



Chapter 10: A Strong, Diversified Economic Base



For related guiding principles, goals, and policies, refer to: Chapter 3: A Coordinated and Efficient Pattern of Growth; Chapter 9: An Active Community Recognized for its Quality of Life and Strong Sense of Place.

Background and Intent

The Manhattan Urban Area’s economy has historically been dominated by the government sector, with the large employment base provided by Fort Riley, the School District, and Kansas State University. While these entities will continue to play an important role in the area’s economy, the City and Counties continue to seek greater diversity in employment opportunities for area residents to include a variety of jobs, a balanced mix of housing options, cultural amenities, and services that make a positive contribution to the community.

Together, the City and Counties will facilitate employment and commercial development opportunities that provide a variety of jobs and services to residents, support the retention and expansion of local businesses, and that expand the economic base. The City and Counties will work with area partners to attract new local, national, and global employers to the Manhattan Urban Area by continuing to promote the community’s unique Flint Hills setting, quality of life amenities, diverse lifestyle options, and educational and research resources. The City and Counties will continue to coordinate with Fort Riley, Kansas State University, and other major institutions and employers to plan for future growth and fluctuations, as needed. This focus should be on diversifying the region’s economy with more private primary employment.

Promoting a strong, diversified economic base within the Manhattan Urban Area and surrounding region is based on the following guiding principles:

- Strengthen the Manhattan Area’s Role in the Regional, National, and Global Marketplace
- Expanded Economic Diversity and Stability

The goals and policies in this chapter, in conjunction with the supporting policy documents identified at the end of this chapter and other goals and policies contained in this Plan, should be used to support ongoing economic development efforts by the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce, the Pottawatomie County

Economic Development Corporation, the Flint Hills Economic Development District, and other partners in the region.

Guiding Principles, Goals, and Policies (EC)

Guiding Principle EC-1: Strengthen the Manhattan Urban Area's Role in the Regional, National, and Global Marketplace

GOAL EC-1: PROMOTE THE MANHATTAN URBAN AREA'S ROLE AS A CENTER FOR ECONOMIC, EDUCATIONAL, SPECIALIZED RESEARCH, HEALTH CARE, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



EC-1.1A: Designate Appropriate Locations for Employment Uses

Designate appropriate areas for employment uses that have convenient access to rail, air, or highway facilities to minimize the necessity for intra-city movement of goods. Encourage the development of existing and new technological/ industrial sites to provide growth opportunities for current and future employers in the community.

EC-1.1B: Land Use Conflicts

Consider the long-term effects of individual land use approvals. To the maximum extent feasible, avoid approving uses (e.g., single-family residential) in areas designated as Industrial, Office/Research, or Service Commercial on the Future Land Use map that may limit the viability of existing or planned employment centers in the future.

EC-1.1C: Industrial Land Availability

Maintain an adequate supply of both finished sites and raw land suitable for commercial, technological, and industrial development, in a range of sizes and locations to accommodate a variety of businesses. Coordinate with economic development organizations throughout the region to monitor supply and demand considerations with respect to available land and unique needs.



EC-1.1D: Jobs / Housing Balance

Maintain a mix of residential, industrial, and commercial land uses to promote a land use balance that creates employment and housing opportunities and generates sufficient revenues to pay for the cost of public facilities and infrastructure needed to serve the community.

EC-1.1E: Quality of Life Initiatives

Continue to work with community organizations and the private sector to support historic preservation, parks and recreation, cultural amenities, arts programs, and other initiatives that enhance the quality of life, preserve our heritage, contribute to local tourism, and strengthen the economic health of the community.

EC 1.1F: Regional Partnerships

Continue to coordinate with Fort Riley, Kansas State University, and other major institutions and employers to plan for future growth and population fluctuations and collaborate on joint planning initiatives.

EC-1.1G: Downtown Manhattan

Continue to strengthen and promote Downtown Manhattan as the primary business, office, governmental, and cultural center for the region. Provide opportunities for businesses, landowners, and the public sector to rehabilitate, redevelop, and revitalize the Downtown. Increase housing options in and adjacent to Downtown for retirees, young adults, and others seeking an active, urban lifestyle. Support the implementation of public wireless access and other infrastructure needs as they evolve.

EC-1.1H: Regional Retail

Provide opportunities for larger-scale commercial developments along major corridors to serve the Manhattan Urban Area and the surrounding region.

Guiding Principle EC-2: Expanded Economic Diversity and Stability

GOAL EC-2: PROVIDE A WIDE RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CURRENT CITIZENS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



EC-2.1A: Diversified Economic Base

Support the maintenance and expansion of a diversified employment base within the Manhattan Urban Area, reflecting manpower and labor force capabilities and emphasizing the expansion of technological and related industries in the local, national, and global marketplace. Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the local economy where consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. This focus should be on diversifying the region's economy with more private sector primary employment.

EC-2.1B: Specialized Industry

Promote land uses in the manufacturing, scientific, professional, specialized industrial service, and education and specialized training sectors that can take advantage of the unique opportunities offered by the presence of Fort Riley, Kansas State University and its Global Food Systems Initiative, the Animal Health Corridor, and NBAF, to attract new capital and promote the creation of primary sector market wage jobs.

EC-2.1C: Encourage Home Occupations and Cottage Industries

Encourage home-based, information technology based, entrepreneurial, and other non-traditional business models—such as “pop up” vendors, business incubators for start-ups, and other “cottage” industries.

EC-2.1D: Knowledge-Based Economy

Plan for additional economic development and placemaking initiatives that can utilize unique local assets and enhance existing quality of life amenities as a means to help attract and retain talent—especially young, knowledge-based talent.



EC-2.1E: Coordination and Public/Private Partnerships

Coordinate with local businesses and foster public/private partnerships to help promote economic development within the Manhattan Urban Area and region.

Related Plans and Policy Documents

The following previously developed documents may or may not have been formally adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan; however they provide important background information and policy direction with regard to economic development considerations. Refer to [Appendix B: Related Plans and Policy Documents](#) for additional information on each plan and links to the full documents.

- City of Manhattan Economic Development Policy (2002, revised 2010, 2014)
- New Horizon: Education, Entrepreneurship and Environment in the Flint Hills (2013)
- Advance Pottawatomie County (2013)
- Riley County Economic Development Strategic Plan (2011)

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