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2013-2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

South Central Economic Development District, Inc.

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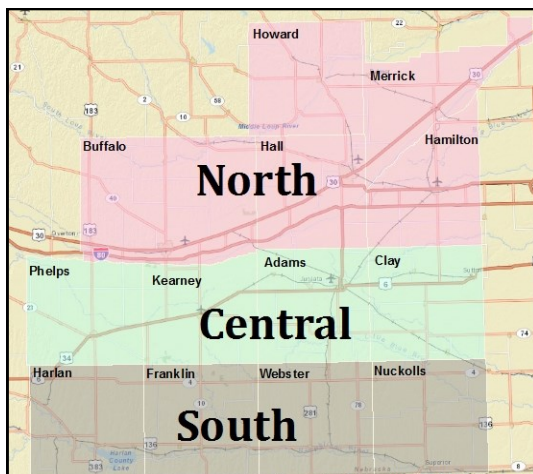
Executive Summary

The South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD), 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the product of a thorough planning process that involved several tasks to include: consideration of public and private sector input; analysis of demographic and economic trends taking place across the District, state, and country; reflection upon the accomplishments and struggles SCEDD experienced during the last five years; and the determination of SCEDD's role in strengthening the regional economy in South Central Nebraska. The CEDS process also assisted the SCEDD organization in evaluating its progress in fulfilling its mission: to develop and promote a positive economic climate which supports regional growth.

The CEDS process was completed through guidance from the Economic Development Administration and incorporated several factors: a review of demographic and economic trends; the results of an in-depth public survey; an inventory of major public and private investments; consideration of major economic development initiatives being undertaken by other agencies within the state; and an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) that impact South Central Nebraska. Through strategic planning exercises that resulted from an analysis of these factors, the CEDS Committee and Board created the Action Implementation Plan (AIP).

SCEDD serves 13 counties in South Central Nebraska to include Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster. The SCEDD territory covers 7,600 square miles and is home to approximately 200,000 people. Over 1,200 miles of State, U.S. and Interstate roadways cross through the District, which is also covered by approximately 800 miles of rivers. SCEDD is one of eight development districts in the Nebraska and is the third fastest growing District in the State as it gained over 8,000 residents from 2000 to 2010. Following the 2010 Census, the third Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in Nebraska was established in the District.

As part of the CEDS process, the District was divided into three sub-regions. The North Region includes Buffalo, Hall, Hamilton, Merrick, and Howard Counties. The 2010 MSA includes all North Region Counties except Buffalo County. The North Region experienced economic and population growth and has two of SCEDD's three metropolitan centers: Kearney and Grand Island. The North also has the highest amount of highway miles and rail lines. The District has two primary commercial service airports, both of which are included in the North; one is located in Kearney and one is located in Grand



Island. Examples of growth in the North Region include the dramatic increase in enplanements at the Central Nebraska Regional Airport (located in Grand Island) as the number rose from 9,159 in 2007 to 56,138 in 2012. This Region has the most developed land and is otherwise covered mainly by grassland.

The Central Region includes Phelps, Kearney, Adams, and Clay Counties. The Central Region experienced moderate population loss from 2000 to 2010. The District's third metropolitan center, Hastings, is located in Adams County and maintained population during the last decennial census. Holdrege, the District's fourth largest city is located in Phelps County and also serves the Region as an employment center; yet, Holdrege and Phelps County lost population from 2000 to 2010. A third of the rail lines that run across the SCEDD area run through the Central Region and one-

fourth of the highway miles that pass through the District pass through the Central Region. The land in the Central Region is primarily covered by crops as these counties enjoy access to prime farmland and irrigation provided by surface and ground water.

The South Region includes Harlan, Franklin, Webster, and Nuckolls Counties, all of which border Northern Kansas. The South Region has important assets such as the Harlan County Reservoir and the childhood home of Nationally Recognized author, Will Cather in Red Cloud (Webster County). The South Region saw the lowest amount of economic growth and the highest amount of population loss from 2000 to 2010.

This region does not have the same access to prime farmland and metropolitan growth as the North and Central Regions. Superior is the largest city in the South Region, the ninth largest city in the District, and is located in of Nuckolls County, the southeast corner of SCEDD territory. The second largest city in the South is Alma, located outside of Harlan County Reservoir in the Southwest corner of the District. Alma is the fourteenth largest city in the District. Both cities, Superior and Alma, lost population during the last decade. One fourth of the highway miles that run through the District run through the South Region and approximately one-fifth of rail lines that run across the District run through the South Region.

The District has characteristics that are unique to it and affect each region. Access to natural resources and irrigation technology have created a agricultural industry that plays a significant role in the SCEDD economy and culture. Ten of SCEDD's 13 counties are listed as agriculture dependent by the United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Another strong source of economic activity in the District is its share of the state's multi-billion dollar travel industry. Local businesses and governments rely on tourism for to generate revenue and provide customers. In addition to being the largest rest stop for the Sandhill Crane migration, South Central Nebraska offers outdoor sports and historical amenities that attract outdoorsmen and historians year round. A majority of the SCEDD area is also fighting an ongoing housing struggle that has negatively impacted the ability of local businesses to add workforce and communities to add population. While some communities are overwhelmed with vacant and dilapidated properties, other bedroom communities have been unable to attract private homebuilders to build market rate homes for their working families, and other towns are losing their older residents to the city due to their inability to develop senior housing. Housing development across the SCEDD territory will need to be more adequately addressed over the next five years.

Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities

An analysis of the District's economic development problems and opportunities involved: inventorying of recent, present, and projected economic development investments; acknowledging other government sponsored plans; identifying economic clusters within the region; considering public and private sector input; and completing a SWOT analysis that considered the inputs into the CEDS process.

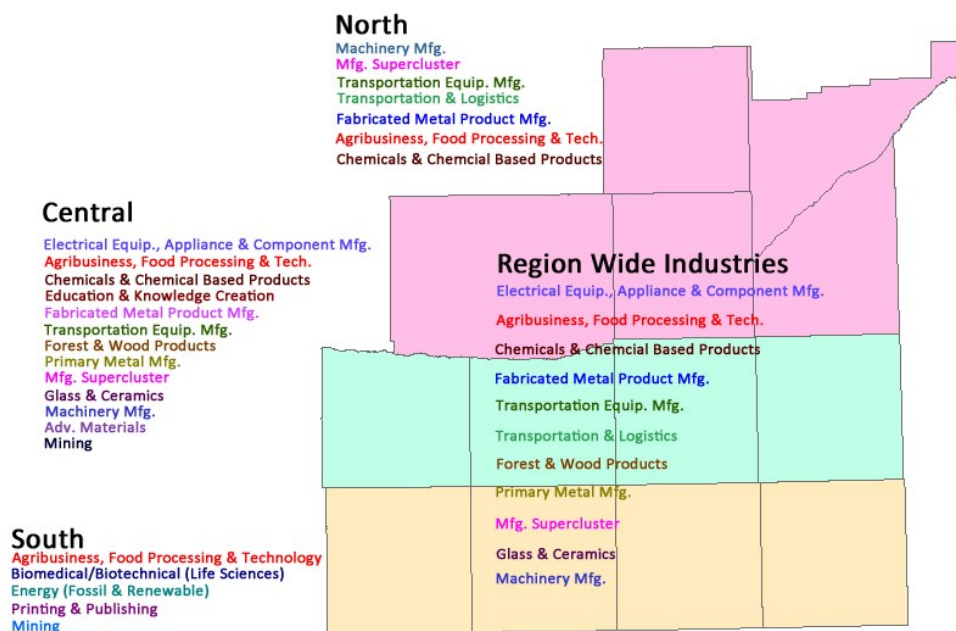
An inventory of recent, present, and projected economic investments in the SCEDD region revealed that the level and types of investments in each region present strengths as well as weaknesses within the District. The fast paced growth in the North Region is a strength for the District; however, local leaders must plan for and accommodate this growth in order to ensure it takes place in a manner that is positive and sustainable. The ability of the Central Region to remain stable and maintain population and businesses is a strength; however, to simply maintain becomes a weakness as limited innovation and diversification endanger Central Region communities if they are not be prepared to grow, or are left out of programs. The smallest amount of economic activity and largest loss in population in the South Region is a weakness; however, recent investments in industries such as tourism and agriculture present an opportunity for the South Region and SCEDD territory to experience new economic growth.

In addition to housing, the CEDS process revealed that workforce issues are affecting the ability of local companies to expand. Business leaders that completed the CEDS survey indicated that a lack of adequately trained employees as the main issue affecting their business; however, local government leaders and community volunteers indicated that a lack of employers was an important issue affecting their communities. The District has an opportunity to partner with other government sponsored and supported plans in Nebraska that will assist with addressing regional workforce, business, and community development issues. Those plans that were listed and described within the CEDS included:

- State of Nebraska Fiver-Year Integrated Workforce Plan
- Nebraska Advanced Manufacturing Coalition, DreamIt, Do It Initiative
- The Nebraska Broadband Initiative, Central Region Broadband Plan
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and the Battelle Study, which includes the Nebraska Talent Advantage Initiative, Nebraska Innovation Initiative, and the Nebraska Industry Cluster Initiative

The State's emphasis on cluster development is an important opportunity for the District as resources provided by the state could be utilized to further research and develop the industry clusters identified by the EDA Innovation in American Regions Project. The Innovation Project assigned a location quotient for each industry in each SCEDD region and for the District as a whole.

The Location Quotient is a comparison of a cluster's local share of each of factors to the national share of each of the factors. If a region's cluster has a LQ of greater than 1, it is considered to have a regional concentration that is greater than the nationwide concentration. The map above displays industries that received a location quotient greater than 1 for at least two out of three factors: establishments, employment, and wages.



Public and private sector input was a key component of the CEDS process. This input was captured through reviewing the 2012 small business needs survey presented by the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), completing of a survey of community and business leaders across the District, and conducting a focus group session with the District's economic development organizations' directors.

The REAP survey identified marketing and succession planning as needs for the business owners that are operating in the District. The CEDS public survey was conducted online and provided questions that were tailored specifically for the type of respondent taking the survey. For instance, a survey respondent that identified himself as an educator received a list of questions that were only asked of educators. A total of 548 respondents answered the survey and all 13 counties served by SCEDD were represented. The CEDS public survey reiterated that housing and workforce development were important issues limiting the ability of businesses and communities to maintain and grow. The CEDS public survey also reinforced findings from the REAP survey as sixty two business owners said they did not have a business succession plan and 47% of business owners said that marketing was the type of training that would be most beneficial to their business.

The third source of public input considered by the CEDS process was information gathered at a focus group session held specifically for the directors of local economic development organizations located within the District. Following a presentation of the CEDS public survey results, the directors were given an opportunity to discuss the information that had been presented as well as share their local accomplishments and struggles. Concerning community development, the directors concluded that the fact that the region had full houses and extremely low unemployment was a strength. Yet, the lack of available housing and workforce was becoming a weakness that is negatively impacting the ability of industries and communities to achieve additional growth. Concerning business development, the directors concluded that a significant amount of patents are being issued, thereby providing a strength for the region; however, few of those patents are reaching the market, thereby weakening the competitiveness of the region. Also, a strength of the region is the large amount of established businesses that provide valuable services and generate wealth. However, those same businesses are owned by people nearing retirement; if adequate succession planning is not taking place, the threat of losing those established businesses weakens the region.

The SCEDD CEDS Committee and Board reviewed CEDS process inputs and participated in an analysis of the District's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT).

After participating in the SWOT exercise, reflecting on the past five years, and envisioning the next five years, SCEDD leadership identified the goals and objectives that established the base for the Action Implementation Plan (AIP), or the District's Five Year Scope of Work. Through the CEDS process, the SCEDD CEDS Committee, Board, and Staff also confirmed that the best way to complete its mission is by supporting small business and community development. Those goals and objectives that reflect SCEDD's focus on small business and community development are listed below.

Goal: Foster Business Development-position SCEDD to impact private investment, job creation, and the creation of new wealth.

- Objective: Foster existing business retention, expansion, and transition as well as the start-up of new businesses.

Goal: Foster Community Development-initiate, strengthen, and enhance services to communities and develop opportunities to provide chargeable services.

- Objective: Serve communities as an extension of local government's economic development branch.
- Objective: Provide relevant information, education, and networking opportunities.
- Objective: Assist with emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation.

Goal: Enrich Organizational Development-strong impact requires a strong organization.

- Objective: Continue to strengthen the SCEDD organization.

The AIP lists the District's Goals and Objectives that will guide the work of SCEDD over the next five years. Also included within the AIP is SCEDD's programs, projects, activities, resources, partners, and performance measures that will be integral to achieving those Goals and Objectives.

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Background

Geography

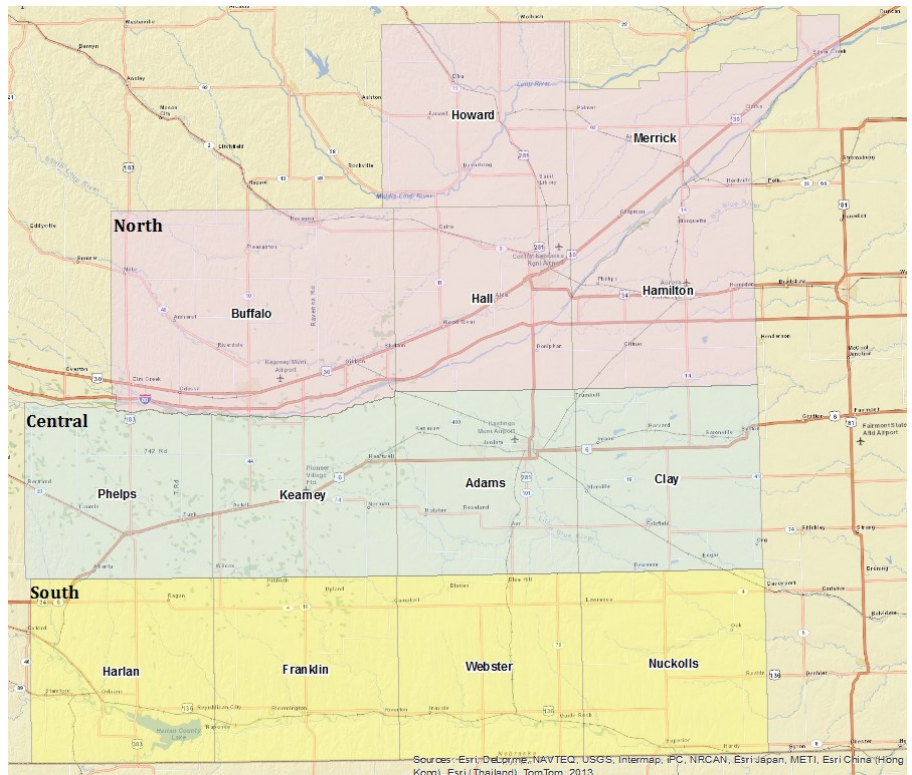
The South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) covers 13 counties located in South Central Nebraska: Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster Counties. A total of 89 incorporated towns and cities as well as six Census Designated Places are located within the District. The region encompasses 7,600 square miles (9.9% of Nebraska) and is home to 199,266 residents (10.7% of Nebraska). The region has three major rivers; Republican, Platte and Loup; and one major reservoir; Harlan County Reservoir.

Map 1: SCEDD Sub-Regions

Regions

Throughout the CEDS document, the District's characteristics are broken into three sub-regions based on geographic, demographic, and economic factors.

North: Buffalo, Hall, Hamilton, Howard, and Merrick, are the most populated and fastest growing counties within the District. The City of Grand Island is the largest city in the District and was recently labeled a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) following the 2010 Census. Due to strong commuting ties, the counties of Howard, Merrick, and Hamilton Counties are included in that MSA. Buffalo County is the home of the City of Kearney; a major employer and the Regions second largest city.



Central: Adams, Clay, Kearney, and Phelps Counties have less people than the North and more than the South. This region saw populations remain steady or experience a decline of less than 10%. The third and fourth largest cities, Hastings (pop: 25,058) and Holdrege (pop: 5,534) are located in the Central Region.

A large portion of Clay County is tax exempt as the Central Region is home to two major federal landowners: Department of Defense (DOD) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Greenlief Training Site (GTS) is approximately 3,000 acres in area and is owned by DOD and operated by the Nebraska Army National Guard. The site employs 65 federal employees. USDA Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) is a neighbor to GTS as it is located adjacent to the site on the east side. The USMARC employs 126 federal employees and covers approximately 55 square miles (over 2 million acres).

South: Franklin, Harlan, Nuckolls, and Webster Counties are adjacent to Kansas and are the most sparsely populated counties within the District. The largest population center in this region, Superior (pop: 1,933), is the ninth largest city in the region.

Water

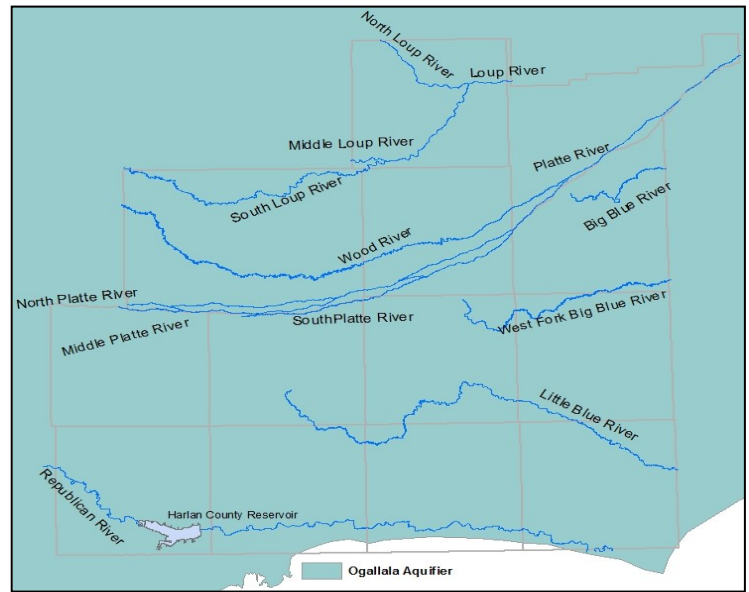
Nebraska has more river miles than any other state in the nation. Over 800 miles of rivers flow through SCEDD Territory. The Republican and Platte Rivers are major rivers that support agriculture and serve municipalities across the District. Also, almost the entire SCEDD region sits on top of the Ogallala Aquifer, one of the largest underground lakes in the world. The aquifer provides a vital supply of water to irrigators and municipalities.

Harlan County Lake, Nebraska's second largest reservoir, is located in Harlan County. Owned by the US Army Corps of Engineers, the lake is nine miles long with 75 miles of shoreline and is an important asset for tourism and agriculture in the area.

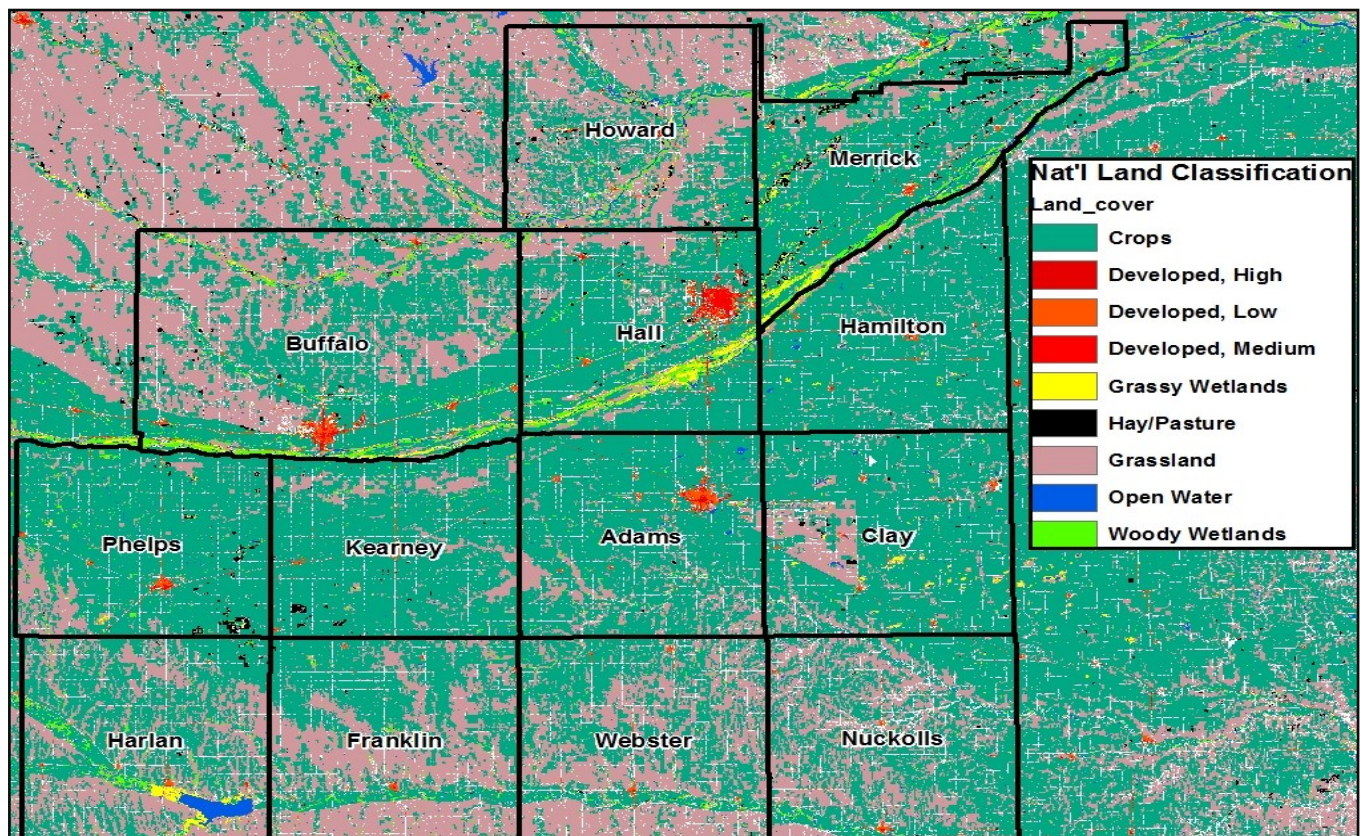
Land Cover

The SCEDD area is primarily covered by agricultural uses: farmland and grassland. Buffalo and Howard Counties, located on the north end of the District, are covered by a significant amount of grassland; the majority of the land in the North and Central Regions are covered by crops. The North Region contains the largest amount of developed acres. The Central Region contains the largest amount of cropland; this region also contains a significant amount of prime, irrigated farmland. The majority of grassland in the District is located in the South Region, which is also the least developed region.

Map 2: SCEDD Water Sources



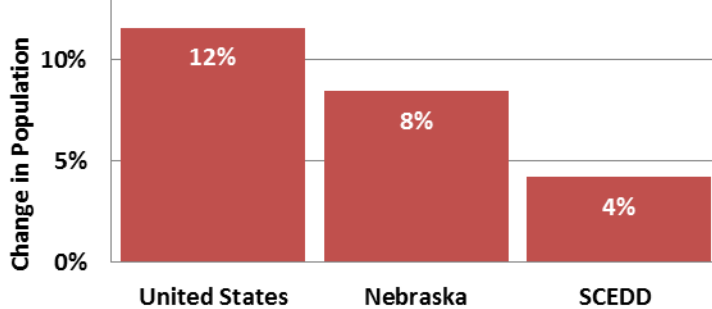
Map 3: Land Cover



Population

Identifying population trends in the region assists in the understanding of where people are choosing to live and work. Population trends also set a baseline that assists with drawing conclusions about what has happened in an area and beginning to make assumptions about what could happen in the future.

Figure 1: Population Growth 2000-2012



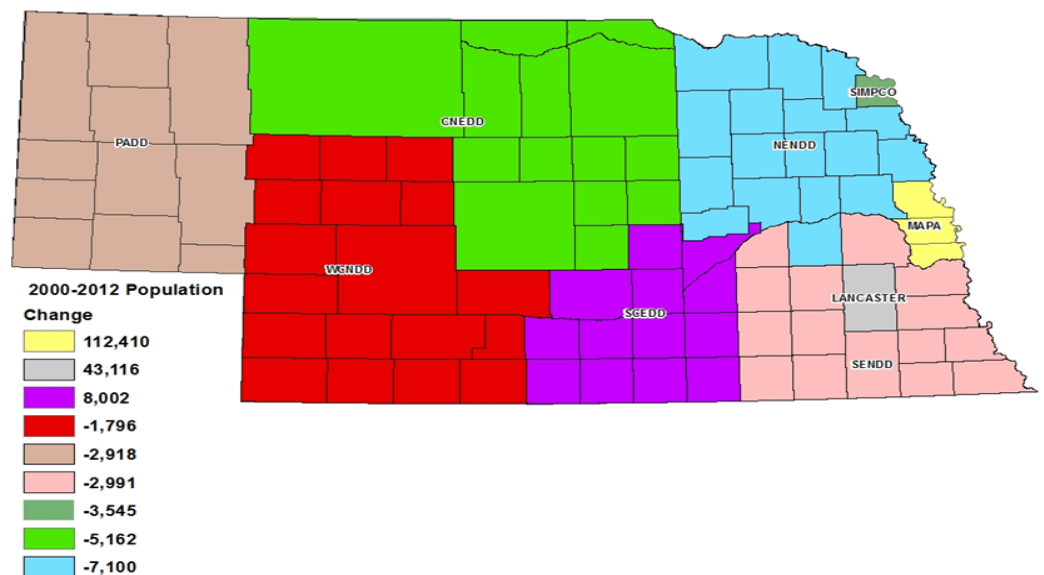
As a region, South Central Economic Development District's (SCEDD) population increased at half the pace of the State of Nebraska, suggesting that some growth in the state has been captured in the South Central portion of the state. The region also grew at one-third of the pace of the nation.

Eight Economic Development Districts (EDD) cover Nebraska. From 2000 to 2012, the majority of Nebraska's population growth was in the eastern, metro section of the state.

The SCEDD region was the only EDD outside of the eastern portion of the state to experience a positive change in population. The metropolitan areas of Nebraska have historically been located in what is known as the Lincoln/Omaha/Council Bluffs Metro

area, which is located at the eastern end of the state. This trend has begun to shift as Grand Island, a SCEDD city, now has the status of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

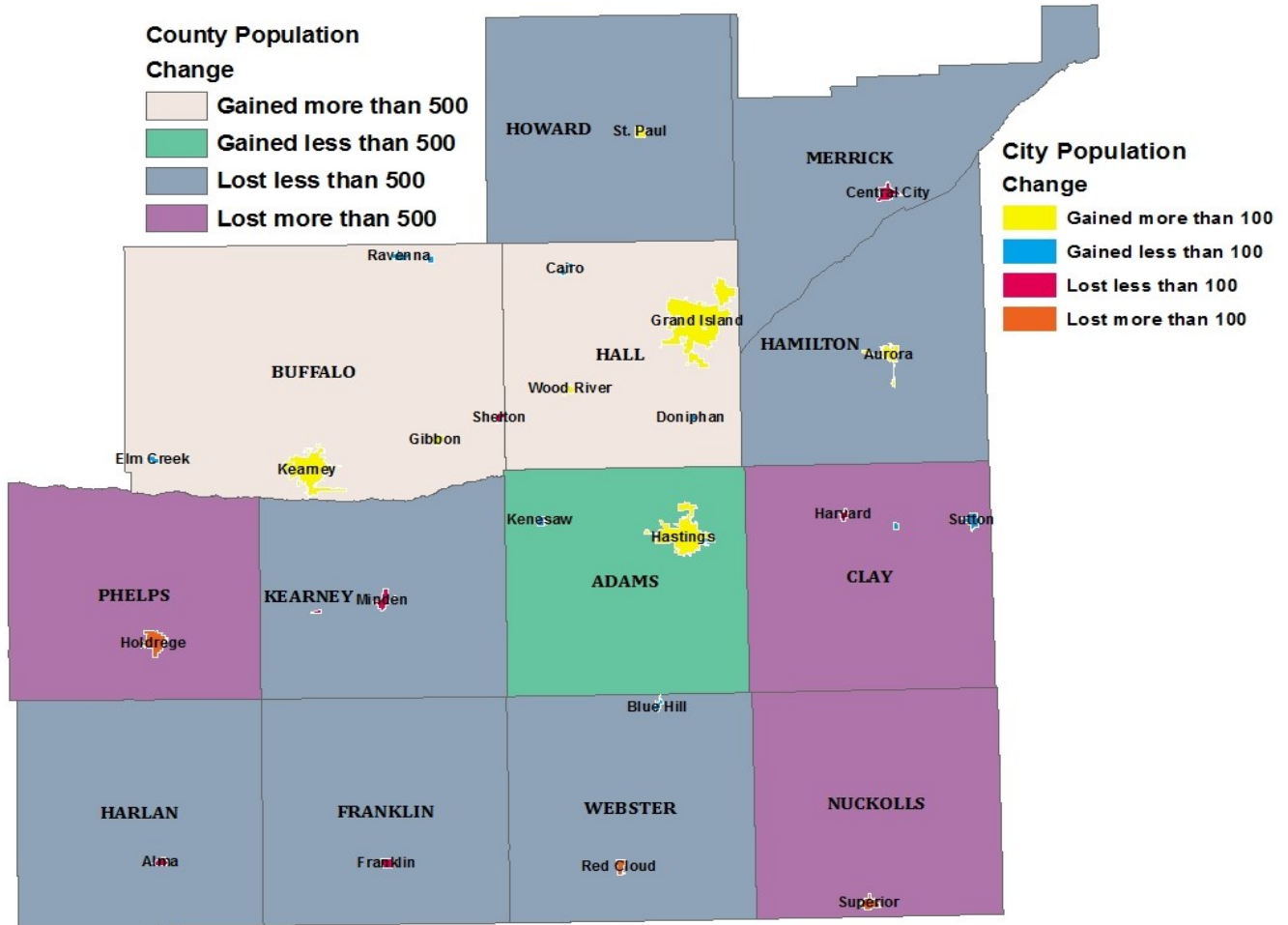
Map 4: Change in Pop, Nebraska EDDs



The following map represents the change in population from 2000 to 2012 within SCEDD's counties and cities. Per Nebraska State Statute, cities are defined as places with populations greater than 800. Population information for villages is available within the appendix.

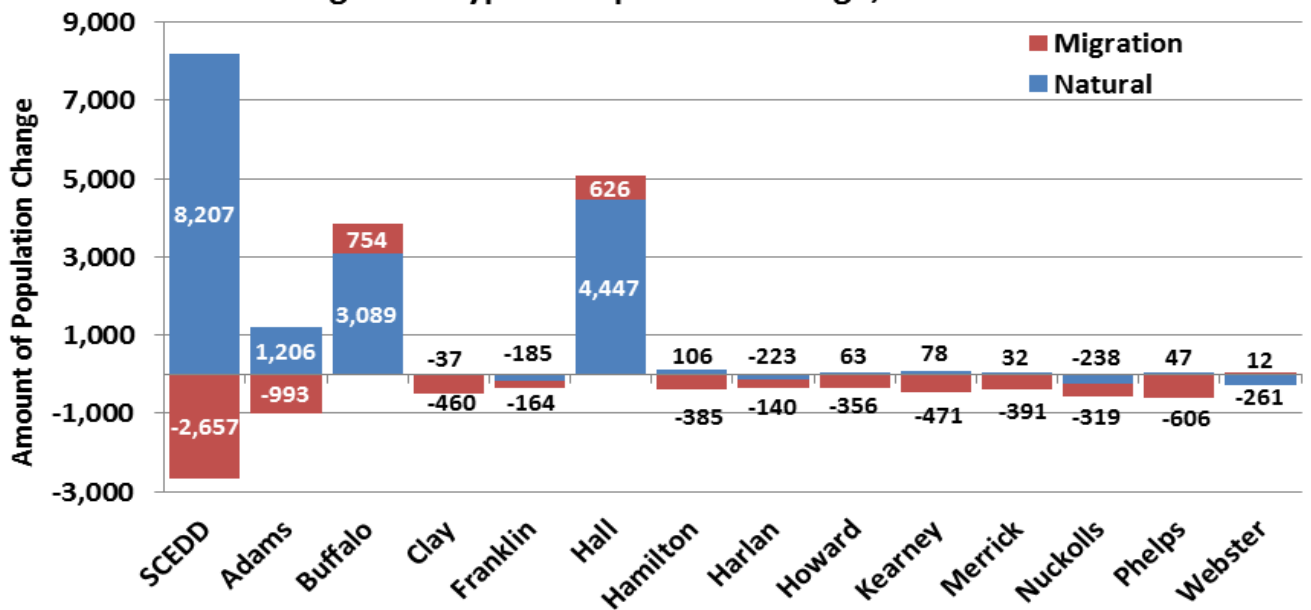
Buffalo and Hall County are the only SCEDD counties that gained more than 500 residents. Adams County gained less than 500 residents. While all of the other counties lost population, Franklin and Nuckolls County saw their 2000 population decrease by more than 10%. Those counties that are adjacent to Hall County demonstrated a significant pattern of commuting to Hall County and are thus included in the Grand Island Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Communities located within those counties are also part of the Grand Island MSA reported growth.

Map 5: Population Changes, SCEDD Counties and Cities



Natural population change takes place when the amount of births in a region exceeds deaths. Migration takes place when the amount of residents moving into an area is greater than the amount of residents moving out of an area. Figure 2 demonstrates the type of population growth that took place.

Figure 2: Type of Population Change, 2000-2010



As a region, SCEDD actually experienced negative migration. The region's overall growth was due to the fact that the number of births exceeded deaths in the majority of counties. The growth that Adams, Buffalo, and Hall Counties experienced was due mainly to natural population change; however, a significant amount of population growth was also a result of migration in Hall and Buffalo Counties. Ten out of 13 SCEDD counties experienced a net loss in migration. Webster County joined Hall and Buffalo in the minority of counties that had migration. In addition to having negative

migration, four counties, Harlan, Clay, Nuckolls, and Franklin had deaths exceed births. Adams County saw an overall population growth only because the amount of births that exceeded deaths was greater than the amount of people who moved out of the county.

Figures 3 and 4 display the age breakdown for each region within SCEDD. Some age group changes reflect national trends. For instance, an overall decrease in the amount of people aged 70 to 79 reflects depression era

babies aging out of their sixties. This decrease in the amount of people aging into their 70s was more severe in the SCEDD region than the state. Nationwide, the group of people aged 50 to 69 will increase as this large generation known as the "baby boomers" age out of their 40s and 50s.

The SCEDD region also saw an increase in this age group, yet not as large of an increase as the state. The cohort of individuals aged 30 to 49 will naturally shrink as there are simply not enough people to replace every "baby boomer" before them. The SCEDD region saw a sharper decrease in this age group than the rest of the state. The increase of the amount of individuals in their 20s is also natural as this group reflects the baby boom echo. Although SCEDD saw an

Figure 3: Percent Change by Age Group, 2000-2010

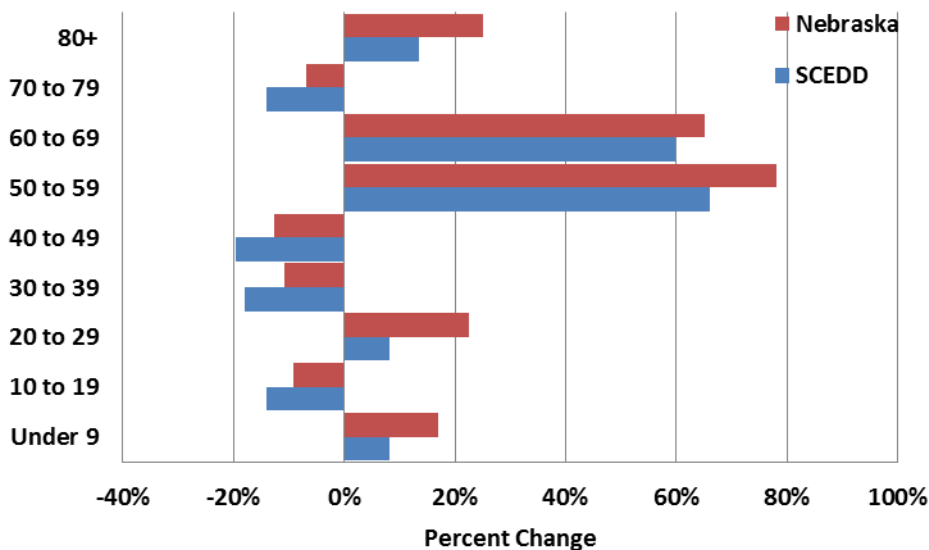
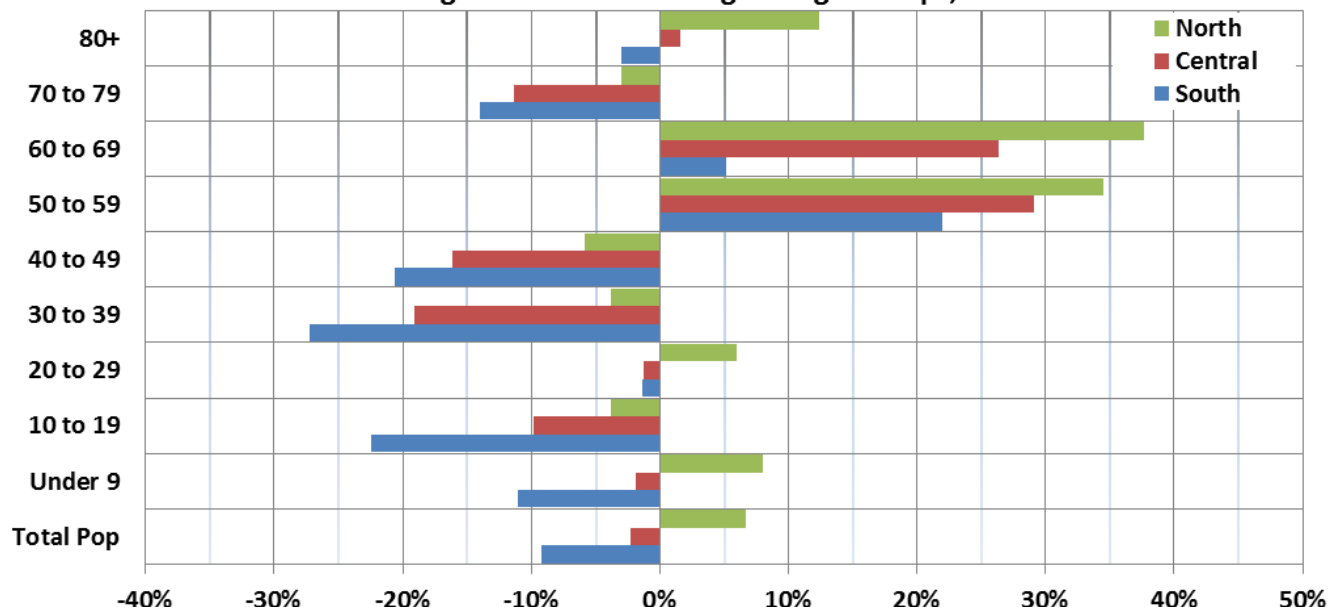


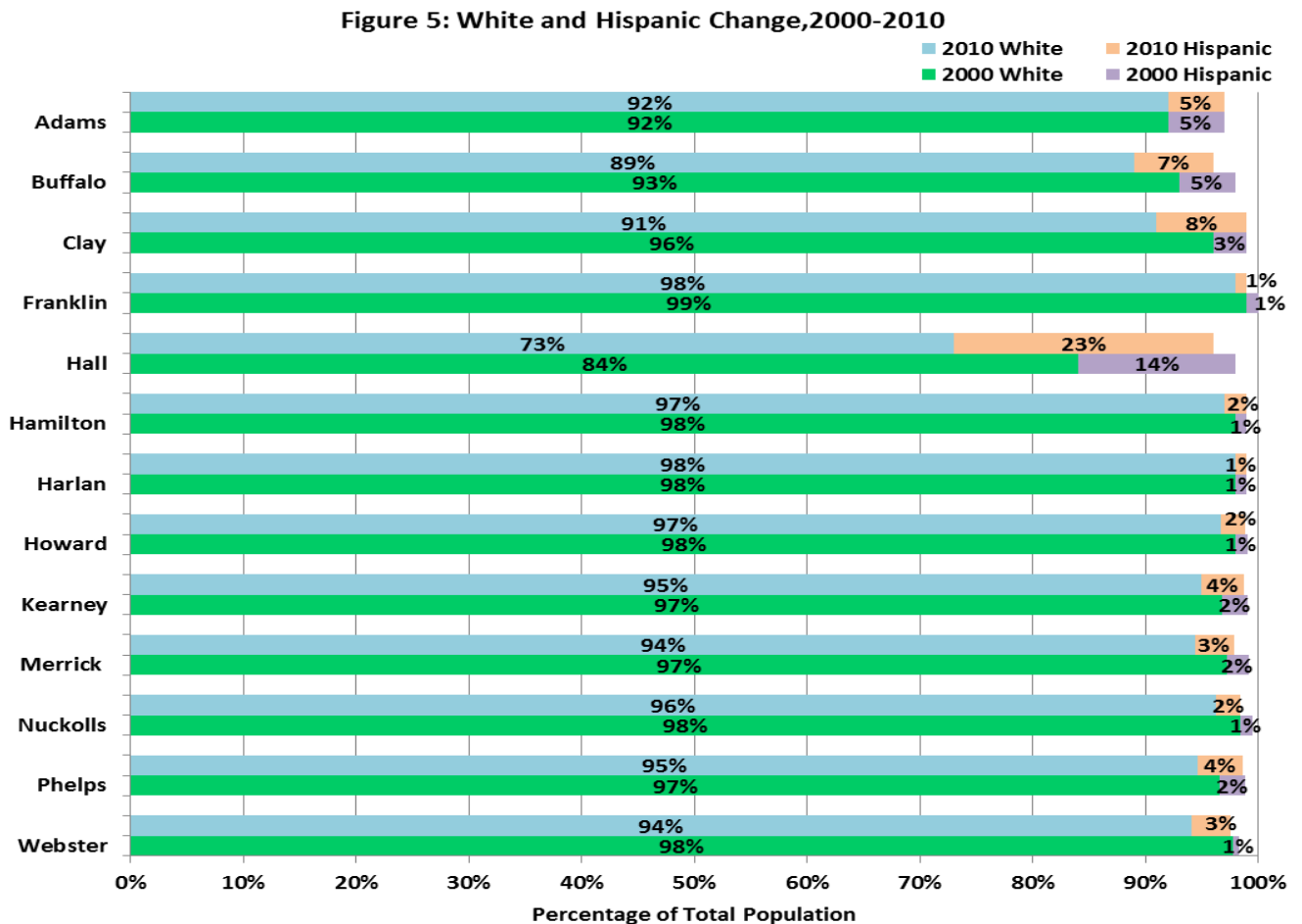
Figure 4: Percent Change in Age Groups, 2000-2010



increase in the amount of people aged 20 to 29, the increase was much less dramatic than the state. The increase of children younger than nine reflects the increase of individuals in their 20s. The SCEDD region saw an increase of just fewer than 10% and the state saw an increase of just over fifteen percent.

