

Blueprint for Growth

County-wide growth plan

UPDATE SPRING 2008

LIVE HERE

Both Amanda & Kory grew up in Hutchinson and never dreamed they would return after going to college in Atlanta and Lawrence, then starting a family in Columbia, MO. They were surprised by how much the medical community in Reno County has grown. Read more about why the Jackson's LIVE HERE inside.



Chairman's Message

A poll was taken in a neighboring community, it asked a question something like this, "What is your perception of our community?" The answer was generally quite positive, around 80% of respondents thought well of the community. However when asked, "How does your neighbor perceive our community?" The answer was amazingly negative. The neighbor was perceived as thinking of the community in poor light.

Hutchinson/Reno County is in the same situation, "Sure we like it here... but our friends and neighbors..." Your friends and neighbors live, work and play here. We have a great community with wonderful assets, we just need some better lighting.

Our* *Blueprint for Growth* states "Both external perception and self perception of Reno County can be enhanced through a series of coordinated marketing and public relations activities".

One of our goals then is to shed the light on how great a place this really is.

The We Could Live Anywhere campaign is a great step, it is about sharing stories of people who have chosen to live here.. and call Reno County Home.

Watch the www.wecouldliveanywhere.com as we grow and develop this exciting web site, which encourages our proud people to promote; this world class city the salt of the earth the bread basket to the world and space to ...

Oh and Jim says don't forget you can earn \$100 bucks per invitee! (I think it's great party money. How about you?)

Always trying to shed some Light, Phil Neufeldt

*that's you, me and your neighbor's *Blue Print for Growth*

What is the *Blueprint for Growth*?

The *Blueprint for Growth* is a county-wide plan developed by the citizens of Reno County to guide and inspire us to work for a stable and prosperous future. The *Blueprint* is a strategic plan for intervening in and changing current trends by taking action.

The *Blueprint for Growth* is organized around seven major vision categories detailed on the following pages.

- Jobs
- Leadership and Partnerships
- Regional Development
- Image and Attitude
- Effective Education & Training
- Living Choices
- Enhancing Lifestyle

Citizens from all walks of life and all parts of Reno County participated in the formation of the *Blueprint for Growth*. If we are to be successful, we must all work together to implement the strategies and actions outlined in the plan.

The Reno County 2020 Growth Coalition's mission is to coordinate and update the *Blueprint for Growth*, while acting as a catalyst for new ideas.

The Growth Coalition is primarily funded by the City of Hutchinson and Reno County. Board members represent key players in the *Blueprint for Growth* as well as each municipality and school district in the County.

To read the complete *Blueprint for Growth* visit www.renocountygrowth.com.

INSIDE

- Wind in Reno County
- Teen Job Fair
- Welcome New Residents
- *Blueprint for Growth* Partners
- We Could Live Anywhere
- *Blueprint for Growth* Accomplishments
- *Blueprint for Growth* Benchmarks

Check out the positive trends happening in Reno County!

BLUEPRINT FOR GROWTH

Reno County 2020

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Growth Coalition

JOBS

Employment growth is a prerequisite for population growth. Job growth efforts involve job attraction, job retention and entrepreneurship.

Benchmark

According to Dr. Krider's June 2001 *Economic Trends Update* we must create 10,285 new jobs by 2020 in order to support a workforce for a population of 80,000 people.

2007 Update

In 2006 substantial employment growth occurred. With the highest employed civilian labor force in the last six years, Reno County jobs increased by 256 from 2000-2006 (Table 1)

Accomplishment highlights:

- Sunflower Wind will manufacture wind turbines in Reno County
- Daymon Worldwide selects Hutchinson for a \$300,000 expansion of new business support center
- Collin's Bus expansion creates 100 new jobs, \$2.8 million in new payroll and approximately \$2 million in capital investment
- Kroger chooses Hutchinson for new HR Division, creates 75 new jobs

LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS

In order to achieve the growth goals, all sectors of the economy must work cooperatively: government, not-for-profit and private.

Benchmark

Add 50 new partners in growth by 2009 and encourage strategic alliances starting with the seven vision categories.

2007 Update

Thirty partners in growth including municipalities, Reno County, schools, chambers and organizations, committed to implementing strategies of the county-wide strategic plan, the Blueprint for Growth.

