



**CLAY COUNTY** 2040

**COMPASS**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Adopted**

February 4, 2025



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# Hello, Clay County!

In 1985, Clay County community leaders developed the first Comprehensive plan for the County. That first plan was updated multiple times in the subsequent years with the desire to “foster an efficient and coordinated development approach for the County.” Now, nearly 40 years later, as Clay County has recently implemented the new governance structure approved by voters in 2020, the County is still focused on a consistent and efficient development approach.

Clay County Compass 2040 is a document which establishes policy for making land use decisions for the unincorporated portions of Clay County. Throughout the process of creating this vision for the future of Clay County we have sought input from many groups and individuals including a citizen stakeholder committee, local cities, and various agencies located in Clay County. That input has resulted in a guide that can be used for the next 20 years as a roadmap for the County as it continues to grow.

We are excited to present the “**Clay County Compass 2040**” comprehensive plan.

*Sincerely,*

**Planning & Zoning Commission & County Commission**

# Acknowledgments

Thank you to all participants in the planning process. Your time, technical expertise, and guidance were critical to the development of the Clay County Compass 2040 (Plan).

**Your investment in this Plan is valued.**

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# 01

## Plan Introduction

**Section 1** provides the foundation on which the comprehensive plan (Plan) is based. This section sets the scene for the Plan and answers why this planning process and the resulting document is necessary, how this document is used, and what the planning process entailed.

## Plan Overview

This Plan serves as a guide for the identification and implementation of Clay County's unified vision for its future. It builds upon the community's values and points Clay County in the direction of its shared goals using a variety of tactics. The Plan addresses critical topics that will shape the way Clay County continues to develop, including:

- Future land use recommendations based on input from stakeholders, the public, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of County Commissioners, and County staff members and the findings from the Economic and Market Analysis (see **Appendix D**).
- Future housing options and opportunities to balance and diversify the existing housing stock.
- Economic development strategies that encourage a vibrant, healthy mixture of revenue generation sources.
- Transportation and mobility opportunities that enhance connectivity and mobility for residents and visitors.
- Climate hazard mitigation and adaptation strategies that build on experience and incorporate outside expertise from similar communities.
- Sustainability and resiliency opportunities woven throughout all recommendations to balance community desires, financial feasibility, and environmental needs.

The planning process culminated in an integrated document (this Plan!) that reflects the needs and desires of the County and guides future decision-making related to the strategic and sustainable growth of Clay County. The Plan provides a framework for the development of future public policy pertaining to development, redevelopment, transportation and connectivity, and the provision of community services and amenities.

### **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

*A comprehensive plan – sometimes referred to as a general plan, master plan, or land use plan – is a vision for the future on a community scale. Comprehensive plans are created by and for the community to record shared goals and desires for themselves and their fellow community members. A comprehensive plan examines what a community is, where it came from, and crafts a coordinated road map for the future. This road map guides the growth and development of the County for the next 20 years and is revisited often to ensure its relevance. Effective plans are grounded and provide measurable, achievable action items for reaching shared goals. Communities can also use comprehensive plans as a factual and objective basis to justify future decision-making.*







# Clay County, Missouri

## A TIMELINE OF MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENTS

Prepared September 18, 2023 for Kipp Jones, Clay County Planning and Zoning Director by Scott Cole and Tony Meyers of the Clay County Archives and Historical Library

**1822**

Clay County was formally organized by the Missouri State Legislature on January 2, 1822. It was formed from a portion of Ray County and originally extended from the Missouri River north to the Iowa line. The current boundaries of the County were established in 1825. Liberty was named as the County seat. At its formation the total population of the County was 1,200.

**1831**

Dedication of Clay County's first courthouse to occupy the Liberty Square. The modest, two-story stone building was constructed for a price of approximately \$1,500.

**1844**

Greatest flood ever experienced by the people of Clay County. The waters of the Missouri River extended from bluff to bluff.

**1849**

William Jewell College was founded February 2, 1849.

**1935**

A dedication ceremony for the new Clay County Courthouse was held in September. Construction costs totaled \$275,000.



**1927**

The Downtown Airport in North Kansas City was dedicated. Charles Lindberg flew here in the "Spirit of St. Louis" for the event.



**1888**

The Elms Hotel in Excelsior Springs opened to serve the growing number of tourists seeking treatment from the "healing properties" of the area's mineral springs.



**1866**

The Clay County Savings Association was robbed of \$60,000 in gold and bonds. Members of the James-Younger gang were suspected of committing the robbery.



## 1960

The total population of Clay County was 87,474.

## 1952

The City of Gladstone was incorporated including the former town of Linden, with an area of eight square miles and a population of 24,000.

## 1950

Construction began on a new Ford plant in Claycomo

## 1949

Clay County adopts first zoning order

## 1965

Clay County Parks Department is established

## 1970's

The Clay County Planning & Zoning Department is established

## 1972

Scenic and historic Tryst Falls became the first in the extensive Clay County Parks system.

## 1973

Worlds of Fun opened on May 26th. It was the first phase of a 500-acre entertainment and hotel complex developed by Lamar Hunt's Great Midwest Enterprises.



## 1976

The Metro North Mall opened in September. Clay County's first enclosed mall had 1.5 million square feet of retail space and featured four anchor stores.

## 1977

Smithville Lake was completed by the damming of the Little Platte River. Planning for the lake and dam began soon after floods devastated Smithville and other areas in 1965.

## 1978

Clay County acquired the James Farm from the Barr brothers, grandsons of Jesse James.



## 1989

Clay County dedicated a new courthouse complex and jail facility in Liberty. The 1935 courthouse then becoming administrative offices for the County.

## 2008

Comprehensive Plan updated

## 2000

The total population of Clay County is 184,703.

## 1997

The Clay County Regional Airport, built at a cost of \$7,000,000, opened in Mosby.

Clay County adopts first Comprehensive Plan

## 2021

A new constitution for Clay County went into effect on January 1st. The County Commission expanded from three to seven Commissioners - a Presiding Commissioner and six Commissioners representing their respective districts.

## 2022

Clay County celebrated the 200th anniversary of its founding with a year-long series of events hosted by various local businesses, charitable groups, and historical organizations.



# The Why

Clay County is designated as a first-class charter county. This gives Clay County the right to prepare and adopt a “Master Plan” per Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 64, et. seq. Since the County’s first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1997, the County’s planning and zoning department has actively maintained a comprehensive plan, providing updates over the years.

Clay County’s previous comprehensive plan was adopted in 2008, with a ten-year timeframe. As the 2008 plan’s timeframe expires, Clay County must review the community’s vision and goals for how to guide the County for the next ten to twenty years.

