%	0.71	\$59,388
Educational Services	790	791	1	0%	0.43	\$30,422
Manufacturing	3,528	3,504	-24	-1%	0.59	\$62,482
Accommodation & Food Services	5,669	5,621	-48	-1%	0.89	\$19,918
Wholesale Trade	1,306	1,060	-246	-19%	0.38	\$71,108
Retail Trade	6,465	6,102	-363	-6%	0.84	\$32,302
Administrative & Support Services	2,381	2,000	-381	-16%	0.43	\$42,008
Information	902	506	-396	-44%	0.35	\$50,685
Government	36,301	33,519	-2,782	-8%	3.07	\$56,677
Total	76,414	76,402	-12	0%		\$59,491

DEVELOPMENT READINESS: SITES & SPACES

Retail, Office & Industrial Market Statistics (May 2024)

	RETAIL* (FOR LEASE)		OFFICE* (FOR LEASE)		INDUSTRIAL** (FOR SALE)			
	Available Properties	Average Lease Rate	Available Properties	Average Lease Rate	Less than 10 acres	10 to 50 acres	50 to 250 acres	250+ acres
Manhattan, KS	8	\$15.11	19	\$22.61	24	5	1	0
Ames, IA	12	\$17.69	11	\$15.77	36	16	7	2
Columbia, MO	20	NA	18	\$17.25	2	4	2	1
Morgantown, WV	36	\$14.32	58	\$21.50	3	4	0	0
Stillwater, OK	11	NA	4	\$13.57	18	2	1	0

*Data for principal cities. **Data for metropolitan areas.

Peer Region Investment, Industrial Site Readiness & Preparation

Ames, IA: In 2017, the City of Ames annexed 1,000+ acres to support industrial site preparation. In 2019, the Prairie View Industrial Park received certification as a “Super Park,” one of only two such designations among the state’s 27 certified industrial sites.

Columbia, MO: The Ewing Industrial Park became home to Missouri’s first certified site in 2008. It is positioned for data center and other high-energy projects. The land is privately-held but the City and its utility providers have created targeted incentives for the industrial park.

Morgantown, WV: In 2008, a tax increment finance (TIF) district was approved for the Morgantown Industrial Park (developed in 1940), producing \$14 million to support shovel-readiness. In 2023, the state announced a new bridge and interstate access point serving the Park.

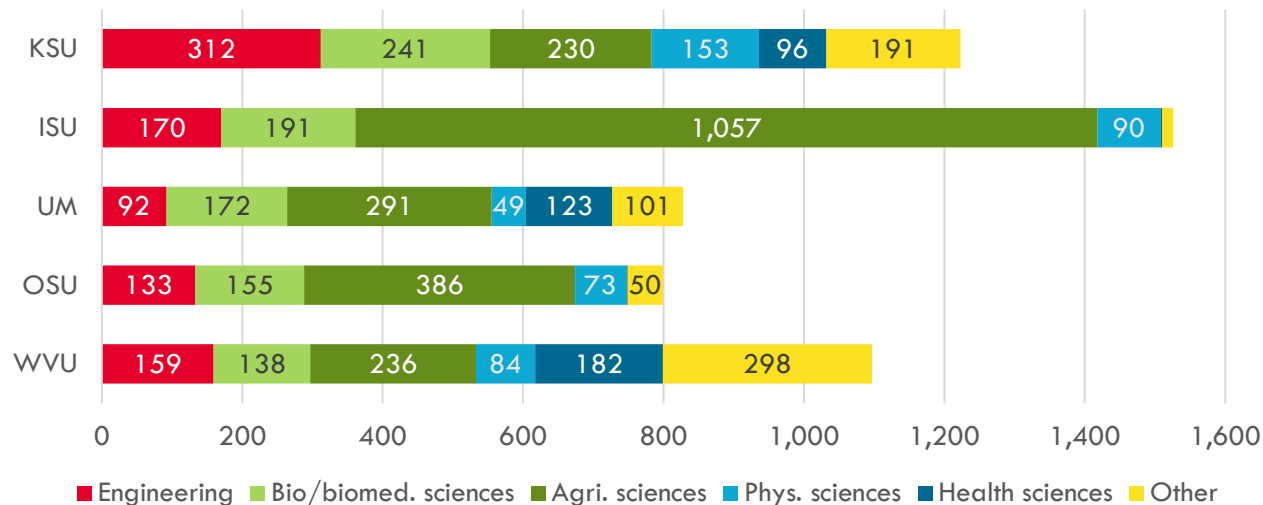
Stillwater, OK: The Stillwater Chamber recently secured a grant from the Department of Commerce which it used to bring in a site selection consultant to evaluate the readiness and positioning of its industrial sites.