Similar to the Nation, each of the separate SCEDD regions follow the trend of the “baby boomers” aging out of their 40s and 50s, with a significant increase in the ages 50 to 69. There are slight differences for the age groups 20 to 29 and children under the age of 9. The South and Central regions both saw a loss, while the North Region saw an increase. This follows the trend from Map 2, which shows Hall and Buffalo Counties experiencing significant population increases since 2000.

Figure 5 displays the manner in which the diversity of the region’s counties changed from 2000 to 2010. Although all of SCEDD’s counties continue to remain predominantly white, 11 out of 13 counties in the District saw the proportion of white residents decrease and no county saw the proportion of white residents increase.



The largest increase per proportion was Hispanic residents took place as they accounted for slightly more than one-fifth of the total population in 2010. Second to Hall County, Clay County experienced the second highest increase in the proportion of Hispanic residents as less than 5% of the County’s population was Hispanic in 2000 and 8% of the 2010 population was Hispanic. According to Figure 2, the largest amount of population growth due to in-migration took place in Buffalo County. This level of in-migration diversified the county as the proportion of white residents decreased and the proportion of Hispanic residents and other minorities increased from 2000-2010.

Figure 2 illustrated that Adams County only saw a population increase due to natural population growth. That illustration is confirmed by Figure 5 as the ethnic make-up of Adams County remained the same from 2000 to 2010.

Air

Commercial service airports support scheduled air commercial service (freight and people) flights. Two primary commercial service airports, as defined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), are currently in operation in the District. The Central Nebraska Regional Airport (Grand Island) has significantly increased its enplanements in the past five years. The Kearney Regional Airport has steadily dropped its enplanements since 2007.

Table 1: SCEDD Area Primary Commercial Service Airports

Airport	2007 Enplanements	2012 Enplanements	% Change
Kearney Regional Airport	12,707	12,480	-2%
Central Nebraska Regional Airport (Grand Island)	9,159	56,138	513%

Source: Federal Aviation Administration

General Aviation airports are landing facilities that support all other types of operations to include: private flights, medical flights, disaster relief, agricultural spraying, aerial surveying, and access to remote towns. General Aviation airports are recognized by the FAA, eligible for federal funding, and organized into five categories:

- Basic: supports general aviation service such as emergency service, charter or critical passenger service, cargo, training, and personal flying.
- Local: provides access primarily to mainly intrastate markets and some interstate markets.
- Regional: connects communities to statewide and interstate markets.
- National: provides access to national and international markets.
- Not classified: airports that have historically been in the FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems but have seen a decline in service and equipment and may have no assets at that airfield.

The General Aviation Airports in the District and their categories as assigned by the FAA are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: SCEDD Area General Aviation Airports & Category

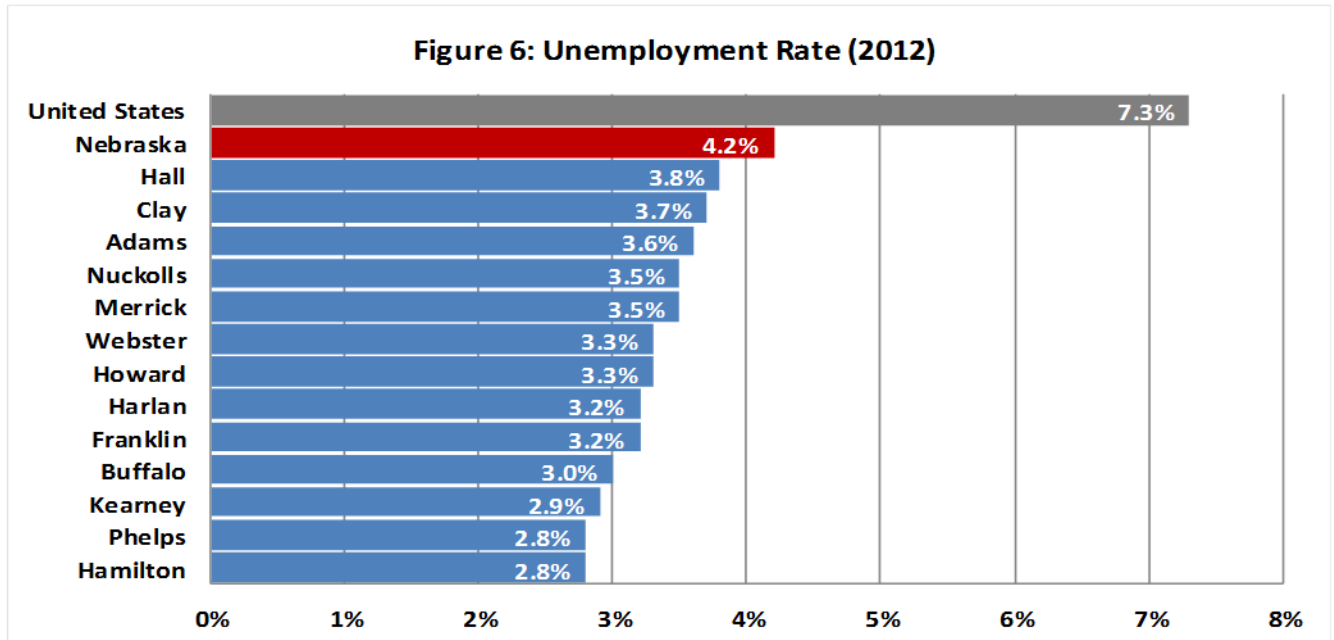
Airport	Category
Alma	Not Classified
Aurora	Local
Central City	Local
Harvard	Not Classified
Hastings	Local
Holdrege	Local
Minden Pioneer Village	Local
Red Cloud	Not Classified
Superior	Basic

Public Transportation

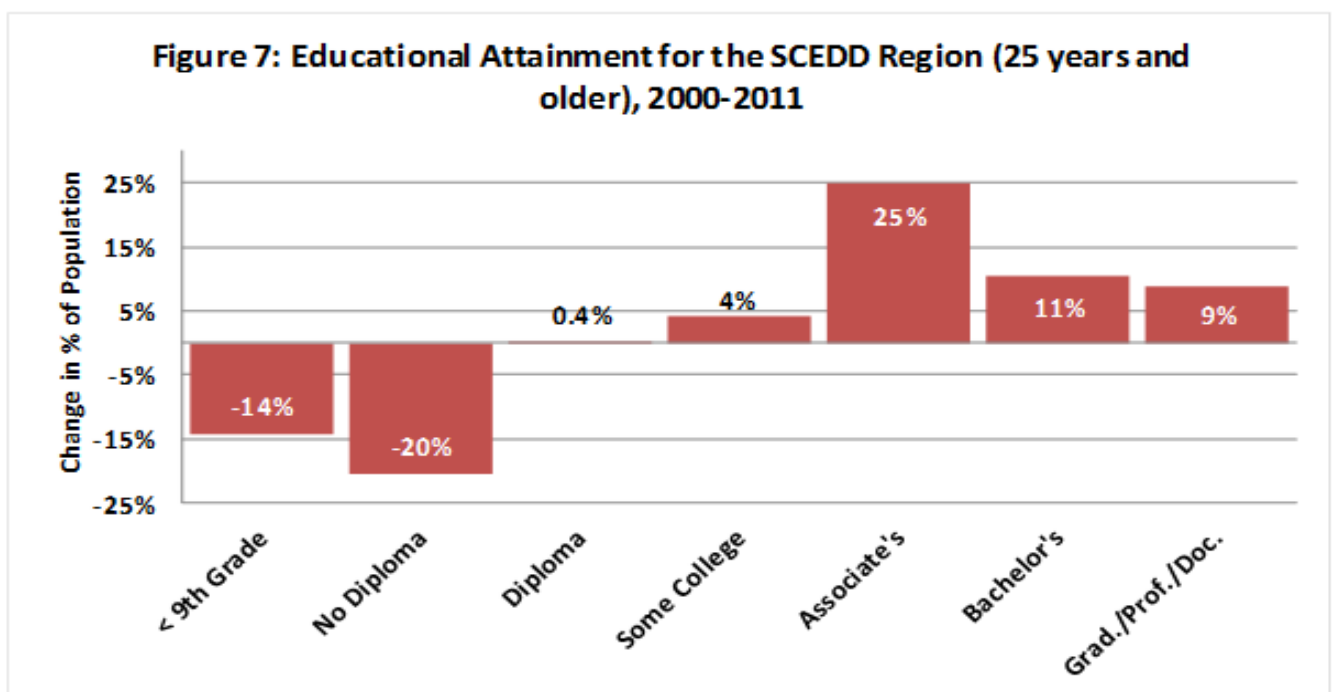
A minimum amount of wheeled public transportation services are provided in each of SCEDD's 13 counties. A description of those services is available within the appendix.

Employment and Workforce

Employment patterns have a strong influence on the characteristics that shape the region. Unemployment is extremely low as none of South Central Economic Development District's (SCEDD) counties are experiencing an unemployment rate higher than the state rate and each county is approximately half of the nation.

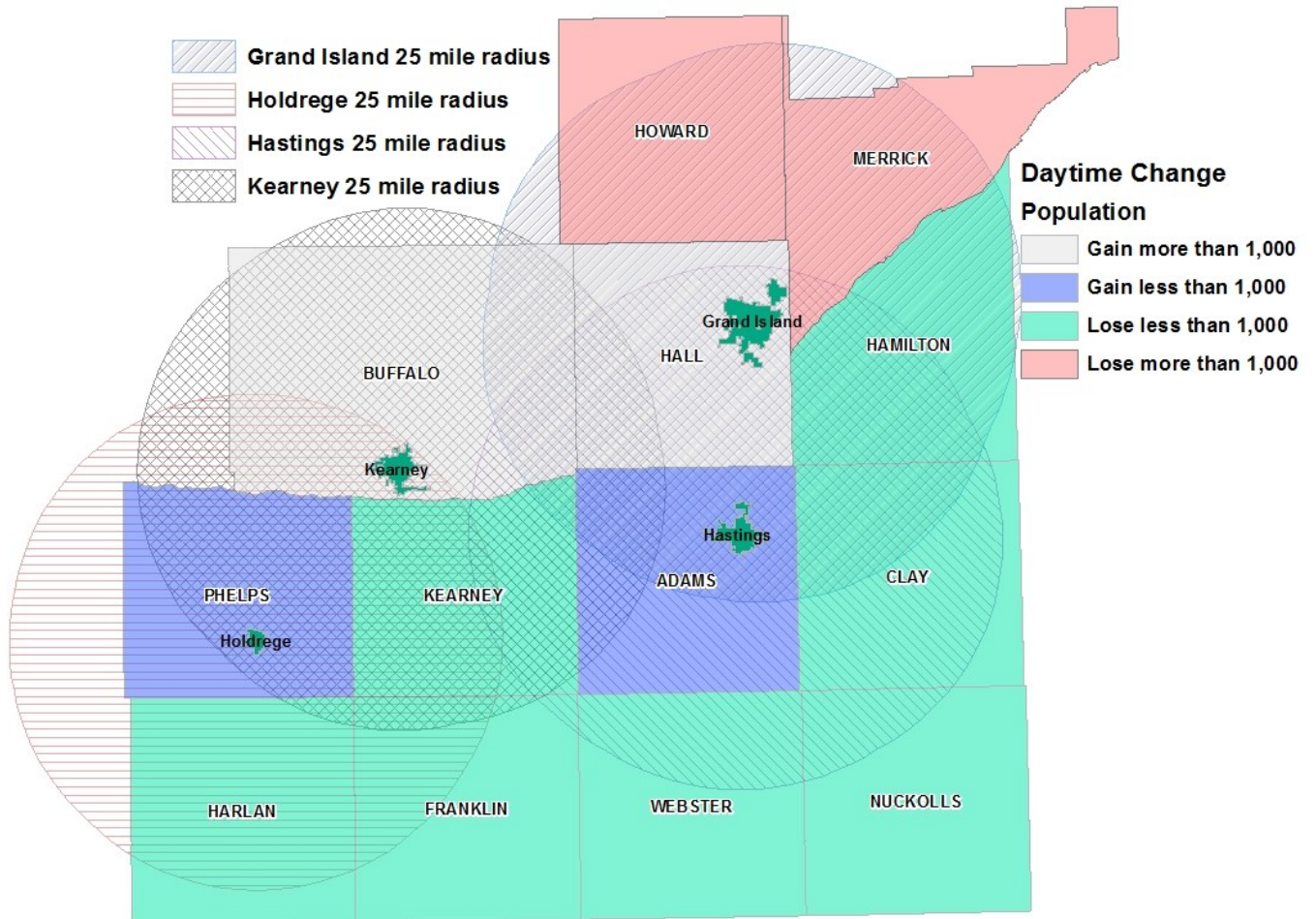


The region's workforce has become more educated as the number of residents with less than a high school diploma decreased. The percentage of the population that has earned an Associate's Degree saw the greatest increase as this proportion grew by twenty-five percent. The proportion of residents in the SCEDD region that earned a Bachelor's Degree increased by just over ten percent and the proportion of the population with an education beyond their four year degree grew by just under ten percent.



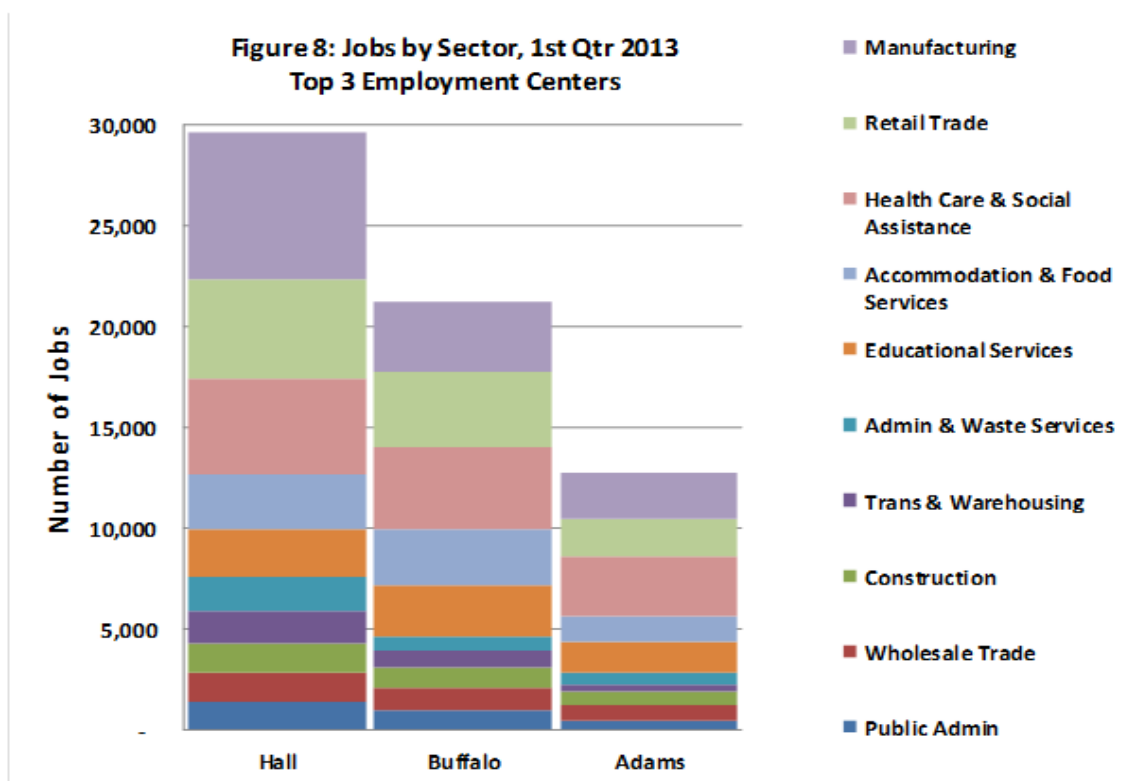
Daytime population change for each county, as reported by the American Community Survey (ACS) is displayed below. Buffalo and Hall Counties see a daily increase in population of greater than 1,000 people coming into the county to report for work (4,829 in Hall County and 1,495 in Buffalo County). The daytime population of Phelps County grows by 657 workers and Adams County grows by 677 workers. All other counties see a daily decrease in their daytime populations. The employment centers or cities bringing workers into these counties are Kearney (Buffalo County), Grand Island (Hall County), Hastings (Adams County), and Holdrege (Phelps County).

Map 7: County Daytime Population Change

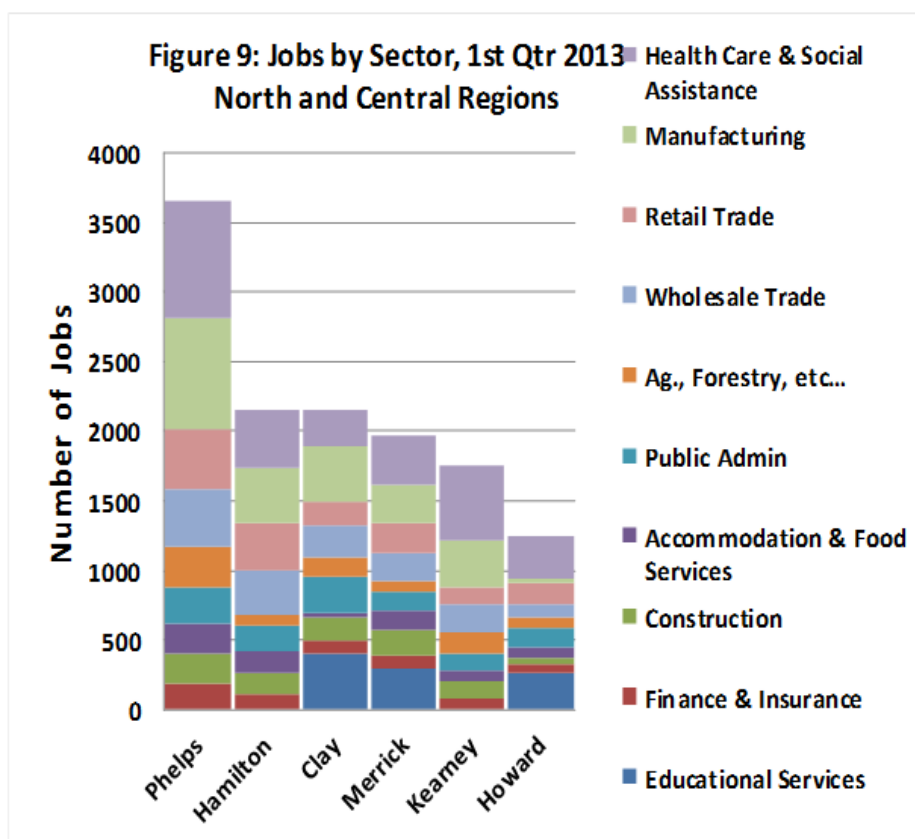


The 2011 American Community Survey reported the mean travel time to work was 18.1 minutes for Nebraska and 25.5 minutes for the United States. Therefore, a 25 mile radius was placed over each employment center in order to demonstrate how much of the region is located in a normal commuting distance from these employment centers. This map suggests that the SCEDD region consists of a handful of employment centers and many bedroom communities that house the workers that support those employment centers. Almost all of the North and Central regions are located within a normal commuting distance of the employment centers. Over half of the South is located outside of normal commuting distances from any of the employment centers.

The following charts describe the top employment industries based on information provided by the Nebraska Department of Labor. According to the Nebraska Department of Labor, the Districts workforce from 109,904 workers older than 16 in 2008 to 113,692 workers older than 16 in 2012.

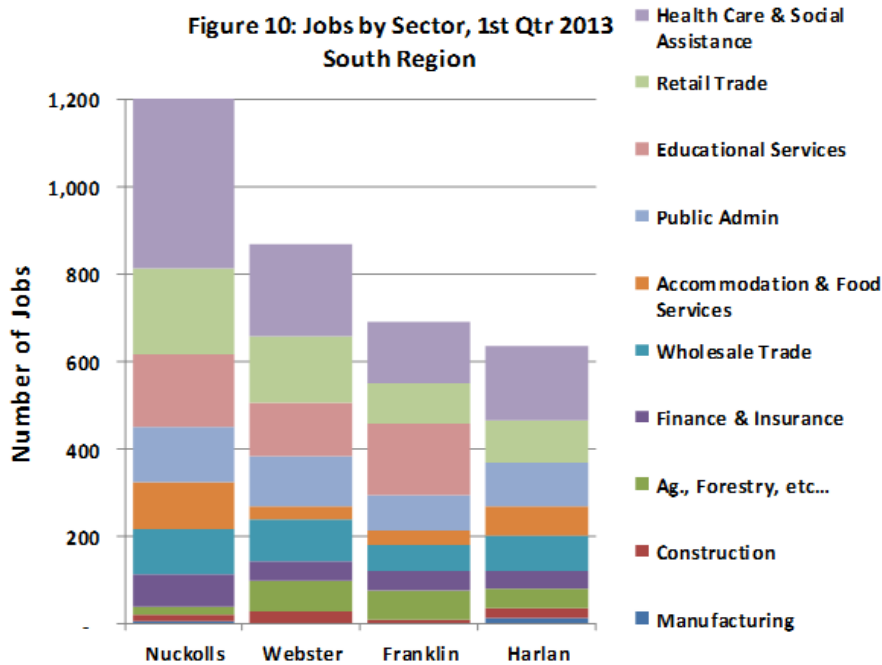


Figures 8 through 10 display the industries that employ the Districts workforce. Figure 8 displays the top three counties by number of jobs. The largest employment center, Hall County reported approximately 30,000 jobs and Buffalo County had slightly more than 20,000 jobs.



Hall County has over twice as many jobs as Adams County. The top three employment sectors for all three counties are Manufacturing, Retail Trade, and Health Care and Social Assistance.

Figure 9 displays the rest of the counties in the North and Central Regions. The top 10 employers in the rest of the North and Central Counties differed from those listed in the three largest counties. Yet, the top 3 employers were similar as manufacturing is the main source of jobs in the three largest counties and health care and social assistance was the main source of employment in the rest of the North and Central Counties.



Nuckolls County has the largest number of jobs in the South region. The top three employment industries for three of the four counties in the South Region are Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Educational Services. Health Care & Social Assistance are a significant source of employment for all counties in the South Region.

Two counties in the North Metro region, Hamilton and Merrick reported a higher median household income (MHI) than the state in 2011. Although Hall County has the largest number of jobs in the entire district, its MHI is the lowest in the North Region.

Figure 11: 2011 Median Household Income
North Region

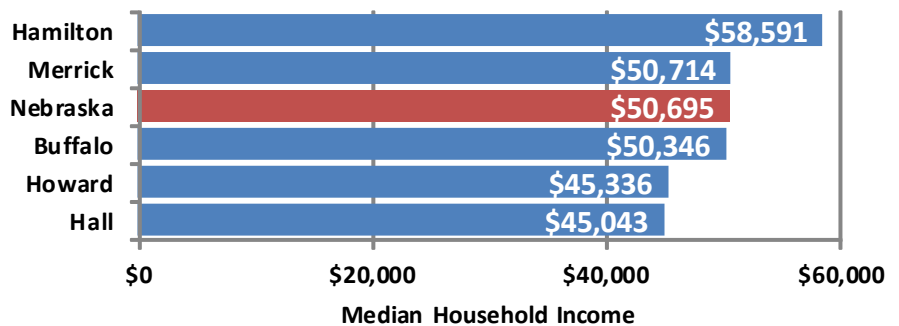
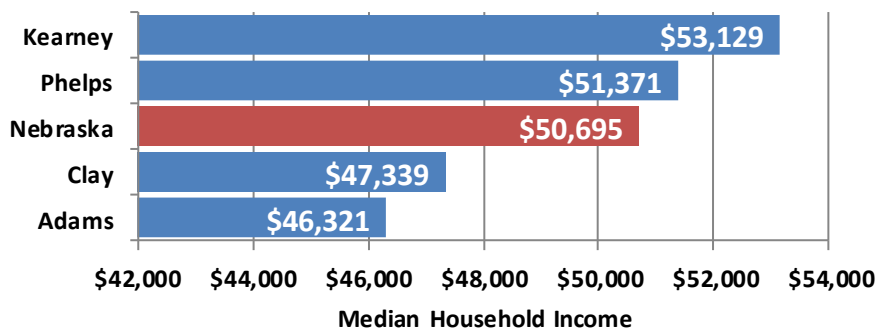


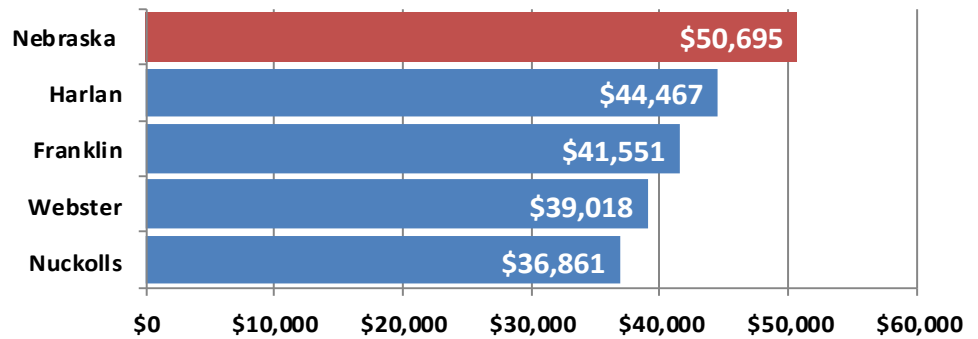
Figure 12: Median Household Income
Central Region



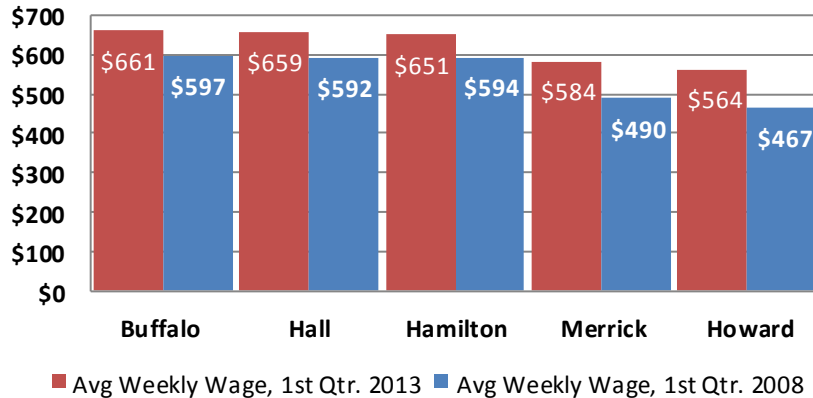
Two counties in the Central region, Kearney and Phelps Counties, reported higher MHI than the state in 2011. Adams County has the largest number of jobs in the Central region, yet this county reported the lowest MHI in the region.

All counties in the South Border region had a MHI that was lower than the state. The highest MHI in the South Region is lower than the lowest MHI in the Central and North Regions.

**Figure 13: 2011 Median Household Income
South Region**



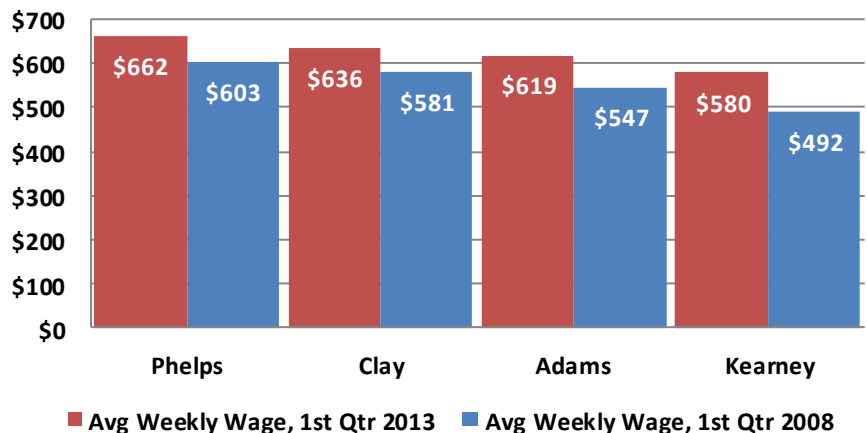
**Figure 14: Avg. Weekly Wage for all Industries
North Region**



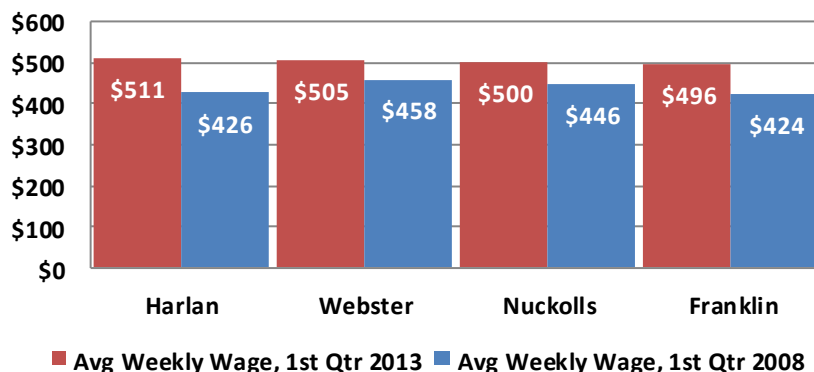
Data concerning the Average Weekly Wage (AWW) of workers was provided by the Nebraska Department of Labor. Buffalo, Hall, and Hamilton Counties realized comparable AWWs. Merrick and Howard Counties saw the most dramatic increase in wages since 2008. Howard had the largest increase in the District.

The numbers reported represent employment data for the first quarter of 2013. The AWW in Phelps County is the highest for the entire district. While Kearney County reported the lowest AWW for the Central region, workers in this county saw the largest AWW increase in Central Region.

**Figure 15: Avg. Weekly Wage for all Industries
Central Region**



**Figure 16: Avg. Weekly Wage for all Industries
South Region**

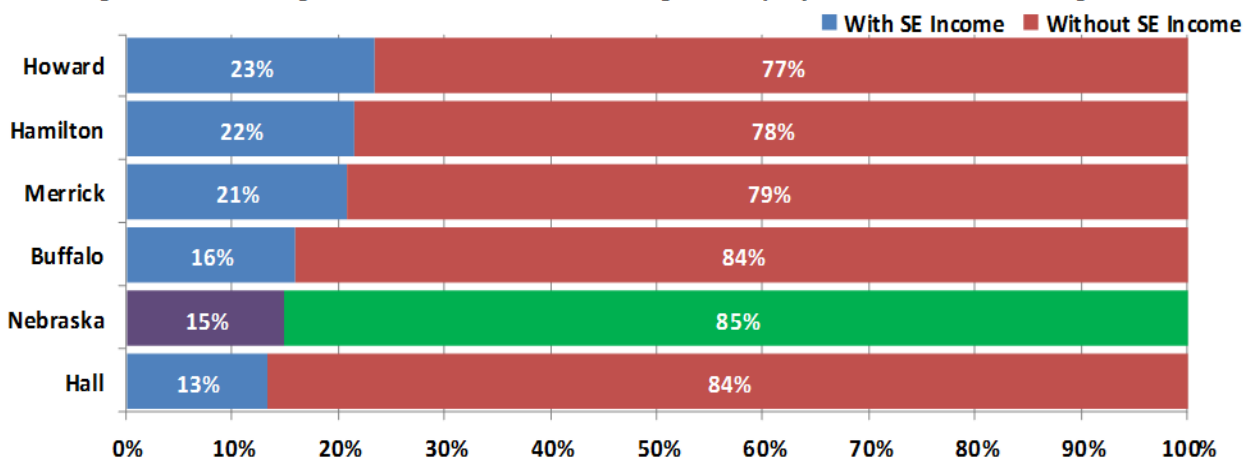


The workers in the South Region earn the lowest AWWs. Webster County had the smallest increase in AWW for the entire District. Adams, Kearney, Merrick, Howard, Harlan and Franklin Counties were the top five counties in the District for largest AWW increase from 2008.

The 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that a total of 77,078 income earners in the District are self-employed. Each county in the District has a significant number of income

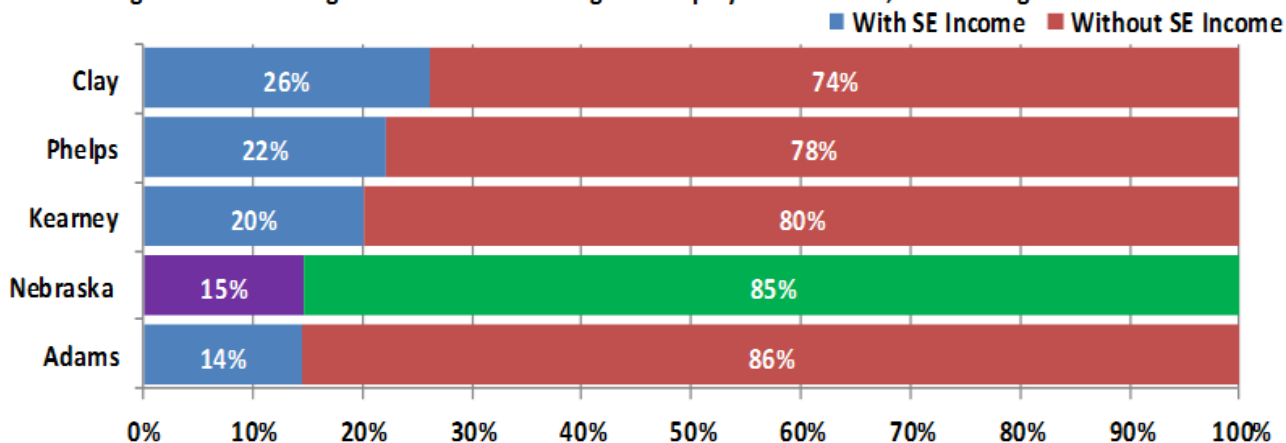
earners that are earning income from self employment (SE), including farmers. The incomes of these workers which include farmers, are provided below.

Figure 17: Percentage of Households Earners Earning Self Employment Income, North Region



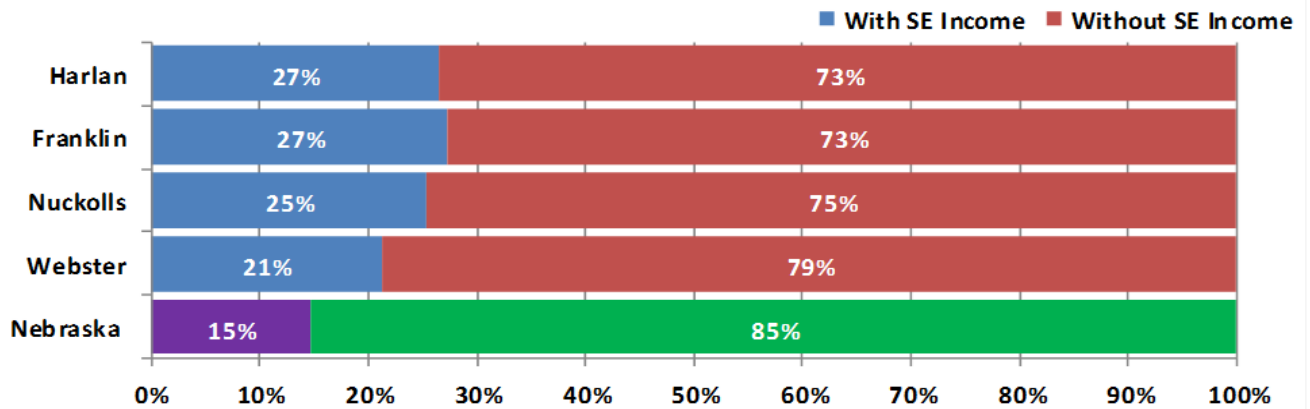
Although Hall County reported the highest number of jobs, it had the lowest MHI and percentage of households earning SE income. Over one-fifth of the households in Howard, Hamilton, and Merrick Counties earn SE income. These counties are dependent upon agriculture; it should be assumed that a substantial amount of self employment income earners are farmers.

Figure 18: Percentage of Households Earning Self Employment Income, Central Region



In the Central Region, Clay County has the highest percentage of SE income earners. Slightly more than one-fourth of households reported self employment income earnings. A large proportion of these earners in Clay, Phelps, and Kearney Counties are most likely farmers. Adams County has the highest number of jobs and the lowest number of self employment income earners.