In 2023, a planning team was formed to tackle the challenge of crafting a new Plan that speaks to the County’s present conditions and chart a path into the future. To best accomplish this task, the planning team had to answer the following questions:

## Where is Clay County today?

Clay County is experiencing incredible growth! Due to its many benefits and its proximity to Kansas City, Clay County is an attractive place to live. To best understand where Clay County is today, the planning team reviewed Clay County’s existing plans and studies (See **Appendix C: Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies**), conducted an Existing Conditions Analysis (See **Appendix A: Existing Conditions**) and an Economic and Market Analysis (See **Appendix D: Economic and Market Analysis**).

## Where does Clay County want to be?

This is a critical component of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan must establish a vision for its community. To do this, members of the community must be able to provide their insight and guidance to a plan.

The planning team worked tirelessly to ensure that County staff, stakeholders, business and property owners, local organizations, and members of the public had ample opportunity to provide their feedback. The engagement process included a visioning workshop, public survey, planning and design charrette, leadership work sessions, and other online and virtual options to gather community feedback. All public and stakeholder feedback was compiled and included in a Public Engagement Summary (See **Appendix B: Public Engagement Summary**).

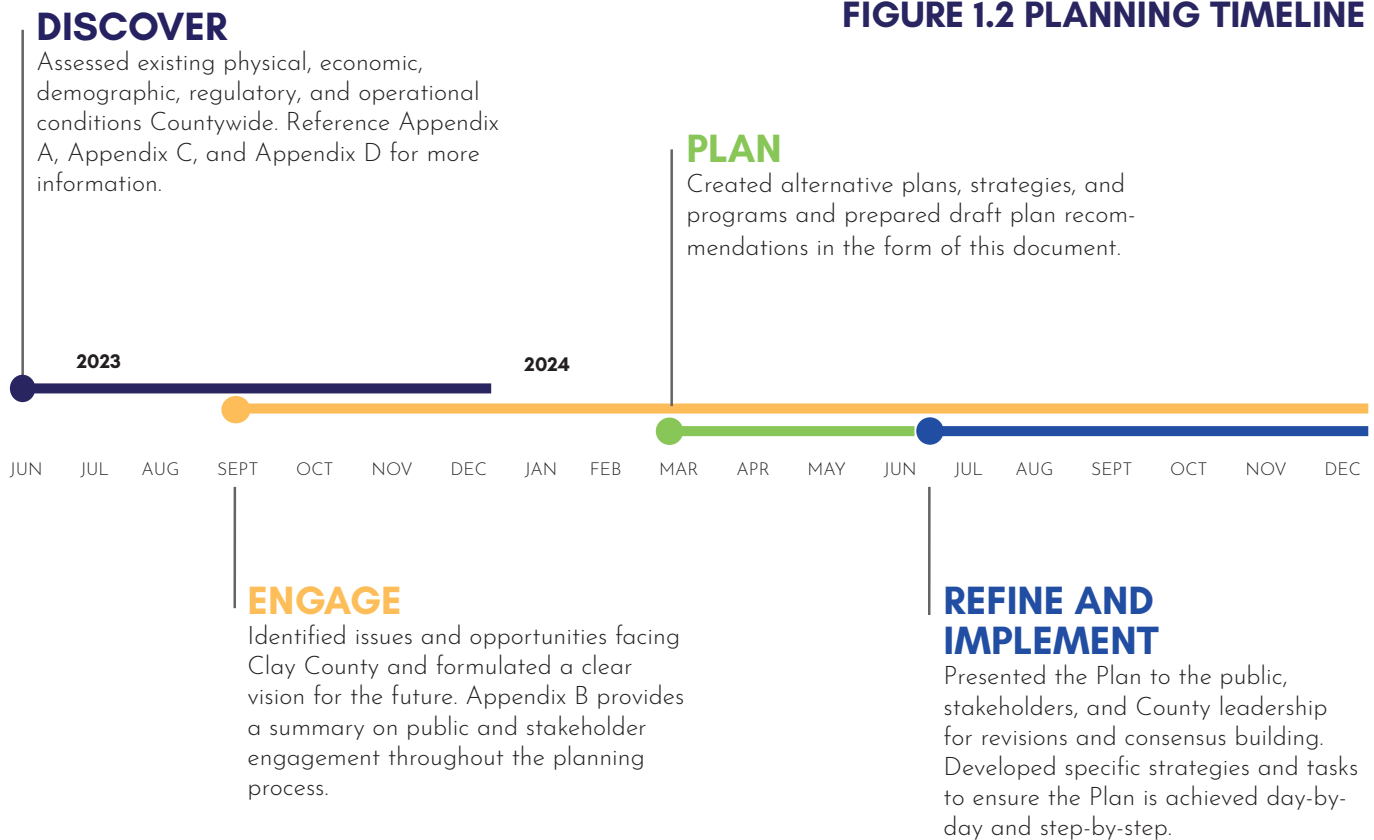
## How do we get there?

Without actionable goals and strategies, a Plan’s vision cannot come to fruition. This is ultimately what the Plan answers. Over 1,400 voices of the community contributed to the Plan’s goals and strategies through the robust engagement process. This Plan offers a road map to the future, outlining goals and strategies to direct Clay County’s future growth and development. This helps keep elected and appointed leaders and County staff members on track to make Clay County what the community envisions for its future (See **Section 8 - Implementation: Action Plan**).

# Planning Process and Timeline

The Plan development process took approximately twelve months and consisted of five primary phases: Discover, Engage, Plan, Refine, and Implement. From Discover, where a baseline of Clay County was developed; to Engage where the community shared its voice; to Plan and Refine when the actual road map for the future of each of the Plan’s topics were recorded; to Implement when the Plan is put to work for the community. **Figure 1.2** demonstrates the planning process timeline.

**FIGURE 1.2 PLANNING TIMELINE**



## Keeping this Plan Fresh

*This Plan should be reviewed and revised periodically to respond to shifts in economic and demographic conditions, new changes in state and federal law, the impacts of existing policies and past decisions, and new implementation tools or resources that would benefit outcomes. At least once a year, the Planning and Zoning Commission should review or reconsider the Plan or portions of the Plan and may propose amendments. Without regular evaluation and monitoring of the Plan’s progress, the Plan will lose its effectiveness in achieving and upholding a shared vision for Clay County.*

# Plan Organization

This Plan is organized into eight sections and four appendices. The first two sections introduce the Plan and its structure.