Accomplishment highlights:

- HCC held a tri-county summit to address workforce recruitment
- RCGC acted as catalyst for wind initiative in Reno County
- RCGC facilitated quarterly Mayor's Forums
- Reno County Legislators and State Congressman Moran updated on Reno County wind initiative

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure is the backbone that helps shape the form and direction of a community's growth.

Benchmark

Working with municipalities and Reno County Commissioners to find a specific measurable goal

Accomplishment highlights

- County-wide comprehensive plan underway
- City ordinances shared among municipalities
- Grants workshop facilitated by City and County planning departments and RCGC

IMAGE AND ATTITUDE

Both external perception and self-perception of Reno County can be enhanced through marketing and public relations, perception of place can also be enhanced by improvements to the physical structure of the County at entrance gateways.

External Benchmark

Double annual unique visitors to Reno County from 1.5 million to 3 million by the year 2020

2007 Update

2007 transient guest tax collected all time high of \$371,404 an annual increase of 15% (Table 3)

Internal Benchmark

Increase residents' response 20% to the following statement: I enjoy a high quality of life in Reno County

2007 Update

Based on a non-scientific survey completed by the 2020 Taskforce in 2004, 64.4% of Reno County residents agree or strongly agree that they enjoy a high quality of life in Reno County

Accomplishment highlights:

- Eight Wonders of Reno County launched
- We Could Live Anywhere program launched
- YP of Reno County launches perception survey
- K-61 beautification project launched
- Market Hutchinson completes comprehensive research project to help market Reno County
- Tourism 2020 Taskforce initiates mini-rack card promotion

EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Educational systems in Reno County are regarded as one of the greatest assets. Early childhood to higher education, a broad range of programs exist to enhance people's lives and opportunities.

Benchmark

Working with education professionals county-wide to find a specific measurable goal

Accomplishment highlights:

- USD 308 \$78 million bond issue passed
- HCC Business & Industry Institute opens in new Business Technology Center
- HCC begins \$500,000 renovation and construction project at the Reno County Industrial Center (RCIC)
- HCC begins \$6.2 million construction and renovation of the Physical and Biotechnology Science Center
- Early childhood initiative started

**For an up-to-date list of county-wide
Blueprint for Growth
accomplishments check out
www.renocountygrowth.com/blueprint**

BENCHMARKS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LIVING CHOICES - A Variety of Lifestyle Choices
In order to be attractive to both businesses and employees, Reno County must have a variety of housing types.

Benchmark

According to Dr. Krider's June 2001 *Economic Trends Update* to meet the housing needs of 80,000 people 6485 new housing units need to be constructed in Reno County by the year 2020

2007 Update

1106 new housing units have been constructed in Reno County from 2000-2007 (Table 2)

Accomplishment highlights

- Interfaith Housing assisted over 500 homeowners in Reno County whose income was less than \$8000 a year to keep homes livable
- Interfaith Housing provided 54 safe and affordable rental units housing 56 people with disabilities and nine single parents along with their children
- Interfaith Housing helped 34 first time home buyers purchase a home
- New Beginnings developed 97 units of transitional and affordable housing in Reno County

ENHANCING LIFESTYLE

Reno County has an abundance of assets including Downtown Hutchinson, to build on community values, attractiveness and spirit to help create an attractive living environment where people want to live and work.

Benchmark

Working with a variety of community development organizations to find a specific measurable goal

2007 Update

Since 2000 City of Hutchinson has invested \$3,458,932 - public has invested \$10,879,726 for downtown revitalization

Accomplishment highlights:

- Hutchinson Recreation Commission completed a strategic plan which included a city-wide assessment of recreational resources
- Young Professionals of Reno County launched
- Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber maintains an active county-wide events calendar
- Teens find summer and part-time employment opportunities through collaboration with RCGC, HCC, Chamber and Worforce Development Center
- Hutchinson Reno County Chamber of Commerce begins a Youth Leadership Reno County program for twenty-four 7th & 8th grade students

Many organizations, civic groups, private businesses, government agencies and individuals are working to make Reno County a better place to LIVE, WORK and PLAY. Tell us how you are making a difference and helping to further the *BLUEPRINT FOR GROWTH* so we can include your accomplishments and successes in quarterly updates.