UNIVERSITY ECOSYSTEMS

Research and Development, Licensing, Patent, and Startup Activity by Institution (FY2021)

	Licensing FTEs	Total Research Expend. (mil.)	Total Licenses	Active Licenses & Options	Gross License Income (mil.)	Disclosures	New Patent Apps.	Issued Patents	Startups
Kansas State University Research Foundation	5	\$203.8	22	168	\$4.11	61	33	17	0
Iowa State University	8	\$394.5	34	376	\$2.91	179	51	50	8
University of Missouri, all campuses	7	\$491.8	66	448	\$5.99	172	61	36	3
<i>*adjusted by Columbia % of R&D (75%)</i>	5	\$368.8	50	336	\$4.49	129	46	27	2
Oklahoma State University	4	\$387.6	17	89	\$2.83	45	28	11	4
West Virginia University	1	\$105.7	2	24	\$0.16	49	20	16	2

Science & Engineering Research Space by Field, Net Assignable Square Feet (FY2021)

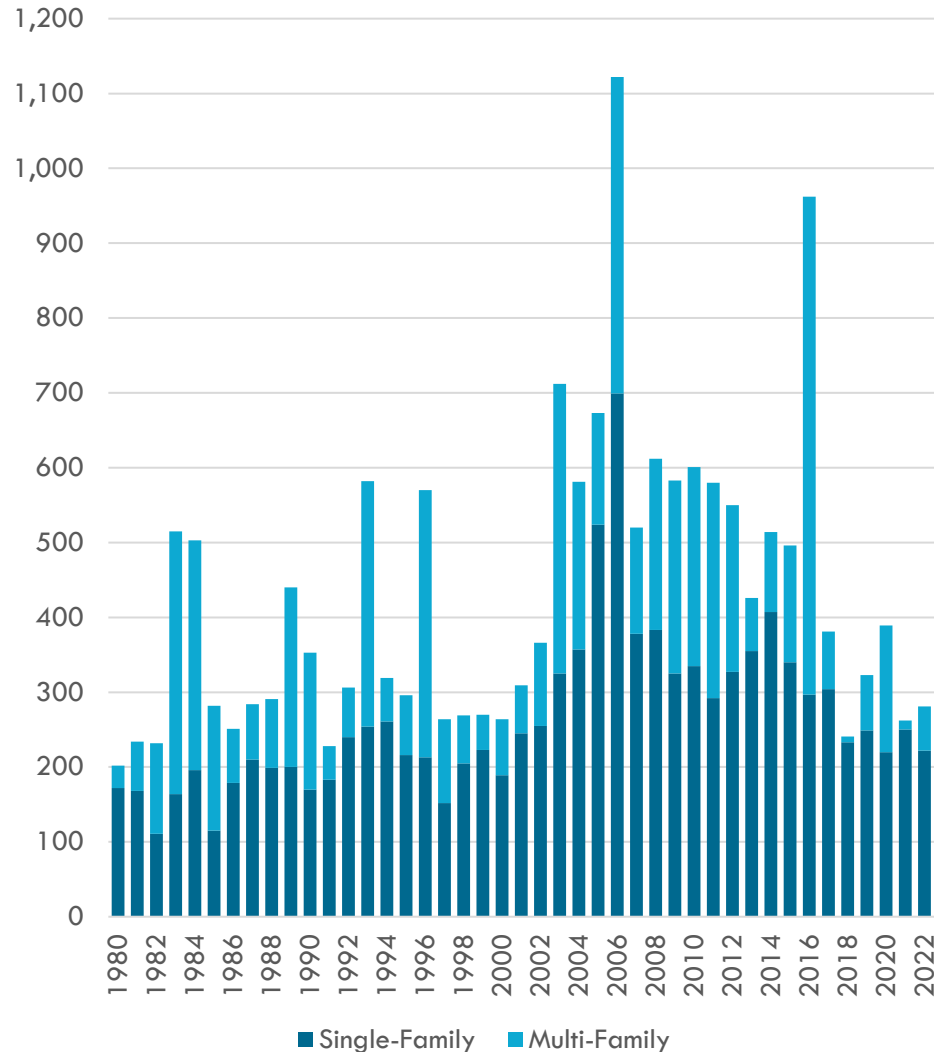


New Construction of Science & Eng. Research Space, Sq. Ft. (FY15 – FY23)