Figure 19: Percentage of Households Earning Self Employment Income, South Region



Every county in the South Region has a higher proportion of households earning self employment income than the State of Nebraska. Three of the four counties in the South have at least one-fourth of households that are earning SE income. It is assumed that many South region SE income earners are also farmers.

Figure 20: Type and Amount of SE Income (\$000), North

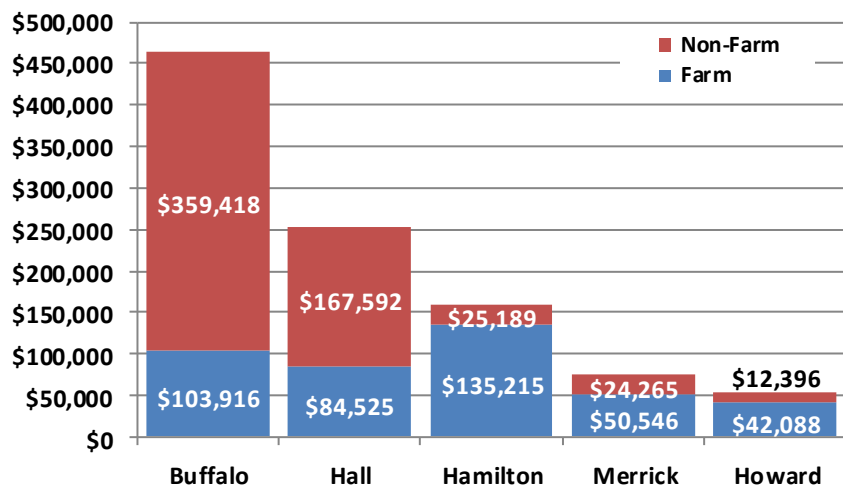
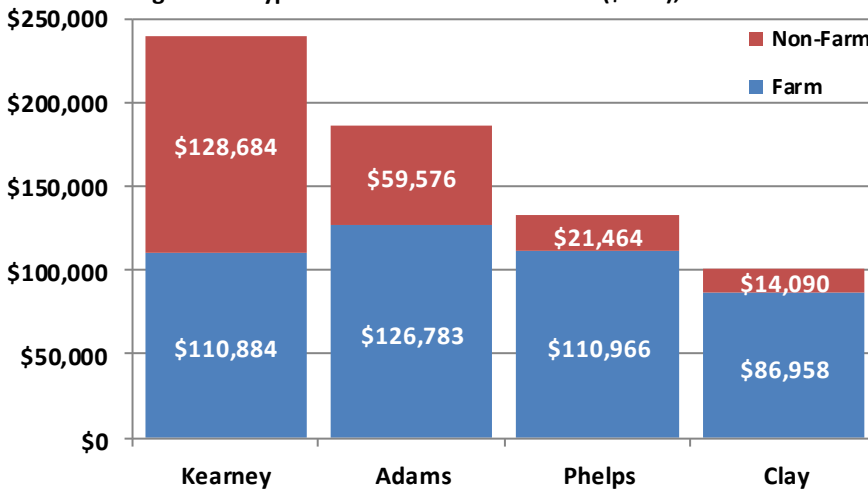
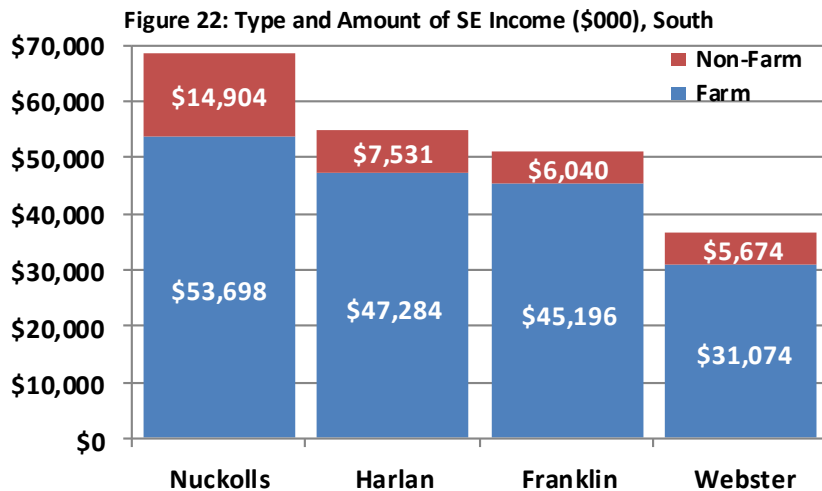


Figure 21: Type and Amount of SE Income (\$000), Central



STATSAmerica provides information compiled by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) from 2012 that tells the amount of SE Income that is Farm and Non-Farm. This information provides insight into how much SE income in the District is produced by farmers and business owners.

Over \$450 million of income is earned by farm and non-farm proprietors in Buffalo County. Over three-fourths of that SE income is produced by non-farm businesses.



Two-thirds of SE income in Hall County is produced by non-farm businesses. In the remaining North Counties of Hamilton, Merrick, and Howard, over half of SE income is earned by farms.

In addition to Hall and Buffalo, Kearney is the only other county in the District that had more than half of SE income earned by non-farm businesses. Over 80% of the SE income earned in Phelps and Clay Counties was earned by farms.

Over three-fourths of all SE income earned in the South Region was earned by farms.

Nuckolls County had the highest amount of SE income earned by non-farm businesses, which was only slightly higher than the lowest non-farm SE income in the Central Region. Harlan, Franklin and Webster Counties had the lowest non-farm SE income in the entire District.

Unique to SCEDD

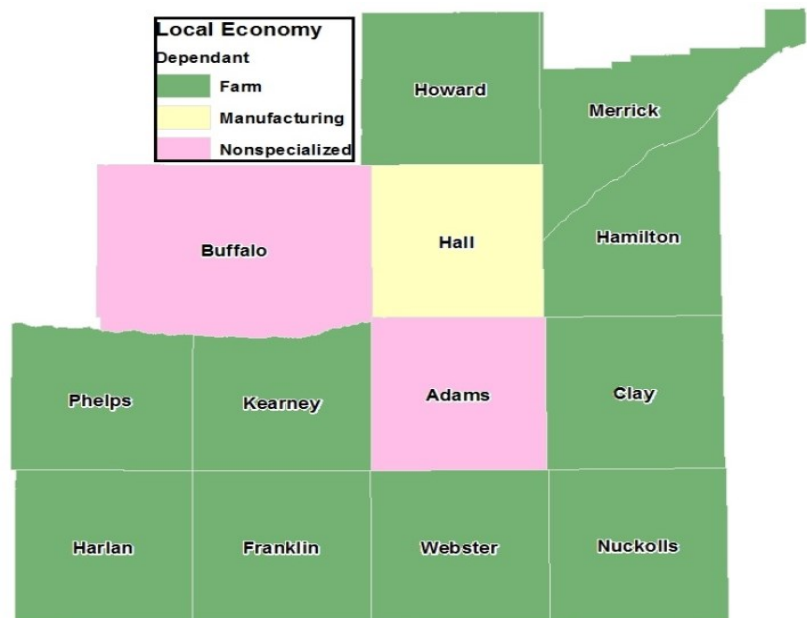
Agriculture

Natural resources such as the Ogallala Aquifer and prime farm ground, combined with technology such as the center pivot, has placed Nebraska among the top agricultural producers in the nation. Nebraska leads the country in commercial red meat production, irrigated land harvested, and popcorn production. In 2011, Nebraska ranked 3rd in the nation for amount of net farm income (\$7,456,742,000). In 2012, Nebraska ranked 2nd in the nation for ethanol production capacity with 40% of the state's corn crop being utilized in ethanol production.

Agriculture also plays a significant role in the local economy and culture in the South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD).

From raising livestock and growing crops to marketing grain to producing ethanol and feed, agriculture is the source of the majority of economic activity in the SCEDD region.

Map 8: Economic Dependency by County



Natural access to an abundant supply of fresh surface and ground water as well as irrigation technology contribute significantly to the strength of agriculture in Central Nebraska. The United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (ERS), 2007 Census of Agriculture Report ranked Nebraska first in the nation with 8.5 million acres of irrigated farmland. Irrigation systems that bring surface water from Nebraska's rivers and groundwater from the Ogallala Aquifer not only strengthen Nebraska's farms but also serve as a significant source of jobs for Nebraskans in farm related careers.

The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID), a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska, is located in Phelps County and is responsible for delivering water to more than 200,000 acres across South Central Nebraska. Irrigation districts such as CNPPID utilize their network of canals to recharge groundwater wells that irrigate another 300,000 acres. In addition to distributing fresh water and electricity across South Central Nebraska, organizations such as CNPPID employ a significant number of residents. The availability of agricultural related careers outside of traditional farming is an important asset for the District.

The United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (ERS) lists 10 out of 13 counties in the District as farm dependent. Hall County is listed as manufacturing dependent and Buffalo and Adams Counties are non-specialized.

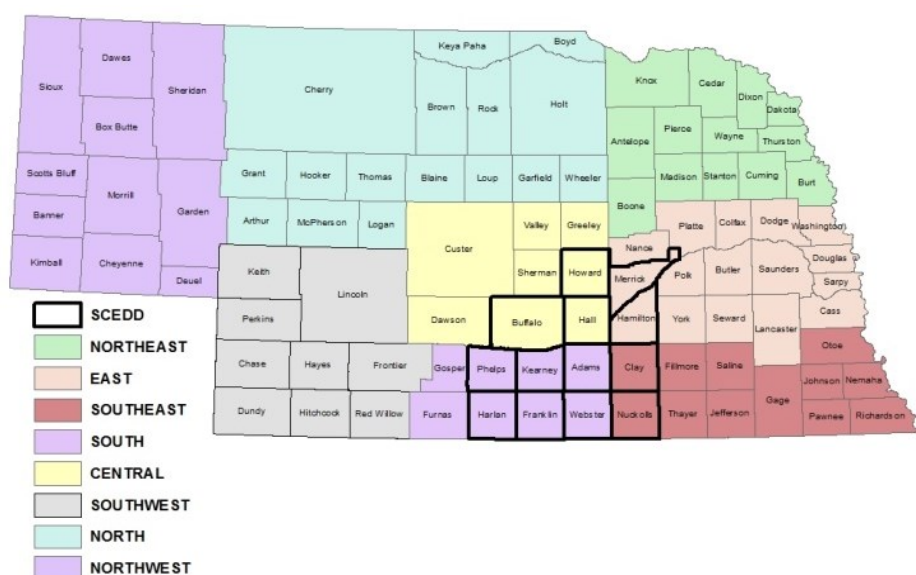
Map 8 displayed that the land use throughout the SCEDD region is dominated by agricultural uses. According to the ERS Census of Agriculture Report, 89% of the land in the District is farmland.

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Department of Agricultural Economics (UNL) provides an annual report, *Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Developments*, that documents annual trends in agricultural real estate transactions. In order to complete the Nebraska Farm Real Estate Highlights 2012-2013 report, UNL surveyed over 100 experts from across the state that provided information concerning current agricultural land values. The report has been compiled annually since 1978 and is able to identify trends taking place concerning agricultural lands in Nebraska. In order to organize the information compiled, UNL categorized the state into eight districts. SCEDD has counties that land in four of the eight

Table 3: Amount of Land in Farms

Adams	85%
Buffalo	98%
Clay	99%
Franklin	79%
Hall	93%
Hamilton	91%
Harlan	96%
Howard	76%
Kearney	83%
Merrick	78%
Nuckolls	83%
Phelps	98%
Webster	83%
SCEDD	86%

Map 9: Nebraska Agricultural Statistics Districts



agricultural statistics districts (ASD). According to information within the report, Nebraska Farmers experienced record breaking income levels in 2012. Those income levels have raised the value of agricultural land, thereby benefitting agricultural landowners and limiting the ability of communities to acquire land for expansion beyond their corporate limits. Rising income has led to an ongoing rise in the price of agricultural land. For each county in the SCEDD district, the price per acre for agricultural land has more than doubled since 2008.

The most common type of buyer for land sold in 2012 was active producers (farmers/ranchers) looking to expand their current agricultural operation. Agriculture is cyclical and while the market is strong now, a downturn in the market is always a

Table 4: Agriculture Land Value and 5 Year Change

ASD	2013 All-Land Average	
	Value/Acre	5 Year Change (%)
Central	\$3,750	123%
East	\$7,185	105%
Southeast	\$5,400	120%
South	\$4,460	152%

All-Land: Dryland, Cropland, Grassland, Hayland and Irrigated Cropland

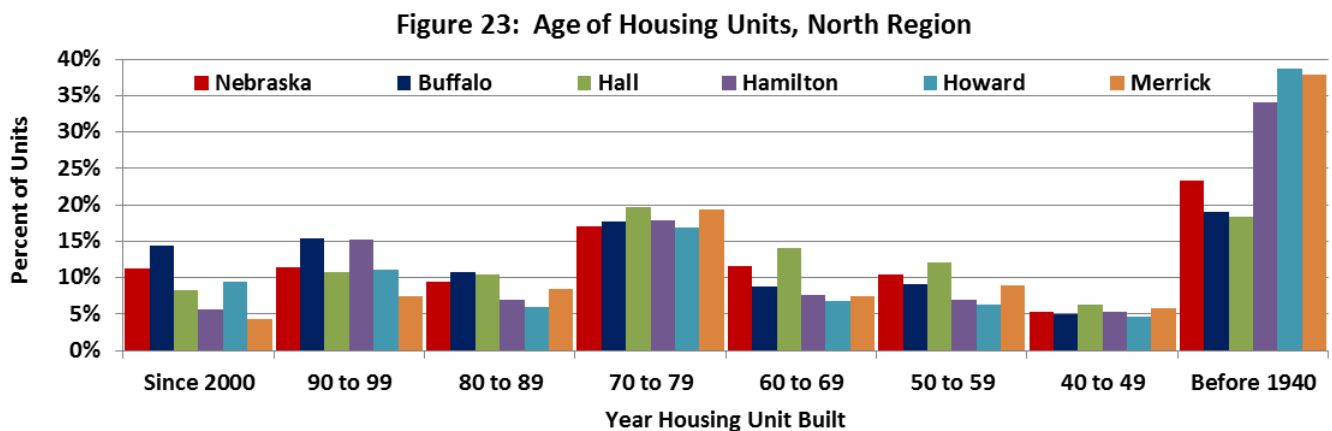
Table 5: 2012 All-Land Real Estate Transaction by Buyer				
ASD	Active Producer	Local Non-Farmer	Non-Local Nebraska Resident	Out-of-State Buyer
Central	73%	15%	6%	6%
East	72%	19%	5%	4%
Southeast	82%	11%	2%	5%
South	88%	6%	6%	0%

possibility. UNL stated that in 2012, the average purchase price for agricultural transactions was over \$1 million. The majority of active farmers purchasing agricultural lands paid with cash. These facts suggest that these expanding farmers should be capable of weathering a decline in the market.

Table 6: 2012 All-Land Real Estate Transactions by Type of Financing				
ASD	Cash Purchase	Mortgage	Contract For Deed	Other
Central	28%	66%	0%	6%
East	41%	58%	1%	0%
Southeast	38%	60%	0%	2%
South	65%	31%	0%	4%

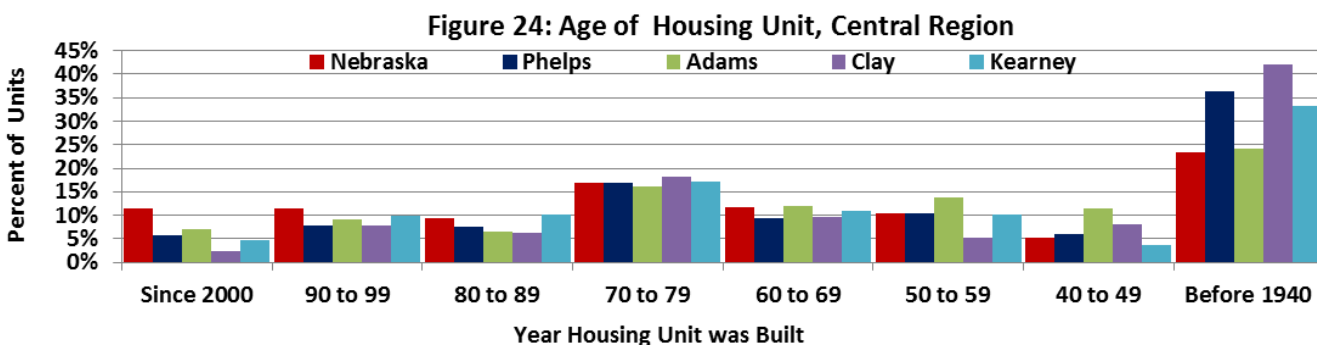
Housing

Housing affects the ability of businesses and communities to maintain the employee and population base as well as add additional workers and families. Every community within the District is facing the same struggle: ample supply of housing stock. While all communities struggle with housing, the symptoms are varied: large numbers of vacant/abandoned properties; the construction industry struggling to keep up with demand; aging seniors facing limited options after the single family home; and incoming workforce struggling to find a decent and affordable place to rent.

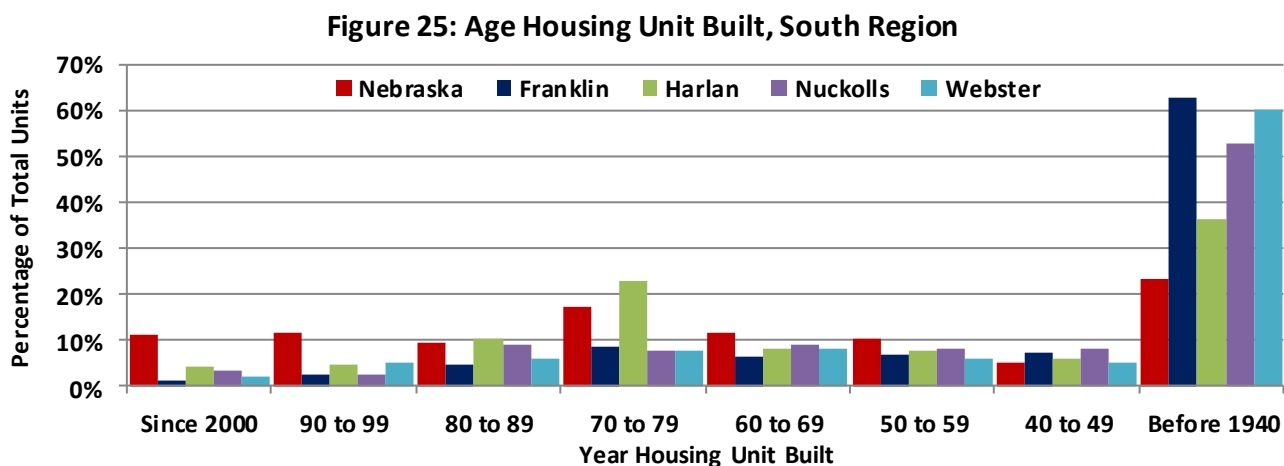


The majority of homes in SCEDD's North Region were built before 1940 and during the 1970s and 1990s. Less than 15% of any of the North Region's housing units were built since 2000. Buffalo County has a greater percentage of housing stock built since 1990 than Nebraska. All other counties have had less housing units built than the state during this time. Fifteen percent of the housing stock was built in Hamilton County during the 1990s; less than 5% have been constructed since 2000.

Most homes within the Central Region were built before 1940. The second largest group was built between 1970 and 1979. Clay County's housing is the oldest within the Central Region as over 40% was built prior to 1940. The remaining Counties have had 80% of their housing built after the 1940s. No counties in this region surpass Nebraska in percentage housing units built since the 1990s.



The age of the housing stock in the South region is much older than in the other regions with three of the four counties having over 50% of their housing units built prior to 1940. These counties follow similar trends to those in the North and Central regions as the next largest group of housing units was built between 1970 and 1979. Less than 10% of all housing units in the South Region were built after 2000. No counties within this region surpass Nebraska in number of housing units built within this time.



The median value for all North Region housing units ranges from \$79,800 to \$132,600. Buffalo County's value is 6% higher than the state. The newer age of Buffalo County's housing stock provides some explanation as to why the median home value is higher than the region and state. The highest home values for the SCEDD area are in the North Region. Buffalo, Hall, and Hamilton Counties have the top three median housing values for the entire District.

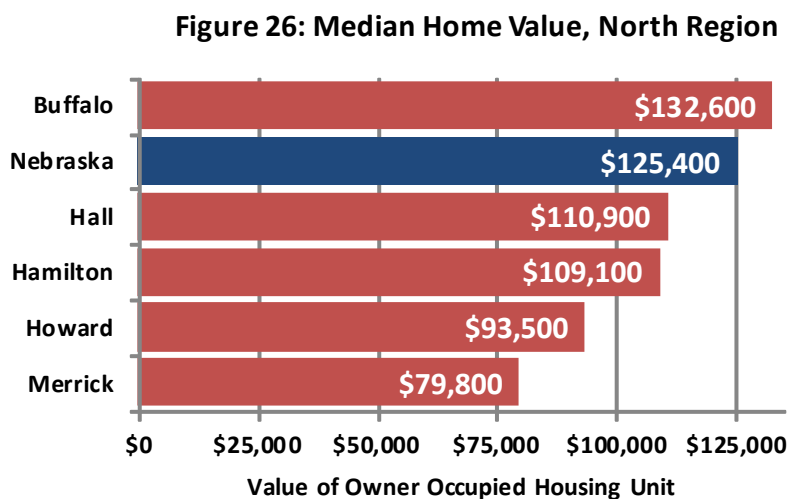
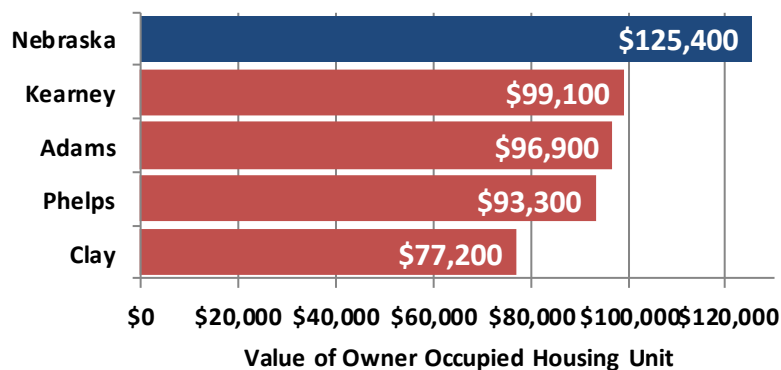


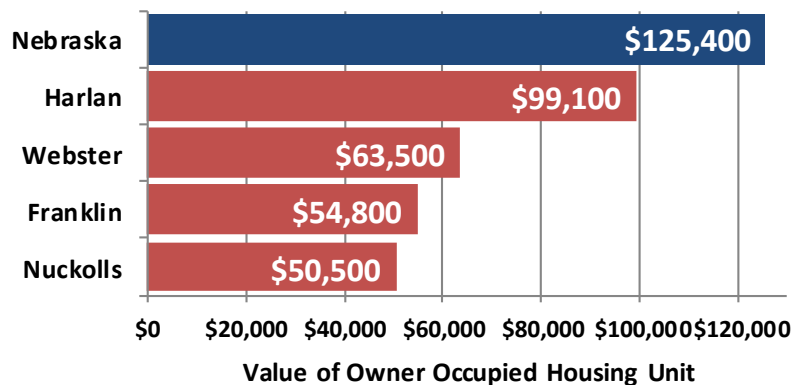
Figure 27: Median Home Value, Central Region



The median home values of the Central Region are slightly lower than the North Region as the lowest value is \$77,200 and the highest is \$99,100. No counties in this region have a higher median home value than the state. Sixty percent of the homes in the North have higher values than all counties in the Central Region.

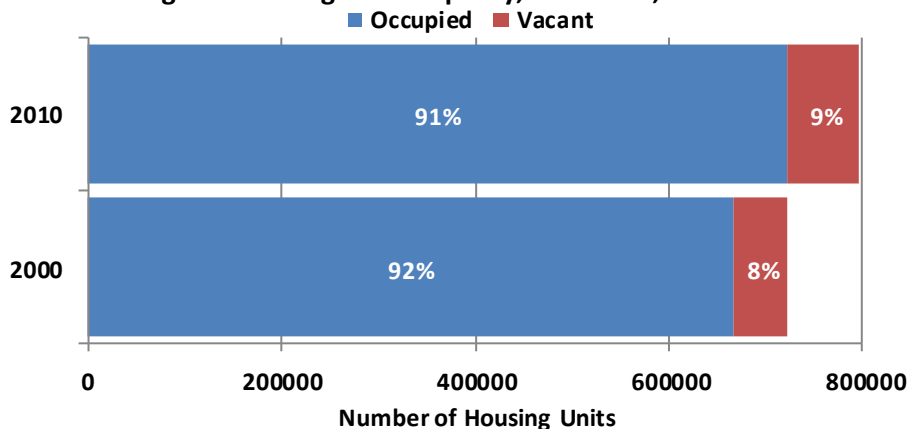
With the exception of Harlan County, the majority of counties in the South region have lower median home values than all counties in the Central Region. The age and value of homes in Harlan County are most likely due to construction of Harlan County Reservoir in 1952. The South region's median home values are significantly less than those of the North and Central regions. Webster and Franklin Counties reported a median home value that is less than half that of the State. Nuckolls County's

Figure 28: Median Home Value, South Region



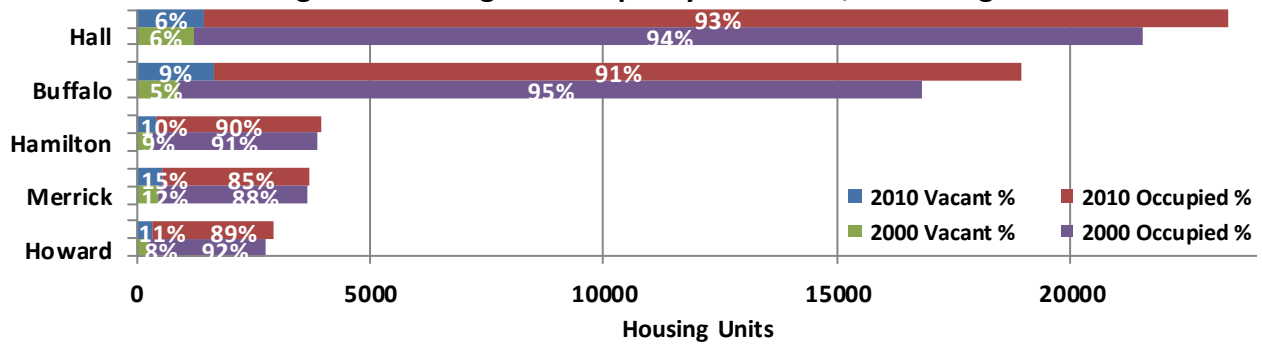
median home value is only slightly higher than 40% of the state's Median Home Value. Over 40% of the housing units in each individual county in this region were built prior to 1940; which correlates to the low median home values. The majority of houses in the South Region are older, valued at lower amounts, and have lower occupancy rates.

Figure 29: Change in Occupancy, 2000-2010, Nebraska



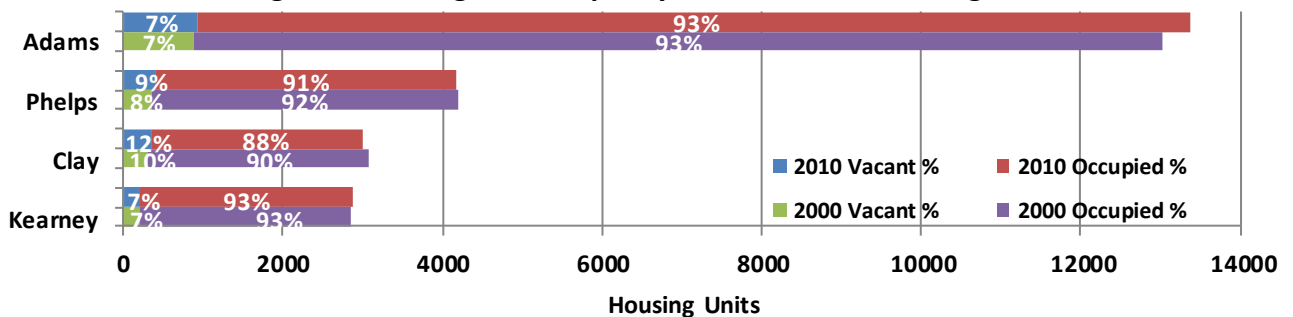
The total number of housing units increased in the state. Yet, the vacancy rate for overall units increased by one percent, suggesting that a growing number of housing units are sitting empty across Nebraska.

Figure 30: Change in Occupancy 2000-2010, North Region



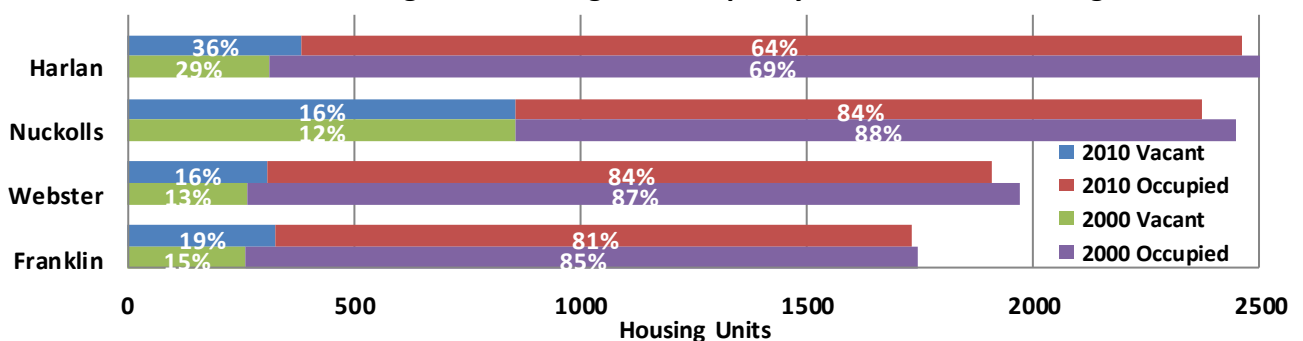
Similar to the State, the vacancy rate for every county in the District increased from 2000 to 2010. All counties in the North region have occupancy rates between 85% and 93% with corresponding vacancy rates between 7% and 15%. All counties showed a decrease in occupancy from 2000 to 2010. The biggest change in rate of occupancy between 2000 and 2010 was in Buffalo County. This rate of vacancy increased by four percent. Merrick and Howard Counties saw a five percent increase in the vacancy rate. While the vacancy rate in Buffalo County increased by four percent. All counties in the North region also had an increase in the total number of housing units from 2000 to 2010.

Figure 31: Change in Occupancy 2000-2010, Central Region



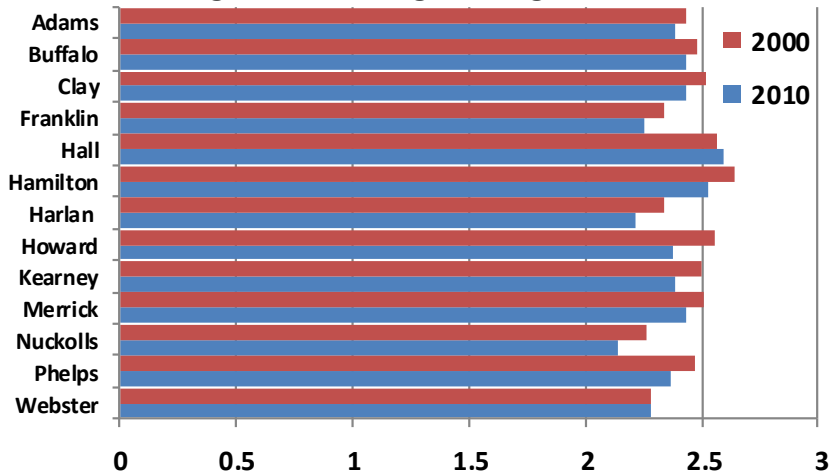
Adams and Kearney Counties were the only counties in the Central Region that experienced an increase in total units from 2000 to 2010. For most of the Central counties, the vacancy rate remained fairly steady; however, Clay County had a decrease in housing units combined with an increase the amount of housing units that are vacant.

Figure 32: Change in Occupancy 2000-2010, South Region



Each county in the South region saw the total number of housing units decrease while the vacancy rate increased. The South region has much higher vacancy rates than the Northern and Central regions. Vacancy rates vary between 16% and 36%. The 36% vacancy rate in Harlan County may reflect the large number of seasonal homes used at the Harlan Reservoir. The lowest vacancy rate, 16%, is a higher vacancy rate than any of the counties in the other two regions.

Figure 33: Change in Avg. Household Size



With the exception of Hall and Webster Counties, every county in the SCEDD Region saw a decrease in average household size. Hall County saw an increase while Webster County remained the same. The increase in Hall County may be a result of the increase in housing units that did not keep up with the increase in working families that migrated to the county. Although household size decreased in nearly every county, every county did not add housing units, which may indicate a housing shortage.

All SCEDD counties have higher owner-occupied housing rates than renter-occupied housing; however the amount of renter occupied units in Hall and Buffalo Counties account for roughly one-third of housing units in these counties. Buffalo County rental numbers may be largely due to the number of students included in the population, as the University of Nebraska has a campus in Kearney. Hall County has the largest number of housing units, which reflects the County's ongoing population growth. Buffalo County has the second highest number of housing units. Hamilton, Merrick, and Howard Counties contain bedroom communities with commuters who work in Hall County. Therefore the number of housing units in these counties, as well as occupancy rates, are impacted by the economy and housing stock located within Hall County.

Figure 34: Housing Tenure, North Region

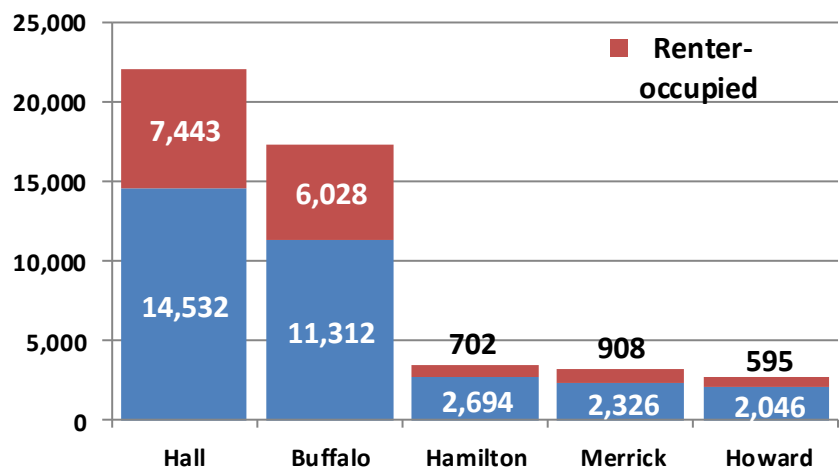
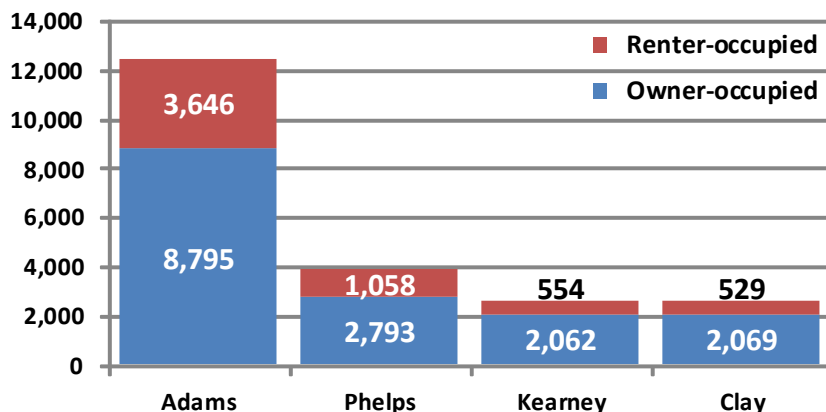
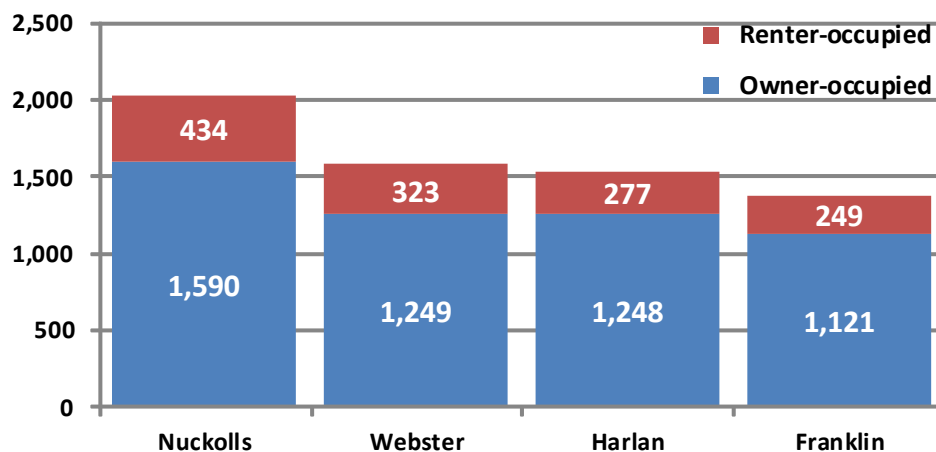


Figure 35: Housing Tenure, Central Region



Adams is the only county in the Central Region which contains more than 4,000 housing units. Almost one third of the housing stock in Adams County is renter-occupied. Phelps has almost twice as many renter-occupied units as Kearney and Clay Counties.

Figure 36: Housing Tenure, South Region



Nuckolls County has the most housing units in the South region. One-fifth of the units in Nuckolls and Webster County are renter occupied. Slightly less than one-fifth of the units in Harlan and Franklin Counties are occupied by renters.

Tourism

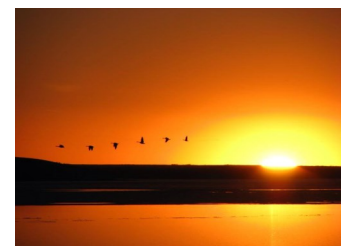
The multi-billion dollar travel industry in Nebraska is an important part of the state and local economies as vacation and travel spending generate revenue for businesses and local governments. The following facts were provided by the Nebraska Department of Tourism.

- Visitors that stayed overnight in lodging establishments accounted for one-half of all visitor spending in 2012. Visitors that stayed overnight in unpaid accommodations (primarily private homes of friends or relatives) accounted for 24 percent. Day travelers accounted for about 22 percent.
- More than one-half (56 percent) of all spending by visitors in 2012 was for leisure and hospitality services (arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food service). Retail spending (including food and beverages purchased for off-premise consumption) amounted to 18 percent. Transportation (including motor fuel) comprised the remaining 26 percent.
- Direct travel spending in Nebraska generated 36,100 jobs with earnings of \$597 million in 2012. Four out of five of these jobs were in leisure and hospitality.
- In 2012, direct travel spending generated \$358 million in federal, state, and local tax revenues. Travel-generated income and sales tax represents 3.6 percent of all state and local tax revenues in Nebraska, not including property taxes.

Due to the location of the Heritage Highway, Historic Lincoln Highway, and the Loup Rivers Scenic Byway, the SCEDD Region has over 250 miles of historic and scenic roadways. Those scenic and historic roadways and national travel routes, such as I-80, lead travelers to lodging and shopping amenities offered by the cities, small communities with friendly faces and historic sites, and outdoor sport opportunities and natural beauty created by rivers, prairieland, and wildlife. Examples of major assets that create revenue and diversify the regional economy through enhancing tourism attractions are categorized below.