- **Section 1** - Introduction. This section presents an introduction to the Plan, including the Plan's purpose and timeline, as well as an introduction to the Clay County Planning Area
- **Section 2** - Vision and Values. This section narrates and illustrates the characteristics of Clay County's desired future through a vision narrative and values that will guide development and redevelopment.
- **Sections 3** - Land Use. This section identifies the preferred and appropriate land uses and development areas throughout the County.
- **Sections 4** - Economy. This section outlines how the County can attract new investment and bolster its existing economy for the well-being of the County and its municipalities.
- **Sections 5** - Mobility. This section examines transportation routes and types, alternative transportation modes, and opportunities for improvements with Clay County.
- **Sections 6** - Environment. This section provides guidance on environmental stewardship across the County for existing and future developments by ensuring use of environmental practices.
- **Sections 7** - Collaboration. This section evaluates how the County functions and operates with the municipalities and agencies within it and provides opportunities to grow and expand its operations and programming.
- **Sections 8 - Implementation: Action Plan.** This section presents specific implementation actions to achieve the goals and strategies of the previous sections.
- **Appendix A: Existing Conditions.** This appendix describes the current (2023) state of Clay County, including details on current and forecast demographic factors, market potential and physical, natural, and regulatory conditions.
- **Appendix B: Stakeholder and Public Engagement Summary.** This appendix presents a summary of the input received from the community through a variety of engagement tools and methods, both in-person and online. All received stakeholder and public comments are transcribed and available in this appendix.
- **Appendix C: Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies.** This appendix presents a full review of existing plans and studies with relevance to Clay County and describes their relationship to this Plan.
- **Appendix D: Economic and Market Analysis.** This appendix is the full Economic and Market Analysis for the Planning Area that evaluates long-term market potential and development and redevelopment opportunities based on economic and demographic factors and market forces.

## How to Use this Plan

This Plan is intended to be a living document and reference point for the County. As County staff members, elected leaders, and community members make decisions for Clay County, this Plan serves as the lens through which they consider the appropriateness of proposed changes. This Plan serves as the road map toward Clay County's determined vision for the future through the development decisions, zoning changes, and community modifications that face the County. Part of the review process for such changes includes ensuring alignment with the comprehensive plan, which works to safeguard the County's established long-term goals through short-term decisions.

While it was compiled as a reflection of current conditions using the public and stakeholders' interests in the community at the time, the Plan establishes a broad policy foundation to guide future growth and reinvestment in Clay County for years to come.

This Plan is used to:

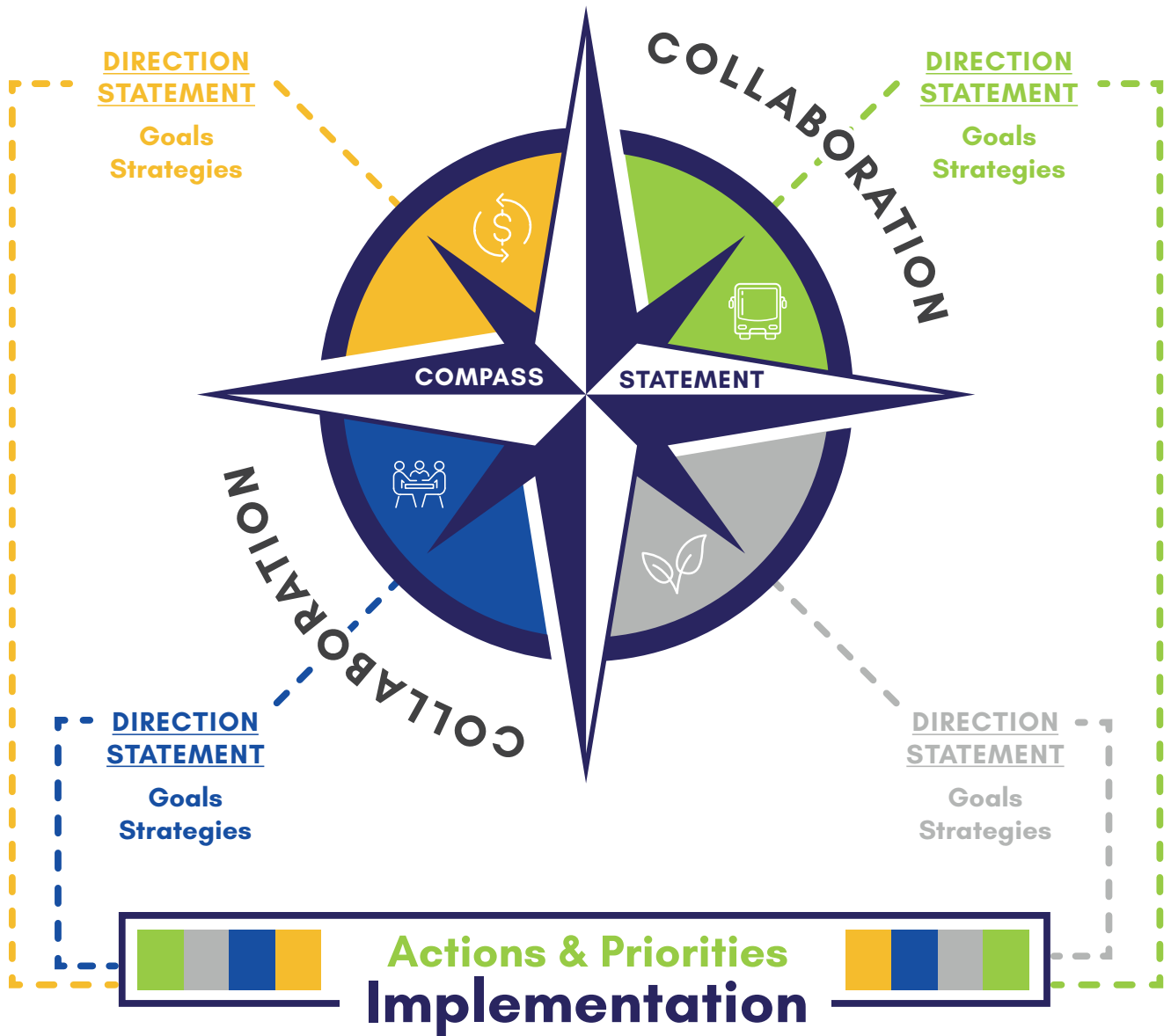
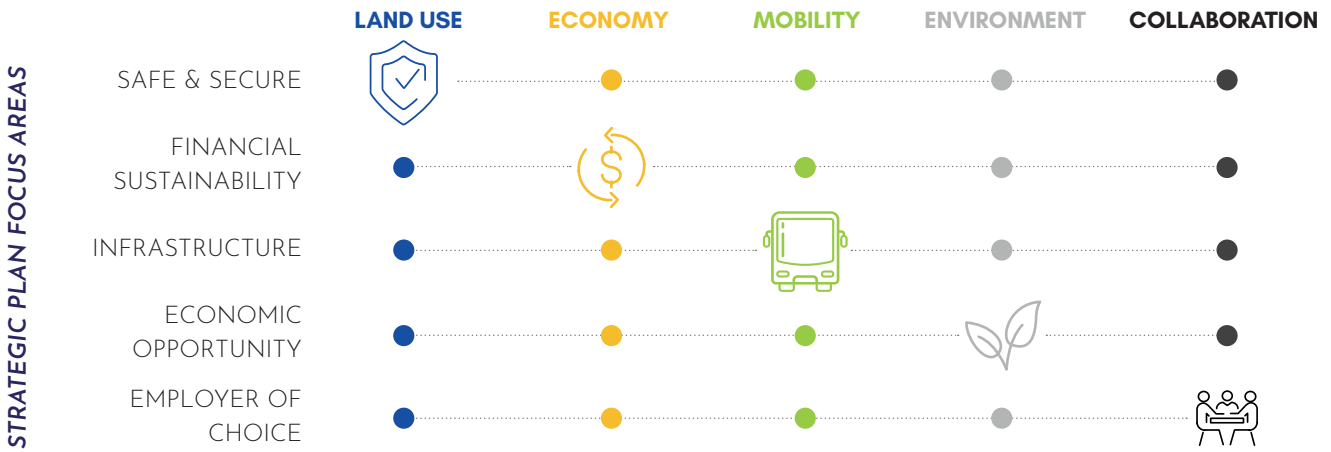
- Establish a strategic vision for the future of Clay County.
- Provide policy guidance for elected and appointed officials when making decisions that affect the long-term needs of the community.
- Help guide County staff members' day-to-day decision-making regarding the location, intensity, and design of future development.
- Inform residents, property and business owners, developers, and others interested in Clay County's priorities and expectations for development.
- Maintain an implementation strategy (**Section 8**) that helps achieve the community's vision for Clay County.