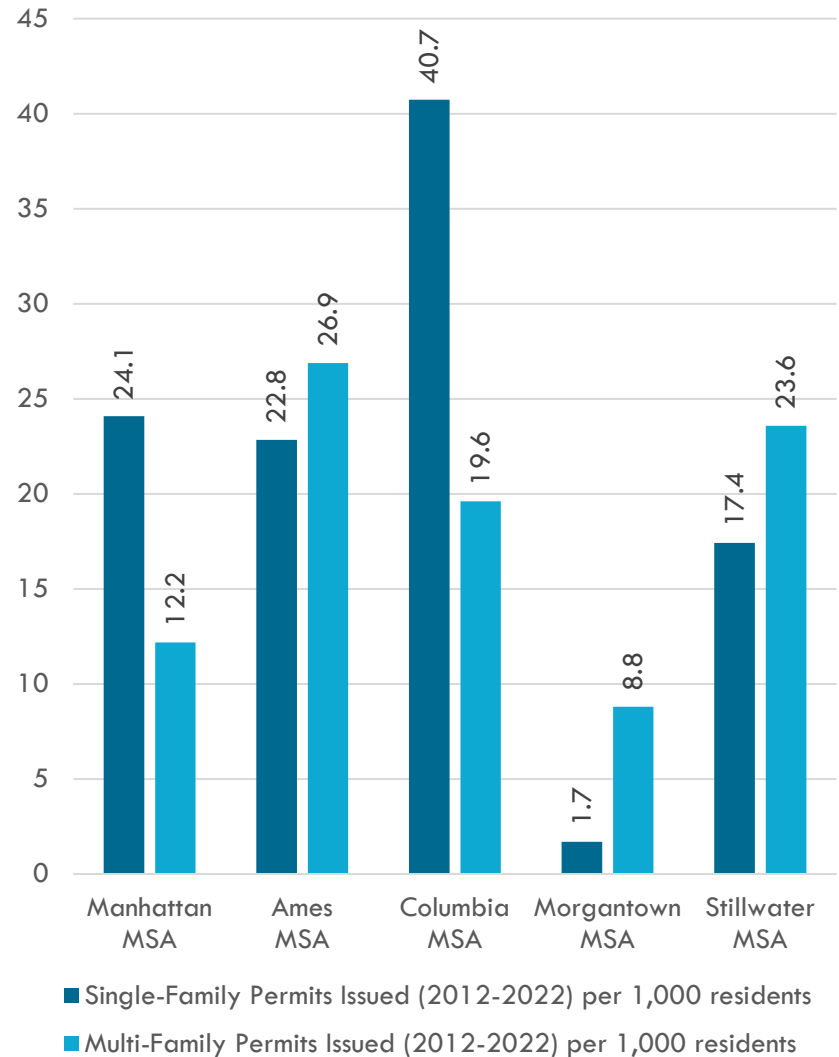
	Started in FY15 or later	Started in FY20-FY23
KSU	61,984	4,728
ISU	20,465	0
UM	267,257	87,800
OSU	52,625	52,625
WVU	25,248	0

HOUSING MARKETS

Building Permits Issued by Year, Manhattan MSA (1980 – 2022)



Building Permits Issued per Capita by MSA (2012 – 2022)



SUMMARY

SWOT Analysis



SWOT ANALYSIS

ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE MANHATTAN AREA

STRENGTHS

- Quality of life
- Public safety
- Arts and culture
- Attractiveness to families and retirees
- Higher education and talent production (KSU)
- Technical training and workforce development capacity (MATC)
- National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF)
- Fort Riley

WEAKNESSES

- Economic diversity
- Housing approachability
- Rental affordability
- Property tax burden
- Net outmigration and talent retention
- Development policies and processes
- Site and building inventory to support large investments

OPPORTUNITIES

- Industrial site preparation
- Regional partnerships along Interstate 70
- Incentive optimization supporting targeted recruitment
- Animal health research and enterprise clustering
- “Yes, if . . .” becomes a defining mindset in development review
- Commitment to fiscal impact analysis, evaluation and transparency

THREATS

- Population and economic stagnation
- Overreliance on sales tax revenues
- Relative lack of private, for-profit employment
- Losing ground in academic R&D (total and life sciences)
- “No, because . . .” is a prevalent mindset in development review
- Lack of urgency related to economic diversification



ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN

STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK

THE PROBLEM

The Manhattan area relies heavily on a few large, public, tax-exempt employers to support its economic growth. Yet over the last decade, the region has experienced a net loss in population and jobs. Despite a series of investments and successes that have aided our economic diversification, the change that is happening *to us* is occurring at a faster pace than the change we are creating *for us*.

Our concerns of **economic stagnation** have, in fact, manifested as **economic decline**. And decline is difficult to reverse for communities, their economies, and their budgets.

A continued reliance on the same sources of growth will not sustain the Manhattan area, economically or fiscally.

A continued reliance on the same strategies will not reignite growth.

THE SOLUTION

The Manhattan area needs a plan for growth. But not all growth is created equal. The Manhattan area needs **desirable growth** that supports its economic, workforce, and fiscal sustainability.

DESIRABLE GROWTH

What is “desirable
growth” for the
Manhattan area?

And how do we
measure it?

Desirable growth...

...diversifies our economy into **target sectors** characterized by private, export-oriented jobs paying above average wages.

...diversifies our tax base, enabling the area to govern with stability and flexibility.

...elevates incomes via above average wage jobs.

...improves the approachability of housing.

...helps attract and retain residents.

Key Performance Indicators

- Job growth and percentage of jobs in high-wage industries (e.g., manufacturing, professional services, information, etc.) that include our target sectors (e.g., agricultural equipment and technology)
- Distribution of tax revenues by source (property vs. sales)
- Income and wage growth
- Months of housing supply; ownership, rental affordability
- Net migration

TARGET SECTORS

What sectors of the economy should be strategically targeted by the Manhattan area to support desirable growth?

A target sector – or simply a “target”– is any type of economic activity that is strategically pursued by an economic development organization and its partners to enable desired growth.

Limited economic development resources, programs, and policies are specifically focused and aligned to support target sectors, aiding desired growth and optimizing return on investment.

Target sectors typically represent segments of a regional economy where assets and competitive advantages exist, and prospects for future growth are greatest.

In the Manhattan area, our approach is guided by our definition of desirable growth; notably, our need to diversify into more private, export-oriented sectors paying above average wages.

A subset of our target sectors – recruitment targets (R) – represent sectors that are well suited for targeted corporate recruitment.