Nature Tourism

- Over 500,000 Sandhills Cranes make a rest stop along the Platte River in Buffalo and Kearney Counties during their migration across the continent. Globally, this is the largest grouping of cranes in any one location, which draws thousands of nature tourists to the region annually.



Adventure in Wildlife/Outdoor Recreation



- Popular activities such as hunting and fishing are important local amenities that attract visitors that come to the area and boost the economy through other purchases such as food, lodging, and supplies. Hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, biking, hiking, state recreation areas, and campgrounds have a large impact on the regional economy. Undeveloped, agricultural land also creates an ample supply of land that is available year-round for hunters. The Platte and Republican Rivers create miles of habitat for wildlife that visitors come to hunt and watch.

Water Recreation



- Harlan County Reservoir is the second largest reservoir in the State of Nebraska. Through hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, water sports, and camping, the lake brings visitors into the District throughout the year. The lake is also a rest stop for the Bald Eagle on its annual migration, which draws additional bird watchers to the area.

Heritage Tourism

- South Central Nebraska has historical sites that preserve the state's and nation's history, showcasing the formative years of Nebraska and the expansion of the United States. The Archway in Kearney is a museum that was built across Interstate 80 intended to draw cross-country travelers off of the road and into the community. The Archway showcases the history of the region and includes stories about area Native American Tribes, the Cowboy, and pioneers that traveled across the nation on several historic trails. Historic trails that run through the District include the Lewis and Clark, Oregon Trail, Pony Express, and Lincoln Highway. Red Cloud is the childhood home of Willa Cather, author of *My Antonia* and an internationally renowned author who drew inspiration from Nebraska's prairies. The Willa Cather Foundation in Red Cloud preserves the legacy of the famous author and contributes hundreds of thousands of dollars to the local, regional, and, statewide economy.



Festivals

- Several local festivals in the District have statewide and national appeal, such as the Victorian Festival in Superior, Swedish Days in Holdrege, and Cruise Night in Kearney. The Nebraska State Fair recently moved to Grand Island and draws a significant amount of visitors into the District each year. Since its move in 2010, the Fair has been attended by as many as 336,987 people in one year.



Environmental

When SCEDD is involved in any project, the following environmental factors are considered.

State or National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges

The South Central counties include multiple State Parks and State Recreation Areas. These designated areas include: the Fort Kearney State Historical Park located within Kearney County; the Fort Kearney State Recreation Area located within Kearney County; the Mormon Island State Recreation Area located within Hall County; the Sandy Channel State Recreation Area located within Phelps County; the DLD State Recreation Area located within Adams County; and the North Loup State Recreation Area located within Howard County.

Wilderness Areas

According to the U.S. Forest Service, there is one designated wilderness area in Nebraska, which is located outside of the South Central Economic Development District.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

No wild or scenic rivers are located within the district.

Endangered and Threatened Species

There are multiple endangered or threatened species located within the District that are defined in accordance with the Endangered Species Act. Those species are identified and monitored by the Fish and Wildlife Service (<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>).

Prime/Unique Agricultural Lands

Each county contains thousands of acres of soil that have been designated as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance (including unique farmlands). The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides an interactive web based map known as the Web Soil Survey (WSS). Information provided by the WSS (<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>) includes the farmland classification for each soil type documented in each of SCEDD's counties.

Superfund, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, or Brownfield (abandoned, contaminated) Sites

Superfunds: NDEQ reports there are six Superfund National Priority List sites in the South Central counties. NDEQ maintains an inventory of all Brownfield and leaking underground storage tanks in Nebraska (<http://deqims2.deq.state.ne.us/deqflex/DEQ.html>).

Hazardous Chemical Manufacturers/Users/Facilities

All manufacturers, users, and storage facilities associated with hazardous chemicals must file an annual Tier II report to the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ). These companies are listed on a website (<https://deq-iis.ne.gov/tier2>) and are available to the public.

Major Manufacturers/Users of Pesticides

Pesticides: The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) maintains a list of aerial pesticide applicators and their locations across the state. The NDA also maintains a list of pesticide dealers and their locations across the state.

Sole Source Aquifers

No sole source aquifers are located within the state of Nebraska or furthermore within the EPA region in which it is included (Region VII). This region includes Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri.

Wellhead Protection Areas

Approximately 85% of Nebraskans receive their drinking water from groundwater; therefore, preventing groundwater contamination is vital. Nebraska's Wellhead Protection (WHP) Program is a voluntary program which assists communities and other public water suppliers in preventing contamination of their water supplies. NDEQ is the lead agency for Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan approval. A list of protected wellhead sites is maintained and made available by NDEQ (<http://www.deq.state.ne.us/GroundW.nsf/Pages/WHPA>).

Clean Air Act Nonattainment Areas

1. Carbon Monoxide: Nebraska does not have a classification for carbon monoxide
2. Nitrogen Dioxide: All areas (including Nebraska) within the EPA's Region 7 have been designated as unclassifiable/attainment for nitrogen dioxide.
3. Ozone: The entire state of Nebraska is designated as unclassifiable/attainment.
4. Sulfur Dioxide: Nebraska does not have an attainment classification for sulfur dioxide.

5. Particulate Matter: This report is currently being updated.
6. Lead: The entire state of Nebraska is designated as unclassifiable/attainment under the lead criteria.

100-Year Flood Plains

Flooding continues to be the main source of property and monetary losses from natural disasters. A significant amount of the SCEDD area is located in a 100-Year Floodplain, which has affected the ability of communities to grow. Currently, SCEDD has the dFIRM (digital flood insurance rate map) map layer from FEMA for 10 of its 13 counties. The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides the effective paper firm map for the remaining counties (<http://maps.dnr.ne.gov/Floodplain>).

Archeological, Historic, Prehistoric, and Cultural Resource Sites

The South Central Economic Development District conducts environmental reviews as required for projects. To provide the least possible amount of harm to historic sites, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is contacted prior to work being implemented. All recommendations are accounted for.

Archeological and prehistoric site information is not provided by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office as it could cause the site to be tampered with. Additionally, these sites are not generally permanent in nature. Historic and Cultural Resource Sites (including Historic markers) are kept on file by SCEDD as well as on the SHPO website.

Coastal Zones

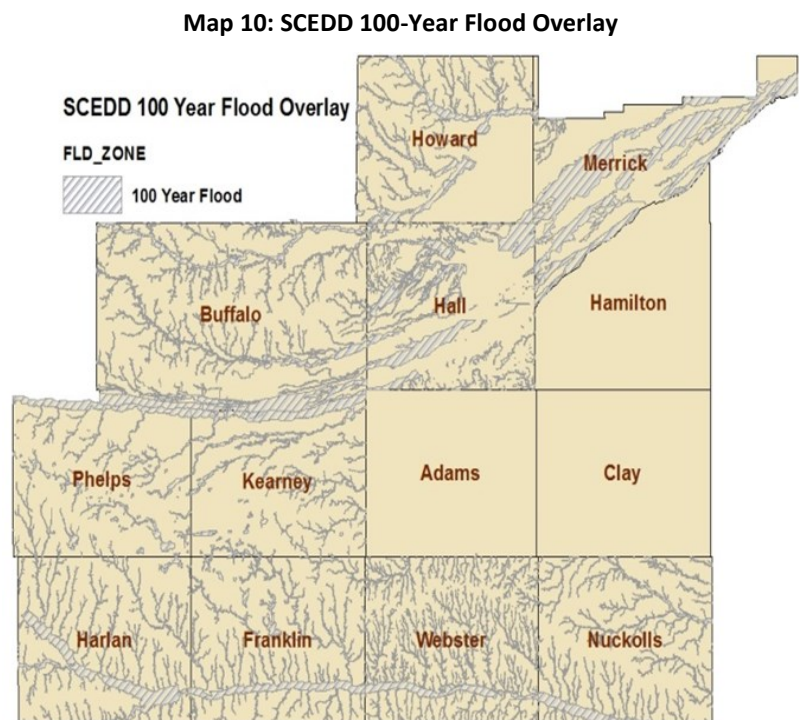
SCEDD is not located within a designated Coastal Zone.

Obvious Constraints to Economic Development

The CEDS does not identify any obvious constraints to region-wide economic development. Throughout the planning process, SCEDD assists in the identification of barriers that could impede individual projects. With community strategic planning assistance from SCEDD, those impediments are addressed and, if possible, mitigated or eliminated through the planning process.

Social Impacts with Respect to Environmental Justice

The CEDS does not identify any environmental justice issues that affect economic development region-wide. When participating in the planning or execution phase of any economic development project, the effects of the project on special groups such as minorities, special needs, and low to moderate income earners are considered and if possible, mitigated.



Resources

The following resources are funders and/or partners that are listed in the Action Implementation Plan (AIP) and play key roles in the ability of SCEDD to achieve its goals.

Center for Rural Affairs (CFRA)/Rural Enterprise Assistance Program (REAP)

The mission of the Center for Rural Affairs is to establish strong rural communities, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship, and genuine opportunity for all while engaging people in decisions that affect the quality of their lives and the future of their communities. The Center for Rural Affairs provides the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP). Through financing (micro loans), business training, technical assistance, and networking, the goal of the program is to strengthen rural communities through small, self-employed business development.

Center for Rural Research and Development (CRRD)

The CRRD is located on the University of Nebraska-Kearney Campus and creates, facilitates, and partners with other organizations to offer multiple networking and mentoring events year-round to enable Nebraska Entrepreneurs to share ideas, contacts, and resources. The CRRD supports entrepreneurs through the following three focus areas: education, mentoring and networking, and market research. CRRD is also a key partner in assisting SCEDD with conducting Community Needs Assessment Surveys (CNAS).

Community Leaders

Community leaders throughout the South Central Economic Development District partner with SCEDD staff in order to provide workshops and other training opportunities across the District. The workshops provide a forum for community leaders to share their lessons learned and best practices for community development with other community members that are facing with similar issues. Community leaders are also vital to the success of community development projects implemented within their towns.

Kansas State University Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities (KSU TAB)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's TAB Program funds technical assistance to communities and other stakeholders on brownfields issues with the goal of increasing the community's understanding and involvement in brownfield cleanup and revitalization. The TAB program works to move brownfields sites forward toward cleanup and reuse. Kansas State University receives a grant to provide TAB services in.

Lenders

Business owners need a relationship with a lender that can assist them in growing and expanding their businesses. SCEDD partners with lenders when there is a gap in financing that can be filled with funds from SCEDD's revolving loan funds.

Local Economic Development Organizations (EDO)

Located within the SCEDD region are 8 economic development organizations that focus on recruiting and assisting businesses locally.

1. Aurora Area Chamber & Development Corporation
2. Central City Economic Development Corporation
3. Economic Development Council of Buffalo County
4. Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation
5. Kearney County Economic Development Agency
6. Phelps County Development Corporation
7. St. Paul Development. Corporation
8. Superior Development Corporation

Emergency Managers

The Emergency Manager (EM), as designated by law, local ordinances, resolutions, or by job description is responsible for the components of the emergency management program in each local jurisdiction, which is typically a county or coalition of counties. The EM is the jurisdiction's primary point of contact and liaison with State and Federal Emergency Management personnel.

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)

NADO provides advocacy, education, research and training for the nation's regional development organizations. Building on nearly four decades of experience, the association offers its members exclusive access to a variety of services and benefits -- all of which are designed to enhance the ability of regional development organizations to foster "regional solutions" to local government, business and community needs.

Nebraska Chapter-American Planning Association (NE APA)/Nebraska Planning and Zoning Association (NPZA)

NE APA strives to advance professional planning throughout Nebraska by sponsoring activities including conferences, chapter meetings, professional development assistance, scholarships, a newsletter, this web site, and more. Through increasing the awareness of planning and its impact upon people, training community leaders to utilize the planning process and develop professionals, and assisting the growth of solid planning principles in Nebraska, the organization betters communities throughout the state.

NPZA provides education, training, and assistance for the betterment of planning in Nebraska. Members include elected officials, members of city and county zoning and planning commissions, representatives of state agencies and professional planners. NPZA provides quality education and training opportunities for individuals who make and impact land use decisions, provides a collaborative network for the exchange of ideas and issues to effect found planning and zoning practices, and provides support for developing local and statewide planning policies and legislation.

The Nebraska Broadband Initiative

The Nebraska Broadband Initiative is a result of the cooperation between the Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Council (NITC), University of Nebraska-Lincoln, DED, and the AIM Institute in order to address the broadband planning needs of Nebraska. The goals of the Nebraska Broadband Initiative include: increasing adoption and utilization of Broadband in communities and regions with an emphasis on unserved and underserved regions, working as a region in developing regional Broadband plans that increase adoption and utilization of broadband, and increasing the understanding of importance of Broadband as a foundation of economic growth.

Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC)

The Nebraska Business Development Center is a cooperative program of the U.S. Small Business Administration, the College of Business Administration of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK). NBDC is located on the UNK Campus and provides direct management and technical assistance to more than 2,000 businesses in Nebraska each year. Basic services are provided free of charge.

Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED)

DED is the official lead economic development agency for Nebraska. DED's emphasis is growing and diversifying the state's economic base, bringing new dollars into the state. The majority of financial resources provided by the Department are provided by the Business Development Division and the Community and Rural Development Division. The Business Development Division provides direct assistance to businesses, while also providing assistance to communities with business and economic development programs and recruiting businesses to the state. The Community and Rural Development Division offers technical and financial services through community-targeted programs and regional service delivery.

Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ)

NDEQ was created by the passage of the 1971 Nebraska Environmental Protection Agency Act, which established the department in order to protect the state's air, land, and water resources. NDEQ works with communities and small businesses in order to assist with compliance. NDEQ also provides technical assistance and funding intended to assist with community economic development endeavors.

Nebraska Economic Developers Association (NEDA)

NEDA is an association of professional economic developers dedicated to the prosperous growth of Nebraska's business climate. Its purpose is to foster economic development in Nebraska, encourage the advancement of the expertise of its members, foster cooperation among economic development professionals, and to afford professional economic developers a vehicle for assembly and collective expression.

Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC)

NROC is the Association of the Nebraska Economic Development Districts and exists to promote community development, promote the general welfare of the various individual members; unite members in efforts to promote the welfare of each member unit's individual community and in its dealings with state, municipal, and federal authorities; encourage the exchange of ideas concerning more efficient operations, and strengthen the bonds of fellowship and understanding between the members. Through further development as an organization, NROC aspires to strengthen the outreach of economic development districts on a statewide level.

South Central Planning Exercise Training Region (SCPETR)

SCPETR's jurisdiction covers the following counties in the SCEDD region: Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Kearney, Nuckolls, Phelps, and Webster as well as Dawson, Frontier, Gosper, and Lincoln counties in Nebraska. SCPETR provides a management structure and organization that can leverage regional resources, plan, cooperation and information to improve response to natural and/or man-made disasters.

United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD)

The financial programs supported by USDA RD provide funding for essential public facilities and services such as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. The program promotes economic development through loans to businesses provided through banks, credit unions, and community-managed lending pools. Additionally, USDA RD offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural producers and cooperatives start their businesses and improve the overall effectiveness of their operations.

United States Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The EDA is the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development, thus the organization plays a critical role in fostering regional economic development efforts across the nation. EDA resources include technical assistance, post-disaster recovery assistance, trade adjustment support, strategic planning, research, and evaluation capacity. The EDA Partnership Planning grant, which has been awarded to SCEDD on an annual basis, enables SCEDD to complete important tasks and participate in essential activities.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Food Processing Center

The Food Processing Center is a resource for food entrepreneurs and offers technical and business development services in order to help potential and current businesses move through product development to market delivery. Examples of services offered include new and improved food products, nutritional evaluation and testing, microbiological analysis, food allergen research and resources, and assessment of customer reaction to taste, appearance, and texture.

Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities

In order to analyze the economic development problems and opportunities of the South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD), the following factors are considered:

- identification of recent, present, and projected economic development investments in the region;
- other government sponsored/supported plans that are consistent with SCEDD's workforce investment strategies;
- economic clusters identified within the region;
- results of Surveys and Economic Developers Meeting; and
- review of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats exercise completed by SCEDD CEDS Strategy Committee and Board of Directors in preparation for the CEDS.

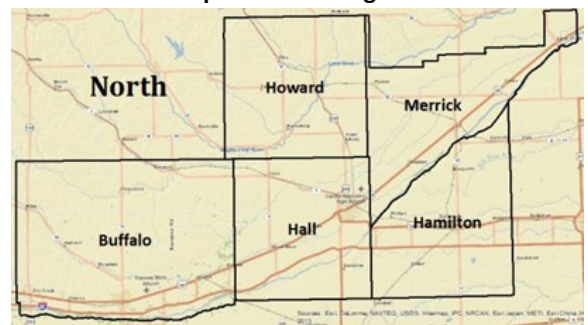
Economic Development Investments in the Region

An important strength of the SCEDD region is optimism demonstrated by the continued growth of private businesses and industries combined with substantial public investments being made across the district. Recent, present, and projected future economic development investments that include the investor, investment action, investment amount and jobs created/maintained (when applicable) within the SCEDD region are identified below.

The fast paced economic growth in the North Region is an important strength of the District that must be capitalized upon. Due to the amount of growth, only the largest projects are listed. Potential threats are also associated with this growth, which include an unexpected “burst” of the growth bubble or the inability of leaders across the District to control the growth in a manner that makes it sustainable and positive.

- Bed Bath & Beyond, Shoe Carnival, and Dress Barn, retail space remodel, \$1.4 million
- Buckle Distribution Center, new distribution center, \$15 million (private), \$6.3 million (EDA, City of Kearney, CDBG), 150 new jobs
- Case New Holland America, LLC, business expansion, \$1.9 million (private), \$605,000 (CDBG), 20 new jobs
- Central City Rural Fire District, New Fire Station, \$2.5 million
- Central City Veterinary Clinic, construction of new facility, \$750,000 (private), \$65,000 (ED Funds), 7 new jobs
- Central Community College, renovation of corridor and remodel of welding classroom, \$1.2 million
- Cherry Avenue Bypass, new interstate exchange and 4 lane corridor connecting Kearney to Interstate 80, \$2 million (City of Kearney), \$48 million (federal funds)
- Chief Industries, business expansion (facility addition), \$2.6 million, 40 projected new jobs
- City of Aurora, Aquatic Park, \$3.75 million
- City of Central City, Lake Development, \$1.5 million
- Good Samaritan, business expansion (new skilled care facility), \$3.6 million
- Grand Island Clinic, business expansion (facility addition and renovation), \$3.9 million
- Grand Island Public Schools, renovation and addition to elementary school, \$1 million
- Green Plains Grain Company Ethanol Plant, expansion of plant and purchase of nearby Granary, \$1 million, 49 maintained/2 projected jobs
- JBS Swift, business expansion (facility addition and renovation) \$5.2 million
- Merrick County Dev. Corp., Central City Home Plant, \$2.5 million, 40 maintained/30 projected jobs
- Nebraska State Fair, expansion of facilities, \$5 million
- Orange Development (CVS), new retail business, \$1.5 million, 10 new jobs
- Phynd Technologies, new business, \$1.4 million (private), \$500,000 (ED funds), 18 new jobs
- SB Worldwide LLC, new multi-housing construction (33 units), \$1.6 million
- St. Paul Development Corp., business creation, retention, expansion activities, \$1 million every five years
- TechOne Crossing, land acquisition and infrastructure construction of technological business park, estimated \$2.5 million (City of Kearney and State of Nebraska)
- Tom Dinsdale Auto Dealership, business expansion (new facility), \$8.15 million

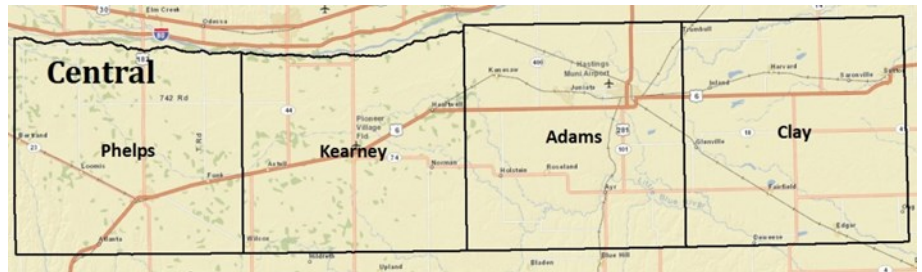
Map 11: North Region



The level of private investment and economic growth in the Central Region has not kept pace with the North; however, several significant investments made through public-private partnerships have supported a steady stream of continuous growth. The ability of the Central Region to remain stable and maintain population and businesses is a strength; however, to simply maintain becomes a weakness as limited innovation and diversification endanger Central Region communities if they are not be prepared to grow, or are left out of programs.

- Ag Processing Inc., business expansion (facility and operations expansion), \$1 million
- Allmand Brothers, business expansion, \$150,000 (ED funds), 7 new jobs
- Dollar General Store, new facility construction, \$836,000
- Drake Tool and Design, business expansion (new facility and equipment), \$1 million, 3 retained/3 new jobs
- Dutton Lainson, business acquisition, \$5.1 million (private), \$705,000 (CDBG), 40 maintained/18 new jobs
- Eaton, business expansion (new plant lines), 20 new jobs
- Hastings Utilities, installation of 220mw coal fired power plant, \$650 million (public)
- Hastings Utilities, wastewater treatment facility upgrade, \$14 million
- Royal Plastic, business expansion, \$617,000 (private), \$405,000 (CDBG), 25 new jobs
- Thermo King, business expansion, 100 new jobs

Map 12: Central Region



The South Region has experienced the least amount of private investment and business and community growth. The smallest amount of economic activity and largest loss in population in the South Region is a challenge; however, recent investments in industries such as tourism and agriculture present an opportunity for the South Region and SCEDD territory to re-energize and experience. Evidence of these opportunities has surfaced in the economic growth that has begun to re-ignite in Superior, the Region's largest city, and in increased activity associated with heritage tourism in Red Cloud, the childhood home of nationally-recognized author, Willa Cather.

- Aurora COOP, new facility construction and business expansion, \$25 million (private), 6-7 new jobs
- Casey's General Store, LLC, new facility construction and business expansion, \$1.5 million, 4 new jobs
- Dollar General Store, new facility construction, \$970,000
- Flag Creek Machining, equipment update, \$65,000 (private), 8 maintained jobs

Map 13: South Region



- Kingswood Court Retirement Community, planned transformation of former school into 63 unit senior housing development, projected \$3 million investment and 20 new jobs
- National Willa Cather Center, renovate vacant historical building into museum, \$300,000 (CDBG), \$1.8 million (private donations)
- Red Cloud City Library, renovation and expansion, \$250,000 (NEDED), \$398,000 (private donations)

Other Government Sponsored/Supported Plans

Many government-sponsored and/or supported plans exist in the SCEDD area that are consistent with workforce investment and community and business development goals set forth in the CEDS. These plans are an opportunity as they represent statewide efforts that will not only strengthen Nebraska but will also improve SCEDD's regional economy.



State of Nebraska Five-Year Integrated Workforce Plan contains key strategies the State intends to implement to achieve the governor's vision, which is focused on economic growth and job creation. The plan will assist SCEDD in addressing the workforce shortage threat that negatively impacts area employers and communities.

1. Implementation of Industry Councils for targeted growth industries and demand occupations to assist in the development of a skilled and ready workforce.
2. Integration of the Department of Education 16 Career Clusters with target industry cluster efforts.
3. Education of the workforce and educators on High Demand, High Skill, and High Wage opportunities in Nebraska.
4. Identification of initiatives that create solutions for overcoming employment barriers of target populations.

Nebraska Advanced Manufacturing Coalition, Dream It Do It Initiative was established by representatives of private industry, educational institutions, chambers, state agencies, and economic development corporations to address the growing shortage of workforce with skills and interest in advanced manufacturing and other related businesses. The purpose of the initiative is to create and maintain an educational campaign to Nebraska students, parents, and educators aimed at re-igniting local interest in manufacturing. A major threat to the region's employers is the fact that a workforce shortage created by the natural aging of the national baby boom generation into retirement will leave openings that must be filled by a smaller pool of applicants. A weakness of the region is the documented loss of population in 10 of its 13 counties that frustrates businesses trying to expand. The Dream It Do It Initiative is an opportunity for employers in the SCEDD region to locally attract and recruit workforce.



The Nebraska Broadband Initiative, Central Region Broadband Plan is a result of government and business leaders recognizing the opportunity to grow businesses and improve quality of life statewide through increased utilization of high speed internet. In order to improve quality and increase the demand for broadband, regional plans for broadband development were created; the SCEDD area is located in the Central Region. Broadband is an incredible opportunity for rural businesses and communities searching for future customers and residents. While the majority of the Central Region is served by broadband, inadequacy in the utilization of internet as a tool to attract new customers and residents is a weakness in the region. The Central Region Broadband Economic Development Action Plan intends to increase demand in the region by demonstrating how broadband access can increase the ability of businesses to increase their profitability and communities to attract potential residents.



Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NEDED) is an important partner of the SCEDD organization and has numerous plans and strategies that help the Department carry out its mission of growing and diversifying the state's economic base. Three of these plan are described below.



The Nebraska Consolidated Plan is reviewed and approved by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and serves as the agency's five year strategy for delivering and evaluating NEDED's housing, homelessness, community and economic development programs.

Annual Action Plan (AAP) is the annual update to the Consolidated Plan and states the specific programs to be implemented by NEDED in the following year that will work towards achieving the housing, homelessness, and community and economic development goals set forth in the Consolidated Plan. The Annual Action Plan includes the award amounts, guidelines, and eligible activities for approximately \$10 million in Community Development Block Grant funds distributed to non-entitlement communities. Programs contained within the AAP are an opportunity for local governments in the

SCEDD region to bring additional community and economic development dollars to their communities. These programs are also an opportunity for the SCEDD organization to diversify its income by administering funds and completing necessary studies.

Growing Jobs, Industries, and Talent: A Competitive Advantage Assessment and Strategy for Nebraska (The Battelle Study): The Battelle Study recognized the need for Nebraska to become competitive by investing in its people as it called for state leaders to understand that the new knowledge based economy requires strategic workforce development initiatives. Much of the findings of this study mirror *A Practitioner's Guide to Economic Development Tools for Regional Competitiveness in a Knowledge-Based Economy*, a compilation of research funded by EDA and intended to identify the changing role of the economic developer. Within the guide, researchers point out that low land cost and the availability of transportation and communication infrastructure are no longer unique competitive advantages. Furthermore, the availability of unskilled labor and technology forces regions to compete globally for employers and the retirement of the baby boom generation creates a demand for skilled labor that the nation has never before experienced. These realities create a threat in that traditional economic development tools will not be enough to grow the local economy. However, these realities also mean that the best chance a region has to differentiate itself is through investment in its people, which creates an incredible opportunity for every region to be competitive.

The Battelle Study created an Action Plan based on three initiatives consisting of strategies meant to enable the State to capitalize on the opportunities for economic development that could be created through investment in its current and future workforce. The Action Plan presents an opportunity for SCEDD to capitalize upon statewide growth initiatives in order to support local growth initiatives. The state's Governor, Legislature, and NEDED are working together to execute the Action Plan's initiatives:

Nebraska Talent Advantage Initiative: highlights the need for sharing of information on current and developing career opportunities with web-based tools; strengthening connections between students and companies through the internNE program; addressing high-demand, skill-shortage areas; and providing incentives to recruit high-skilled workers, especially targeting former Nebraskans.

Nebraska Innovation Initiative: addresses the improvement of Nebraska's Research & Development (R&D) base into new products and new companies, the need to support growth-oriented start-up companies, and the upgrading of value-added activities and modernization of Nebraska's existing industry clusters.

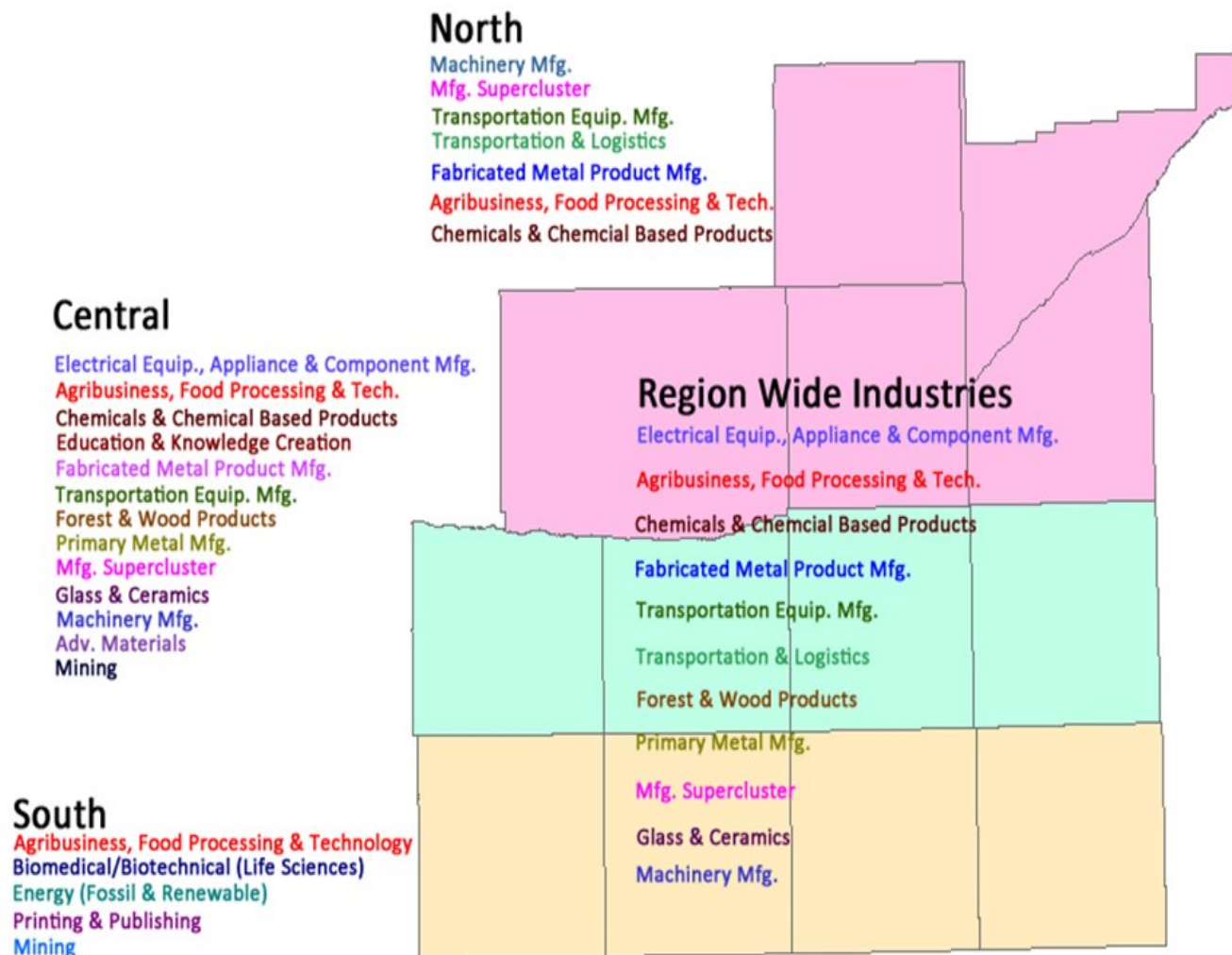
Nebraska Industry Cluster Initiative: identifies common needs of firms in a cluster (workforce development, technical assistance, and market access), organizes state economic development services to advance competitive industries, and enables more broad-based initiatives to engage colleges and universities to address industry needs and opportunities. Through the Battelle Study and Action Plan, the following industry clusters have been identified, studied, and have had programs developed to support their continued growth across the state.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. BioSolutions | 5. Tourism |
| 2. Transportation Logistics | 6. Health Services |
| 3. Software and Technology | 7. Advanced Manufacturing |
| 4. Research & Development (R&D) and Engineering | 8. Business Management and Administrative Service |

Economic Clusters Identified within the Region

Through the utilization of data provided by STATS America, Innovation in American Regions, an Industry Cluster Analysis of the SCEDD Region was performed to identify the local networks of businesses and industries that are creating wealth in SCEDD's regional economies. The EDA sponsored Cluster Analysis project was a result of industry data analysis completed by academic and private sector researchers. The researchers identified 17 clusters and analyzed their influence in each County and Development District in the U.S. The researchers also provided economic developers with the ability to build custom regions. SCEDD utilized the cluster analysis tool to identify the overall competitive strengths for each region.

Map 14: SCEDD Cluster Industries



The research provided a Location Quotient (LQ) for three factors for each cluster: establishments, employments, and wages. The Location Quotient is a comparison of a cluster's local share of each of the factors to the national share of each of the factors. If a region's cluster has a LQ of greater than 1, it is considered to have a regional concentration that is greater than the nationwide concentration. All clusters in each region with a LQ of 1.2 or higher in at least two of the three factors are identified as an industry strength because their local share of industry activity exceeded what would be expected by the national average.

Results of Surveys and Economic Developers Meeting

2012 Small Business Needs Assessment Survey conducted by the Center for Rural Affairs, Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP)

In 2012, REAP completed a small business needs assessment survey that asked small business owners and experts to provide information about issues faced by their business. A total of 489 respondents answered the survey; 57% (278) identified themselves as business owners. Issues included: technology; health insurance; difficulties encountered when starting their business; current limitations the business was facing; and training needs for themselves and their employees. REAP provided survey results specific to the SCEDD region. Relevant survey results are listed below:

- Businesses located within the District identified the following factors as the #1 difficulty when starting up:
 - Lack of start-up cash: 54%
 - Lack of business finance knowledge: 34%
 - Obtaining financing from a traditional lender: 31%
 - Marketing: 24%
 - Lack of a business plan: 29%
 - Lack of market awareness: 24.6%
- Businesses located within the District identified the following factors as their largest, current need:
 - Working capital: 32%
 - Marketing: 32%
 - Succession: 23%
- Business owners aged 50+ years stated marketing/advertising and succession were their top training needs.

SCEDD 2013 Public Survey

In 2013 a survey was conducted to gather information regarding the SCEDD Region. Details of this survey process are provided in the Community & Private Sector Participation section of this document. Pertinent results of the survey are listed below:

1. Demographics
 - A total of 548 respondents answered the survey; each of SCEDD's thirteen counties was represented.
 - Almost half of respondents categorized themselves as a business representative.
 - Of respondents living in the region less than five years, over half moved to the area for a career.
2. Workforce/Employment
 - The majority of high schools offer entrepreneurship programs and are communicating with local employers.
 - Most educators said half of their graduating seniors go onto a four year institution; half of educators said their seniors do not return due to a lack of employment opportunities.
 - Most businesses and homebuilders/general contractors claimed the main reason they do not expand is a lack of skilled and available workforce.
 - Local government officials and community volunteers both claimed a lack of major employers as one of the top three barriers they faced to economic development.
 - Over half of employers find experience to be the most attractive type of training in an employee; one-fourth, preferred prospective employees to have a Bachelor's Degree.
3. Business
 - Almost half (49%) of business respondents categorized themselves as an owner.
 - Sixty two businesses did not have a succession plan.
 - Almost half (47%) of businesses said marketing was the type of business assistance they would find the most valuable.
 - Community volunteers and city/village officials/employees stated the top priorities of local government should be recruiting and expanding new businesses.
 - The main reason lenders are unable to complete a loan to a small business is lack of working capital (cash).
 - A third of lenders that responded would be willing to pay an annual membership fee to have access to a business consulting program.
4. Housing/Community Development
 - Community volunteers and city/village officials/employees felt that the most prevalent community development issues they faced involved housing: lack of decent rental housing; lack of single family housing stock; and dilapidated residential properties.
 - Community volunteers and city/village officials/employees agreed that a top priority of local governments should be housing development.
 - The majority of realtors, homebuilders, city/village elected official or employees, and community volunteers claimed that single family homes and lower end starter homes were the type of housing in highest demand.

A meeting was held between the South Central Economic Development District staff members and area economic development leaders, as well as staff members from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. Details are provided in the Community & Private Sector Participation section of this document. SCEDD staff presented the following emerging trends from the survey and data analysis:

- A disconnect between community leaders, business owners, and the public as the business representatives repeatedly claimed a lack of labor was hampering their growth while community leaders and volunteers pointed to a lack of jobs as the main issue limiting the growth of their communities.
- Several aspects of housing development were negatively impacting community and economic development.

After discussion of the information presented, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were identified by this group:

- Strengths/Weaknesses:
 - Full Employment/Primary need for Business Growth: Workforce
 - Full Homes/Primary need for Community Growth: Housing
- Opportunities/Threats:
 - Adequate number of patents issued in Nebraska/Small number of those patents are reaching the market
 - Increasing number of business owners are approaching retirement thereby creating options for younger generations to achieve ownership/Retiring business owners without a succession plan could lead to the closure of the business and a loss of the wealth it created and the services it offered

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

A review of the background data, relevant plans, REAP and SCEDD survey results, regional cluster analysis, and economic developer input guided the SCEDD CEDS Strategy Committee and Board through the following analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strength	Weakness
Agriculture is strong	Premium land prices
Communities trying to grow	Costly for communities to expand
Business & industry is growing	Land cost makes it difficult for business & industry to expand
Full employment	Low available workforce
Ample job openings	Remaining labor force weakened (drug use, health insurance, transportation)
Businesses working to recruit new workers	Housing shortage makes communities less attractive
Available workforce training assets: Career Pathways, Central Community College, University of Nebraska Kearney	Current workforce skills not applicable to current local jobs

Strengths that were identified involved internal characteristics of the region that give it an advantage over other regions. The strengths were a result of a common theme of growth: the agriculture economy is strong and growing, communities scattered across the District are ready to grow, and businesses are constantly trying to hire new employees. Weaknesses identified involve internal characteristics of the region that could place it at a disadvantage when compared to other regions. Weaknesses were also a result of a common theme: lack of available land and people limits the ability of communities and businesses to add new residents and employees.

Opportunity	Threat
Presence of national transportation assets that support industry and travel	Consistent rise in transportation costs
State focus on cluster development and maintaining Nebraska's workforce	Bordering states with higher unemployment could become attractive to employers
National growth in Millennials (20-35) forming households and immigration population present potential for families & employees to be attracted to SC Nebraska	Competition from outside communities that are actively marketing and promoting their quality of life
Technology advances in the mfg. industry have improved mfg. careers	Employers struggle to find employees skilled in advanced manufacturing

Opportunities were defined as events taking place outside of the region, but could be capitalized upon by the region to continue to experience economic and population growth. Opportunities centered on people attraction and growing and training the workforce. Threats were defined as outside elements that could harm the region. Threats identified include those trends listed above that would put further stress on the region's decrease in population and available workforce.

The information considered throughout the analysis of regional opportunities and strengths led to the identification of the goals and objectives that provided the foundation for the Action Implementation Plan.

Community & Private Sector Participation

The SCEDD Board and CEDS Strategy Committee played an integral role in completing the CEDS process and producing a vision for South Central Nebraska. In addition to Board and Committee direction, private and public sector partnerships are critical to successful development and implementation of the CEDS. Therefore, meaningful input was obtained from specific public and private sectors regarding economic, community and business development in the region. Targeted sectors included: local government representatives, business representatives, lenders, educational officials, realtors and homebuilders knowledgeable in the housing arena, and economic developers serving within the SCEDD region.