Clay County completed its Strategic Plan in 2023 crafting a vision and five focus areas where the County must be successful. To ensure cohesiveness between County plans the comprehensive plan structure was built off the Strategic Plan five focus areas. The plan structure shown in **Figure 1.3** identifies how the five core elements of the Clay County Compass Plan coordinate with the Strategic Plan.

This Plan uses a variety of terms in its structure, including compass statement, direction statement, goal, strategies, and implementation. Reference **Figure 1.3** to understand what these terms mean and how they work together.



**FIGURE 1.3 PLAN STRUCTURE**



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# 02

## Vision & Values

**Section 2** describes the consensus-built vision and core elements of Clay County that are the backbone of the goals, strategies, and framework plans within this Plan. The Compass Statement and Direction Statements were developed based on the input gathered throughout the public engagement process on the issues, concerns, and opportunities facing the County, as detailed in **Appendix B**.

A vision is an aspirational statement that describes an idealistic future. It reveals what a community most hopes to be and achieve in the long term without getting into the specifics of how it will be accomplished. In the instance of Clay County, a “Compass Statement” has been developed and acts as the vision statement answering important questions about what the community cares about, who in the population the County wants to serve, and what lasting impact the County hopes to have on its residents over the next 10-20 years.

# Compass Statement

Clay County is a leader in County collaboration and communication, effectively working with its community members, businesses, and regional agencies to balance urban growth, natural resource preservation, and providing opportunities for new development while protecting and maintaining its natural resources and rural character.

Achieving such a vision is a complex process that requires a multi-layered approach. To help guide this process, the following Direction Statements have been developed and act as the beliefs that are of central importance to Clay County.

The Direction Statements of the County facilitate decisions and underline all actions; they are the core elements of how the County sees itself and where it wants to go in the future. Each direction statement educates current and future residents, leaders and public servants about the community's identity.

Clay County's Direction Statements should be considered when the County is making decisions regarding policies, developments, investments, and more. Note the direction statements are not listed in order of importance.

## Direction Statements:



**Land Use:** Ensures healthy and strategic economic growth, while protecting natural and agricultural areas and preserving the rural character of the County.



**Economy:** Supports existing businesses and the labor force while strategically attracting new and expanded industry opportunities that support the financial well-being of the County and its municipalities.



**Mobility:** Continues to repair and maintain existing County transportation infrastructure, providing safe access to recreation, healthcare, and economic opportunities for all users.



**Environmental:** Engages proven environmental practices to preserve and conserve the County's agriculture, natural resources, local biodiversity, and rural landscape.



**Collaboration:** Strives to develop and maintain strong working relationships within the County, its unincorporated community, municipalities, local and regional agencies, and other counties through its policies, regulations, and communications.



# 03

## Land Use

**Section 3** provides specific guidance regarding the location, type, and character of future land uses in Clay County. This section is a guide for County staff members, leadership, and stakeholders, as well as a commitment to the community of what the future land of Clay County holds from a responsible growth perspective. The County will manage growth to ensure it remains attractive to residents, newcomers, and visitors, while strengthening and diversifying its communities and protecting its natural resources and ecosystems.



## Direction Statement

Ensures healthy and strategic economic growth, while protecting natural and agricultural areas and preserving the rural character of the County.