- Agricultural Equipment & Technology (R)
- Animal Health Products & Science (R)
- Biomanufacturing, Biosecurity & Food Safety (R)
- Equipment, Machine & Metal Fabrication (R)
- Healthcare
- Construction Trades

ONGOING EFFORTS

What existing
strategies and tactics
are essential to
supporting
desirable growth?

This Economic Growth Plan identifies a set of clear strategic priorities that proactively focus the community's collective efforts on a clear strategic imperative: the need to reignite desirable growth in the Manhattan area. These priorities complement a variety of existing strategic objectives that are advanced by the Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership – a division of the Manhattan Area Chamber – and which should continue to receive strategic attention and investment in support of desirable growth. These include but are not limited to:

- Engage primary, target sector, and major employers in the region through a formalized BR&E program.
- Develop leads from existing business engagement and support BR&E projects with economic development resources.
- Respond to the workforce and advocacy needs of area companies.
- Deploy high-value programming, assistance, and resources to entrepreneurs, small businesses, and innovation-based companies.
- Sustain existing and create new access to capital solutions.
- Facilitate sustainability of entrepreneurial support organizations.
- Maintain and strengthen *Made for Manhattan* brand and associated programs that promote living and working in the area.
- Leverage Kansas State University, Fort Riley, and Manhattan Area Technical College to increase retention of talent in the region.
- Connect business and community leadership with Fort Riley leadership to collaborate in achieving defined program objectives
- Create a welcoming community for service members to call home.
- Advocate on behalf of Fort Riley to sustain and grow the mission.

“YES, IF...”
INSTEAD OF
“NO, BECAUSE...”

How does our mindset
influence our actions,
our strategy, and our
outcomes?

As the Manhattan area confronts this mandate to reignite growth and support its economic, workforce, and fiscal sustainability as a community, it is imperative that the community and those who engage with its economic development embed this sense of urgency – this responsibility – into their day-to-day operations. This will require an intentional shift in mindset and culture across organizations and within individuals.

When businesses, developers, and investors bring forward opportunities to ignite desired growth, they must be met with a welcoming and receptive attitude that recognizes the importance of these investments in the community’s future and seeks to resolve any differences between written policy and development proposals with a “yes, if...” response as opposed to a “no, because...” response.

Such a shift in mindset to begin with “yes” is essential to the efficient and effective implementation of the various recommendations – policy, process, initiatives, and investments – that are outlined in the Economic Growth Plan.

“YES, IF...”
INSTEAD OF
“NO, BECAUSE...”

How does our mindset
influence our actions,
our strategy, and our
outcomes?

This mindset has prevailed in Decatur, Georgia, instilling a culture that permeates departments and is palpable to businesses and developers. Decatur’s model – and the positive feedback from both government and developers – has inspired other communities and their leadership to instill a similar culture.

“In 2012, Tom Stahl decided he wanted to make craft beer on a commercial basis in Decatur. One problem: City ordinances didn’t allow that. But the city’s economic development officials didn’t discourage him. In fact, they did the opposite...the city commission voted in the summer of 2012 to change its alcoholic beverage ordinance to allow for breweries, wineries and distilleries. Zoning was tweaked, too. Everything happened quickly, Stahl says. ‘They said unequivocally yes,’ he says. ‘They said yes, yes, yes across the board.’ Catherine Lee, development services coordinator in the city’s economic development department, says Decatur tries to deal with new business ideas by following a ‘yes, and’ approach rather than a ‘no, but’ philosophy.”

“Cities Mean Business.” *Georgia Trend*, February 1, 2016.

“In Decatur, Georgia, where I serve as planning director, a big part of our successful redevelopment has been the elected officials and staff. They’re great listeners. They have a well known philosophy of ‘Yes, if...’ rather than ‘No, because...’ when it comes to working with the development community.”

- Amanda Thompson, Planning Director (retired), City of Decatur (2013)

ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN

INVESTMENTS

Expedite investment in a more competitive real estate inventory to enable desirable growth.

POLICIES

Craft stimulative new policies that incentivize desirable growth and target sectors.

PROCESSES

Augment development review processes to improve predictability, efficiency, and accountability.

INITIATIVES

Invest in modern partnerships and initiatives that promote desirable growth and target sectors.

INVESTMENTS

THE CHALLENGE

Development **readiness and preparedness – or a lack thereof** – inhibits our ability to seize growth opportunities.

THE PRIORITY

Expedite investment in **a more competitive real estate inventory** to enable desirable economic growth.

THE ACTIONS

1. Hire a location consultant to conduct a Regional Inventory Audit and Mock Site Visit to help optimize the preparation and promotion of land, buildings, and lab space.
2. Work with local partners to optimize an existing industrial site for shovel-readiness and designation as a new REDI (Readiness Evaluation for Development and Investment) Site by the Site Selectors Guild (SSG).
3. Work with regional partners to identify a site with proximity to I-70 that could potentially accommodate a project of regional economic significance.
4. Enable and proactively utilize available funding streams to advance the development of needed housing stock.

INVESTMENTS

1. Hire a location consultant to conduct a Regional Inventory Audit and Mock Site Visit to help optimize the preparation and promotion of land, buildings and lab space.