The following list includes all the members of the SCEDD Governing Board:

Government Representatives (51-65%)

Name	Government	Position
Dale Curtis	Adams County	County Commissioner
Lynn Rauner	Buffalo County	County Board Administrator (Appointed by County Commissioners)
Barb Barnett	Clay County	County Zoning Administrator (Appointed by County Commissioners)
Gary Quandt	Hall County	County Commissioner
Gregg Kremer	Hamilton County	County Commissioner
Traci Dietz	Harlan County	County Commissioner
Robert Swanson	Kearney County	County Commissioner
Rex Weller	Merrick County	County Commissioner
Theresa Puls	Phelps County	County Commissioner
Arnold Brown	Nuckolls County	County Commissioner

Non-Government Representatives (35-49%)**Private Sector Representatives (at least 1)**

NAME	COMPANY/ENTERPRISE	POSITION
Wayne Bell	TCBY	Owner
Matthew Blum	Good Samaritan Society - Superior	Executive Director
Jan Rodehorst	Kearney RV	Owner
Vacant		

Stakeholder Organization Representatives (at least 1)

NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION
A. Ross Taylor	University of NE Kearney	Professor
Bill Hitesman	Central Community College	Hastings Campus President

At-Large Representatives (0-14%)

NAME	AREA OF INTEREST	BACKGROUND
Jay Hall	Heritage Highway Tourism	International College Professor

Members of the CEDS Strategy Committee are listed below:

Business Representatives (51+%)

NAME	COMPANY/ENTERPRISE	POSITION
Rex Weller	Weller Farms	Owner
Theresa Puls	Speak Easy Restaurant	Owner
Arnold Brown	Farming	Owner
Jan Rodehorst	Kearney RV	Owner
Wayne Bell	TCBY	Owner
Matthew Blum	Good Samaritan Society - Superior	Executive Director

Other Representatives (<=49%)

NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION
A. Ross Taylor	University of NE Kearney	Professor
Bill Hitesman	Central Community College	Hastings Campus President
Jay Hall	Heritage Highway Tourism	International College Professor
Linda Black	NE Dept of Economic Development	Industry Cluster Program Manager

SCEDD 2013 Public Survey

An online survey was determined to be the most effective means of eliciting public and private participation. SCEDD partnered with the Nebraska Public Power District to create the online survey, which was delivered via email and consisted of sections tailored specifically for each sector asked to respond.

This survey process was promoted via emails strategically sent to leaders within regional community governments, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce and rotary clubs, as well as in the Nebraska Bankers Association weekly E-update Newsletter and the SCEDD Newsletter. To guarantee that the most applicable individuals were reached, multiple resources were enlisted to produce a successful distribution list:

1. City/Village Elected Official or Employee: The 2013 Nebraska Directory of Municipal Officials published by the League of Nebraska Municipalities was used to get the most current contact information for city and village officials; village/city clerks were then asked to forward an email containing the invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to the employees and elected officials.
2. Educator: Contact information was gathered from the Nebraska Department of Education and personal phone calls to area parochial schools; SCEDD staff emailed an invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to each Superintendent and Principal in the District.
3. Realtor: The Nebraska Real Estate Commission provided broker contact information; SCEDD staff emailed an invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to each Real Estate Broker in the District.
4. General Contractor/Homebuilder: Regional development organizations and housing authorities provided contact information for area general contractors and homebuilders; SCEDD staff emailed an invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to each contractor and homebuilder.
5. Lender: The Nebraska Bankers Association provided a list of regional banking professionals; SCEDD staff emailed an invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to each lender.
6. Business Owner/Manager: Business owners and managers were reached through the area chambers of commerce, economic development groups, rotaries, and other community clubs. SCEDD staff emailed an invitation to complete the survey and the survey link to each organization. The email invitation was forwarded to each organization's membership.
7. Community Volunteer: This sector included those that received the survey invitation as a member of a chamber of commerce, economic development group, rotary, or community club, and were actively involved in their community but did not fit into the other six categories.

To ensure the maximum response rate, Constant Contact was utilized to monitor the response rate of email messages sent directly by SCEDD. This allowed staff to follow-up with emails and phone calls in order to ensure all recipients of the survey understood the intent of the survey and the importance of their input.

The first set of survey questions was demographic in nature and was asked of all respondents. The role, or sector, indicated dictated the set of questions asked in the remainder of the survey. For example, local government officials were asked only questions pertaining to the operations, struggles and opportunities of their local government; realtors were only asked questions pertaining to housing supply, demand, and environment.

The survey was completed by 548 respondents across the District. The survey results not only provided guidance in the development of the CEDS; but continue to guide the priorities and projects of SCEDD over the next five years. A copy of the survey and the survey results are available within the appendix.

Economic Developers Meeting

A meeting was held between the South Central Economic Development District staff members and area economic development leaders, as well as staff members from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. SCEDD staff presented the results of the SCEDD 2013 Public Survey and emerging trends from the survey and data analysis, and asked participants to confirm or dispute the results and provide additional input. The meeting was conducted in a focus group format that provided participants with several opportunities to discuss the survey results, provide examples of local economic development successes and struggles learn from other organizations, and gain a better understanding of SCEDD's mission and services. A list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were also identified as a result of the meeting.

Action Implementation Plan

The CEDS Action Implementation Plan (AIP) incorporates the District's goals & objectives and strategic projects, programs, and activities into a 5 year plan of action. The mission of SCEDD is to develop and promote a positive climate which supports regional growth. The AIP implements the goals & objectives of the CEDS in a manner that enables SCEDD to fulfill its mission. The AIP also ensures SCEDD will continue to be the resource that businesses and communities rely on for advice and connections to programs designed to help businesses grow and ensure community sustainability.

SCEDD's regional approach to rural economic development addresses two key aspects: community and business development. Through the CEDS process, the SCEDD CEDS Committee, Board, and Staff have confirmed that this approach has been and will continue to be the most appropriate framework for the District to operate within. In order to provide the highest level of service to businesses and communities, SCEDD understands that its personnel must be equipped with knowledge and skills that will enable them to continue to strengthen its communities and businesses. Therefore, the AIP also includes goals, objectives, and action items necessary for achieving organizational development.

By completing data and public input analysis, conducting strategic planning meetings with the CEDS Committee and Board, reflecting on the past five years, and envisioning the next five years, the following goals and objectives that will guide the SCEDD mission for the next five years are listed below:

Goal: Foster Business Development-position SCEDD to impact private investment, job creation, and the creation of new wealth.

Objective: Foster existing business retention, expansion, and transition as well as the start-up of new businesses.

Goal: Foster Community Development-initiate, strengthen, and enhance services to communities and develop opportunities to provide chargeable services.

Objective: Serve communities as an extension of local government's economic development branch.

Objective: Provide relevant information, education, and networking opportunities.

Objective: Assist with emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation.

Goal: Enrich Organizational Development-strong impact requires a strong organization.

Objective: Continue to strengthen the SCEDD organization.

These goals and objectives provide the basis for which the SCEDD organization will prioritize the projects that will be pursued and completed over the next five years. The manner in which progress toward each objective will be made is described within the AIP.

South Central Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Action Implementation Plan								
Goal	Objective	Action Item	Priority	Lead	Resources	Timeline	Jobs	Performance Measure
Foster business development	Foster existing business retention, expansion, and transition as well as the start-up of new businesses							
		Advocate for strong local Business Retention and Expansion Strategies	High	SCEDD, DED	SCEDD, EDA, EDOs, NE Broadband Init., DED	Ongoing	TBD	Number of communities with strong BR&E programs; number of businesses interviewed
		Connect with business owners (or potential owners) to identify issues faced by business, provide consulting and/or connect with proper resources	High	SCEDD, DED, REAP, local ED, USDA RD, NBDC	SCEDD, DED, REAP, EDOs, USDA RD, NBDC, local Ec Dev, Lenders, UNL Food Processing Ctr.	Ongoing	TBD	Number of business receiving consulting services, referral to other resources, or training
		Provide SCEDD revolving loan funds for appropriate projects	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA, Lenders	Ongoing	TBD	Number of loans originated and number of loans outstanding at the end of the year
		Maintain partnerships with local coalitions to provide business training	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	TBD	Number of coalitions in which connections are made; number of trainings opportunities offered
		Increase awareness of business resources and maintain relationships with other business resources to understand services, identify gaps, determine SCEDD's role, and act accordingly	Med	SCEDD, DED, CRRD, REAP, NBDC	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	TBD	Number of workshops and meetings in which resources can be promoted and number of resources with which connections are made
	Foster Community Development							
	Serve communities as an extension of local government's economic development branch							
	Assist communities with strategic planning and assessment of community needs	High	SCEDD, CRRD, DED	SCEDD, CRRD, DED, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of communities assisted	
	Assist with project facilitation and identification of resources	High	SCEDD, DED	SCEDD, EDA, NROC, DED	Ongoing	N/A	Number of community projects facilitated	
	Provide technical assistance for data development, code enforcement, and studies	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, NROC, DED	Ongoing	N/A	Number of communities receiving technical assistance	
	Provide relevant information, education, and networking opportunities		Med					
	Host workshops highlighting resources, best practices, and success stories	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, DED, USDA RD, Community Leaders, NROC	Ongoing	N/A	Number of workshops conducted	
	Participate in local, regional, state and national meetings to raise awareness of local issues and gain knowledge to deliver to communities	High	SCEDD	NEDA, NADO, NROC, NDEQ, KSU TAB, NPZA/NE APA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of meetings attended	
	Assist with emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation							
	Maintain relationships with South Central Planning, Exercise, and Training Regions and emergency managers and assist as appropriate with disaster preparedness and recovery	Low	SCEDD	SCEDD, SCPETR, EMs	Ongoing	N/A	Number of meetings attended	
Enrich organizational development								
	Continue to strengthen the SCEDD organization							
	Participate in continuing education to ensure staff is equipped with relevant information and knowledge to serve constituents; hold regular staff meetings to share information	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of educational sessions in which staff participates; number of staff meetings	
	Continue to participate as a member of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and other national, state, and local organizations that share relevant best practices and offer important networking opportunities	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of conferences/meetings in which staff participates	
	Through active participation in the Nebraska Regional Officials Council (NROC), strengthen the ability of NROC to pursue opportunities for expansion of services and funding, deliver statewide coverage, ensure peer accountability, and provide staff training and networking for all Nebraska development districts	High	NROC	SCEDD, EDA		N/A	Number of NROC meetings in which SCEDD staff participates	
	Hold bi-monthly board meetings to ensure planning, provide oversight, conduct business and share information	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing, bi-monthly	N/A	Number of bi-monthly meetings held	
	Research and seek new programs and funding opportunities to diversify the District and continue to develop, implement, and refine current services	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of programs established, refined or expanded	
	Continue to pursue funding sources, completing applications and reporting requirements	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of grants submitted and awarded	
	Research, establish and implement the best structure for SCEDD membership; amend articles and by-laws as appropriate	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	2014	N/A	Success of re-structuring SCEDD to allow for City/Village and non-governmental participants	
	Recruit and retain members in the Development District; provide development opportunities for the board of directors	High	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of members recruited and retained; number of participants in orientation/development activities	
	Market the services of the District via workshops, community visits, website, social media, newsletters, email updates, press releases	Med	SCEDD	SCEDD, EDA	Ongoing	N/A	Number of workshops, City/Village board visits, newsletters, email blasts, and press releases	

Performance Measures

The following list of performance measures are required to be reported upon annually to the Economic Development Administration. These measures will be reported on in each annual update in order to evaluate the successful development and implementation of the South Central Economic Development District, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:

1. Number of jobs created after implementation of the CEDS;
2. Number and types of investments undertaken in the region;
3. Number of jobs retained in the region;
4. Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS;
5. Changes in the economic environment of the region.

Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency

The rising number of natural and man-made disasters demands that families, businesses, and government agencies have a plan in place to prepare for and respond to disasters. Disaster preparedness is a crucial component affecting the region's economic health.

Regional Assets

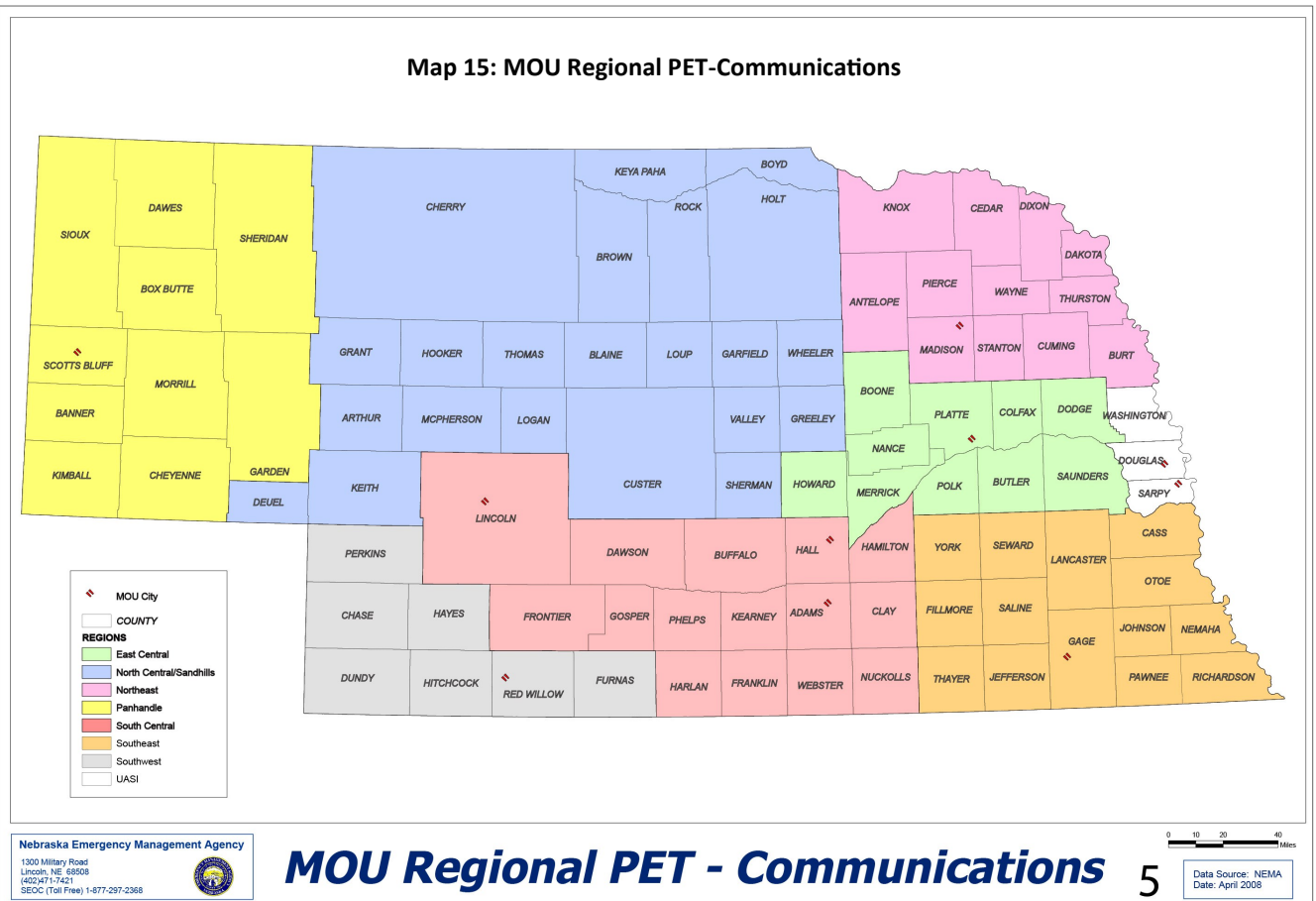
South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) has numerous organizations actively involved in disaster planning, preparedness, and response organizations within its region.

1. **Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP):** Nebraska State Law requires that each county establish an Emergency Management Agency. Therefore, each county within the SCEDD area has an emergency manager as well as a documented Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) that is adopted by the County and Cities/Villages within its jurisdiction. The LEOP document serves as a county's multi-hazard plan. It describes the roles and responsibilities of each county's elected and appointed officials and state and federal agencies in order to prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made hazards and disasters. In addition to addressing command and control during a disaster, the LEOP also ensures that critical infrastructure, hazardous chemicals, and other components that would be affected by a disaster are inventoried. Finally, the LEOP provides direction for recovery operations to begin to take place immediately following a disaster. The LEOP ensures counties consider twelve emergency functions to include: direction and control; communications and warning; damage assessment; emergency public information; evacuation; fire service/HAZMAT; health and medical; law enforcement-terrorism; mass care; protective shelter; public works/utilities; and resource management.

An updated LEOP is required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and is funded by FEMA. The plan developed in accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the current nationwide concept found in the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS). The LEOP document is written and updated by staff planners provided by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

2. **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP):** The HMP is a pre-disaster planning document typically prepared for local counties, coalitions, or natural resource districts (NRD) (as designated by the State of Nebraska) by a professional planning consultant. The HMP is separate from the LEOP in that the document is more in-depth and has additional information such as, population trends, growth patterns, and infrastructure planning. HMP's include scenario planning in order to predict how a natural disaster, such as a flood would impact a community or region. A completed HMP makes local jurisdictions eligible to apply for funding to make improvements that will prevent natural disasters based on the scenarios modeled in the plan. For instance, the construction of dams, shelters, or underground infrastructure can be completed as a result of a hazard mitigation planning document that has been approved by FEMA. Once adopted, FEMA requires the HMP be updated every five years. Every county in the SCEDD area has an updated HMP or belongs to a NRD or coalition that has an updated HMP.

3. Planning, Exercise, Training (PET) Regions: NEMA has divided the state up into eight PET regions in order to coordinate statewide preparedness by accomplishing certain objectives to include: ensuring readiness exercises are conducted in each region once every three years; conducting the annual Training and Exercise Planning Workshop; assigning command control at incident sites; investing public funds to upgrade county communication assets and ensure all incident management personnel can communicate via radio. The PET program also supports the state National Incident Management System (NIMS) program, local and regional integration into the National Response Framework, and the continued development of the All-Hazards Incident Management Team. The South Central PET Region (Buffalo, Hall, Hamilton, Phelps, Kearney, Adams, Clay, Harlan, Franklin, Webster, and Nuckolls) and the East Central PET Region (Merrick and Howard) intersect the SCEDD area.



The South Central Exercise Planning and Training (SCEPTR) has worked with SCEDD to deliver business preparedness and continuity training to local businesses in the South Central Region. The NE BIZ Recovery website is a product of that partnership. SCEDD continues to host the NE BIZ Recovery website which offers disaster preparedness and response information to businesses.

4. Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD): COADs are made up of representatives from public, private, volunteer, and non-profit agencies and organizations that may be active in all phases of disaster. Five of SCEDD's 13 counties are involved in a COAD.

5. Tri-Cities Medical Response System (TRIMRS), Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (MRC): The TRIMRS is a collaborative effort of Central Nebraska hospitals, public health departments, county emergency managers, not-for-profit agencies, and city government officials dedicated to creating and maintaining a system for responding to public health emergencies. TRIMRS created the MRC to serve the region through the volunteer efforts of medical professionals deployed in the event of a public health emergency or disaster. All of SCEDD's 13 counties are served

by the TRIMRS MRC. Members of the MRC are pre-trained, pre-registered, and pre-credentialed in order to ensure they can be quickly activated and utilized in the event of a disaster or emergency that creates mass casualties.

6. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): This FEMA sponsored program educates people about disaster preparedness and hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and medical operations. CERT team members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available. Within the SCEDD region, two active CERT organizations exist.

7. Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG), Civil Mission: The mission of the Nebraska Army National Guard is to provide trained and equipped organizations to protect life and property and to preserve peace, order, and public safety. The NEARNG has installed major training facilities in the SCEDD region to include the Aviation Support Facility in Grand Island and Greenlief Training Site in Hastings. The NEARNG also has a readiness center and Battalion level unit in Kearney. The 72nd Civil Response Team is a NEARNG unit in Lincoln dedicated to responding to natural and man-made disasters.

8. American Red Cross: The Red Cross responds to natural and man-made disasters ranging from fires to floods, tornadoes, hazardous material spills, transportation accidents, and explosions. Three chapters associated with the Nebraska/SW Iowa Red Cross are located in the SCEDD area.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has provided guidelines for developing a Disaster and Economic Recovery and Resiliency Strategy. Those guidelines are considered below in order to demonstrate that the SCEDD region is served by the regional assets described above.

Phase I: Pre-Disaster Preparedness

Plan and prepare for the unexpected. Build disaster-resiliency practices.

- *Engage in pre-disaster recovery and mitigation planning.* Each county's completed LEOP ensures that local officials have adopted a plan for immediate response to begin disaster recovery.
- The LEOP document ensures county emergency managers have a plan to provide short-term help to solve immediate problems using local resources (personnel, money, services, equipment, government, non-government, and private sector). The HMP process ensures that counties, coalitions, and/or NRDs have participated in mitigation planning and highlighted the projects that should take place in order to mitigate future hazards.
- *Know the region's risks and vulnerabilities.* The HMP process aims to reduce damages from disasters through planning by completing tasks such as inventorying characteristics that make a region vulnerable to natural disasters. The HMP also identifies local vulnerabilities that could lead to man-made hazards associated with disasters such as chemical spills or acts of terrorism.
- *Inventory and organize the region's recovery resources.* Through the adoption of the LEOP, county officials identify the resources they have as well as the roles and responsibilities of local officials, volunteers, non-profit organizations (i.e. Red Cross), and private business (i.e. equipment contractors or caterers) that would be utilized in order to prepare for, respond to, and begin to recover from a disaster. The LEOP also requires that those individuals that have a role are aware of their responsibilities and that those identified resources are in place.
- *Engage in business continuity planning.* In 2009, funding provided by EDA enabled SCEDD and the SCEPTR to form a partnership that brought business continuity training to South Central Nebraska. SCEDD utilized the funding to hire a full time employee tasked with providing disaster preparedness information and resources created specifically for businesses. In addition to offering workshops, presentations, and consulting, the partnership created the NE Biz Recovery website. The purpose of the website is to promote preparedness among the business community.

NE Biz Recovery continues to serve the business community as an online resource center offering information on the following disaster preparedness topics:

- Preparedness: identifying hazards & threats; disaster phases; FEMA Voluntary Private Sector Preparedness Accreditation & Certification Program (PS-Prep); Local Emergency Planning Committees and Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT); and Weather Alerts
 - Recovery: financial sources of recovery assistance; local and statewide resources that can offer assistance; and recovery assistance for agriculture and farms
 - Resources: tools, guides, and presentations geared toward getting a business prepared.
- *Ensure there are resources available for the elderly and those with special needs.* The MRC has gained experience and training in treating and transporting the elderly and persons with special needs. Within the LEOP document, Annex E: Evacuation, requires local officials to consider and plan for moving elderly and special needs out of a danger area and back into their homes once a disaster is over. Annex G: Health and Medical ensures that a plan is in place for a coordinated response for medical care and treatment for the ill, injured, elderly and special needs population CERT teams are more likely to know where their elderly and special needs neighbors and coworkers are during an emergency and will provide vital emotional support to individuals while also assisting emergency responders with evacuation and accountability. Annex I: Mass Care, also requires officials to plan for the immediate sheltering needs of special needs individuals who would normally be independent (i.e. vision impaired, advanced pregnancy, elderly, and behavioral disorders).
- *Identify Shelters.* Annex J: Protective Shelter of the LEOP document outlines procedures and places for protective sheltering and Annex I: Mass Care requires local officials to plan for general and medical support shelters that will be needed in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. The HMP process identifies areas where shelters such as storm shelters should be improved or installed to better prepare an area or group of people. In Nebraska, the HMP has assisted communities in securing funding for constructing additional shelters and safe rooms.
- *Identify Recovery Partners (federal, state, and local, and private sector), type of assistance and resources they can provide. Develop an interagency action plan.* Through the LEOP process, NEMA trains local emergency responders to be self-sufficient in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Each county's LEOP is meant to serve as an interagency multi-hazard action plan that identifies recovery agencies, organizations, and businesses, assigns them a role, and ensures each entity understands their role. Within the 12 annexes of the LEOP, responsible individuals are assigned responsibilities. For instance, the Hall County LEOP assigns responsibility for traffic control to the Hall County Sheriff, Grand Island Police Department, and Nebraska State Patrol and also names a Public Health Coordinator who would work with the MRC when responding to a disaster in Hall County. The Hall County LEOP also names the USDA County Emergency Board as the authority for storing, distributing, and utilizing equipment, resources, and personnel. The PET program is utilized to develop interagency coordination and communication exercises and assets. Through the PET program, NEMA has ensured that all agencies in the state that are involved in emergency management are able to communicate on the same radio channel.
- *Identify what recovery activities will take place immediately, short-term, intermediate, and long term.* The PET regions conduct training exercises in order to respond to disasters and determine the recovery activities that should take place immediately, and in the stages to follow after a disaster has taken place. Local Emergency Managers understand that local resources must be readily available immediately following an accident. Statewide resources are prepared to respond to a disaster in a timely fashion.
- *Develop and disseminate a community wide evacuation plan.* Each County LEOP has an Annex E: Evacuation that provides direction and planning guidance for safe and orderly evacuation. The County Hazards Analysis (completed through the LEOP) identifies the most likely hazards in an area. Evacuation plans are created in response to those potential hazards. Each jurisdiction (city or village) within a county is also required to have an evacuation plan in

place and documented within the LEOP.

- *Establish a communication chain.* Annex B: Communications and Warning of the LEOP document provides information and guidance concerning available communications and available warning systems within each county. Those communications and warning systems are identified and procedures for their use are outlined.
- *Engage the community.* An important part of the HMP process is engaging the general public in a region to ensure they understand hazards and the importance of preparedness. The LEOP identifies all local media outlets and other methods of warning the public and keeping them informed. BeReadyNebraska.gov was recently established and is designed to help members of the public (business owners, families, schools, senior citizens, healthcare facilities, and agriculture representatives) prepare a tailored plan and to gather information and resources about emergency preparedness.

Phase II: Post-Disaster Planning and Implementation

Disaster Assessment:

- *Assess nature and magnitude of the disaster; impact on the economy; impact on transportation and public infrastructure; housing, schools, and health care facilities-Annex C.*
 - Damage Assessment of the County LEOP addresses the manner in which initial assessment should take place following a disaster. While the county emergency manager is responsible for assessment of damages, several agencies and organizations are identified as the responsible party for initial damage assessment. In order to account for the damage on public and private assets, damage assessment teams will be activated as needed following a disaster. Damage assessment teams will consist primarily of local government officials. When necessary, personnel from the private sector will be recruited. The Red Cross also has personnel.
 - The State of Nebraska has an established Damage Assistance Taskforce of Nebraska (DATNE) that consists of building inspectors, architects, and structural engineers that can be deployed to estimate damages. Damage assessment teams gather information from private and public landowners and provide this information to the emergency manager in order to ensure that appropriate support from the state and federal government is activated.
 - Families and businesses are encouraged to have insurance covering their real property assets, which provides experts that will perform on-site assessments. The importance of insurance is reiterated to businesses and families through the NE Biz Recovery and BeReadyNebraska.gov websites.

Develop and/or Implement Recovery Timeline:

- *List and prioritize recovery activities to be performed.* The entire LEOP document serves as a list of activities that should take place in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.
- *Identify Resources (federal, state, local, and private sector) needed for each activity.* Counties are prepared to provide initial response resources locally and through the LEOP have a plan for requesting assistance from private, non-profit, state, and federal resources as needed and as appropriate. The Red Cross is prepared to provide immediate disaster relief by performing tasks such as providing shelter to people affected or feeding emergency workers.
- *Determine Level and Type of Assistance Needed.* When a disaster takes place, the County Emergency Manager (EM) is the incident manager and primary point of contact for NEMA. As information is gathered and reported to the EM, an Incident Status Report is completed with NEMA in order to determine the level and type of assistance needed.

- *Identify Roles and Responsibilities.* Immediately following a disaster all personnel with an identified role and/or responsibility are called out and the LEOP will be activated. Depending on the type and extent of the disaster, additional responsible parties will be activated as described in the LEOP.
- *Determine the Timeframe for Each Recovery Activity.* Through the PET program, exercises allow EM officials to determine the level of services that will be needed in the immediate, short term, intermediate, and long term aftermath of a disaster. For instance, the Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency has established a system to provide volunteers and residents with identification to allow for access to a site following a disaster. This level of service will be needed in the short-term timeframe following a disaster. The Nebraska Army National Guard can be utilized to provide firefighting services; this service would need to be utilized in the immediate timeframe. The MRC would also be utilized in the immediate and short-term timeframe. Recovery services provided by NEMA would be utilized in the intermediate and FEMA services could be utilized in the intermediate and long term once reporting is complete and appropriate declarations have been made by the Governor and President.
- *Establish Recovery Benchmarks.* Upon stabilizing an area that has experienced a disaster, local officials will utilize resources provided by emergency planning agencies (NEMA and FEMA) in order to set goals that ensure recovery continues to take place, normalcy is restored for local families and businesses, and communities are rebuilt to be stronger and better prepared for the next disaster.

Implement Recovery Plan

- *Identify: business, economic and entrepreneurial rebuild initiatives; workforce initiatives to employ workers and rebuild economy.*
 - Federal agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA provide resources to businesses and employers to assist them to restore or maintain business in the aftermath of a disaster.
 - SCEDD has developed an information base containing tools, financial and informational resources, and best practices that can be offered to businesses to start them back up, keep them going, or help them better prepare for the next disaster. SCEDD also offers one on one consulting for businesses and is prepared to work with any business that is ready to create a disaster prepared and response plan.
 - BeReadyNebraska.com is a statewide initiative designed to encourage business owners and employers to understand what it will take to keep their business operational and put their employees back to work in the event of a small or large, natural or man-made disaster.
- *Describe: federal, state and local funding programs; management plans to ensure the most effective use of federal, state, local, and private sector funds.* Local agencies (city and county jurisdictions) are expected to have immediate funds available to respond immediately to disasters.
 - The State of Nebraska is prepared to provide assistance through the Governor's Emergency Fund in order to assist political subdivisions that have suffered from a disaster or emergency to such an extent as to impose a severe financial burden exceeding the ordinary capacity of the subdivision. The purpose of the Fund is to help political subdivisions maintain or promptly restore essential public facilities or services when threatened by or damaged as the result of a natural or man-made disaster. NEMA is responsible for the administration and oversight of this funding source.
 - Non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross and MRC are governed by organizational procedures that will ensure funds expended for disaster relief are properly accounted.
 - The Public Assistance Program is in place to support local governments subsequent to a major disaster declaration made by the President. The purpose of this program is to repair or replace disaster damaged

infrastructure to ensure the timely recovery of local governments in a disaster area. In Nebraska, NEMA is responsible for requesting, obtaining, and managing funds administered through the Public Assistance Program.

SCEDD's Role

Many resources exist across the SCEDD region that have plans and processes in place for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The role of SCEDD is varied based on each area, type, and level of disaster. SCEDD staff is prepared to fulfill five important roles described by RestoreYourEconomy.org.

1. Analyst

- Pre-Disaster Role
 - Understand how possible disasters could impact local communities/businesses/industries
- Post-Disaster Role
 - Understand current conditions and damages to critical infrastructure, industries, and businesses
 - Assess impacts on long term viability of communities/businesses/industries
 - Be prepared to provide cost/benefit analysis of recovery projects

2. Catalyst

- Pre-Disaster Role
 - Encourage business recovery preparedness
- Post-Disaster Role
 - Participate in business recovery efforts to identify immediate and long-term recovery efforts
 - Gather information needed to support critical recovery initiatives
 - Assist with the update of strategic plans to match current realities

3. Gap Filler

- Pre-Disaster Role
 - Work with emergency management agencies and organizations to advocate for mitigation and preparedness efforts
- Post-Disaster Role
 - Provide business recovery and assistance services
 - Work with emergency management agencies and organizations to provide community and business recovery assistance services
 - Work with emergency management agencies and organizations to develop programs/initiatives as needed to support long term recovery
 - Seek funding opportunities for recovery initiatives

4. Educator

- Pre-Disaster Role
 - Continue to educate small businesses on business continuity planning
- Post-Disaster Role
 - Facilitate flow of accurate information to businesses

5. Visionary

- Pre-Disaster Role
 - Engage with emergency management agencies and organizations to envision full process of post-disaster redevelopment

Appendix

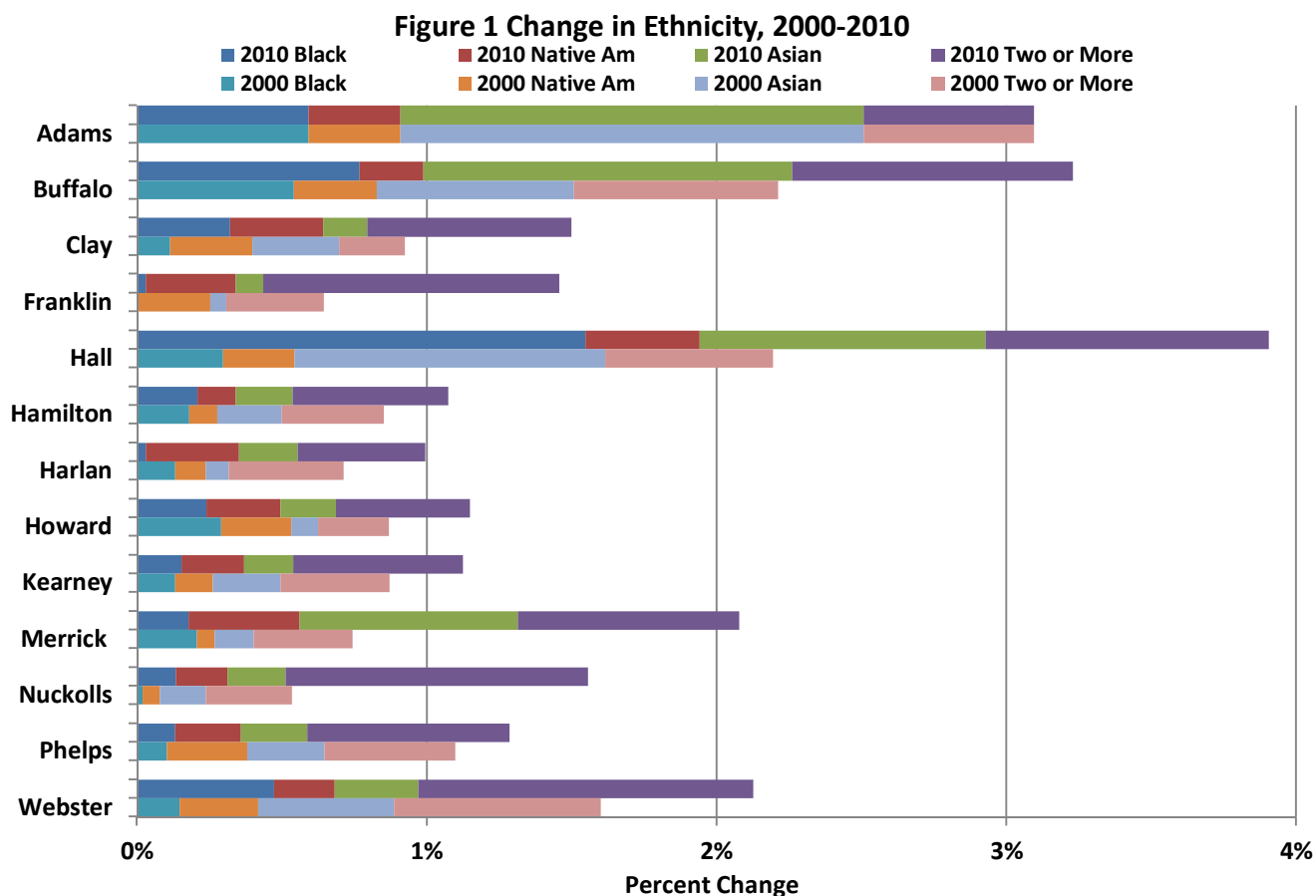
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Table 1 SCEDD Community and County Population Change, 2000-2012 (* County Seat)				
County/City	Population 2000	Population 2012	Change	% Change
Adams County	31,151	31,459	308	1.0%
Hastings	24,064	25,058	994	4.1%
Kenesaw	873	909	36	4.1%
Juniata	693	787	94	13.6%
Roseland	242	243	1	0.4%
Holstein	229	221	-8	-3.5%
Ayr	98	94	-4	-4.1%
Buffalo County	42,259	47,463	5,204	12.3%
Kearney	27,431	31,790	4,359	15.9%
Gibbon	1,759	1,867	108	6.1%
Ravenna	1,341	1,383	42	3.1%
Shelton	1,140	1,074	-66	-5.8%
Elm Creek	894	929	35	3.9%
Pleasanton	360	347	-13	-3.6%
Amherst	277	253	-24	-8.7%
Riverdale	213	185	-28	-13.1%
Miller	156	139	-17	-10.9%
Clay County	7,039	6,411	-628	-8.9%
Sutton	1,447	1,471	24	1.7%
Harvard	998	990	-8	-0.8%
Clay Center	861	744	-117	-13.6%
Edgar city	539	492	-47	-8.7%
Fairfield	467	378	-89	-19.1%
Glenvil	332	304	-28	-8.4%
Trumbull	212	201	-11	-5.2%
Deweese	80	66	-14	-17.5%
Ong	67	62	-5	-7.5%
Saronville	61	47	-14	-23.0%
Franklin County	3,188	3,574	386	12.1%
Franklin	1,026	983	-43	-4.2%
Campbell	387	339	-48	-12.4%
Hildreth	370	372	2	0.5%
Upland	179	142	-37	-20.7%
Riverton	145	89	-56	-38.6%
Naponee	132	106	-26	-19.7%
Bloomington	124	103	-21	-16.9%
Hall County	53,534	60,345	6,811	12.7%
Grand Island	42,940	49,989	7,049	16.4%
Wood River	1,204	1,365	161	13.4%
Cairo	790	804	14	1.8%
Doniphan	763	849	86	11.3%
Alda	652	657	5	0.8%
Prosser	94	68	-26	-27.7%
Hamilton County	9,403	9,011	-392	-4.2%
Aurora	4,225	4,417	192	4.5%
Hampton	439	418	-21	-4.8%
Giltner	389	342	-47	-12.1%
Phillips	336	283	-53	-15.8%
Marquette	282	226	-56	-19.9%

Table 1 SCEDD Community and County Population Change, 2000-2012 (* County Seat)				
Hordville	150	143	-7	-4.7%
Stockham	60	43	-17	-28.3%
Harlan County	3,410	3,786	376	11.0%
Alma	1,214	1,132	-82	-6.8%
Orleans	425	383	-42	-9.9%
Republican City	209	149	-60	-28.7%
Stamford	202	182	-20	-9.9%
Huntley	67	44	-23	-34.3%
Ragan	46	38	-8	-17.4%
Howard County	6,567	6,336	-231	-3.5%
St. Paul	2,218	2,322	104	4.7%
Dannebrog	352	306	-46	-13.1%
Elba	243	214	-29	-11.9%
Howard City	221	189	-32	-14.5%
Farwell	148	122	-26	-17.6%
Cotesfield	66	46	-20	-30.3%
Cushing	31	32	1	3.2%
Kearney County	6,882	6,485	-397	-5.8%
Minden	2,964	2,960	-4	-0.1%
Axtell	696	718	22	3.2%
Wilcox	360	354	-6	-1.7%
Heartwell	80	70	-10	-12.5%
Norman	49	43	-6	-12.2%
Merrick County	8,204	7,780	-424	-5.2%
Central City	2,998	2,915	-83	-2.8%
Palmer	472	469	-3	-0.6%
Silver Creek	441	360	-81	-18.4%
Clarks	361	360	-1	-0.3%
Chapman	341	284	-57	-16.7%
Nuckolls County	5,057	4,438	-619	-12.2%
Superior	2,055	1,933	-122	-5.9%
Nelson	587	479	-108	-18.4%
Lawrence	312	301	-11	-3.5%
Ruskin	195	122	-73	-37.4%
Hardy	179	157	-22	-12.3%
Oak	60	65	5	8.3%
Nora	20	21	1	5.0%
Phelps County	9,747	9,215	-532	-5.5%
Holdrege	5,636	5,534	-102	-1.8%
Bertrand	786	745	-41	-5.2%
Loomis	397	379	-18	-4.5%
Funk	204	194	-10	-4.9%
Atlanta	130	131	1	0.8%
Webster County	4,061	3,725	-336	-8.3%
Red Cloud	1,131	992	-139	-12.3%
Blue Hill	867	916	49	5.7%
Bladen	291	233	-58	-19.9%
Guide Rock	245	217	-28	-11.4%
Cowles	48	29	-19	-39.6%

Minority Ethnicity Change

With the exception of Adams County, there was measurable change in the amount of a race other than White or Hispanic in the district's counties; however, the amount of change was much less, than that of the White and Hispanic population as all other races makes up less than 5% of the population in each county.