Dorothy Barnett, Growth Coordinator
dorothy@renocountygrowth.com or
(620) 664-8656

Table 1: Reno County Jobs (Full & Part-time) December 2000-2006

Employed Civilian Labor Force							
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total Job Change
31,333	31,247	31,414	31,351	31,335	30,664	31,589	246
Annual Job Change	-86	167	-63	-16	-671	925	256

Please note: According to the Kansas Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics recently revised the methods for calculating employment and unemployment estimates. Estimates for 2000-2006 have been produced using this revised method.
Source: Center for Economic Development and Business Research WSU

Table 2: Annual estimates of new housing units in Reno County 2000-2007

Housing Units									
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007*	Total	
128	130	126	120	100	187	159	156	1106	Reno County
69	82	85	69	61	134	65	108	673	Hutchinson
59	48	41	51	39	53	94	48	433	Rural RC

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
<http://censtats.census.gov/bldg/bldgprmt.shtml>
*Estimated for Rural Reno County and Total County for 2007 (Only Hutchinson is known for 2007)

Table 3: Transient Guest Tax Collection 2001-2007

Tax Collected							
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
\$290,773	\$263,236	\$324,050	\$276,244	\$322,166	\$323,556	\$371,404	\$2,171,429

Source: City of Hutchinson and City of South Hutchinson

THE WIND IS BLOWING....

In July of 2007 Mayors and community members from eight Reno County communities agreed to host a workshop to learn more about wind energy. In August, Reno County, Hutchinson Community College, The Land Institute and RCGC Mayor's Forum hosted a workshop featuring Larry Flowers from NREL and a panel of national experts. 200 Reno County residents in attendance voted to move forward with further wind exploration.

In September Reno County Commissioners appointed 30 members to Reno County Wind Energy Taskforce (RCWET). RCGC hosted a bus tour for 40 community members to Elk River Wind Farm. Six representatives of RCWET attended the Kansas Renewable Energy Conference.

Also in September USD 310 (Fairfield) was named as a "Wind for Schools" project.

By October sixty-six people signed up to be considered for the task force. RCWET convened for organizational meeting on October 22nd and hosted an all-day consulting session with Scott White from JW Prairie and Scott Allegrucci from the Climate & Energy Project on Community Wind projects.

In November fifty RCWET task force members formed five committees: Finance/Investor Relations, Site Location, Research/Data Collection, Legislative and Administrative. A public meeting held on November 12th was attended by approximately 30 people interested in wind energy. In December - RCWET received a \$2000 anonymous donation and \$1000 grant from Kansas Energy Office to continue wind exploration.

In January of 2008 RCWET and Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber hosted a Land Owner Forum featuring Pete Ferrell. Nearly 200 Reno County residents attended this information session.

In April of 2008 RCWET retained Pete Ferrell as a consultant to begin phase 2 of wind energy development in Reno County,

RCWET Goals

To protect sensitive areas in Reno County

To provide local investment opportunities to benefit all of Reno County

To pursue and protect site selection opportunities for community and commercial wind energy development in Reno County

RCWET's vision for wind energy development enables Reno County to be out front in providing and consuming energy for the 21st century. Wind energy is clean energy - it does not create air or water pollution and does not use water in its creation. Equally as important, adding wind to our electric system improves reliability, increases energy security and is cost effective. Not only can we utilize clean energy, we can invest in and benefit from producing it. Manufacturing of wind components will begin soon in Hutchinson, providing economic development, capital investment and new jobs. Among all these other benefits is the forward-thinking image such investment creates for Reno County, attracting just the sort of young, progressive "knowledge workers" we'd like to have as new residents.

Six members of RCWET - Jim Davis, Betty Taylor, Mark Richardson, Curt Miller, Dorothy Barnett and Phil Neufeldt plus Nancy Jackson from the Climate and Energy Project visited the Capitol for a forty-minute conference with Lieutenant Governor Mark Parkinson to discuss wind energy potential for Kansas and Reno County prior to the Renewable Energy Conference.





Wind for Schools

Students, staff and friends of Fairfield High School in Langdon gathered to watch a 33-foot Skystream wind turbine installed on May 21st. Fairfield was among five schools in the state chosen to participate in NREL's "Wind for Schools" program.