The availability of labor, land and energy remain at the top of site location factors for industrial projects varied sizes. According to the Site Selectors Guild 2024 State of Site Selection: *“Because the availability of development-ready sites with sufficient utility capacity has become much more difficult to find...the first screening must be to narrow the markets to only those that consultants know to have at least one viable candidate site...Guild members agreed that states and provinces are inadequately investing in infrastructure to address the lack of development-ready sites.”* Competitive communities are leveraging such consultants to evaluate and provide feedback on their inventory, its relative competitiveness and preparation for target industries, and the economic development team’s approach to selling the community to a prospective employer. These engagements also helps strengthen relationships with and exposure to top consultants that have a pipeline of projects and potential investments. The Manhattan area can optimize its portfolio of industrial sites, buildings, and laboratory spaces in alignment with target industry needs via a Regional Inventory Audit.

Timeline: 2025

Metrics & Milestones: Completion of Regional Inventory Audit

2. Work with local partners to optimize an existing industrial site for shovel-readiness and designation as a new REDI (Readiness Evaluation for Development and Investment) Site by the Site Selectors Guild (SSG).

Informed by the completed Regional Inventory Audit (see above), the community should follow recommendations to optimize one or more industrial sites that hold the greatest potential to achieve REDI Site designation from SSG by the end of 2026. This site’s marketability and solicitation of investment would be supported by a collaborative new initiative – the Request for Investment (RFI) – that aligns partners behind an innovative incentive package to attract desired growth and investment on the site.

Timeline: 2025 Regional Site Audit completion; 2026 site investments; 2027 REDI site designation and marketing

Metrics & Milestones: Attainment of REDI Site designation by 2027

INVESTMENTS

3. Work with regional partners to identify a site with proximity to I-70 that can accommodate a project of regional economic significance.

Interviews with community leaders suggested that the community needed to begin making the next phase of investments to prepare competitive industrial sites in an era of domestic manufacturing resurgence. The research validated that the region's competitors have made significant investments in recent years while also illustrating that the area has potential to develop and market a large, certified industrial site with interstate proximity that could differentiate the region in pursuit of a project of regional significance supporting "desirable growth" KPIs. Building on the regional inventory audit (see above), the Manhattan area should engage in strategic conversations with surrounding communities regarding shared opportunities and advocacy priorities to enable the preparation of a highly competitive megasite.

Timeline: 2025 Regional Site Audit (see above); 2026 site identified; 2027 development opportunity advanced with partners, property owner(s)

Metrics & Milestones: Identification of one (1) or more 250+ acre sites

4. Enable and proactively utilize available funding streams to advance the development of needed housing stock.

Throughout the strategic planning process, stakeholders referenced the relative under-utilization of certain state-enabled programs and financing mechanisms that are aiding the development of much needed housing stock in other communities across the state. Specifically, the process identified two specific priorities:

- A. The proactive utilization of state-enabled programs – including but not limited to the Reinvestment Housing Incentive District (RHID) program, the Moderate Income Housing (MIH) program, and Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) MIH, and IRBs – to facilitate additional residential development.
- B. The development of mechanisms and/or targeted funds in partnership with local government, the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation, and Habitat for Humanity to support the strategic acquisition and redevelopment of properties that aid desired housing and revitalization objectives.

The Chamber can help advance utilization and/or development of these programs by working with developers and relevant local governments to draft resolutions and development plans needed for RHID establishment/incentives, develop applications for annual MIH funding rounds, etc.

Timeline: Annual Q2 meetings to identify projects with funding potential

Metrics & Milestones: Number of projects and number of units receiving state funding; number of properties acquired and redeveloped locally

THE CHALLENGE

Development **policies are not fully optimized** to enable desirable economic growth.

THE PRIORITY

Craft **stimulative new policies** that incentivize desirable growth and target sectors.

THE ACTIONS

1. Help reduce development costs by refining the Manhattan Development Code (MDC) and Manhattan Stormwater Criteria (MSC) consistent with the Crossroads MHK Housing Market Analysis' (HMA) recommendations.
2. Update and simplify the Manhattan Economic Development Incentive Funding Criteria to align with “desirable growth” KPIs defined herein.
3. Formalize a flexible and customized workforce training incentive in partnership with Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC).

POLICIES

1. Help reduce development costs by refining the Manhattan Development Code (MDC) and Stormwater Management Criteria (SMC) consistent with the Crossroads MHK Housing Market Analysis' (HMA) recommendations.

The recently completed Crossroads MHK HMA makes a series of sensible recommendations to help support the availability and affordability of housing, based heavily on successful best-practice codes and ordinances from peer communities. Most notably, the recommended refinements to the MDC that merit immediate implementation to help lower development costs and support desirable growth include increased density allowances, the adoption of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) policy and corresponding permitting, and reduced lot sizes in targeted areas. In addition, the input and assessment that informed this Economic Growth Plan identified a series of additional and more detailed elements of Manhattan Development Code (MDC) and Stormwater Management Criteria (SMC) that merit reconsideration to help enable desired growth. These include: citywide stormwater detention requirements (SMC 8.2), maintenance pathways to detention facilities (SMC 4.3.8), and sidewalk requirements on both sides of minor arterials or lower (MDC 26-7A-4).