Public Transportation Listed by County

Adams County

Rural Public Transportation - Adams County Transportation Program

- Communities Served: Ayr, Hastings, Holstein, Juniata, Kenesaw, Prosser, and Roseland
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit, operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska serves Adams County with demand responsive, portal to portal service, Monday thru Friday in Hastings and scheduled weekly service to surrounding towns in Adams County.

Buffalo County

Rural Public Transportation - Buffalo County Public Transportation R.Y.D.E Transit

- Communities Served: Amherst, Elm Creek, Gibbon, Kearney, Miller, Pleasanton, Poole, Ravenna, Riverdale, and Shelton
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit is operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska and serves the City of Kearney and the surrounding county with demand responsive, portal to portal service, Monday thru Friday.

Rural Public Transportation - City of Ravenna Public Transportation

- Communities Served: Cairo, Grand Island, Kearney, Pleasanton, Ravenna, and St. Paul
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit, operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska serves Buffalo County with demand responsive, portal to portal service, Monday thru Friday in Kearney and scheduled weekly service to surrounding communities in Buffalo County.

Clay County

Rural Public Transportation - Midland Area Agency on Aging Clay County HandyBus

- Communities Served: Clay Center, Deweese, Edgar, Fairfield, Glenvil, Harvard, Ong, Saronville, Sutton, and Trumbull
- Description of Services: Midland Area Agency on Aging offers on-call services through its Clay County Senior Services Office.

Franklin County

Rural Public Transportation - Franklin County Public Transportation

- Communities Served: Bloomington, Campbell, Franklin, Hildreth, Naponee, Riverton, and Upland
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit of Franklin County, operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska, serves the City of Franklin and the surrounding county with demand responsive, portal-to-portal service, Monday thru Friday.

Hall County

Rural Public Transportation - Hall County Public Transportation

- Communities Served: Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, Grand Island, and Wood River
- Description of Services: Hall County Public Transportation provides portal-to-portal, on demand service Monday thru Friday. Service is limited to Hall County.

Hamilton County

Rural Public Transportation - Hamilton County Handi Bus

- Communities Served: Aurora, Giltner, Hampton, Hordville, Marquette, Phillips, and Stockham
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit of Hamilton County, operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska, serves Hamilton County and the surrounding communities with demand-responsive, portal-to-portal service Monday thru Friday.

Harlan County

Rural Public Transportation - Harlan County Transportation System

- Communities Served: Alma, Huntley, Orleans, Oxford, Ragan, Republican City, and Stamford
- Description of Services: The primary geographical area served is Harlan County. Occasional trips out of the county are made on an as needed basis.

Howard County

Rural Public Transportation - Midland Area Agency on Aging Howard County HandiBus

- Communities Served: Boelus (Howard City), Cotesfield, Cushing, Dannebrog, Elba, Farwell, St. Libory, and St. Paul
- Description of Services: The program is operated as one of the services in Howard County provided by Midland Area Agency on Aging through its office in the St. Paul Senior Center. The system operates on a demand-responsive basis and all rides are portal to portal on a 24 hour advance dial-a-ride basis.

Kearney County

Rural Public Transportation - Kearney County Public Transportation

- Communities Served: Axtell, Heartwell, Hildreth, Minden, Newark, Norman, and Wilcox
- Description of Services: Reach Your Destination Easily (R.Y.D.E.) Transit of Kearney County, operated by Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska, serves the City of Minden and the surrounding county with demand responsive, portal-to-portal service Monday thru Friday.

Merrick County

Rural Public Transportation - Central City Mini Bus

- Communities Served: Central City, Chapman, Clarks, Palmer, and Silver Creek
- Description of Services: The Central City Mini Bus operates on a demand-response with 24-hour advance notice requested for a ride.

Nuckolls County

Rural Public Transportation - Midland Area Agency on Aging Nuckolls County Senior Services Public Transportation

- Communities Served: Hardy, Lawrence, Nelson, Nora, Oak, Ruskin, and Superior
- Description of Services: The project is jointly sponsored by Midland Area Agency on Aging, the City of Superior and Nuckolls County, with Midland Area Agency on Aging being the operator. A mini-van is used when there are no wheelchairs being transported, but a lift-equipped van is available when needed. Rides are portal to portal and a 24 hour in advance reservation is required.

Phelps County

Rural Public Transportation - Phelps County Handi Bus

- Communities Served: Atlanta, Bertrand, Funk, Holdrege, and Loomis
- Description of Services: The Phelps County Handi Bus covers all of Phelps County on a demand-responsive basis.

Webster County

Rural Public Transportation - Village of Guide Rock Public Transit

- Communities Served: Guide Rock, with transportation provided to Hastings, Red Cloud, and Superior.
- Description of Services: Demand-responsive system serving the residents of Guide Rock.

Rural Public Transportation- Webster County Transportation Services

- Communities Served: Bladen, Blue Hill, Cowles, Inavale, Red Cloud, and Rosemont
- Description of Services: Provides services to the communities and rural areas of Webster County. It is a demand-responsive service.

SCEDD Survey 2013

South Central Economic Development District is in the process of bringing together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic road map to diversify and strengthen regional economies. The input you provide will help our community's leaders plan and identify projects that will meet our community's needs and provide information to pursue funds for community projects through state, federal, and private foundations. YOUR INPUT IS INVALUABLE TO THIS PROCESS AND WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS. The survey will require about 15–20 minutes to complete. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Demographics

1. What counties do you serve? (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adams | <input type="checkbox"/> Hamilton | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuckolls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buffalo | <input type="checkbox"/> Harlan | <input type="checkbox"/> Phelps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clay | <input type="checkbox"/> Howard | <input type="checkbox"/> Webster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin | <input type="checkbox"/> Kearney | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hall | <input type="checkbox"/> Merrick | |

2. What is your home zip code?

Five digit zip code:

3. What is your age?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> <20 | <input type="radio"/> 41-50 | <input type="radio"/> >70 |
| <input type="radio"/> 20-30 | <input type="radio"/> 51-60 | |
| <input type="radio"/> 31-40 | <input type="radio"/> 61-70 | |

4. What is your highest level of educational attainment?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> GED | <input type="radio"/> Bachelor's Degree |
| <input type="radio"/> High School Graduate | <input type="radio"/> Master's Degree |
| <input type="radio"/> Some College | <input type="radio"/> Doctorate Degree |
| <input type="radio"/> Associate's Degree | |

5. How many years have you lived in South Central Nebraska?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> < 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 years | <input type="radio"/> > 15 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 years | <input type="radio"/> 11-15 years | |

SCEDD Survey 2013

6. If less than 5 years, what is your reason for moving to South Central Nebraska? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career move | <input type="checkbox"/> More affordable housing options |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closer to family | <input type="checkbox"/> Location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

7. Please describe your level of familiarity with the South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD):

- ☐ I have never heard of SCEDD
- ☐ I am aware SCEDD exists, but have never used their services
- ☐ I am familiar with SCEDD and have utilized a service or attended a workshop sponsored by SCEDD
- ☐ My community utilizes SCEDD's services frequently

8. Please choose the category that best describes your role in your community:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Business Representative | <input type="radio"/> Homebuilder |
| <input type="radio"/> Community Leader/Employee | <input type="radio"/> Lender |
| <input type="radio"/> Educator | <input type="radio"/> Realtor |
| <input type="radio"/> General Contractor | <input type="radio"/> Community Volunteer |

9. How long have you been in your role?

Number of years:

Educators

10. Do you offer any entrepreneurship education programs in your school?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. How many of your teachers live in the community?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 6-10 teachers |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 teachers | <input type="radio"/> > 10 teachers |

12. Do local businesses provide apprentice or internship programs for your school's students?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

SCEDD Survey 2013

13. How often does the high school communicate with local businesses about the type of employees they are searching for?

- ☐ Often, once a month or more ☐ Sometimes, once a year or more ☐ Never, have not had this conversation with local employers

14. Does your school invite area employers to make presentations about their company?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how often?

15. Does your school have any organizations related to entrepreneurship, manufacturing, agriculture, or other?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list:

16. Over the past five years, what portion of your graduating seniors...

	Less Than Half	Half/More Than Half
Remain in community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leave for employment elsewhere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend vocational training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a community college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attend a four year institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Of those students that leave after graduation, what prevents them from returning? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Lack of employment opportunities ☐ Lack of housing options
☐ No desire to return
☐ Other (please specify)

Realtors

18. What is the most common type of housing requested?

- ☐ Starter home ☐ Apartment
☐ Market-rate single family home ☐ Duplexe/townhouse to rent
☐ Luxury home ☐ Duplexe/townhouse to own

SCEDD Survey 2013

19. What is the most common demographic of those people seeking to purchase a home?

- ☐ Singles
- ☐ Single parents with children
- ☐ Young couples/families
- ☐ Families with teenagers
- ☐ Couples with grown children
- ☐ Retirees

20. What is the most common reason your clients sell their homes?

- ☐ Moving away
- ☐ Downsizing their housing
- ☐ Upgrading their housing
- ☐ Other (please specify)

21. What is the most common price range of the homes you sell?

- ☐ < \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000-\$100,000
- ☐ \$100,001-\$150,000
- ☐ \$150,001-\$200,000
- ☐ > \$200,000

22. What is the most common reason you are unable to complete a deal?

- ☐ Buyer lack of financing
- ☐ Lack of affordable housing choices
- ☐ Lack of upgraded housing choices

23. Which type of property is in highest demand for first time home buyers?

- ☐ Building lots for custom homes
- ☐ First time buyer homes - speculative construction
- ☐ First time buyer homes - older housing stock
- ☐ Other (please specify)

24. Do you utilize local community development programs such as: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Free lots
- ☐ CRA/TIF
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None available

Home Builders and General Contractors

25. What is your primary focus on:

- ☐ Residential Construction
- ☐ Commercial Construction
- ☐ Both

26. What is the most common type of housing requested?

- ☐ Starter home
- ☐ Market rate single family home
- ☐ Luxury home
- ☐ Apartment
- ☐ Duplexe/townhouse to rent
- ☐ Duplexe/townhouse to own

27. What is the most common demographic of those people seeking to build/rehab a house?

- ☐ Singles
- ☐ Single parents with children
- ☐ Young couples/families
- ☐ Families with teenagers
- ☐ Couples with grown children
- ☐ Retirees

28. In what size of community are the majority of your projects located?

- ☐ 0-1,500
- ☐ 1,501-5,000
- ☐ >5,000

29. Which types of housing projects does your company develop? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Rehab existing homes
- ☐ New construction on new land
- ☐ New construction on existing infrastructure/inside corporate limits

30. What is the primary reason a project stops or never starts?

- ☐ Lack of available land
- ☐ Cost of installing new infrastructure
- ☐ Mismatch between customer's desires and ability to afford
- ☐ Local permitting process is too strict
- ☐ Local permitting process is too unpredictable

SCEDD Survey 2013

31. What issues most affect your business? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of construction materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Competency and quality of labor force |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of project inputs (such as fuel) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of target market |

32. Have you used housing programs (such as NIFA, NAHTF, HUD) to finance your projects?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, elaborate on these projects successes?

33. If yes, what was the most difficult part about using a government housing program?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Paperwork requirements | <input type="radio"/> Complexity of program |
| <input type="radio"/> Length of reporting period | <input type="radio"/> Benefits were not worth the effort |

34. If no, why not?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Unaware of programs | <input type="radio"/> Lack of time to administer programs |
| <input type="radio"/> Too complicated | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other reasons (please specify): | |

35. If lack of time and staff was your reason for no, would you utilize a service to assist with applying for and administration of housing programs?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

36. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership to support housing development (housing project grant writing, assisting with TIF/CRA projects, etc.) in your communities?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Lenders

37. Annually, how many business loans do you make?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

SCEDD Survey 2013

38. If you are unable to complete a loan to a small business, what is the main reason?

- ☐ Lack of business plan ☐ Lack of cash
- ☐ Lack of credit rating ☐ Lack of competency/applicant is not ready

Other

39. Do you require a business plan from an applicant when applying for business financing?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

40. Do you refer business clients for free consulting?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

41. If yes, to which business consulting programs do you refer clients?

- ☐ REAP (Rural Enterprise Assistance Project) ☐ SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives)
- ☐ SCEDD (South Central Economic Development District) ☐ GROW Nebraska
- ☐ NBDC (Nebraska Business Development Center)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

42. With which public business programs have you worked? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Small Business Administration ☐ South Central Economic Development District
- ☐ Nebraska Enterprise Fund ☐ Nebraska Business Development Center
- ☐ USDA Rural Development ☐ SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives)
- ☐ Veterans Administration ☐ GROW Nebraska
- ☐ REAP (Rural Enterprise Assistance Project)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

43. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership fee to have an on-call business consulting program for potential and current businesses?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

SCEDD Survey 2013

44. Have you partnered with a municipal government or economic development program to provide a business loan, if yes at what total percentage of the loan package.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what total percentage does your institution typically provide?

45. Annually, how many mortgages do you originate? (If 0, please skip to economic development.)

- ☐ 0 ☐ 1-100 ☐ 101-500 ☐ >500

46. Annually, how many mortgages do you originate in communities with populations of less than 1,500?

- ☐ 0 ☐ < 5 mortgages ☐ 5-20 mortgages

47. Do you offer any first time homebuyer/low income public mortgage lending programs?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

48. If yes, which?

- ☐ Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) ☐ Veterans Administration (VA)

☐ United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development
(USDA-RD)

- ☐ Other (please specify)

49. What is the single largest obstacle your institution faces when offering a government supported lending program (such as USDA RD, NIFA)?

- ☐ Paperwork ☐ Finding eligible applicants ☐ Losing money on the program
☐ Other (please specify)

50. Would you be willing to pay annual membership dues to support housing development (program application/administration, TIF/CRA assistance, etc) in your community?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

SCEDD Survey 2013

51. Do you belong to a local economic development corporation?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

52. If yes, do you make financial contributions to belong?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

53. If no, would you be willing to make financial contributions to belong to a local economic development corporation?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Businesses

54. Please describe your role in the business where you are employed:

- ☐ Owner ☐ Manager
☐ Other (please specify)

55. How many years have you worked in this position?

- ☐ <1 year ☐ 11-15 years
☐ 1-5 years ☐ 16-20 years
☐ 6-10 years ☐ >20 years

56. What is the annual gross sales of the business?

- ☐ <\$100,000 ☐ \$500,001-\$700,000
☐ \$100,000-\$300,000 ☐ \$700,001-\$900,000
☐ \$300,001-\$500,000 ☐ >\$900,000

57. What type of business assistance would you find most valuable? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Business Plan Assistance ☐ Financial Management
☐ Marketing ☐ Expense Tracking
☐ Accounting Software
☐ Other (please specify)

SCEDD Survey 2013

58. What, if any, obstacles prevent you from expanding your business? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Available workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaware of markets to expand into |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working capital | <input type="checkbox"/> Skilled workforce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

59. Did you have a business plan before starting your business?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

60. If yes, do you keep it updated?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

61. If no, have you created one since opening the business?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

62. Do you have a business succession plan?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

63. If no, would you be interested in assistance with writing a business succession plan?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

64. Does the business have a disaster preparedness plan?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

65. If no, would you be interested in assistance with writing a disaster preparedness plan?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

66. Have you utilized business consulting services from any of these entities?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nebraska Business Development Center | <input type="checkbox"/> South Central Economic Development District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) | <input type="checkbox"/> GROW Nebraska |
| <input type="checkbox"/> REAP (Rural Enterprise Assistance Project) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

SCEDD Survey 2013

67. Have you used public assistance/incentive programs to grow the business?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

68. If you have used public assistance/incentive programs to grow the business, what type of experience did you have?

- ☐ Positive ☐ Negative

69. If your experience was negative, please indicate why:

- ☐ Too much paperwork
☐ Unable to fulfill commitments
☐ Other (please specify)

70. Besides yourself, how many individuals does the business employ?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 16-20 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 | <input type="radio"/> 21-25 |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 | <input type="radio"/> 26-30 |
| <input type="radio"/> 11-15 | <input type="radio"/> >30 |

71. What type of position within the business are the most difficult to fill?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Management | <input type="radio"/> General labor |
| <input type="radio"/> Supervisor | <input type="radio"/> Do not struggle |
| <input type="radio"/> Skilled labor | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |

72. Once hired, is it a struggle to maintain the workforce?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

SCEDD Survey 2013

73. If yes, what is the main reason it is a struggle to maintain the workforce?

- ☐ Unable to offer benefits such as insurance
- ☐ Employees unable to pass random drug/alcohol tests
- ☐ Unable to compete with offers from other local employers
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Unable to compete with offers from out of area employers
- ☐ Employee and company are not compatible

74. Which type of training do the employees and hiring prospects typically lack? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Soft skills (such as communicating, eye contact)
- ☐ Specific technical skills needed for the job
- ☐ Other (please specify)

75. If you answered yes to any of the above reasons, would you be interested in assistance with workforce training?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

76. How are the majority of the employees trained?

- ☐ On the job
- ☐ Vocational training
- ☐ Vocational college
- ☐ Other specialized training: (please specify)
- ☐ Community college
- ☐ Four year institution
- ☐ Graduate level education

77. Which type of education do you find most attractive in prospective employees?

- ☐ Experience in the field for which you are hiring
- ☐ High School Graduate
- ☐ Certificates
- ☐ Vocational Degree
- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctorate Degree

SCEDD Survey 2013

78. When making hiring decisions, does it make a difference if the applicant's education was received online?

- ☐ Yes, I will be less likely to hire the applicant ☐ No, it does not make a difference
- ☐ Yes, I will be more likely to hire the applicant

Communities

79. What is your position in your local government?

- ☐ Employee ☐ Elected Official

80. How many years have you been in this position?

- ☐ <1 year ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 1-5 years ☐ 16-20 years
- ☐ 6-10 years ☐ >20 years

81. How many times have you come into contact with SCEDD in the past five years?

- ☐ No Contact ☐ 1-4 times ☐ 5-10 times ☐ >10 times

82. Which of the following services would you use as a community leader? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Annual networking opportunities with community leaders of similar size and geographic location
- ☐ Assistance with enforcing local nuisance codes
- ☐ Assistance with understanding and accessing state and federal community development programs
- ☐ Assistance with state and federal grant writing and administration
- ☐ Assistance with local planning and zoning

83. Does your community have a current comprehensive plan?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what year was the plan last updated?

84. Does your community have a zoning ordinance?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what year was your zoning ordinance updated?

SCEDD Survey 2013

85. Does your village board/city council actively enforce your zoning ordinance?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

86. Does your community have a hazard mitigation plan in place?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

87. Does your community have a local sales tax?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

88. If yes, does it fund?

- ☐ Economic Development ☐ Capital Improvements ☐ Both

89. Approximately what year was the community's sanitary sewer system installed?

Year:

90. Has the community's sanitary sewer system been upgraded since installation?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

91. Approximately what year was the community's domestic water system installed?

Year:

92. Has the community's domestic water system been upgraded since installation?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

93. What are the community's most pressing infrastructure needs? Select the top three.

	1-Most Important	2-Second Most Important	3-Third Most Important
Update storm sewer system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Update sanitary sewer system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Update domestic water system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street repairs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreational facilities: swimming pool, parks, trails, community center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sidewalk, curb, and gutter repair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

94. What is the most requested type of housing?

- ☐ Apartment ☐ Market rate housing for families
☐ Single family rental homes ☐ Retirement housing for rent
☐ Starter homes for young families ☐ Retirement housing for purchase

SCEDD Survey 2013

95. What is the single most prevalent development issue in the community?

- ☐ Dilapidated residential properties
- ☐ Lack of land for new construction
- ☐ Lack of decent rental housing
- ☐ Lack of single family housing stock
- ☐ Lack of infill development
- ☐ Degraded downtown
- ☐ Cost of new infrastructure

Other (please specify)

96. Do you have a written Economic Development plan (LB 840 or other)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

97. If yes, how long has your community had a written plan?

- ☐ < 1 year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ > 10 years

98. If no, would you be interested in assistance with creating an Economic Development plan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

99. Is your community a Nebraska Leadership Community or Nebraska Certified Economic Development Community as designated by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

100. If no, would you be interested in assistance in becoming a leadership designated/economic development certified community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

101. Who is primarily responsible for economic development in your community?

- ☐ Economic Development Corporation
- ☐ City/village government
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Local business groups such as Chamber of Commerce or Community Club

SCEDD Survey 2013

102. What are the main sources of funding for economic development efforts in your community?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Special assessment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal grants | <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Increment Financing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State grants | <input type="checkbox"/> Lodging taxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General obligation bonds | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales tax |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue bonds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

103. Has your local government encountered any of the following economic development barriers? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of sites | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of available land | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited number of major employers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental regulations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of skilled labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen opposition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of population |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of affordable, quality childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available buildings |

104. Which type of business support activity is the most important to your community? (use pull down rankings next to each activity)

Business development through support of entrepreneurial activities

Business retention and expansion services for local businesses

Business attraction and recruitment

SCEDD Survey 2013

105. From your perspective, what are your local government's top 3 priorities?

	1-Most Important	2-Second Most Important	3-Third Most Important
Brownfields (redevelopment of dilapidated and/or contaminated properties)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Securing state and federal grants for infrastructure and community facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GIS development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comprehensive plan updating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting new businesses to your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assisting existing businesses with expansion and succession	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing new businesses in your community through entrepreneurship support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sewer/wastewater treatment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solid waste/recycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water treatment/supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zoning/subdivision regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Code enforcement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

106. What type of utilities does your community own?

- ☐ Electric
 ☐ Phone
 ☐ Neither

107. If your community owns their utilities, are you interested in becoming a Rural Utilities Service (RUS) in order to utilize USDA RD's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) for a local revolving loan fund?

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Need more information

Community Volunteer

108. What is the most requested type of housing in your community?

- ☐ Apartments
 ☐ Market rate housing for families
- ☐ Single family rental homes
 ☐ Retirement housing for rent
- ☐ Starter homes for young families
 ☐ Retirement housing for purchase

SCEDD Survey 2013

109. What is the most prevalent development issue in your community?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Dilapidated residential properties | <input type="radio"/> Lack of single family housing stock |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of land for new construction | <input type="radio"/> Lack of infill development |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of decent rental housing | <input type="radio"/> Degraded downtown |

Other (please specify)

110. Who is responsible for economic development in your community?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development Corporation | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business groups such as Chamber or Community Club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City/village government | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

111. Which of the following barriers to economic development has your local government encountered?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available land | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of money |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of available land | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited number of major employers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental regulations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of skilled labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen opposition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of population |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of affordable, quality childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available buildings |

112. Which type of business support activity is the most important to your community? (use pull down rankings next to each activity)

<input type="text"/>	Business development through support of entrepreneurial activities
<input type="text"/>	Business retention and expansion services for local businesses
<input type="text"/>	Business attraction and recruitment

SCEDD Survey 2013

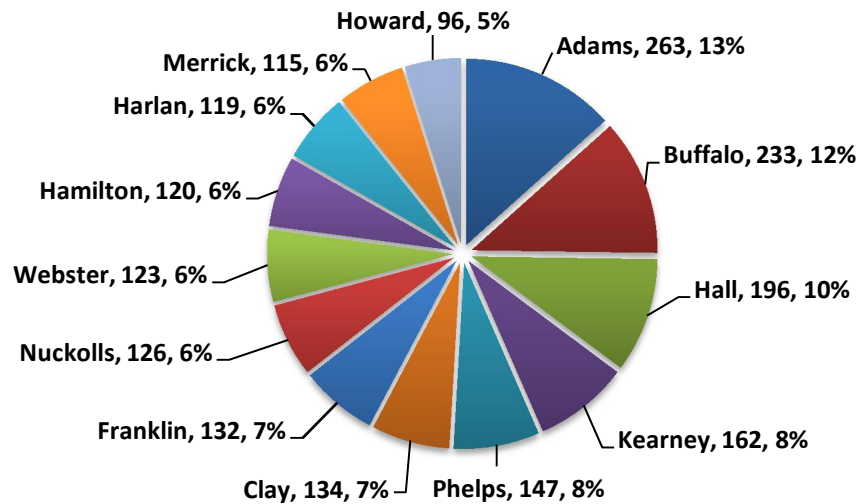
113. From your perspective, what are your local government's top 3 priorities?

	1-Most Important	2-Second Most Important	3-Third Most Important
Brownfields (redevelopment of dilapidated and/or contaminated properties)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Securing state and federal grants for infrastructure and community facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GIS development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comprehensive plan updating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting new businesses to your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assisting existing businesses with expansion and transition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing new businesses in your community through entrepreneurship support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sewer/wastewater treatment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solid waste/recycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water treatment/supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing your community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Zoning/subdivision regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Code enforcement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

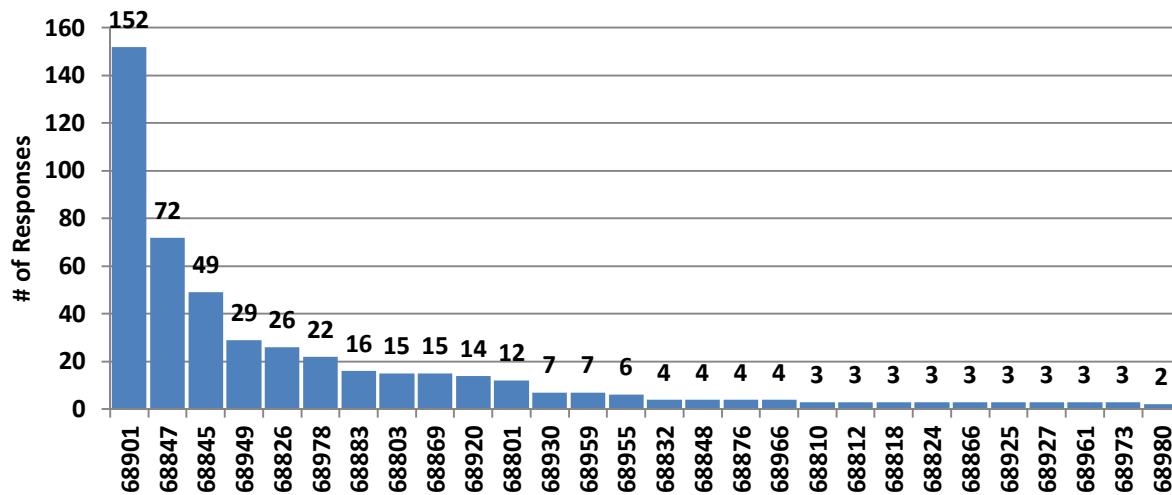
CEDS 2013 Survey Results

Demographics

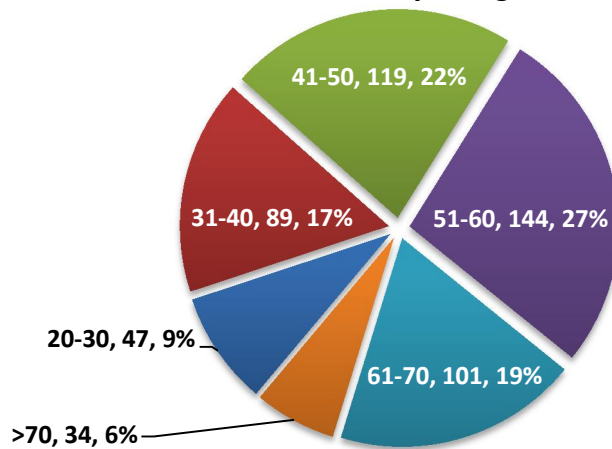
1. What counties do you serve?



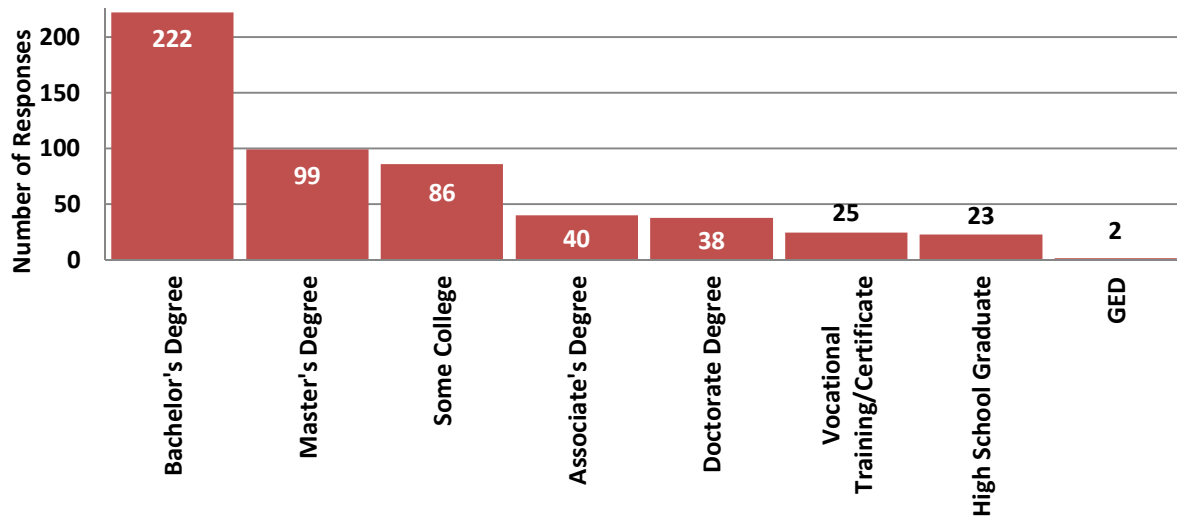
2. What is your home zip code?



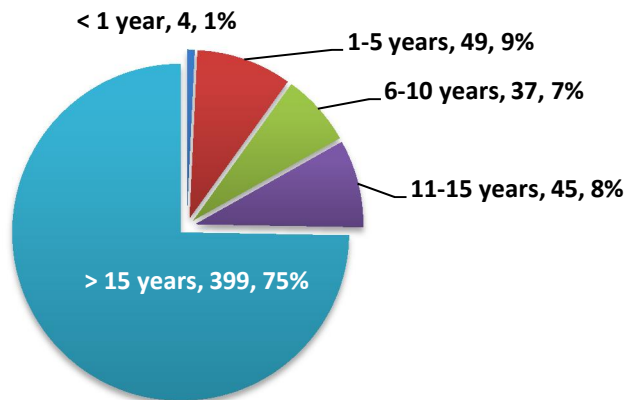
3. What is your age?



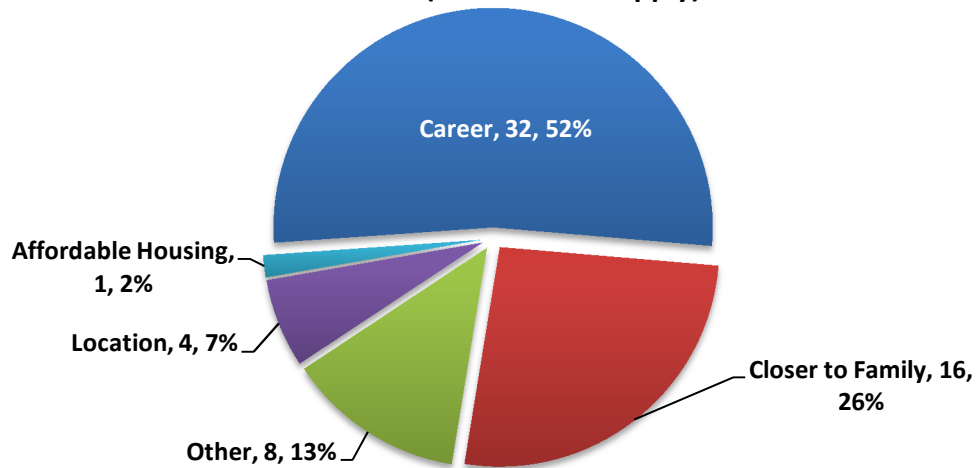
4. What is your highest level of educational attainment?



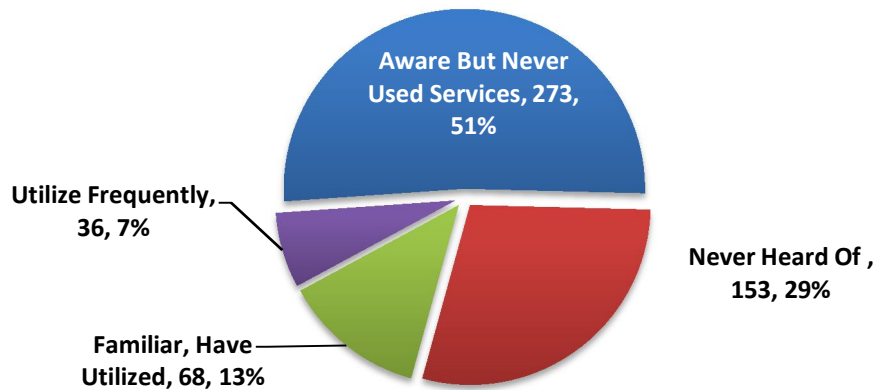
5. How many years have you lived in South Central Nebraska?



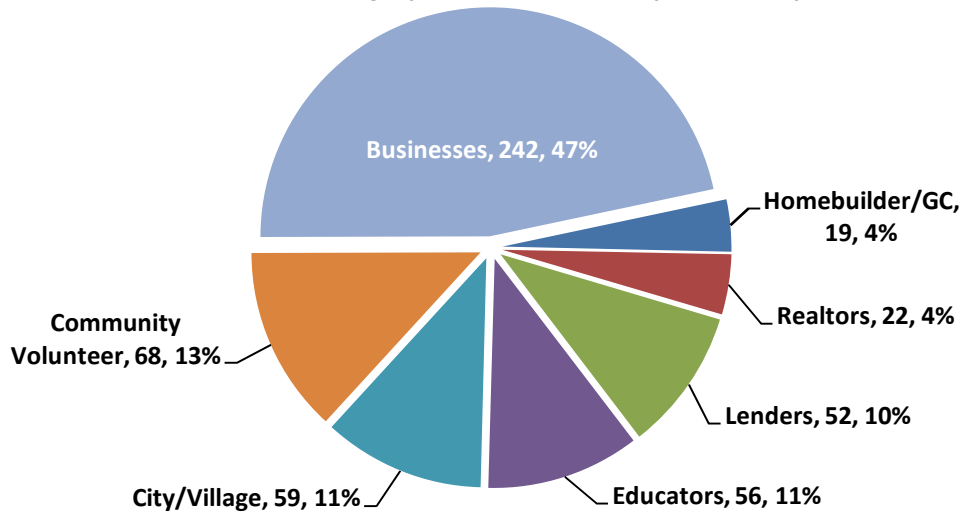
6. If less than 5 years, what is your reason for moving to South Central Nebraska? (check all that apply)



7. Please describe your level of familiarity with the South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD):

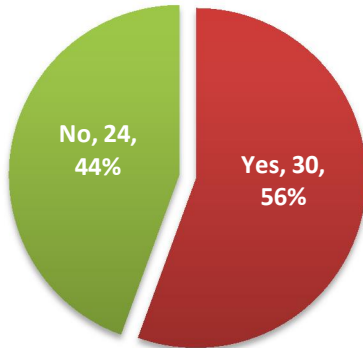


8. Please choose the category that best describes your role in your community:

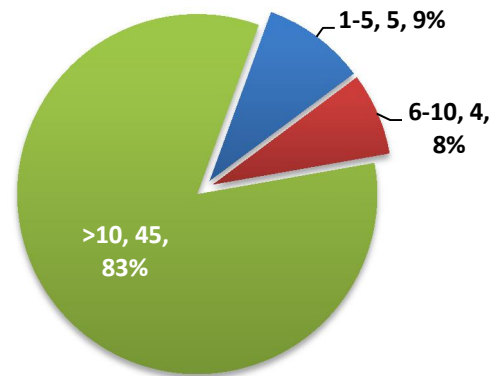


Educators

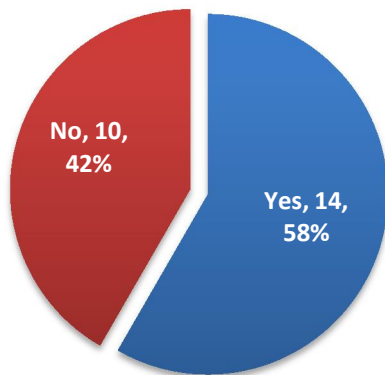
10. Do you offer any entrepreneurship programs in your school?



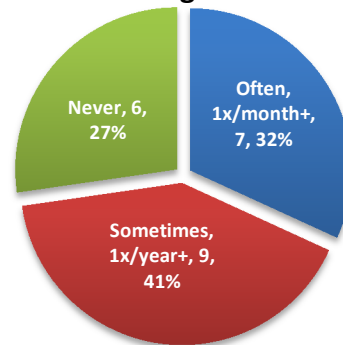
11. How many of your teachers live in the community?



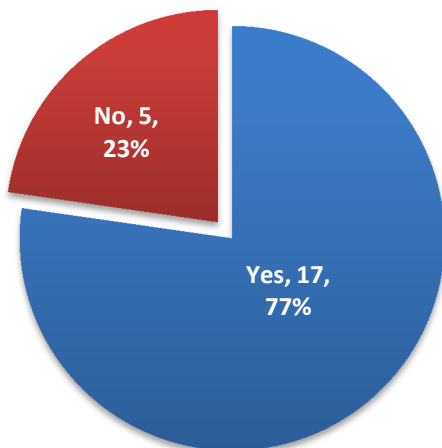
12. Do local businesses provide apprentice or internship programs for your school's students?



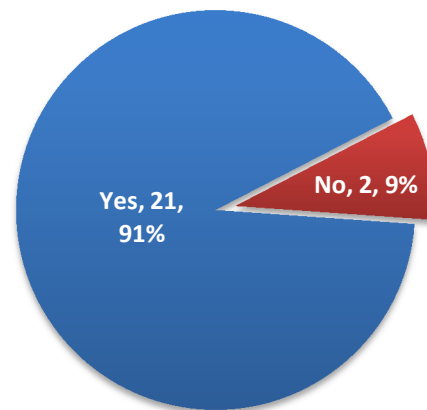
13. How often does the high school communicate with local businesses about the type of employees they are searching for?