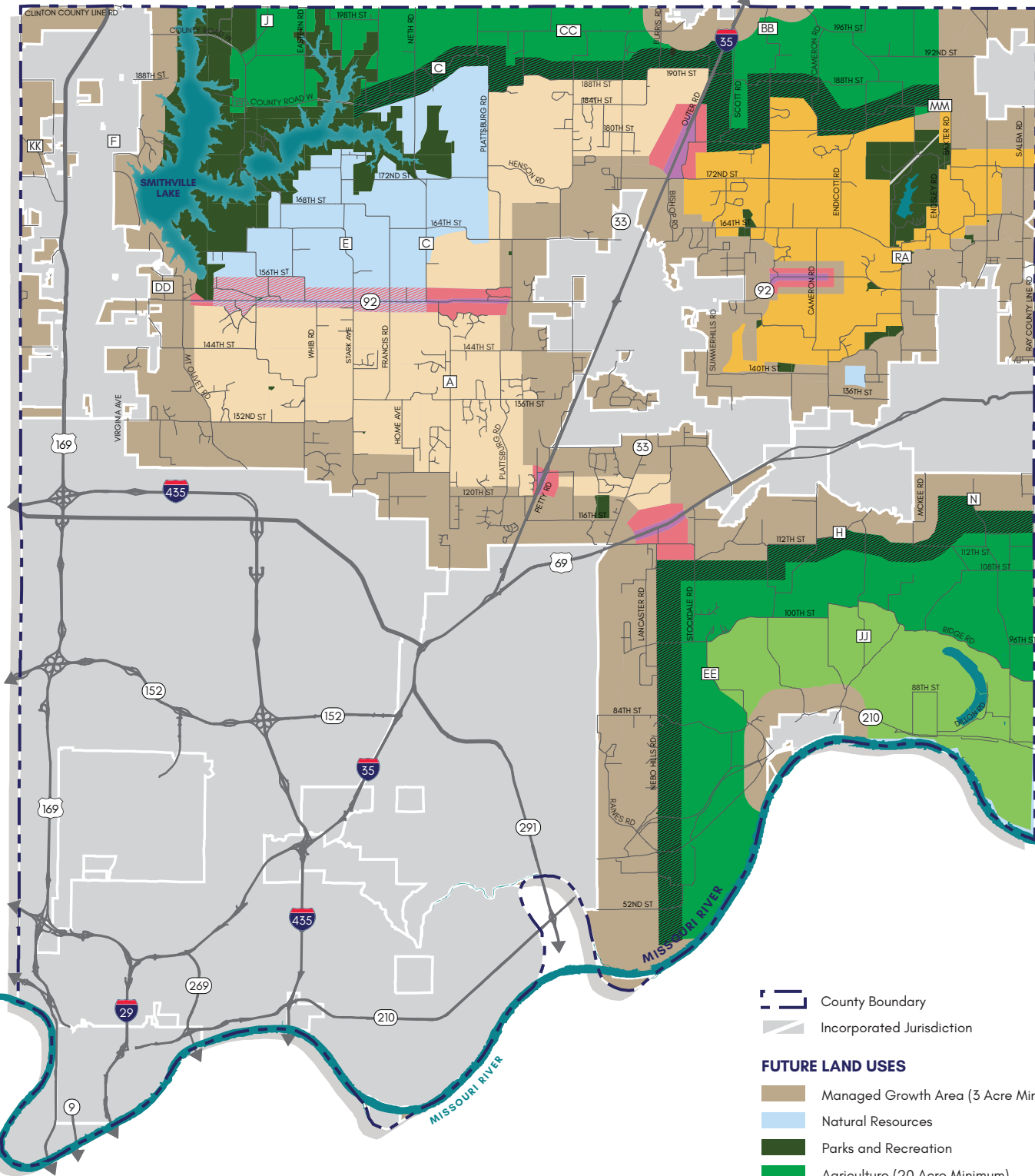
## Future Land Use Patterns

Clay County's large land area, natural resources, and transportation system allow the opportunity to create a blend of urban and rural environments that provides the template for the County and its principal population and economic centers to adapt to future trends in land use, economics, demographics, and transportation.

This section intends to establish a land use plan to continue urban growth where appropriate and establish a seamless transition from the County's existing urban areas into adjacent unincorporated areas and growing rural communities. Future growth should be sustainable and strike a balance between complementary land uses emphasized by strengthening the municipalities within the County while retaining rural areas and protecting natural resources and open space.

Future land use patterns for Clay County were carefully considered based upon extensive community input - both in person and online (see **Appendix B**); County staff and governing body guidance; and professional expertise. No piece of input was considered on its own. Together, these factors resulted in the Future Land Use Framework (**Figure 3.1**). To this end, future land use decisions should be considered based on **Figure 3.1** and in conjunction with other sections of the Plan.





- County Boundary
- Incorporated Jurisdiction

**FUTURE LAND USES**

- Managed Growth Area (3 Acre Minimum)
- Natural Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Agriculture (20 Acre Minimum)
- Agriculture Preserve (40 Acre Minimum)
- Estate Residential (5 Acre Minimum)
- Residential Preserve
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Compass Transition Zone

**FIGURE 3.1**  
**FUTURE LAND USE**  
**FRAMEWORK**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Olsson Studio



# Future Land Use Framework

Each of the future land use designations as shown in **Figure 3.1** are described and illustrated on the pages that follow. Land use designations describe the primary land use and development intensity of parcels within the County. Although land use designations on their own are not legally binding these designations provide the foundation for zoning. Zoning regulations are a regulatory tool used to implement land use policies.

## Managed Growth Area

The Managed Growth Area land use designation is comprised of all the land uses found within a mile of any municipal boundary. Each municipality within Clay County has a distinctly unique growth area, which is defined by location and not a single land use. With the contiguity of incorporated areas and existing municipalities' infrastructure, this category should be the primary location of any future growth in the unincorporated areas of the County. This designation does not seek to describe or recommend a specific land use but should be determined by the market and the respective municipality's local planning. In cases where the closest city does not provide detailed comments, Clay County Planning staff will review the case for compliance with the next closest land use category.

## Compass Transition Area

The Compass Transition Area land use category is designed as a transition area between the smaller lots closer to city limits and the more rural areas farther from city limits. This land use category exists as a half-mile zone where the land-use map transitions from the managed growth areas and estate residential areas to Agricultural districts. The recommended minimum lot size for this area is 5-acres but is designed to consider the median lot sizes within a half-mile radius of the subject parcel for guidance.

## Natural Resources

The Natural Resources land use category protects and enhances a portion of the area around Smithville Lake—either publicly or privately owned. This land use category seeks to protect Smithville Lake from contamination and degradation. In addition, this land use category is designed to create a transition zone from the Estate Residential

land use to the larger lots in the Agricultural land use category in the northern section of Clay County. Each parcel in this area is unique and will be evaluated in relation to the median lot size within a half-mile radius of the subject parcel. Development that requires county-maintained infrastructure is not encouraged within this district unless the proposal meets the requirements for a Conservation District as detailed in the Land Development Code with the Developer addressing all required criteria as determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission and County Commission.

## Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation represent public lands dedicated to parkland, including neighborhood, community, and regional facilities. This use includes open space, playgrounds, gardens, greens or lawns, meadows, woods or trees, ponds or streams, walkways and paths, fountains, civic plazas, shelters and picnic areas, and amphitheatres and performance space. It also includes areas utilized for sports, active play, and recreation uses, including sports fields and courts, sports facilities, adventure play, bicycle facilities, and museums. Parks and Recreation can include accompanying infrastructure, such as spectator facilities and seating, support and maintenance facilities, concessions, restrooms, meeting rooms, landscaping, and parking.









## Estate Residential

The Estate Residential land use category comprises concentrated residential subdivisions and neighborhoods that are not near or contiguous to existing incorporated community boundaries. In some cases, they may be master planned subdivisions with a somewhat suburban feel, while in other cases they may be neighborhoods that have naturally developed over time. Sizes and styles of residences can vary in this category. Large lot, single-family detached homes are the predominant housing type and are typically found in a rural or scenic setting.

Residences within this category are not connected to municipal infrastructure and utilities. Internal street networks typically do not have curbs and gutters, and the residences are typically serviced by rural water sources and septic systems for sanitation. In master planned neighborhoods, private sewer systems may be allowed.