Timeline: 2025

Metrics & Milestones: Adoption of revised Manhattan Development Code and Stormwater Management Criteria (SMC).

2. Update and simplify the Manhattan Economic Development Incentive Funding Criteria to align with “desirable growth” KPIs defined herein.

The current incentive policy and associated criteria utilized to evaluate economic development projects in the City of Manhattan can be simplified and better aligned with the “desirable growth” KPIs defined herein. Most notably, adjustments would improve eligibility for qualifying projects that advance these KPIs (percentage of jobs in private, export-oriented industries; job growth in above average wage occupations; percentage of tax revenues derived from property).

Timeline: 2025

Metrics & Milestones: Adoption of revised Incentive Funding Criteria.

3. Formalize a flexible and customized workforce training incentive in partnership with Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC).

Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC) has experienced tremendous growth in enrollments, certificate and degree completions in recent years. A number of regional employers are effectively leveraging MATC for their training needs, and MATC has reportedly demonstrated relative flexibility in accommodating the needs of existing employers. This has been particularly evident within MATC’s Industrial Engineering Technology offerings. Potential exists to formalize a new flexible, customizable workforce training incentive that would be available to eligible existing and prospective employers that meet certain criteria (e.g., alignment with desirable growth KPIs). Such customized workforce training is the premier economic development incentive in many of the nation’s most competitive and fast-growing states (e.g. South Carolina’s readySC, Georgia’s Quick Start, Virginia’s FastForward, etc.).

Timeline: 2025 program development, 2026 program marketing and enrollment, 2027 program implementation

Metrics & Milestones: Two (2) new and two (2) existing (expanding) employers engaged in the program by the end of 2027.

THE CHALLENGE

Development review **processes are frustrating** for both developers and local governments.

THE PRIORITY

Augment development review processes to improve **objectivity, predictability, efficiency, and accountability.**

THE ACTIONS

1. Hire a Development Coordinator to aid the completeness of applications, the efficiency of reviews, and the adoption of a “yes, if...” culture.
2. Form a new Development Review Committee (DRC) at the City of Manhattan comprised of departmental representatives to help expedite review and feedback via an Initial Screening Process (ISP).
3. Establish clear goals and performance metrics associated with development review at the City and County levels to aid objectivity, predictability, efficiency, and accountability.

PROCESSES

1. Hire a Development Coordinator to aid the completeness of applications, the efficiency of reviews, and the adoption of a “yes, if…” culture.

Throughout the input process, a variety of developers indicated that current development review processes and meetings with departmental representatives are often characterized by a variety of inconsistent variances or additional requirements requested by staff that may not be required by city code or clarified in application procedures. City representatives suggested that applications often do not meet basic submission requirements and/or that some developers come unprepared to meetings. Numerous communities nationwide have created full-time positions – liaisons, facilitators, coordinators – to help improve communications and outcomes between the development community and City staff. In Manhattan, the position would principally focus on three objectives: completeness of applications, efficiency and objectivity of reviews, and transparency and accountability to both City leadership and the development community. The Development Coordinator is ideally housed within City Hall, supported by economic development funds at the City, and reports directly to the City Manager.

Timeline: 2025 identify ideal position profile; 2026 hire Development Coordinator; 2027 implement transparency and performance reporting

Metrics & Milestones: Hiring of Development Coordinator; % of initial applications accepted at various stages before and after hiring

2. Form a new Development Review Committee (DRC) at the City of Manhattan comprised of departmental representatives to help expedite review and feedback via an Initial Screening Process (ISP).

Consistent with the aforementioned feedback from both City representatives and the development community, a new DRC comprised of key departmental leadership and the recommended Development Coordinator can help coordinate feedback on applications prior to meeting with the applicant in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness. This Initial Review (IR) meeting between the DRC and the applicant would ideally occur within 10 business days or less after an application is accepted for completeness through an Initial Screening Process (ISP). Consistent with best practices from peer communities, the ISP should provide feedback to the applicant within 2 business days.

Timeline: 2025

Metrics & Milestones: Formation of new Development Review Committee

3. Establish clear goals and performance metrics associated with development review at the City and County levels to aid objectivity, predictability, efficiency, and accountability.

While the consistency of feedback during the development review process is critical, the timeliness of that process – or lack thereof – is often the greatest pain point for developers that wish to bring new housing stock to market and help advance the community’s objectives to improve the availability and affordability of housing. Ideal environments create predictability through accountability and set clear performance metrics associated with development review process. Differentiated metrics will be required based on differentiated processes at the city and county levels; the City of Manhattan should lead by way to the recommended Development Coordinator and Development Review Committee (DRC).

Timeline: 2025

Metrics & Milestones: Initial Screening Process (ISP) of 2 days; Initial Review (IR) meeting w/i10 days; all reviews completed in 45 days

INITIATIVES

THE
CHALLENGE

Programs, partnerships, and initiatives that promote desired growth need **new approaches to create new impacts.**

THE
PRIORITY

Invest in **modern programs, partnerships, and initiatives** that promote desirable growth and target sectors.