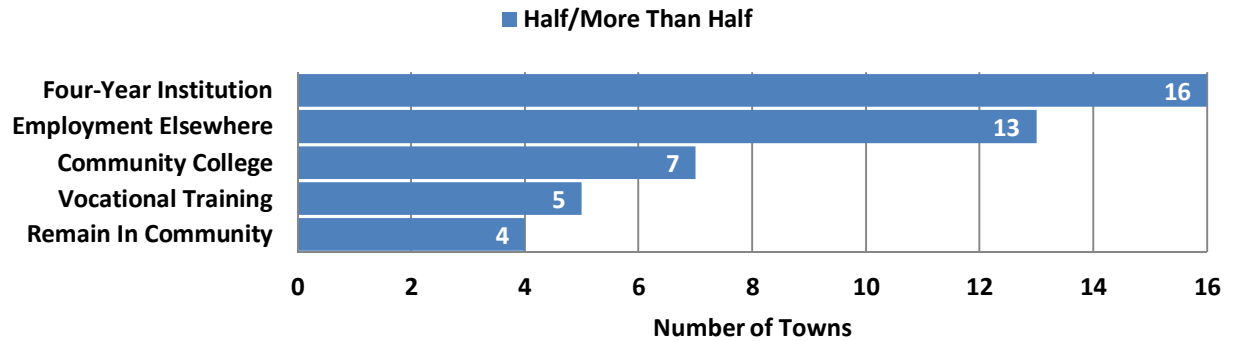
14. Does your school invite area employers to make presentations about their company?



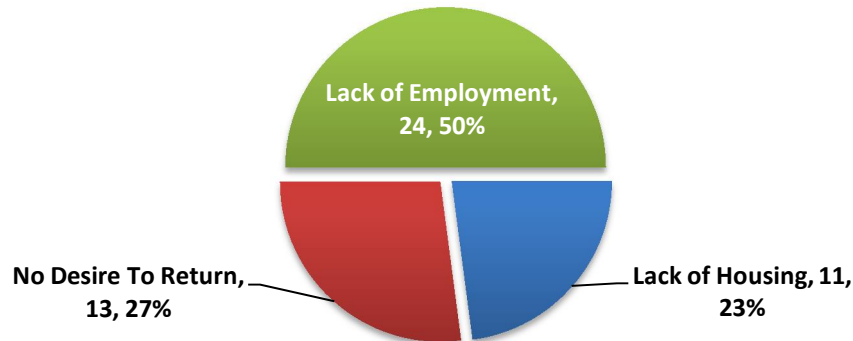
15. Does your school have any organizations related to entrepreneurship, manufacturing, agriculture, other?



16. Over the past five years, what portion of graduating seniors...

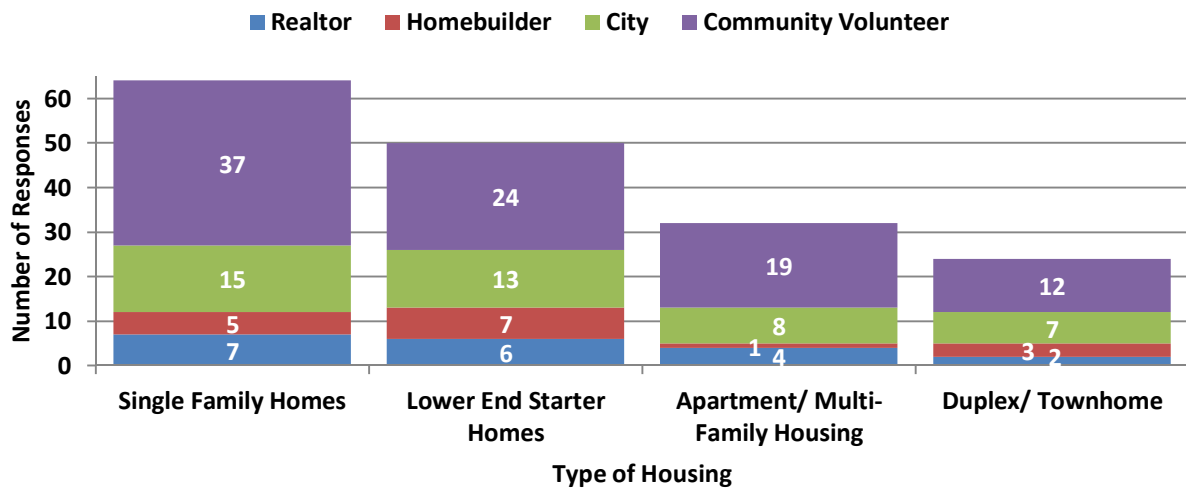


17. Of those students that leave after graduation, what prevents them from returning? (check all that apply)

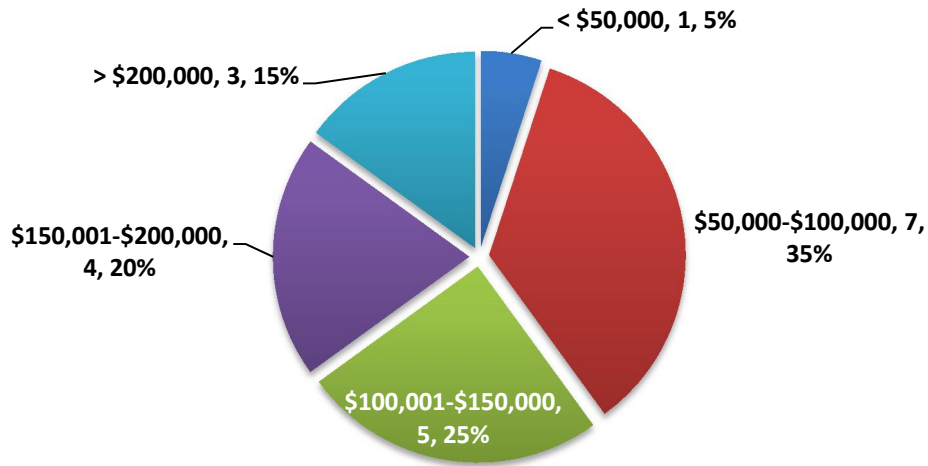


Realtors

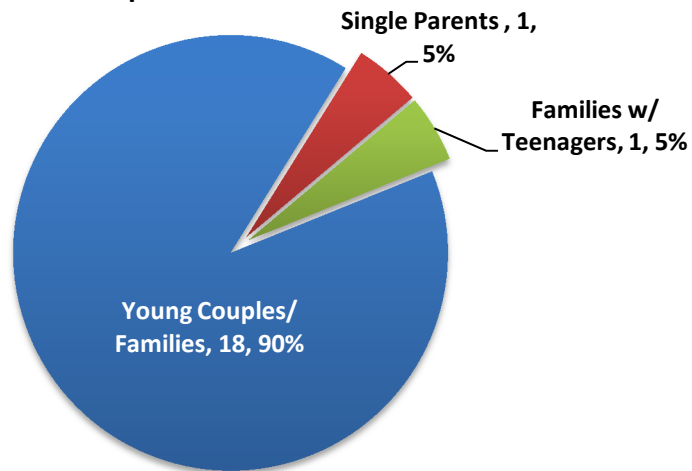
18. Is there a need for housing in and around the community you are involved with? If so, what type of housing need most fits demand requests? (Combined with Q26, 101, & 115.)



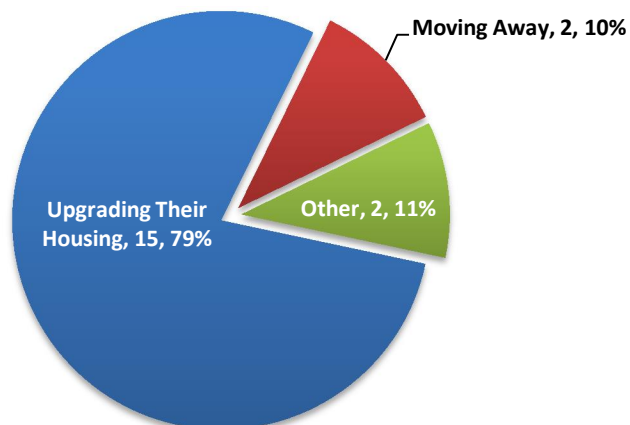
19. What is the most common price range of the homes you sell?



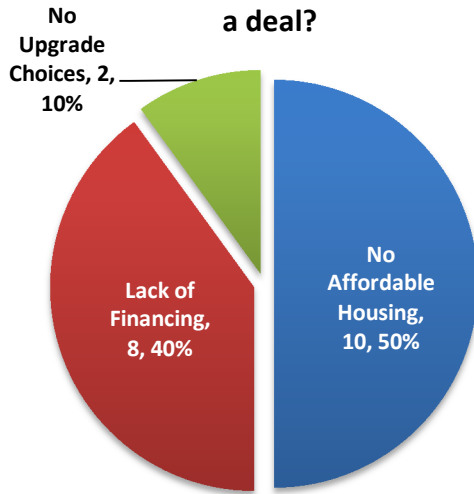
20. What is the most common demographic of those people seeking to purchase a home?



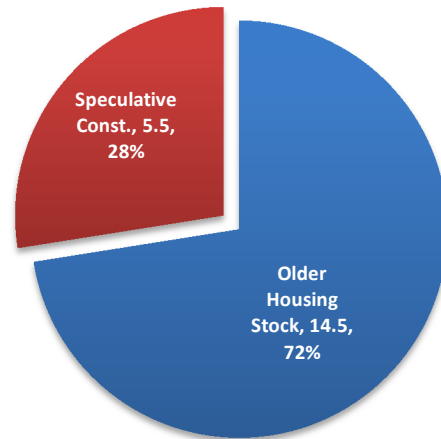
21. What is the most common reason your clients sell their homes?



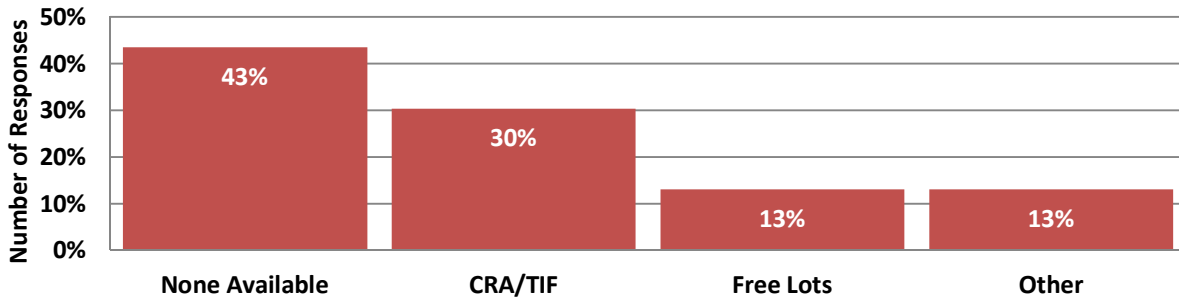
22. What is the most common reason you are unable to complete a deal?



23. Which type of property is in highest demand for first time home buyers?

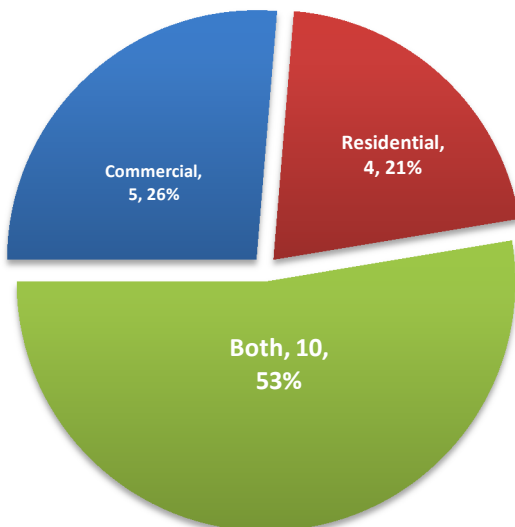


24. Do you utilize local community development programs such as: (check all that apply)

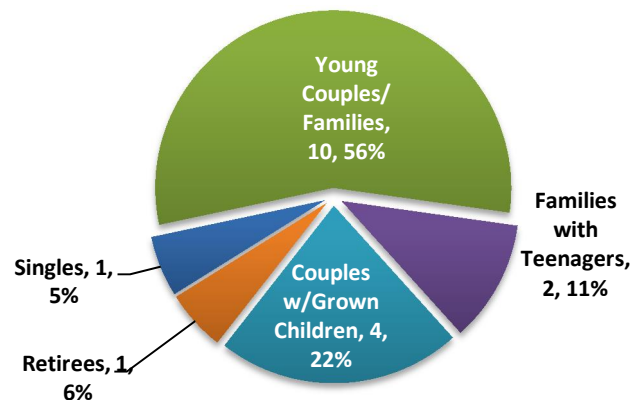


Home Builders and General Contractors

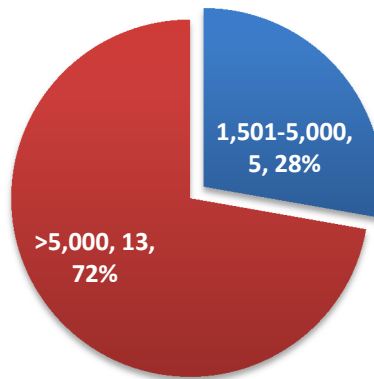
25. What is your primary focus?



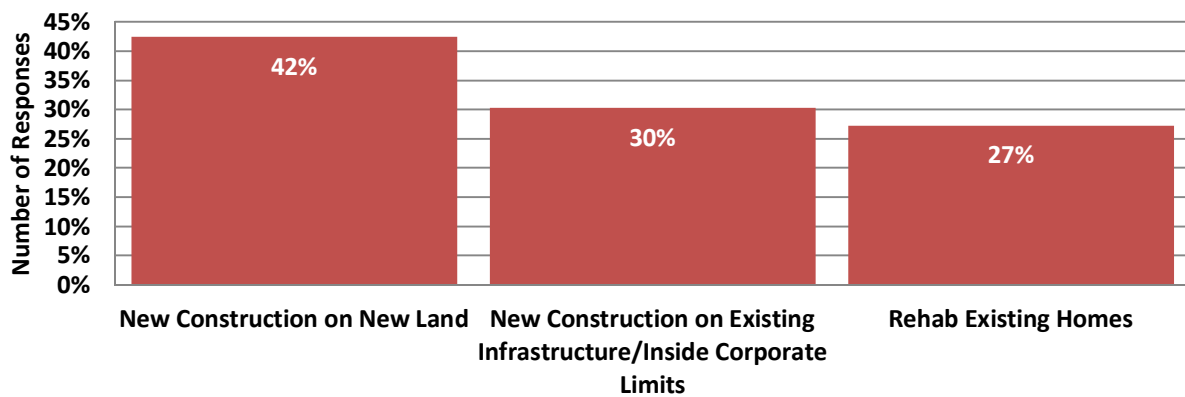
27. What is the most common demographic of those people seeking to build/rehab a house?



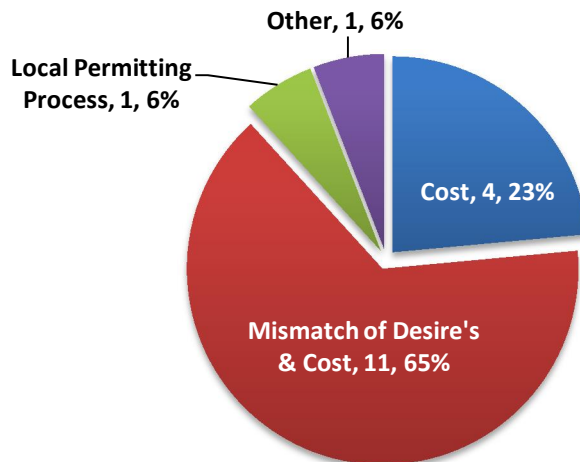
28. In what size of community are the majority of your projects located?



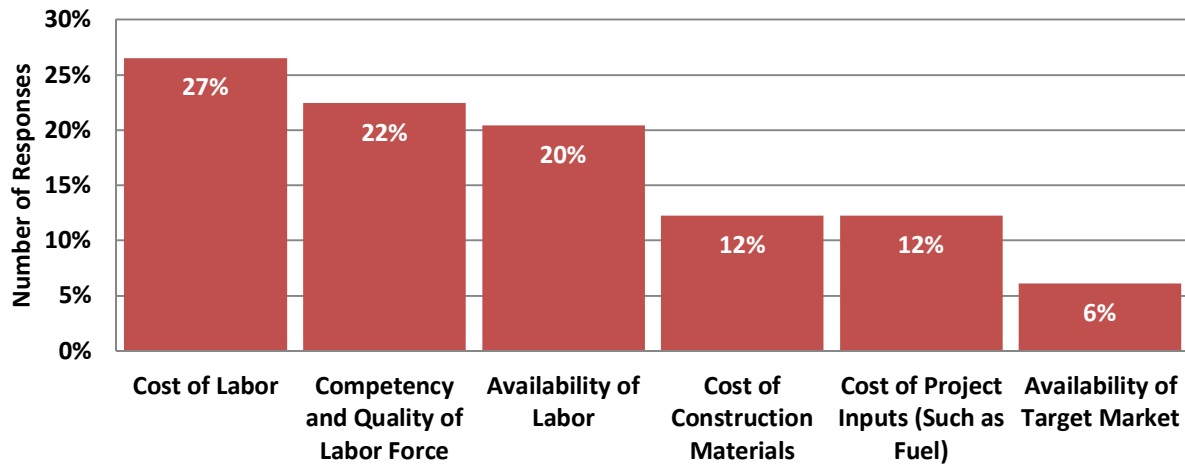
29. Which types of housing projects does your company develop? (check all that apply)



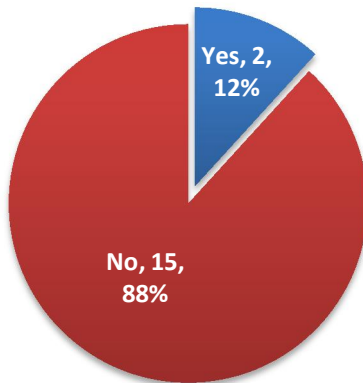
30. What is the primary reason a project stops or never starts?



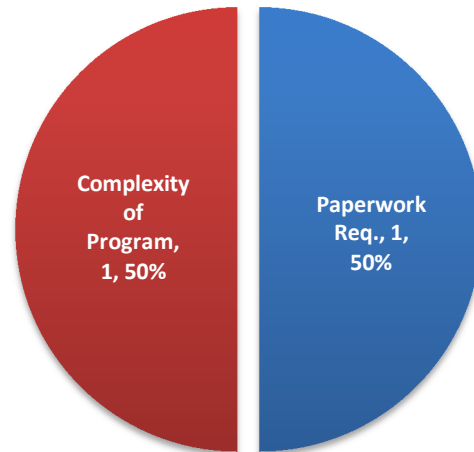
31. What issues most affect your business? (check all that apply)



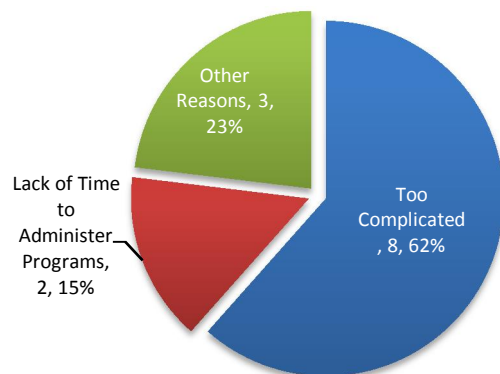
32. Have you used housing programs (such as NIFA, NAHTF, HUD) to finance your projects?



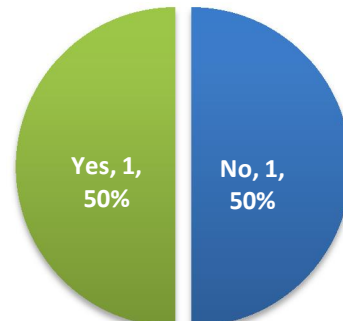
33. If yes, what was the most difficult part about using a government housing program?



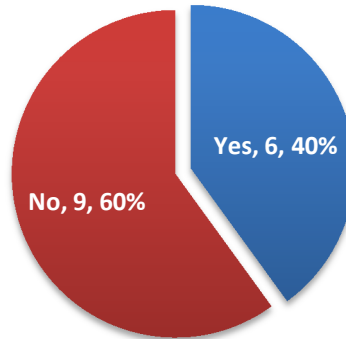
34. If no, why not?



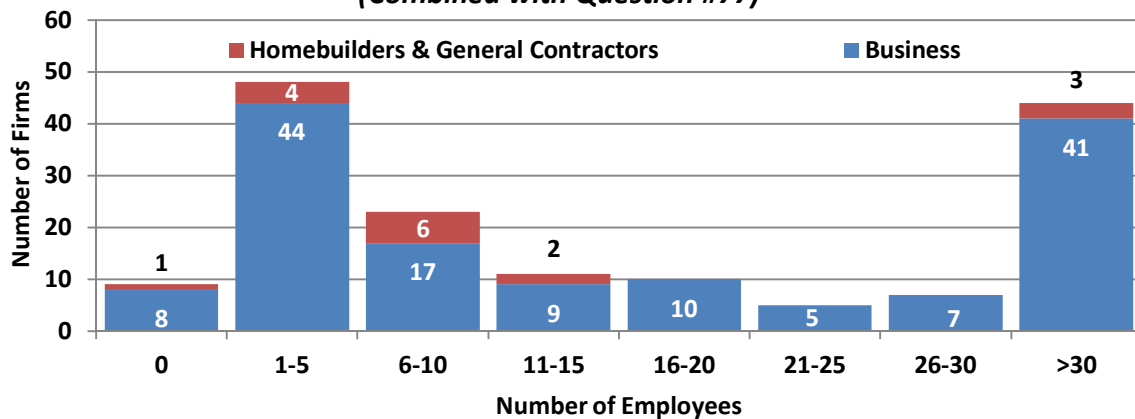
35. If lack of time and staff was your reason for no, would you utilize a service to assist with applying for and administration of housing programs?



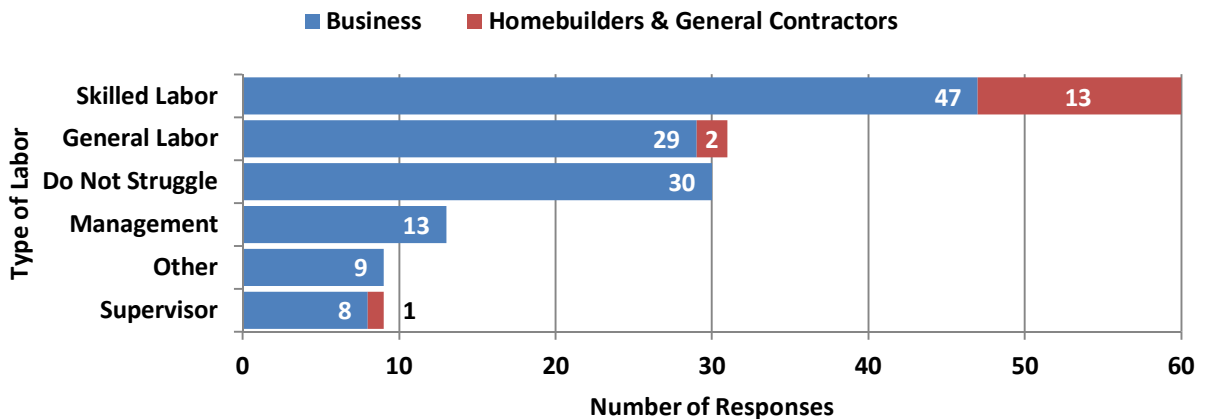
36. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership to support housing development (housing project grant writing, assisting with TIF/CRA projects, etc.) in your communities?



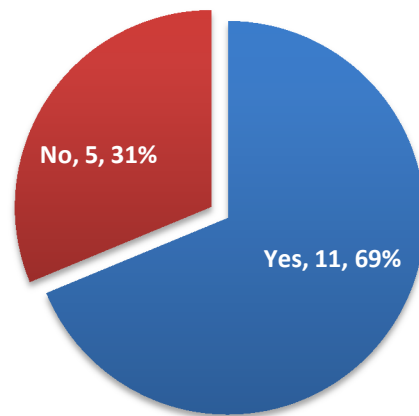
37. Besides yourself, how many individuals does the business employ?
(Combined with Question #77)



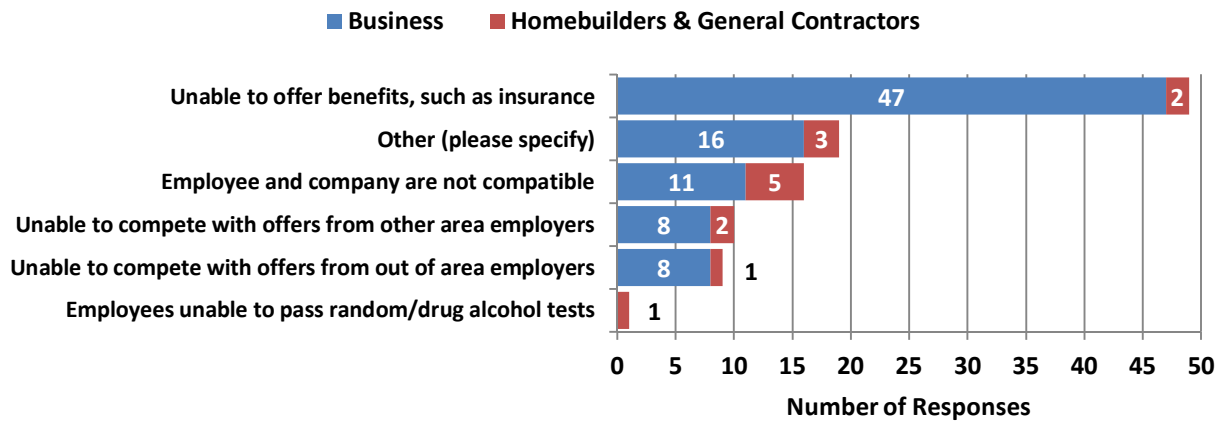
38. What type of position within the business is the most difficult to fill?
(Combined with #78)



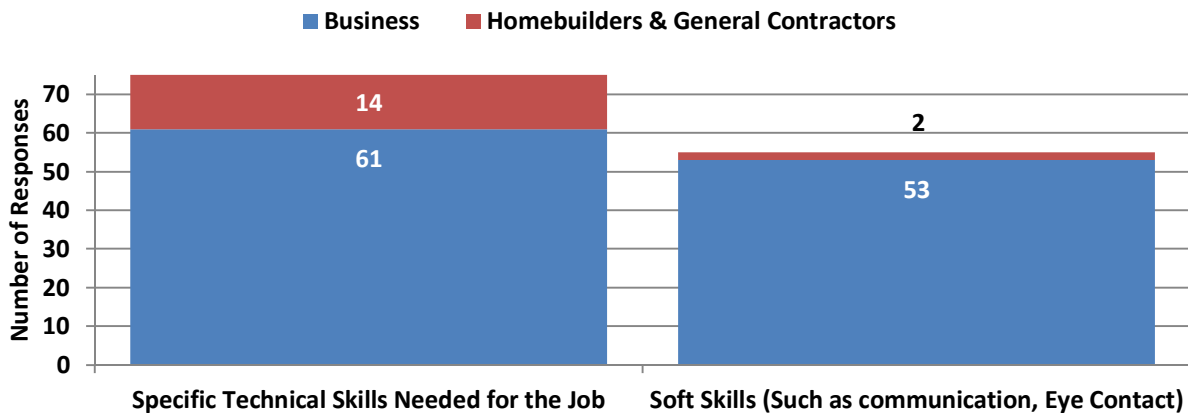
39. Once hired, is it a struggle to maintain the workforce?



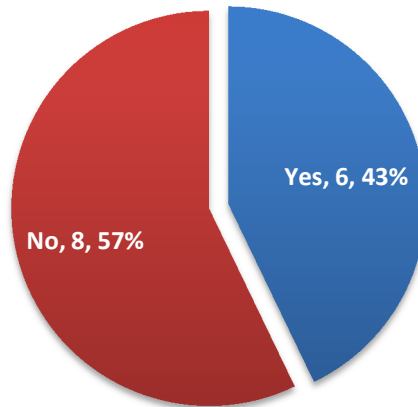
40. If yes, what is the main reason it is a struggle to maintain the workforce? (Combined with #80)



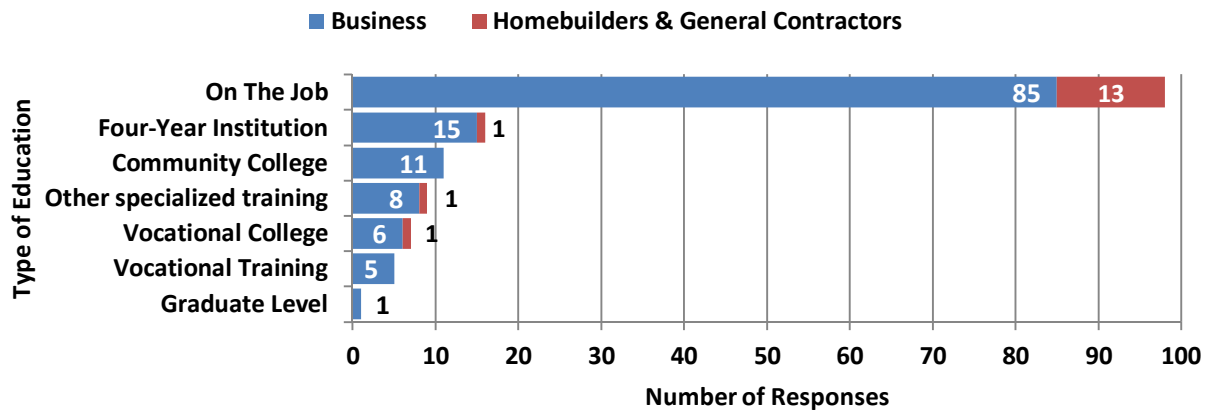
41. Which type of training do employees and hiring prospects typically lack?



42. If you answered yes to any of the above reasons, would you be interested in assistance with workforce training?

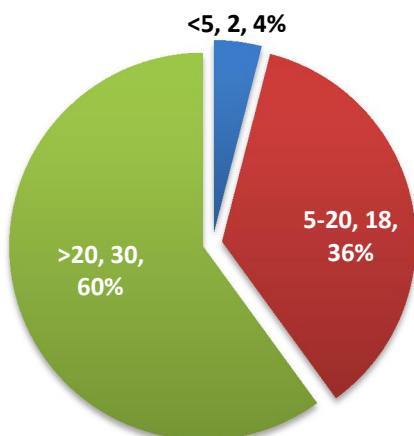


43. How are the majority of your employees trained? *(Combined with #83)*

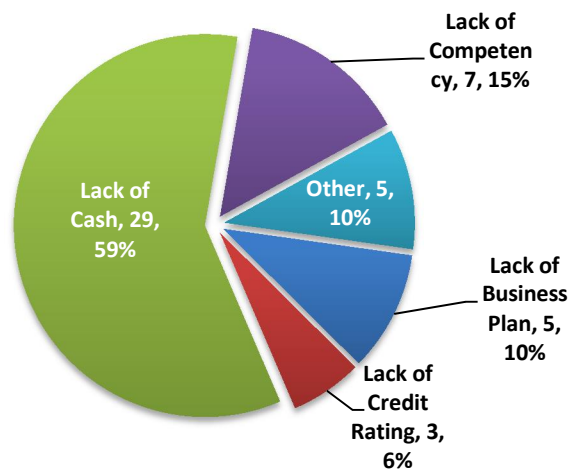


Lenders

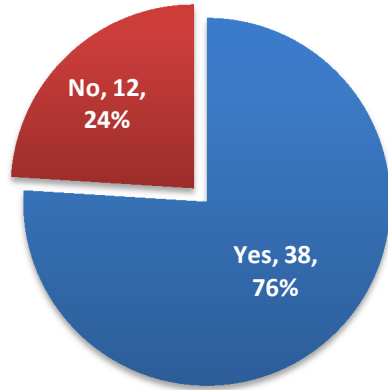
44. Annually, how many business loans does your institution make?



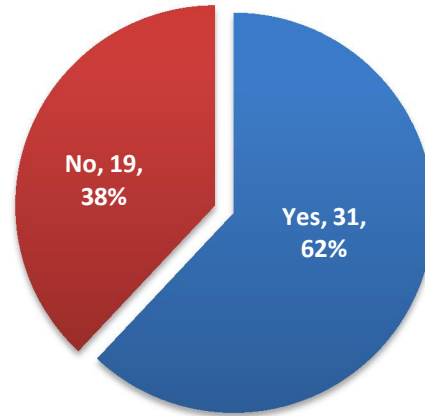
45. If you are unable to complete a loan to a small business, what is the main reason?



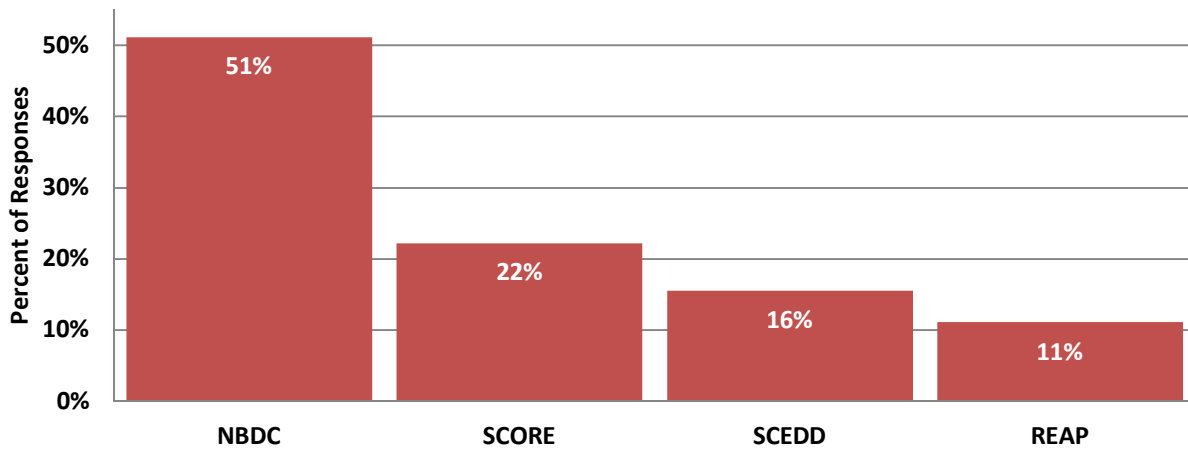
46. Do you require a business plan from an applicant applying for business financing?



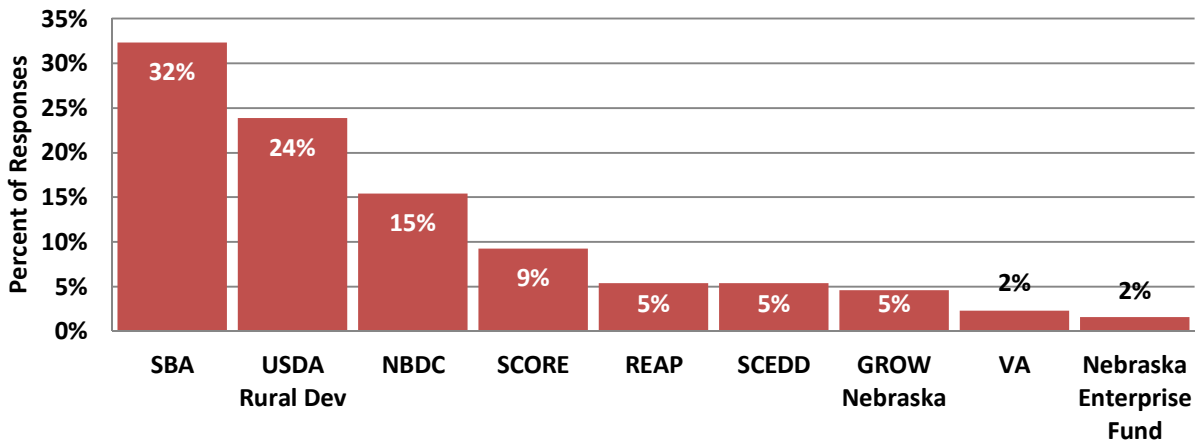
47. Do you refer business clients for free business consulting?



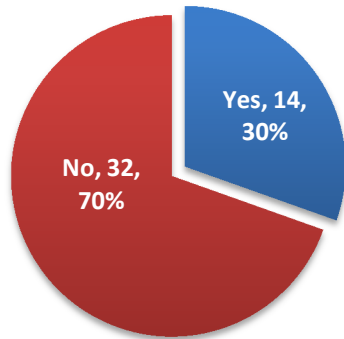
48. If yes, to which business consulting programs do you refer clients?



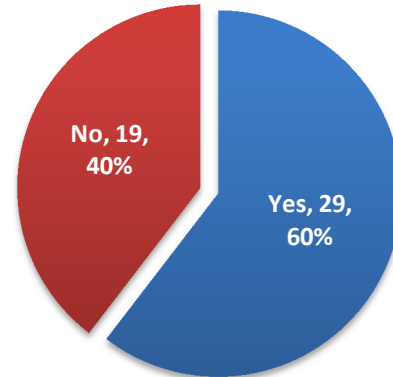
49. With which public business programs have you worked? (check all that apply)



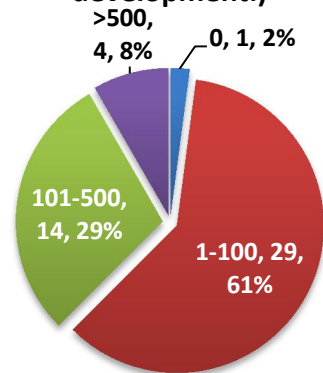
50. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership fee to have access to a business consulting program for potential and current businesses?



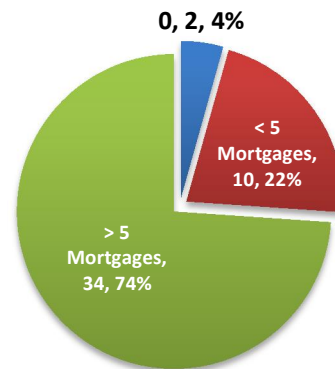
51. Have you partnered with a municipal government or economic development program to provide a business loan?



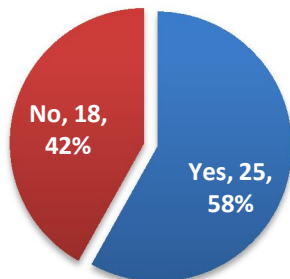
52. Annually, how many mortgages does your institution originate? (If 0, please skip to economic development.)



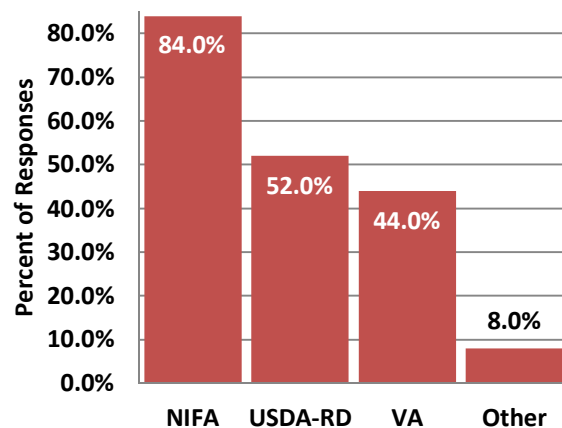
53. Annually, how many mortgages does your institution originate in communities with populations of less than 1,500?



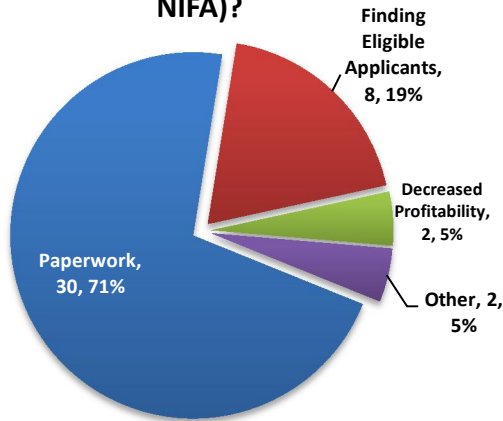
54. Do you utilize any first time homebuyer/low income public mortgage lending programs?