The recommended minimum lot size for this land use category is 5 acres. Subdivisions with lots smaller than five acres may be allowed on municipal-level services or if compliant with Conservation District requirements.

## Residential Preserve

The Residential Preserve land use category is designed to allow development north of Kearney and Excelsior Springs compatible with existing development but also to preserve and protect the natural features of each individual parcel in an agricultural land preservation (ALP). The ALP is designed to protect unique and natural features such as floodplain, wooded areas, wildlife corridors, streams, ponds, and other natural features.

The recommended minimum lot size for this land use category is 5 acres, provided that the additional preservation requirements in the Land Development Code have been met. Large lot, single-family detached homes are the predominant housing type and are typically found in a rural or scenic setting. Residences within this category are not connected to municipal infrastructure and utilities. Internal street networks typically do not have curbs and gutters, and the residences are typically serviced by rural water sources and septic systems for sanitation. In master planned neighborhoods, private sewer systems may be allowed.

The recommended minimum lot size for this land use category is 5 acres. Subdivisions with lots smaller than 5 acres may be allowed but only if the proposal meets the requirements for a Conservation District as detailed in the Land Development Code with the Developer addressing all required criteria as determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission and County Commission.





TABLE 3.1

# LAND USE CATEGORY OPTIONS



## AGRICULTURAL PRESERVE: 40+ ACRE AREA AROUND COOLEY LAKE

**OPTIONS:**

- 40+ acre lots
- 5+ acre lot that qualifies as a farmstead dwelling
- 10+ acre lot with 50 percent of lot in Agricultural Land Preserve (ALP)
- 1 lot per parcel every 5 years
- Subdivision of land that is consistent with median lot size in .5-mile radius

## AGRICULTURAL 20+ ACRE AREAS AROUND NORTHERN AND EAST OF LIBERTY

**OPTIONS:**

- 20+ acre lots
- 5+ acre lot that qualifies as a farmstead dwelling
- 5+ acre lot with 30 percent of lot in Agricultural Land Preserve (ALP)
- Subdivision of land that is consistent with median lot size in .5-mile radius
- Subdivision of land that qualifies as a Conservation District

## COMPASS TRANSITION ZONE .5 MILE AREA WHERE 5 ACRE AREAS MEET 20 ACRE AREAS

**OPTIONS:**

- 5+ acre lots
- 5+ acre lot that qualifies as a farmstead dwelling
- Subdivision of land that is consistent with median lot size in .5-mile radius

## RESIDENTIAL PRESERVE 5+ACRES WITH ALP NORTH OF EXCELSIOR SPRINGS AND KEARNEY

**OPTIONS:**

- 5+ acre lot that qualifies as a farmstead dwelling
- Subdivision of land that qualifies as a Conservation District

## ESTATE RESIDENTIAL 5+ ACRES

**OPTIONS:**

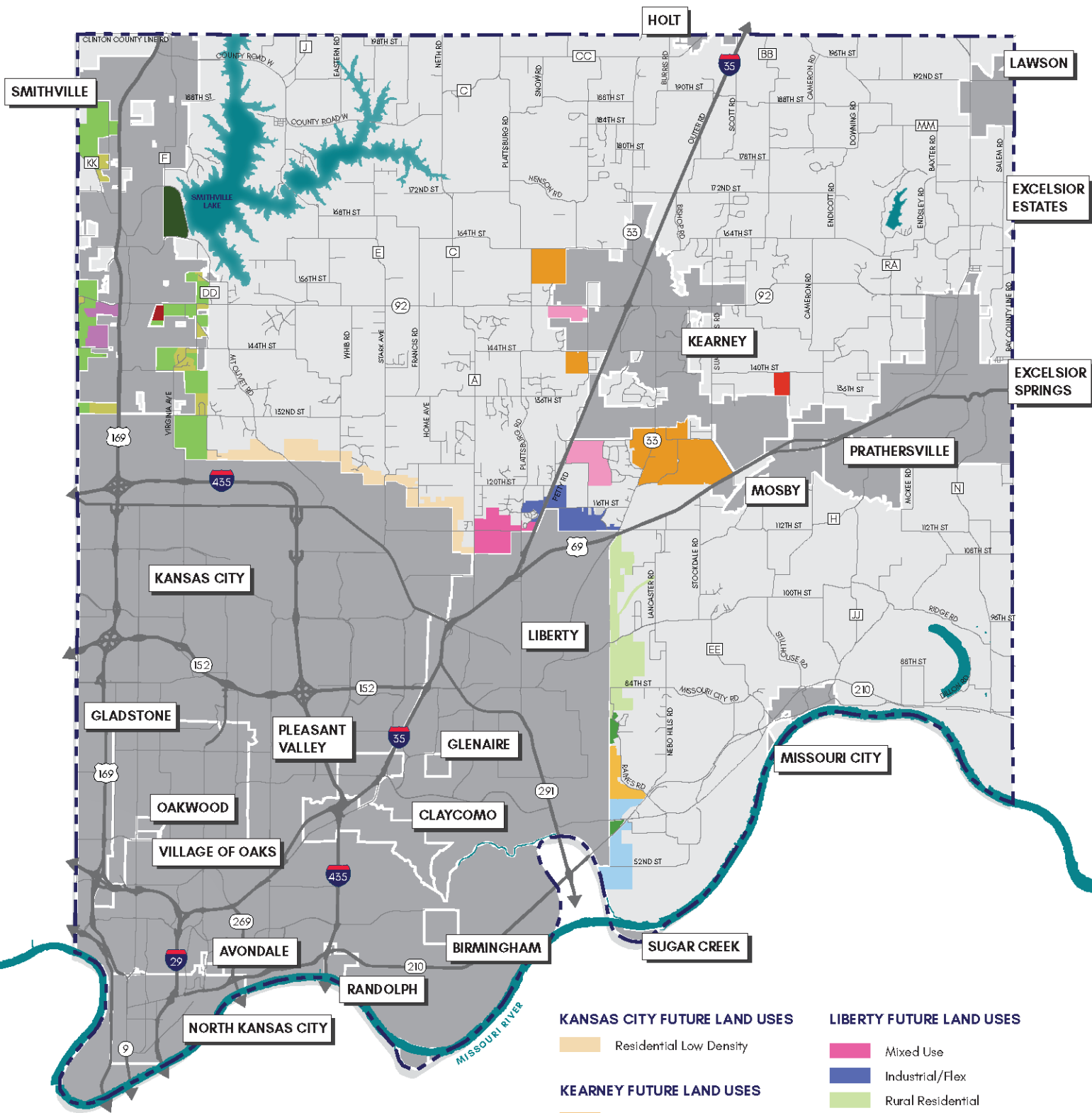
- 5+ acre lots
- Subdivision of land that includes County-maintained infrastructure with septic systems, 5-acre lot average
- Subdivision of land that includes County-maintained infrastructure that municipal level services, 3-acre average
- Subdivision of land that qualifies as a Conservation District

## MANAGED GROWTH AREA COMMENTS FROM CITY

**OPTIONS:**

- Proposals deemed acceptable by the closest city





**FIGURE 3.2**  
**ANNEXATION**  
**AREAS**



Data Sources: Clay County, Olsson Studio, and Comprehensive Plans



## EXCELSIOR SPRINGS

The Future Land Use Map outlined in their Master Plan identifies various zoning designations for areas adjacent to unincorporated Clay County, including Rural Residential, Urban Reserve, Greenways, and Medium Density Residential (MDR). Since the approval of the Excelsior Springs Master Plan in 2009, significant changes have occurred through annexation limiting what can be shown on **Figure 3.2**. Excelsior Springs is currently underway in updating their existing comprehensive plan with a 15-year plan.