THE
ACTIONS

1. Open a Regional Economic & Business Research Center to help optimize business retention and expansion, corporate attraction, fiscal impact analysis, performance reporting, and other objectives.
2. Implement a proactive lead generation strategy supporting startup and corporate recruitment in target sectors.
3. Develop a collaborative new initiative – the Request for Investment (RFI) – to solicit desired investment in target sectors and gain unique exposure for the Manhattan area.
4. Evaluate opportunities to expand and/or formalize regional economic and workforce development partnerships.

INITIATIVES

1. Open a Regional Economic & Business Research Center to help optimize business retention and expansion, corporate attraction, startup services, performance reporting, and other objectives.

Across the country, university-anchored economies and their business communities have long benefited from the presence of university economic research centers that support the regional economy and its business community. And in recent years, regional economic development organizations have begun to make considerable new investments in research and analytics as they recognize that their stakeholders – entrepreneurs, existing employers, potential new employers, brokers, consultants, etc. – are increasingly data-driven in their decisions. These investments in research and analytics are modernizing approaches to lead generation for corporate recruitment while enabling more valuable and real-time processing of information *from* existing business and *of benefit to* existing businesses. Within the Manhattan area, this capacity could be enabled via a new University-supported research center or a Chamber-housed research department. Another key role of the Center would be to support the ongoing needs for **fiscal impact analysis** in the Manhattan area, providing independent evaluation of public investments, budgets, referenda, etc.

Timeline: 2025 evaluation and design; 2026 hiring and resource acquisition; 2027 operations begin

Metrics & Milestones: Hiring of research personnel and acquisition of necessary analytical technologies

2. Implement a proactive lead generation strategy supporting startup and corporate recruitment in target sectors.

Modern economic development organizations are leveraging the aforementioned research and analytics capabilities to gain greater control over their economic development project pipeline, investing in tools, technologies, and relationships that will help them develop and execute a more proactive approach to lead generation. Leveraging research and relationships, the Manhattan area can follow the lead of some of the nation's leading economic development organizations by developing and executing a lead generation strategy that seeks to generate and convert leads in target sectors (e.g., animal health, biomanufacturing, food safety and global food systems, etc.) from both startups and established operations.

Timeline: 2025 strategy and tactics development; 2026 lead identification, engagement, and development; 2027 lead conversion begins

Metrics & Milestones: Number of unqualified leads (100), pursuits (50), active prospects (10), and converted projects (2) by target sector

INITIATIVES

3. **Develop a collaborative new initiative – the Request for Investment (RFI) – to solicit desired investment in target sectors and gain unique exposure for the Manhattan area.**

In the traditional corporate relocation process, communities respond to requests for information (RFIs) issued by companies and/or their location advisors, and compete for investments through a rigorous site selection process. The Manhattan area can invert this process – issuing a request for investment (RFI) – to attract desired growth in target sectors while gaining unique attention for the Manhattan area.

Specifically, a Request for Investment (RFI) would be issued to companies, site selectors, and others influencing location decisions, offering a compelling and unique incentive package (e.g., property/land, financial incentives, custom workforce training, etc.) to one or more companies that meet certain criteria and are interested in making a series of commitments to enable available incentives. The contest could be promoted nationally or globally, gaining positive exposure for the region. Partners would be engaged to help develop a creative and highly-attractive set of incentives, and define the ideal companies to target by way of eligibility criteria.

The RFI would ideally be specifically connected to the marketing and activation of one or more sites that have been evaluated by way of the recommended Regional Inventory Audit (see Investments) and achieved shovel-readiness by way of REDI designation (see Investments).

Timeline: 2025 partner engagement regarding concept; 2026 development of specific incentives and RFI package; 2027 RFI issued

Metrics & Milestones: RFI issued in 2027

4. **Evaluate opportunities to expand and/or formalize regional economic and workforce development partnerships.**

During the input phase, a variety of stakeholders suggested that the region might benefit from initiating formal conversations related to three regional partnership opportunities: 1) expansion of multi-county regional economic development partnerships (i.e., Greater Manhattan Economic Partnership) supporting corporate recruitment and site preparation; 2) preservation of working partnerships that characterized the recently dissolved Knowledge Based Economic Development (KBED) partnership, and; 3) a potential consortium of education and workforce partners to advance dual enrollment opportunities, career readiness and placement, and other areas of shared value.

Timeline: 2025 evaluations; 2026 formalize any identified new partnership opportunities

Metrics & Milestones: Conversations initiated and progress reported to relevant stakeholders by the conclusion of 2025.



