

300 W. DOUGLAS. #850  
WICHITA, KS 67202



# REAP

of  
South Central  
Kansas

REGIONAL ECONOMIC AREA PARTNERSHIP

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

### REAP 2018 MEMBERS

Andover, Augusta  
Bel Aire, Bentley, Cheney  
Clearwater, Conway Springs,  
Derby, El Dorado, Garden Plain  
Goddard, Harvey County, Hesston  
Hutchinson, Kechi, Kingman County, Maize  
Mount Hope, Newton, North Newton, Park City  
Rose Hill, South Hutchinson, Valley Center

### REAP 2018 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Black Hills Energy, Greater Wichita Partnership, K-96 Corridor Association,  
Kansas Global Trade Services, South Central Kansas Economic Development  
District (SCKEDD), Sumner County Economic Development, Westar Energy,  
Mr. Willis Heck, Commissioner Mike Wheeler, Mayor Tom Brown, Ms. Kasi Morales,  
Commissioner Ron Hirst, Mr. Gary Meagher

## In Memory of Carl Koster

Council Member Carl Koster, Cheney, former chair of REAP and active member passed away in 2018. Carl had served on the City Council since 2009 and previously held the position of Mayor from 1991-2003. He served on many regional and county boards for the City of Cheney including chairing for REAP in 2000-2001 and again from 2014-2015.

An advocate for regionalism, he was one of the founding members of REAP in 1999. Those conversations began in 1997 with then Mayor of Wichita, Bob Knight. At the end of the process, 27 cities passed resolutions to support this new organization - the South Central Regional Economic Area Partnership, or REAP.

Carl made significant impact on moving the conversation forward for regional cooperation. He always contributed insight on how Cheney fit into the bigger picture of regionalism. He was a wonderful mentor and friend to many; his effort and guidance left a lasting impression on the region.

Through the years, Carl supported 4-H by judging photography at the Sedgwick County Fair in Cheney and at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. Often included was his "pie report" from these events, highlighting the various ones he sampled. Carl was also an avid history buff and attended countless Kansas history classes throughout the state.

REAP will be forever grateful for his leadership and representation.



## REAP Taskforce

As REAP continues to connect local leaders, advocate for Kansas, and support initiatives on regional issues, a taskforce was initiated to address operations, organizational structure, and common concerns. Results were identifying similar missions, overlapping members, possible redundancies, and limited resources of the regional partner organizations for enhanced coordination. The taskforce met to determine interest and feasibility addressing these concerns and REAP was chosen to coordinate collaborative strategies for the region.

### Taskforce Members:

Kaylene Haug, K-96 Corridor	Steven Wilkinson, SCKEDD
Mayor Shelley Hansel, City of Wellington, REAP	Laura Rainwater, SCAC
Council Member James Cledenin, City of Wichita	Keith Lawing, REAP
Bob Myers, Harvey County Council of Governments	Marla Canfield, REAP
Gary Plummer, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce	John Waltner, REAP
Andrew Nave, Greater Wichita Partnership	Matt Stiles, WSU
	Phil Nelson, WAMPO

The REAP Executive Committee recommended to restructure organizational operations for 2019. The goal is to be in line with a targeted budget and to engage regional partners in an enhanced collaborative strategy.

### Key changes for the restructuring plan:

- ▶ Executive Committee to conduct REAP business and perform the governing functions. Board meetings will become quarterly REAP partner meetings as opposed to formal REAP meetings.
- ▶ Suspending the Legislative Committee. Functions will be completed by the Executive Committee for 2019. A legislative conference call is to be held during the session to update REAP-member communities. REAP will invite lobbyists from Topeka representing regional organizations to participate as well as invite members of the South Central delegation to participate.

## REAP 2018 Activities Summary

Supported development of regional strategies promoting economic growth in South Central Kansas.