The turbine will be used primarily for educational opportunities. Several students laid the ground work for the turbine. Students welded, created a wooden template for bolts and poured a concrete base. The turbine has 1.9 kilowatts of power and will produce about \$400 worth of electricity a year. According to Dan Nagengast, executive director of the Kansas Rural Center and facilitator of the "Kansas Wind for Schools" program the wind turbine will provide a data stream for science education and renewable energy education.

The Wind for Schools program was an initiative first discussed in Reno County during the Growth Coalition's July 2007 Mayor's Forum.

Nancy Jackson, executive director of the Climate and Energy Project spoke to Mayors from eight Reno County communities, County Commissioner Larry Sharp, John Montgomery from the Hutchinson News, several RCGC Board members, City Manager John Deardoff, Representative Mark Treaster as well as Superintendents Mary Treaster from Fairfield and Brad Wade from Pretty Prairie.

As Ms. Jackson spoke about wind energy, climate change and the Wind for Schools program, the Mayor's Forum attendees began to develop a plan to explore Reno County's wind energy potential.



RENO COUNTY TEEN JOB FAIR

Approximately 90 teens looking for summer employment attended the Reno County Teen Job Fair at the Business Technology Center at Hutchinson Community College on April 5th. Thanks to our sponsors, the Workforce Development Center and the Hutchinson/ Reno County Chamber of Commerce, teens were given the opportunity to meet with ten businesses seeking students for part-time jobs.

The Workforce Development Center had job specialists available to meet students prior to the job fair and discuss how to dress for an interview and how to complete a job application in preparation for the job fair.

Students were able to meet with Dillon's, Home Depot, APAC Shears, the Department of Revenue, Salt City Splash, Neufeldt's Flooring, American Packaging, Hutch Rec, Catalyst Creative Services and Realty Executives.

Next year's job fair, tentatively scheduled for April 4th, will focus on college-aged Reno County students home for summer break in addition to high school students seeking summer employment. To participate next year e-mail dorothy@renocountygrowth.com.



Kim Schleich, American Packaging speaks to students about opportunities for summer employment.

WE COULD LIVE ANYWHERE

Reno County 2020

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Growth Coalition

New Reno County residents have earned your neighbors \$4,600!

Send a "We Could Live Anywhere" postcard or e-card to out-of-state friends and family. When they move to Reno County, you earn a \$100 reward for each member of the family. Check out our web site www.WeCouldLiveAnywhere.com or call us at (620) 664-8656 for more information. This program is sponsored in part by the Hutchinson Board of Realtors.



WE COULD LIVE ANYWHERE Relocation Reward Program for Reno County

Purpose of program: Stabilize and or increase the population of Reno County by empowering all current Reno County residents to actively participate in the recruitment of potential out-of-state residents to move to Reno County. Those participating in the program would be provided materials and training to assist them and would be offered modest financial incentives for successful results.

Target: Reno County Residents Audience: Anyone who does not have a legal address in Kansas

Minimum Requirements for Audience: Must be a legal resident. No felony convictions. Establish a "permanent" residence anywhere in Reno County. Buy a home. Lease a home or apartment. Reside in a long-term care facility. No discrimination based on age, gender, race, religion, familial status or national origin.

Reward: \$100 paid for every man, woman and child who meets the minimum requirements, including moving to and establishing permanent residence in Reno County.

Reward paid only to Reno County residents

Reno County residents mail a postcard, available in all communities, Reno County courthouse and Chamber of Commerce, to potential residents. They may also mail an electronic postcard available at www.WeCouldLiveAnywhere.com.

Potential residents register on the website listing their first contact in Reno County, who encouraged them to move here. When a relocation to Reno County occurs, Reno County residents may apply for a relocation reward. Verification forms are available at www.renocountygrowth.com under news. Postcards are available at the Growth Coalition office at 111 North Walnut.

Once a reward request is made, the Growth Coalition will verify new residence with a home visit and if the above conditions are met, Reno County recruiter will receive \$100 per person.

Check out www.WeCouldLiveAnywhere.com to read stories about Reno County residents who really could live anywhere.

WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS

Reno County 2020 Growth Coalition is teaming up with the Hutchinson News and our local Mental Health America to welcome new residents to Reno County.