APPENDICES

A. Data Sources & Technical Information

APPENDIX A: DATA SOURCES & TECHNICAL INFORMATION

DASHBOARD: BUSINESS

Job Growth: Percent change in jobs (2013 – 2023); Lightcast.io

Establishment Growth: Percent change in establishments (2013 – 2023); Lightcast.io

Gross Regional Product (GRP) Growth: Percent change in the total value of all goods and services produced (2012 – 2022); Lightcast.io

Gross Regional Product per Worker: Total value of all goods and produced per worker (2022); Lightcast.io

Business Formations: Number of new business formations per 1,000 residents (2022); U.S. Census Bureau, Business Formation Statistics (BFS)

Self Employment: Self employment as a share of all jobs (2023); Lightcast.io

Small Firms: Number of establishments with fewer than five employees per 1,000 residents (2021); Census Bureau, County Business Patterns (CBP)

Funded Startups: Number of companies receiving pre-seed, seed, series A-J, angel, grant or equity funding (05/01/14 – 05/01/24); Crunchbase

Academic R&D Expenditures: Research and development (R&D) expenditures by higher education (2022); National Science Foundation (NSF), National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

Academic R&D Expenditure Growth: Percent change in research and development (R&D) expenditures by higher education (2022); National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

APPENDIX A: DATA SOURCES & TECHNICAL INFORMATION

DASHBOARD: PEOPLE

Population Growth: Percent change in total population (2013 – 2023); Lightcast.io

Migration Rate: Net migration, domestic and international (2012 – 2022) per 1,000 residents (2022); Census Bureau, Population Estimates

Young Population (25-39): Percent of population aged 25-39 (2023); Lightcast.io

Young Population Growth (25-39): Percent change in population aged 25-39 (2013 – 2023); Lightcast.io

Educational Attainment (AA+): Percent of adults (25+) with an Associate's degree or higher (2022); Lightcast.io

Change in Educational Attainment (AA+): Change in percentage of adults (25+) with an Associate's degree or higher (2022); Lightcast.io

Cert/AA Degree Completions: Number of non-distance Certificates and Associate's degree completions per 1,000 residents (2022); Lightcast.io

BA/Grad+ Degree Completions: Number of non-distance Bachelor's and above degree completions per 1,000 residents (2022); Lightcast.io

Cert/AA Degree Completions Growth: Change in the number of non-distance Certificates and Associate's degree completions per 1,000 residents (2012 – 2022); Lightcast.io

BA/Grad+ Degree Completions Growth: Change in the number of non-distance Bachelor's and above degree completions per 1,000 residents (2012 – 2022); Lightcast.io

APPENDIX A: DATA SOURCES & TECHNICAL INFORMATION

DASHBOARD: PLACE

Cost of Living Index: Cost of living index, 100 = U.S. average (Q32023); Council for Community & Economic Research (C2ER), Lightcast.io

Sales Tax Rate (Non-Food): Sales tax rate, non-food (2024); local government websites

Median Home Price: Median residential (single-family, multi-family) home price (March 2024); Zillow

Homeownership Affordability: Ratio of median home price to median household income (2022); Zillow; Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS)

Median Rent: Median rent, all units (2022); Census Bureau, ACS

Rental Affordability: Percentage of renters spending 30% or more of income on rent (2022); Census Bureau, ACS

Median Real Estate Taxes Paid: Median real estate taxes paid, all homeowners (2022); Census Bureau, ACS

Property Tax, Manh. Median-Priced Home: Property tax assessment on the Manhattan area's median priced home (March 2024); Zillow; local government websites

Single-Family Permits: Single-family building permits issued per 1,000 residents (2022); United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), State of the Cities Data System (SOCDS) Building Permit Database

Multi-Family Permits: Multi-family building permits issued per 1,000 residents (2022); HUD, SOCDS

APPENDIX A: DATA SOURCES & TECHNICAL INFORMATION

KEY THEMES & STRATEGIC ISSUES

Location Quotients by Industry by MSA (2023): Share of employment in a given region in a given industry divided by that same industry's share of employment nationwide (2023); Lightcast.io

Employment Growth, Location Quotient (LQ), and Average Annual Wage (2013 – 2023), Manhattan, KS MSA: Jobs, all sectors (all covered, noncovered, and self-employed) (2013); Jobs, all sectors (all covered, noncovered, and self-employed) (2023); Net Change in Jobs (2013 – 2013); Percent Change in Jobs (2013 – 2023); Location Quotient (2023); Average Annual Wage (2023); Lightcast.io

Components of Population Change (2020 – 2023): Natural change (births minus deaths), domestic migration, international migration by year (2020 – 2023); Census Bureau, Population Estimates

Age Composition (2023): Population by age (2023); Lightcast.io

Birth Rates & Family Dynamics (2023): Births per 1,000 women aged 15-50 (2022); Percentage of households with children under the age of 18 (2022); Census Bureau, ACS

Retail, Office & Industrial Market Statistics (May 2024): Number of available properties and average lease rate, office and retail properties for lease (May 2024); number of industrial sites for sale by acreage (May 2024); Loopnet; regional and state economic development websites

Research and Development, Licensing, Patent, and Startup Activity by Institution (FY2021): Various indicators of research expenditure, licensing activity, patent activity, and startup creation; Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM)

Science & Engineering Research Space by Field, Net Assignable Square Feet (FY2021): Square feet of science and engineering research space by field (FY2021); NSF, NCSES

New Construction of Science & Eng. Research Space, Sq. Ft. (FY15 – FY23): Square feet of new constitution of science and engineering research space (FY2015 – FY2023); NSF, NCSES

Building Permits Issued by Year, Manhattan MSA (1980 – 2022): Number of single-family and multi-family building permits issued per year; HUD, SOCDS

Building Permits Issued per Capita by MSA (2012 – 2022): Number of single-family and multi-family building permits issued per 1,000 residents; HUD, SOCDS



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