## LIBERTY

Liberty's comprehensive plan, Leading Liberty Forward, was approved in 2023 and carefully details planning and development strategies for the city. While the city does not have an intent to annex, it sets goals to evaluate the need for more land when and if appropriate based on market demands. Future land use designations contiguous to the county line for Liberty are delineated in **Figure 3.2** to ensure appropriate land use transitions are evaluated within the Managed Growth Area land uses designation for the County.

## KANSAS CITY

Although Kansas City does not specifically mention annexation or an annexation policy, the city emphasizes the importance of thoughtful growth and development, ensuring it occurs in an equitable, sustainable manner, both financially and environmentally. Future land use designations contiguous to the county line for Kansas City are delineated in **Figure 3.2** to ensure appropriate land use transitions are evaluated within the Managed Growth Area land uses designation for the County.





## Smart Land Use and Development Practices

Smart/conservationist land use and development seek to promote sustainable, equitable, and vibrant development patterns. Tactics emphasize compact, mixed-use development, efficient land use, transportation choices, environmental preservation, and community engagement. Some tactics include:

- **Mix land uses:** Encourage a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses within development areas to reduce the need for long trips and promote walkability.
- **Compact building design:** Encourage development that uses land efficiently and minimizes sprawl by focusing on compact, higher-density development patterns, where applicable.
- **Walkable destinations:** Design destinations that are pedestrian-friendly, with well-connected streets, sidewalks, and amenities within walking distance.
- **Provide a variety of transportation choices:** Promote public transit, biking, and walking options alongside automobile use to reduce congestion, air pollution, and reliance on fossil fuels.
- **Preserve open space and natural beauty:** Protect environmentally sensitive areas, green spaces, and natural habitats to maintain biodiversity, provide recreational opportunities, and enhance the quality of life across the County.
- **Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities:** Encourage infill development and redevelopment of underutilized areas within existing communities to revitalize urban areas and reduce pressure on undeveloped lands.
- **Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective:** Provide clear, consistent development regulations and streamline approval processes to promote investment and ensure equitable access to development opportunities throughout the County and in strategic areas.
- **Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration:** Involve residents, businesses, community organizations, and other regional stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process to ensure that growth strategies reflect local priorities and values.
- **Foster distinctive, attractive destinations:** Promote design and placemaking strategies that celebrate the County's culture, history, and identity, creating vibrant and unique destinations.



# Goals and Strategies

## **GOAL 3.1: PROMOTE A BALANCED MIXTURE AND DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USES THAT BALANCES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH LONGSTANDING RURAL CHARACTER AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**

### **Strategy 3.1.1. Future Land Use Framework**

Update the County's zoning regulations to support the uses, intensities, and design principles outlined in the Future Land Use Framework.

### **Strategy 3.1.2. Land Use, Development, and Infrastructure Policy Coordination**

Coordinate land use policies, zoning, and subdivision regulations, and infrastructure investment plans to focus new growth in or adjacent to incorporated communities easily served by infrastructure and envisioned for growth of the local communities.

### **Strategy 3.1.3. "Land First" Conservation Approach**

Maintain a "land first" development mentality when evaluating County development proposals. "Land First" refers to a set of principles and strategies designed to create more livable and sustainable communities in which development should first take into consideration the value of natural ecology, features, and functions of land before determining the most appropriate development and site design. Conservation design, which requires the conservation, preservation, and enhancement of natural and environmental resources, is one way to implement a "land first" approach to development.

## **GOAL 3.2: PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFICIENT PATTERN OF GROWTH.**

### **Strategy 3.2.1. Community Growth Management Areas**

Maintain a coordinated intergovernmental growth management policy with each incorporated community (e.g., "Managed Growth Area" a buffer around each incorporated community one to three miles in width) within the County to ensure development and infrastructure decisions are mutually beneficial to both the individual community and County, with the overarching goal that growth should be focused within the communities.

### **Strategy 3.2.2. Intergovernmental Coordination**

Collaborate with the incorporated communities, surrounding counties, and Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) on issues and initiatives of mutual interest where shared revenue and joint governance may be advantageous, such as open space preservation, recreational programs, and conservation easements.

### **Strategy 3.2.3. Inter-Municipality Collaboration**

Establish open communication lines between the County and all incorporated communities to determine consistent, streamlined, and transparent development review processes to create a culture of Countywide economic development.

## **GOAL 3.3: ENSURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CAPITALIZES ON AND PRESERVES THE COUNTY’S AGRICULTURAL CHARACTER AND FUNCTION WHILE EXPANDING HOUSING OPTIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

### **Strategy 3.3.1. Mixture of Housing Types, Densities, and Values**

Warrant that the Future Land Use Framework (see **Figure 3.1**) and zoning regulations provide opportunities for a mixture of housing options at varying densities and price points, especially in areas where sewer and water services are available. To maintain the rural character that draws and keeps many residents within the County, three residential land use designations have been identified. Such land use types secure areas for agricultural practices, recreational uses, and large lot residential. As developments move closer to the existing municipalities, residential densities should increase.

### **Strategy 3.3.2. Housing Needs Assessment**

Collaborate with existing municipalities to periodically evaluate their existing housing stock to assess County housing needs, and set County policies and actions to achieve the ideal housing, type, density, price, and location mixture. Update **Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Framework** to reflect the appropriate mixture of housing types and densities, as determined by the housing needs assessment.

### **Strategy 3.3.3. Residential Buffers**

Review County zoning regulations to ensure and require appropriate size and type of buffer between residences and commercial and industrial uses.

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# 04

## Economy

**Section 4** identifies economic development opportunities and proposes several recommendations to guide and support the County's decision-making for the duration of the Plan's term. This section's recommendations are based on insight from several stakeholders and the Clay County Administration as well as the **Economic and Market Analysis**, which can be found in **Appendix D**. Overall, this section supports Clay County's business culture and the development of new economic opportunities.