Do you have a new employee? A new church member? A new neighbor on the block? Visit www.hutchcountry.com or www.renocountygrowth.com and click on the "Welcome Bag" icon.

Give us your name and theirs and we will personally deliver a reusable Dillon's grocery bag filled with special offers and gifts to welcome them to Reno County.

If you'd like to donate an item of value to help welcome our new residents, contact Patsy Terrell at (620)663-7772 or e-mail patsyterrell@gmail.com.



WE LIVE HERE



KORY & AMANDA JACKSON both grew up here and dated while in high school. After graduation, they headed off in different directions -- she to the University of Kansas, he to Stanford -- with thoughts of "meeting up" four years later in Kansas City.

They did meet up, but in Atlanta. Amanda pursued her graduate degree in physical therapy and Kory entered medical school at Emory University. They also got married. And by the time he had completed his residency in Columbia, MO, they had started a family -- it was time to choose where to settle down and establish Dr. Jackson's family practice.

"When I left Hutchinson to go to college, I really didn't think there was any chance I'd ever be coming back here to live," Kory recalls. But as the Jacksons were looking around and weighing their options, he received an offer from Hutchinson Clinic.

Amanda admits, "We were surprised by how much the medical community had grown here. We weren't aware of the wide range of specialists that had been added and the way Hutchinson had developed into a regional medical center serving such a wide area."

Amanda feels that this is a great place to raise a family. "Hutchinson is big enough to have lots to do with our children." They especially like the zoo, water parks, and nature center. "And the recreation commission has so many good programs...plus there's a really nice indoor pool at the YMCA and all its other activities." The Jacksons recently saw their first-ever rodeo -- the Pretty Prairie Rodeo, a popular annual event in Reno County for 70 years. "The kids were so excited to see real cowboys," she says, "And it was just a great family outing."

A bonus for Amanda and Kory is the number of other young families here. "We have made some great friends, Kory really likes his job, the kids love being close to their grandparents... I'm glad we came back," Amanda summarizes.

PARTNERS FOR GROWTH

RCGC BOARD

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- * Abbyville
- * Arlington
- * Buhler
- * Haven
- * Hutchinson
- * Langdon
- * Nickerson
- * Plevna
- * Pretty Prairie
- * South Hutchinson
- * Sylvia
- * Turon
- * Willowbrook

EDUCATION PARTNERS

- * Hutchinson Community College and Area Vocational School
- * USD308 Hutchinson
- * USD309 Nickerson
- * USD310 Fairfield
- * USD311 Pretty Prairie
- * USD312 Haven
- * USD313 Buhler
- * Central Christian
- * Trinity Catholic Junior/Senior High School

CHAMBER PARTNERS

- * Buhler Chamber
- * Haven Chamber
- * Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce

ADDITIONAL PARTNERS

- * Reno County, Kansas
- * Greater Hutchinson Convention/Visitor Bureau
- * Spirit of Success
- * Quest Center

- Ed Berger - Hutchinson Community College
- Amy Conkling - Hutch Rec Commission
- Jim Davis - Realty Executives (past-chair)
- John Deardoff - Hutchinson City Manager
- Virginia Elliott -United Health Ministry Fund (chair-elect)
- Lisa French - Reno County Conservation District (treasurer)
- Daniel Friesen - Ideatek Computers
- Gary Graber - Retired school administrator
- Dave Kerr - Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce
- Dan Ledebouer - Quest Center
- Erwin Leeper - Mayor South Hutchinson
- Nathan Meyer - 1st National Bank
- Ben Miller - Stutzman's Green House
- Curt Miller - Mayor Pretty Prairie
- Phil Neufeldt - Neufeldt's Flooring (chair)
- Criss Palacios - Hutchinson Community College
- Lois Schlickau - Haven Chamber
- Nancy Scott - Director of Planning & Development
- Mark Trotman, Eagle Communications
- Mark Vonachen - Reno County Planner
- Brad Wade -Superintendent Pretty Prairie
- Dorothy Barnett - Growth Coordinator

If you would like more information about becoming a *Partner for Growth*, contact Growth Coordinator, Dorothy Barnett by email at dorothy@renocountygrowth.com, stop by the office at 111 North Main, Suite C in Hutchinson or call (620) 664-8656.