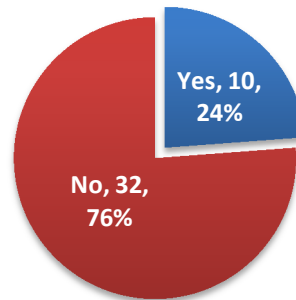
55. If yes, which?



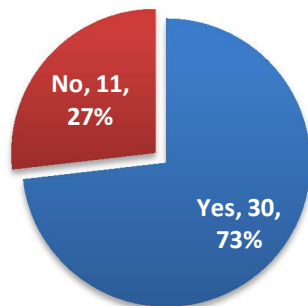
56. What is the single largest obstacle your institution faces when offering a government supported lending program (such as USDA RD, NIFA)?



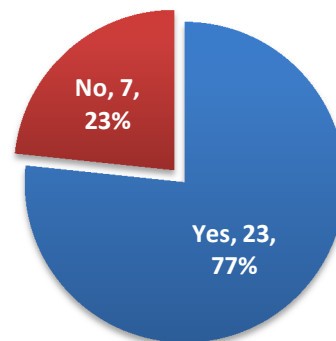
57. Would you be willing to pay annual membership dues to support housing development (program application/administration, etc.) in your community?



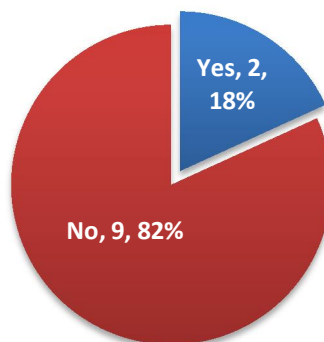
58. Do you belong to a local economic development corporation?



59. If yes, do you make financial contributions to belong?

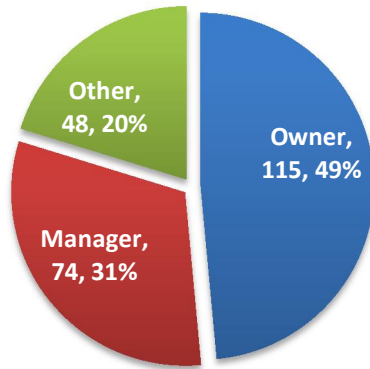


60. If no, would you be willing to make financial contributions to belong to a local economic development corporation?

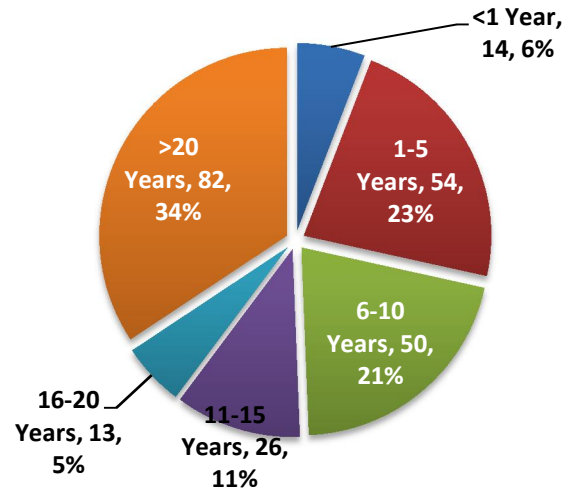


Businesses

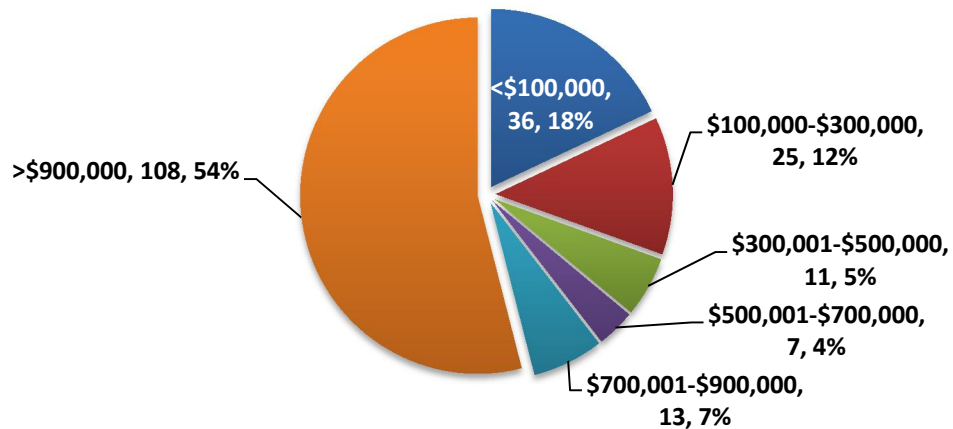
61. Please describe your position in the business where you are employed:



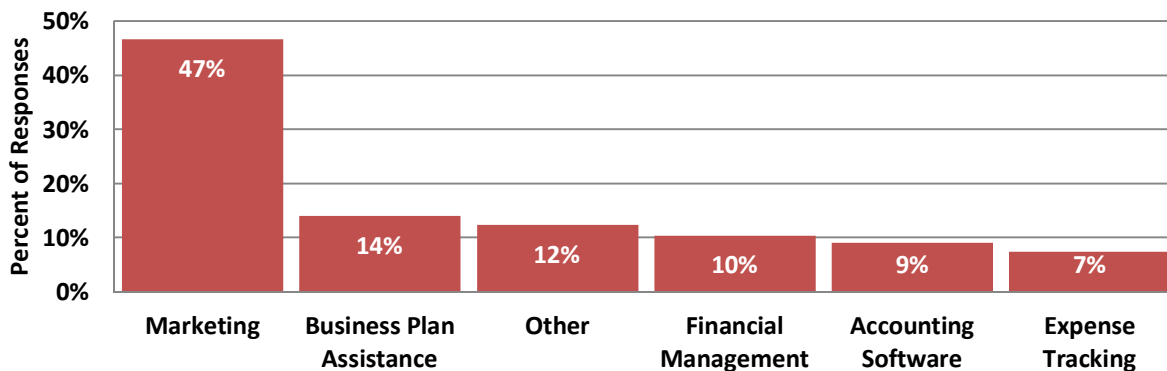
62. How many years have you worked in this position?



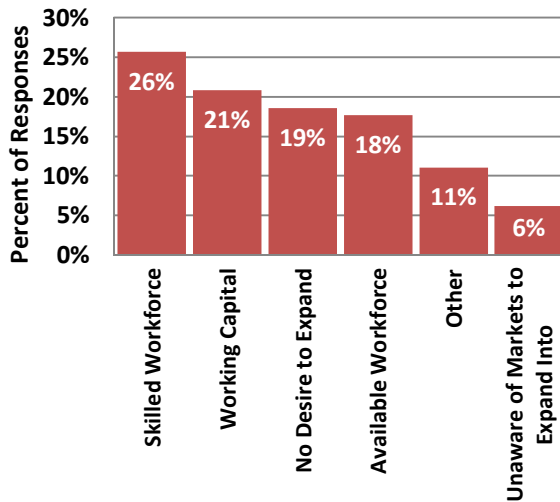
63. What is the annual gross sales of the business?



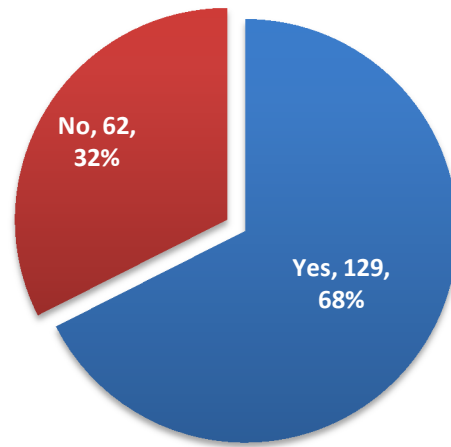
64. What type of business assistance would you find most valuable?
(check all that apply)



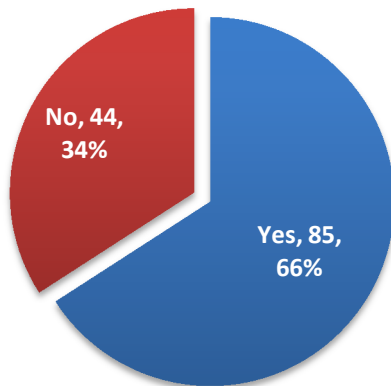
**65. What, if any, obstacles prevent you from expanding your business?
(check all that apply)**



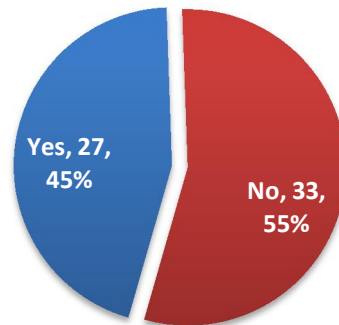
66. Did you have a business plan before starting your business?



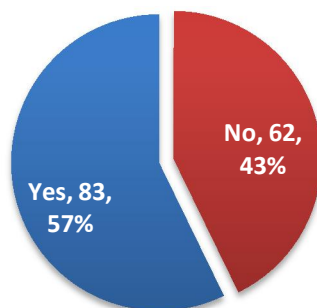
67. If yes, do you keep it updated?



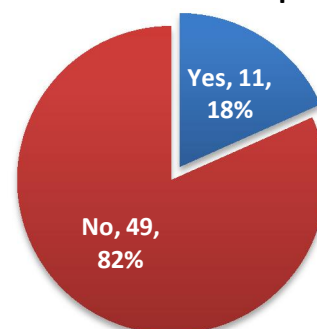
68. If no, have you created one since opening the business?



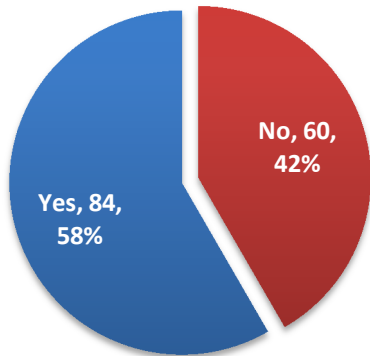
69. Do you have a business succession plan?



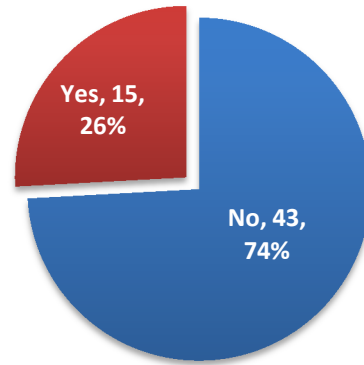
70. If no, would you be interested in assistance with writing a business succession plan?



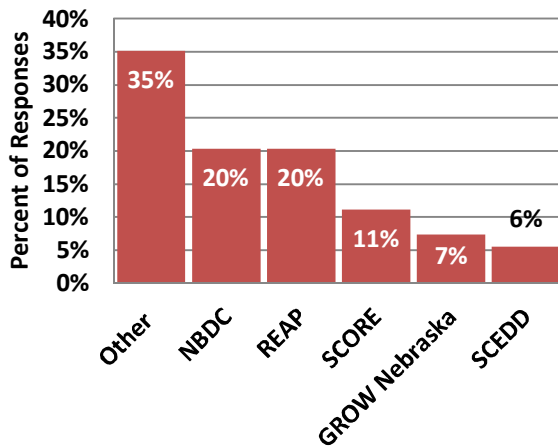
71. Does the business have a disaster preparedness plan?



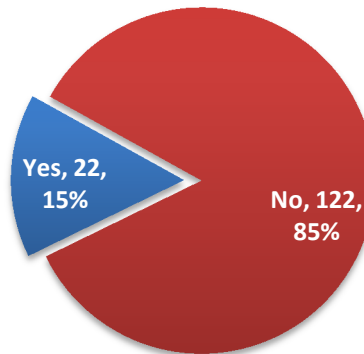
72. If no, would you be interested in assistance with writing a disaster preparedness plan?



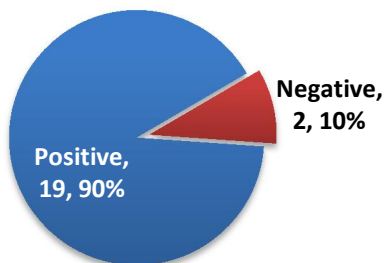
73. Have you utilized business consulting services from any of these entities?



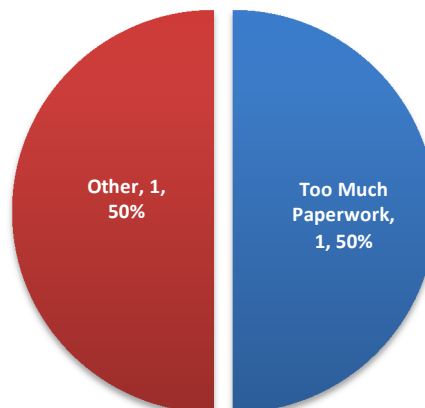
74. Have you used public assistance/incentive programs to grow the business?



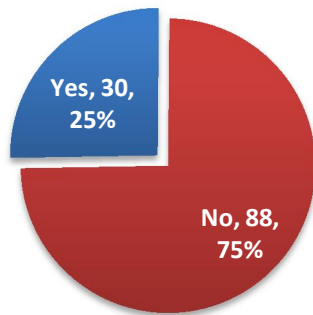
75. If you have used public assistance/incentive programs to grow the business, what type of experience did you have?



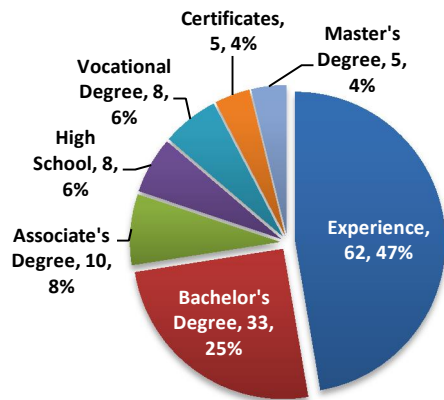
76. If your experience was negative, please indicate why:



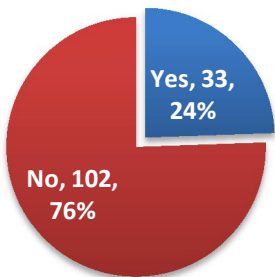
82. If you answered yes to any of the above reasons, would you be interested in assistance with workforce training?



84. Which type of education do you find most attractive in prospective employees?

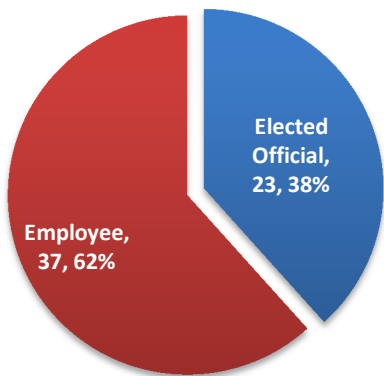


85. When making hiring decisions, does it make a difference if the applicant's education was received online?

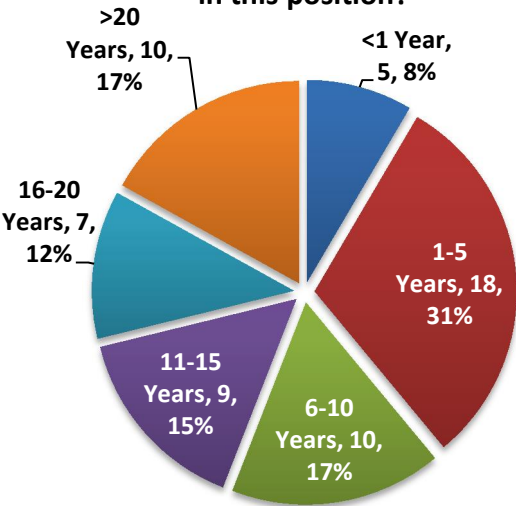


Communities

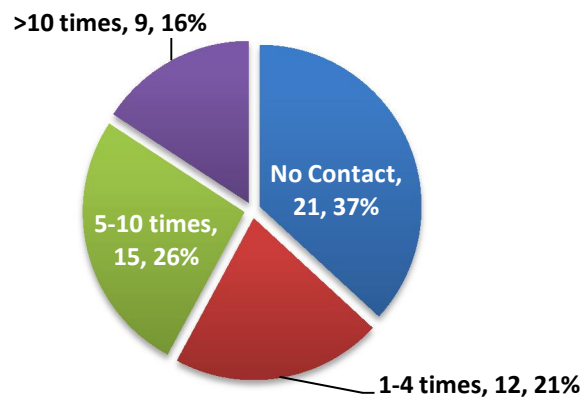
86. What is your position in your local government?



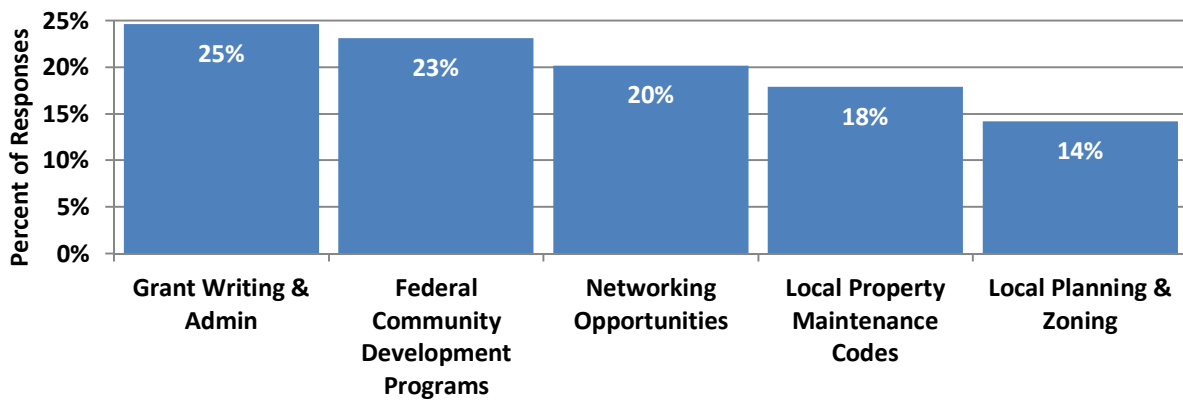
87. How many years have you been in this position?



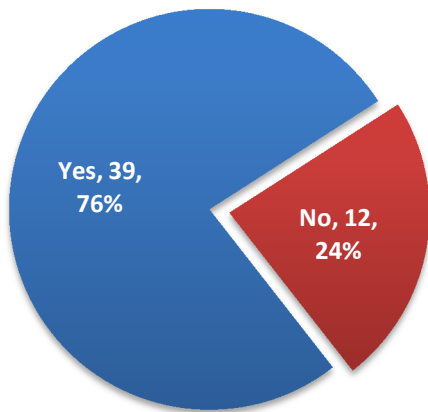
88. How many times have you come into contact with SCEDD in the past five years?



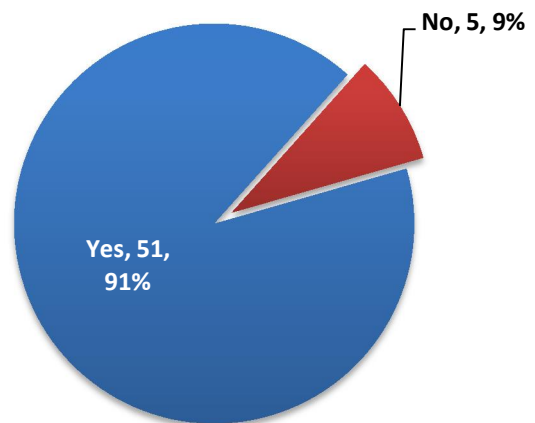
89. Which of the following services would you use as a community leader? (check all that apply)



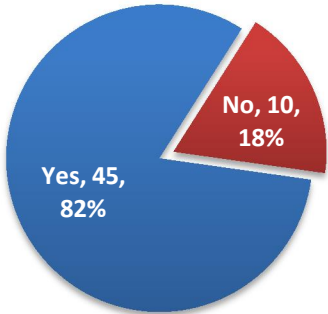
90. Does your community have a current comprehensive plan?



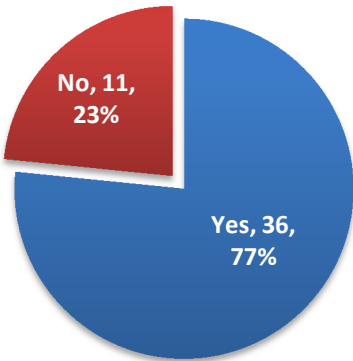
91. Does your community have a zoning ordinance?



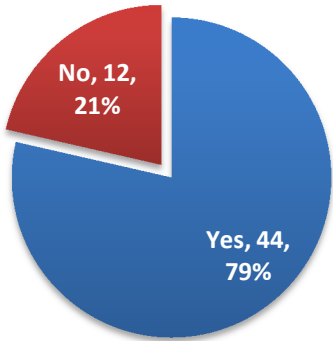
92. Does your village board/city council actively enforce your zoning ordinance?



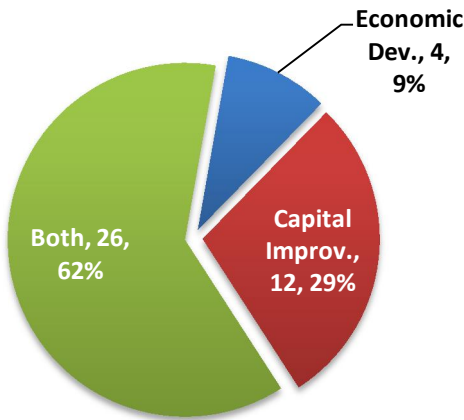
93. Does your community have a hazard mitigation plan in place?



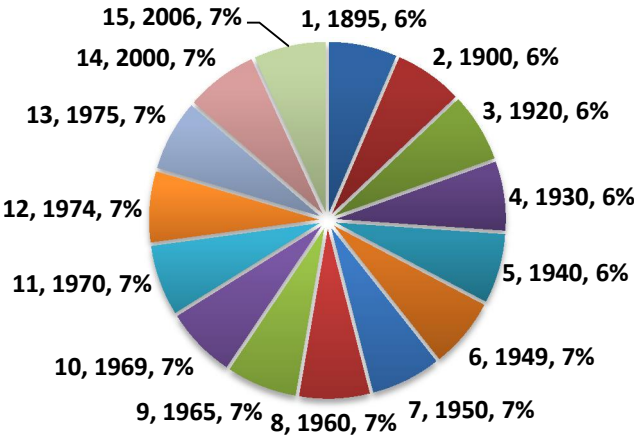
94. Does your community have a local sales tax?



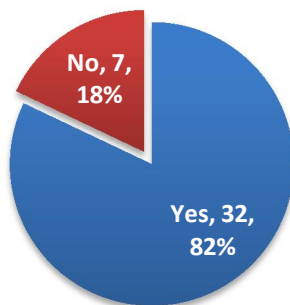
95. If yes, what does it fund?



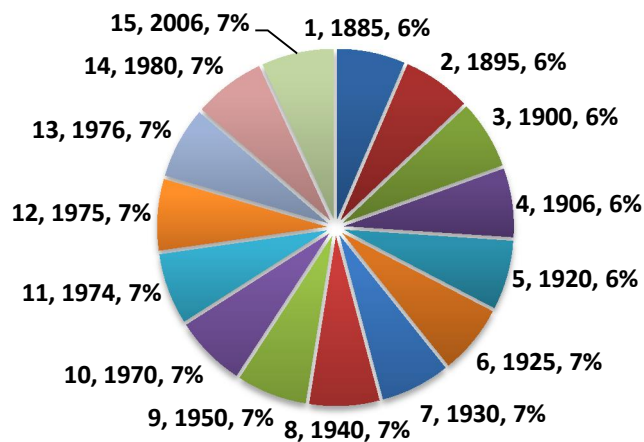
96. Approximately what year was the community's sanitary sewer system installed?



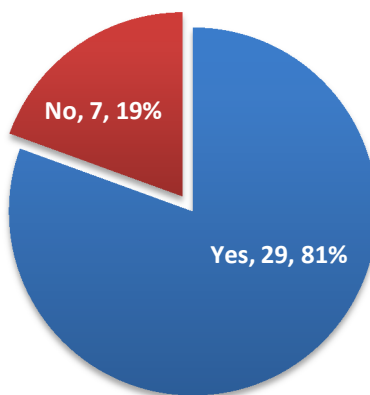
97. Has the community's sanitary sewer system been upgraded since installation?



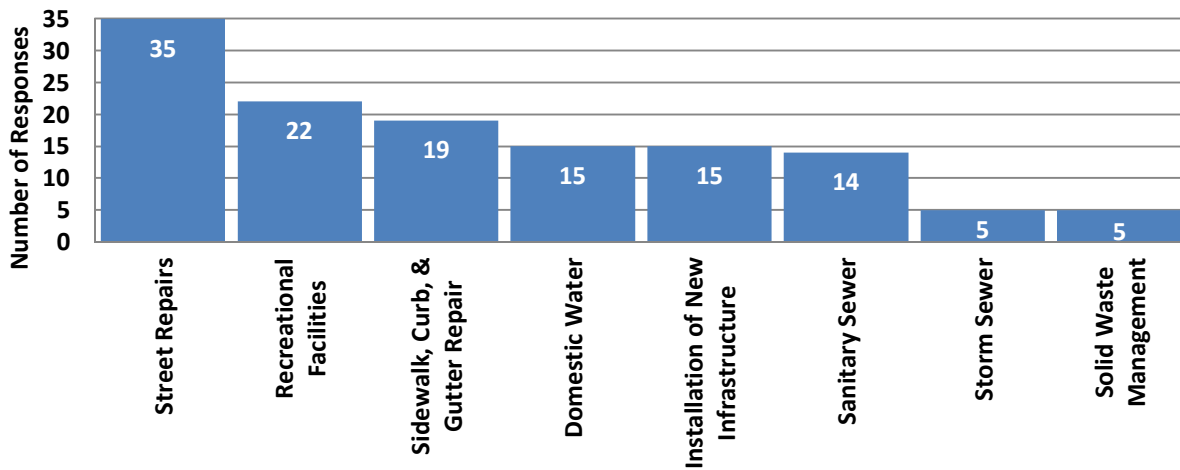
98. Approximately what year was the community's domestic water system installed?



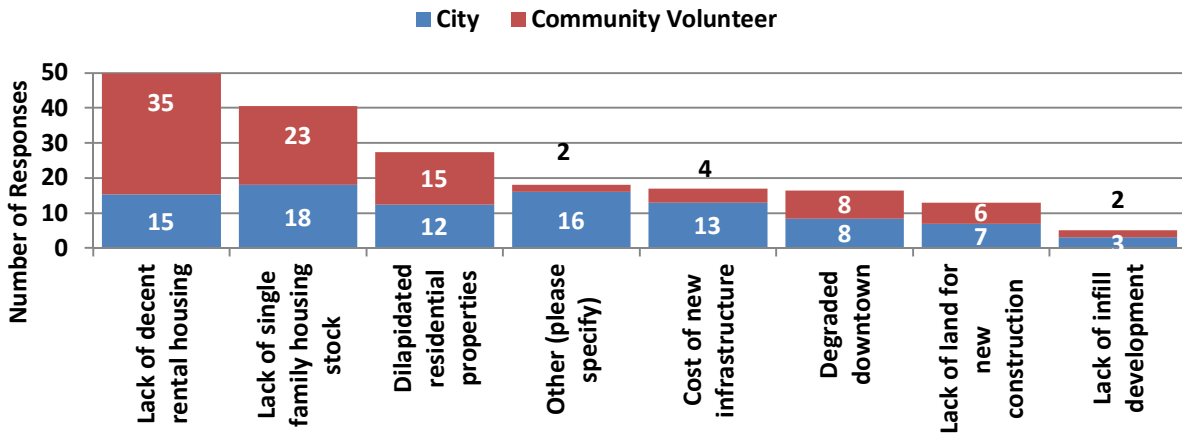
99. Has the community's domestic water system been upgraded since installation?



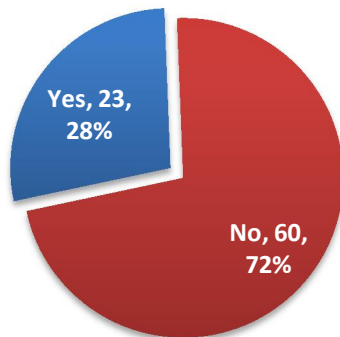
100. What are the community's most pressing infrastructure needs?
Select the top three.



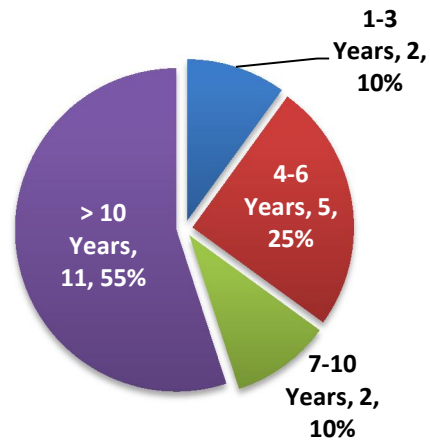
102. What is the single most prevalent development issue in the community?(Combined with Q#116)



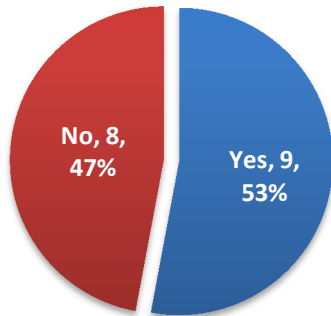
103. Do you have a written Economic Development plan (LB 840 or other)?



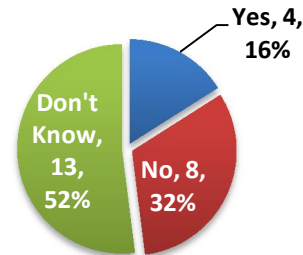
104. If yes, how long has your community had a written plan?



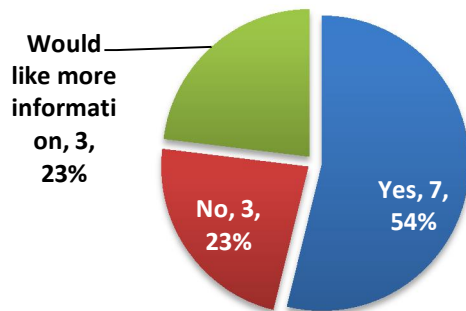
105. If no, would you be interested in assistance with creating an Economic Development plan?



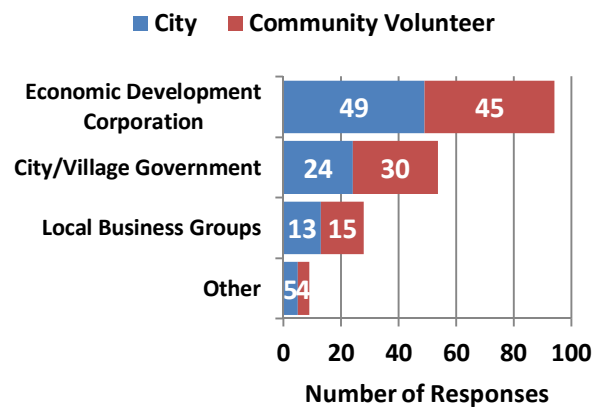
106. Is your community a Nebraska Leadership Community or Nebraska Certified Economic Development Community as designated by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development?



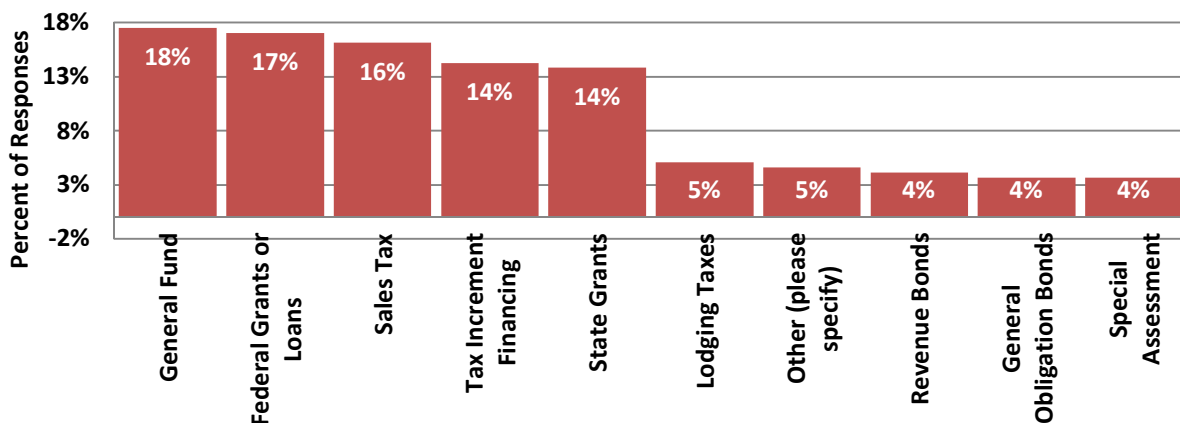
107. If no, would you be interested in assistance in becoming a leadership designated/economic development certified community?



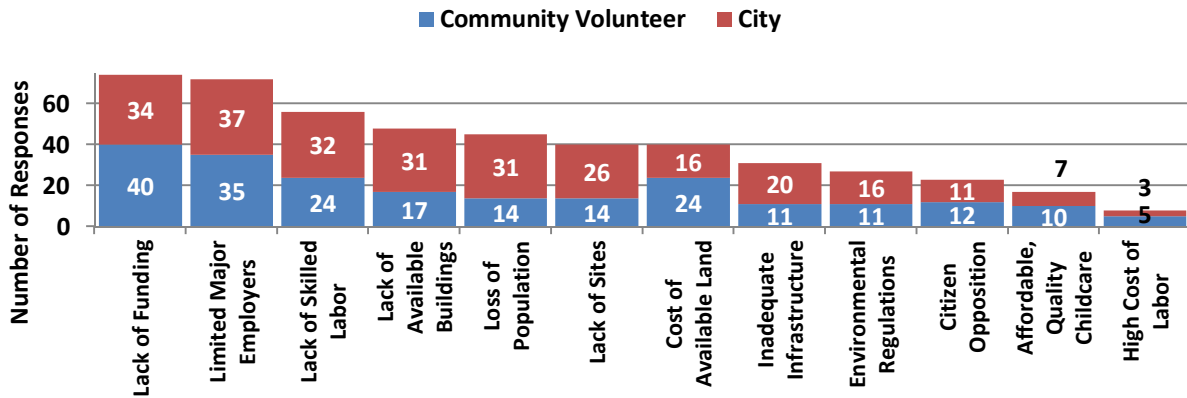
108. Who is primarily responsible for economic development in your community? (Combined with Q117)



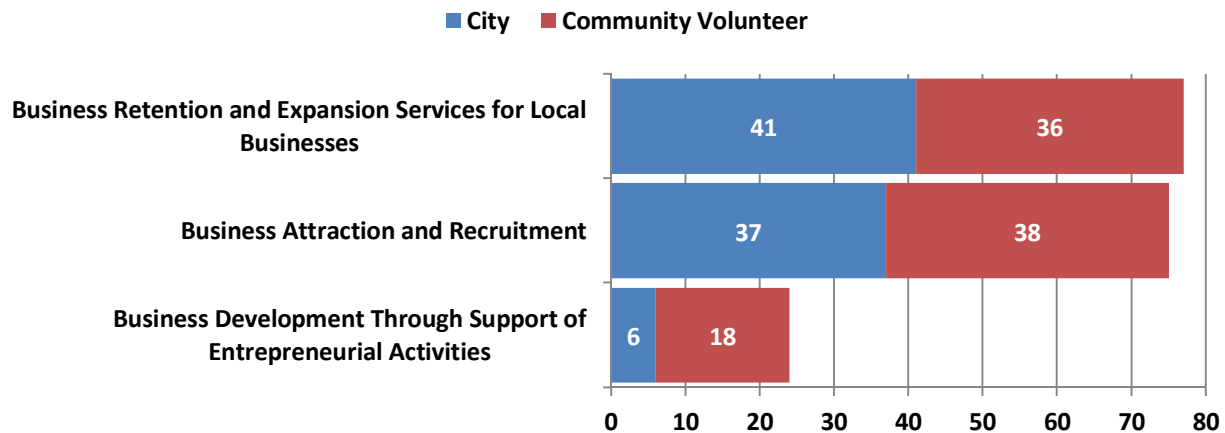
109. What are the main sources of funding for economic development efforts in your community?



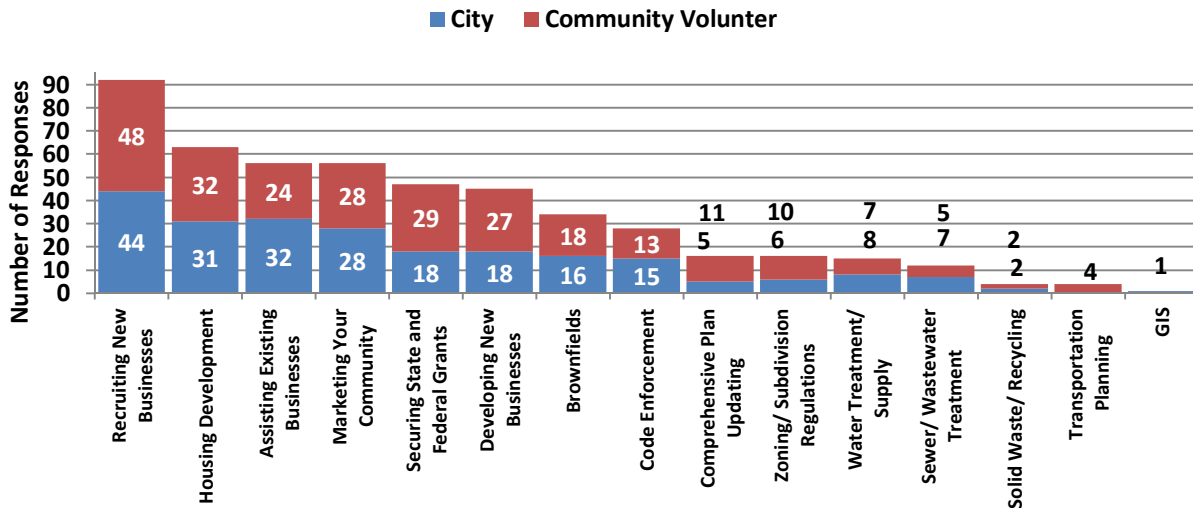
110. Has your local government encountered any of the following economic development barriers? (check all that apply) (Combine with #118)



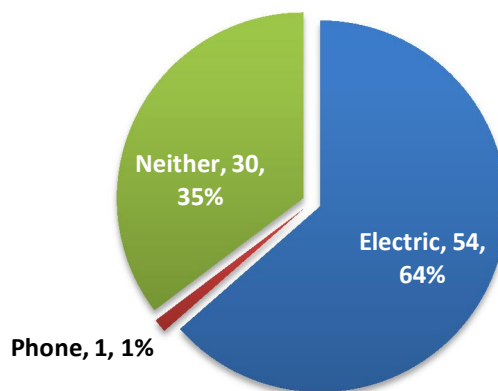
111. Which type of business support activity is the most important to your community? (use pull down rankings next to each activity)



112. From your perspective, what are your local government's top 3 priorities? (Combined with #120)



113. What type of utilities does your community own?



114. If your community owns their utilities, are you interested in becoming a Rural Utilities Service (RUS) in order to utilize USDA RD's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) for a local revolving loan fund?