- ▶ Participated in the Greater Wichita Partnership's Market Street plan to assist the region moving forward in expanding its existing business sectors and identifying new ones. The plan took into account the existing Blueprint for Regional Economic Growth (BREG) created in 2015 to outline an economic development plan for the 10-county area. REAP also participated in the Talent Research and Marketing Strategy completed in 2018 by consultant group DCI.
- ▶ Created partnerships to implement regional legislative strategies.
  - ▶ Collaborated with regional chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, and additional partners to identify mutually supportive legislative priorities.
  - ▶ Participated in the Washington D.C. Fly-In with the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce.
  - ▶ Advocated for regional priorities including transportation and the farm bill.
- ▶ Raised awareness of the importance of commercial air service to the regional economy and the role of Eisenhower Airport as a regional economic development asset.
  - ▶ Coordinated meetings and presentations to support regional airports.
  - ▶ Served on the Airport Advisory Committee and Wichita Regional Chamber Airport Committee.
  - ▶ Provided airport updates and marketing information to REAP members and regular partners.
- ▶ Increased awareness of regional transportation planning for South Central Kansas in relation to state policy, possible legislation, and identified important regional transportation assets.
  - ▶ Participated in Wichita Regional Chamber's Ad Hoc Committee on Transportation (South Central Kansas Transportation Coalition).
    - ▶ Met in Topeka with the Department of Transportation to offer support in gaining resources for the region.
    - ▶ South Central Kansas Transportation Coalition provided testimony to the Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Taskforce highlighting the North Junction as the region's top transportation priority.
  - ▶ REAP staff served on the WAMPO Technical Advisory Committee and monitored actions for the Policy Body.
  - ▶ Greg Schneider, Andover, represents REAP on the Wichita Transit Advisory Committee.
- ▶ Implemented services for REAP Members related to best practices, community development and leadership.
  - ▶ Includes newly-elected officials training, Grant Finder system with bi-weekly blasts, customer service training, and grant-writing training.
  - ▶ July Board of Directors meeting was a regional convening to focus on transportation priorities within the region. Panel topics included regional economic development meetings, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce Ad Hoc Coalition, and regional transit opportunities. Additional topics for the region:
    - ▶ Eisenhower Airport remains a critical asset for business growth and expansion.
    - ▶ Passenger Rail Services is a key transportation priority.
    - ▶ Healthcare has a strong economic impact arising from sales, wages, and employment generated by business activity.
    - ▶ South Central Kansas has a strong agricultural tradition which continues to be a significant economic contributor.
- ▶ REAP received a Kansas Leadership Center Transformation Grant worth \$25k to enhance the leadership training opportunities for members. Thirty-eight attendees completed the programs at KLC in 2018.
- ▶ Supported four REAP members so they could attend the City-to-City trip to Boise, Idaho.
- ▶ Hosted the South Central Delegation for four events, and coordinated the delegation annual meeting at WSU. The focus of this meeting was workforce development with panel discussions regarding education and employers, plus presentations on the economic drivers for the region.
  - ▶ REAP also hosted the delegation at the January reception, elected officials' reception, and lunch in Topeka.
  - ▶ Hosted regular legislative conference calls during session and provided written updates each week.



## South Central Economic Development Summit

On November 1st, 100 elected and appointed officials gathered at the WSU Metroplex. Tim Cowden, President and CEO of the Kansas City Area Development Council, presented on celebrating success, overcoming challenges on regional economic development strategies. He highlighted how the KC area worked diligently on several projects to coalesce as a region, including a proposal for Amazon. While the bid was not accepted, the cohesion remained.

### Other Presentations:

Andrew Nave, Greater Wichita Partnership, and Keith Lawing Workforce Alliance, facilitated discussion on South Central regional issues including ways communities can market themselves.

Exports: Regional Driver, Local Opportunity - Karyn Page, Kansas Global Trade Services, spoke on the economic impact of trade.

Tools You Can Use: Economic Development Toolbox - Matt Stiles, Public Policy and Management Center, shared the Economic Development Toolbox designed to help with understanding and planning for economic development.

How Things Worked Out: Lessons from the Area - Bob Myers, City of Newton, and Murray McGehee, City of Moundridge, shared insight into the economic success in their respective communities.

The day concluded with a panel and conversation regarding challenges and regional collaboration. Discussion was facilitated by Keith Lawing; the panel consisted of Mayor Shelley Hansel (REAP Chair), Bob Myers (Newton), and Karyn Page (Kansas Global).

### Takeaways:

- ▶ REAP will adopt a new operational model to continue hosting quarterly convenings
- ▶ Use of the Economic Development Toolkit
- ▶ Resolution to enhance regional collaboration.



## Project Wichita

REAP joined the Vision Team and Mayor Terry Somers, Mount Hope, was selected to represent REAP. REAP communities Wichita, El Dorado, and Newton collaborated on the project. During the Listen phase of the process, general ideas and feedback regarding regional priorities were collected from town hall meetings, focus groups, and online surveys. An additional online survey gathered opinions determining priorities within the region. During the Focus phase, research and community findings were analyzed for patterns. Work teams were formed to identify and review recorded priorities, and will work with subject experts along with those affected to help build a plan of action accordingly. In addition to a regional vision, the community engagement process will produce an action plan focusing on the next 10 years within the region.