## Direction Statement

Supports existing businesses and the labor force while strategically attracting new and expanded industry opportunities that support the financial well-being of the County and its municipalities.



## Edge of Tomorrow: Economic Development Framework

Clay County is poised to experience a great deal of potential growth within the near future. In addition to being located on the fringe of the Kansas City Metropolitan Service Area (MSA), Clay County also benefits from being part of an excellent transportation network that is well-integrated within the region. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, due to its location and recent population growth, Clay County also boasts several other advantages relative to other counties that make it an attractive location for businesses and their workers to reside. These include good school districts; low crime rates; ample recreational amenities; available land and infrastructure; and a diverse housing stock. With specific regard to business and company relocation, Clay County is part of a strong and growing regional economy; is conveniently close to highway, air, and rail access; is comprised of a well-educated population; and is situated in a central location within the country.

**TABLE 4.1 – FORECAST RETAIL, OFFICE, INDUSTRIAL, AND RESIDENTIAL DEMAND; CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI 2023 – 2040**

Land Use	Growth (2023 - 2040)		Net Gain	
	Population	Jobs	Conservative	Optimistic
Retail	65,211 - 75,630		3,382,000 SF	4,482,000 SF
Office		3,860 - 5,715	955,000 SF	1,508,000 SF
Industrial		6,180 - 9,145	8,583,000 SF	12,568,000 SF
Housing	65,211 - 75,630		30,429 DU <sub>s</sub>	34,949 DU <sub>s</sub>
Single Family			22,508 DU <sub>s</sub>	25,862 DU <sub>s</sub>
Multi-Family			7,911 DU <sub>s</sub>	9,087 DU <sub>s</sub>

These benefits are also likely why Clay County’s population is likely to continue to grow in the coming years. The **Economic and Market Analysis** analyzed this growth and provided market predictions through 2040. They include the following:

- Retail sales will be able to support an additional 3.38 million to 4.48 million square feet of new retail space.
- Office-related job growth is projected to support the need for 955,000 to 1.5 million square feet of new professional office space.
- Industrial-related jobs will be able to support between an additional 8.6 million to 12.6 million square feet of industrial business space.

In addition to retail, office, and industrial growth, it is anticipated that additional housing will be needed to support these growing markets. Forecasts for housing suggest between 30,429 to 34,949 dwelling units will be needed to support the population’s growth, and presumably, the growing labor force over the next several years.

Along with the larger market trends mentioned above, several stakeholders indicated their desire to see the following concerns addressed at the county level. These critical issues include:

- An increase in public transit access, ensuring there is accessibility throughout a major portion of the County.
- Ensure that infrastructure is well-maintained (e.g., roads, water and sewer districts, stormwater infrastructure); and,
- A desire to see a greater variety of retail and dining options, ensuring that there was a diversity for residents and visitors to choose from.



Although economic development at a county-level scale is complex, there are some strategies that Clay County can employ to encourage development and prepare for population growth.

- **Future Land Use.** As economic growth continues to occur, it will be important for Clay County to establish and use the Future Land Use Framework, ensuring that urban growth transitions naturally to unincorporated areas and growing rural communities.
- **Housing.** Housing within urban growth areas should primarily consist of low to medium-density single-family housing. Higher-density housing is more suitable adjacent to or in proximity to existing employment centers, retail core, and other multi-family housing options. Large-lot rural residential is more suitable for areas outside of those urban growth areas.
- **Public Transit.** Several stakeholders indicated the need for public transportation throughout the County, connecting those without automobiles and vehicles to Kansas City, the greater Kansas City MSA, or other adjacent communities. This could prove to be a particularly strong need for future members of the labor force within the County.





# Goals and Strategies

## **GOAL 4.1: CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION WHEN APPROPRIATE, PROVIDING NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND WORKFORCE AMENITIES.**

### **Strategy 4.1.1. Economic Development Strategy**

Consider developing an Economic Development Strategy that aligns and works with the 2023 Clay County Strategic Plan and Clay County Compass 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

### **Strategy 4.1.2. Affordable Housing Developments**

Support the development of affordable housing through development patterns and zoning regulations. Consider both state and national programs that provide financing for affordable workforce housing projects.

### **Strategy 4.1.2. Public Transportation**

Support local and regional efforts to better public transit connections between municipalities and the Kansas City MSA. Seek partnerships and conversations with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), Kansas City, MoDOT, and other agencies where applicable.

### **Strategy 4.1.3. Small Business Growth**

Ensure the availability of funding opportunities (e.g., grants, loans, etc.) for small and medium-sized entrepreneurs by partnering with the Small Business Association (SBA) and state and local institutions.

### **Strategy 4.1.4. Business Workshops**

Partner with municipalities and the Clay County Economic Development Council to provide business workshops for entrepreneurs, new businesses, and companies. Include welcome packages and a list of resources for existing businesses.

### **Strategy 4.1.5. Resident Support**

Partner with local agencies and schools to provide financial literacy and educational workshops for residents.

## **GOAL 4.2: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND ENCOURAGE RECREATIONAL AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT CLAY COUNTY BY MARKETING THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND THE STATE OF MISSOURI.**

### **Strategy 4.2.1. Municipal Coordination**

Continue to coordinate with local municipalities and their chambers of commerce to develop targeted marketing efforts to increase the level of tourism to the County.

### **Strategy 4.2.2. VisitClayMo Website**

Continue to manage the VisitClayMo website, maintaining its high level of quality and making regular updates as needed.

### **Strategy 4.2.3. Create a 2026 World Cup Strategic Marketing Plan**

Prepare a specific marketing plan for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, actively advertising and aligning local and regional events before the national/international event. Collaborate with chambers of commerce, municipalities, and surrounding counties to capture economic spending on goods, services, and lodging during the event.

### **Strategy 4.2.4. Marketing, Tourism, and Communications Plan**

Develop and implement a Marketing, Tourism, and Communications Plan, collaborating with municipalities, their chambers of commerce, and the Clay County Economic Development Council.

## **GOAL 4.3. ACTIVELY PURSUE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT EXISTING AND EMERGING INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES, EXPANDING THE COUNTY'S TAX BASE.**

### **Strategy 4.3.1. Attracting Economic Growth**

Actively work with municipalities and the Clay County Economic Development Council to attract commercial, employment, and industrial opportunities to the County.

### **Strategy 4.3.2. Incentives**

Explore the use of new county-level economic development incentives to encourage commercial, employment, and industrial opportunities in the County.

### **Strategy 4.3.3. Growth Corridors**

Prioritize commercial and industrial development, where appropriate, along the principal urban growth corridors outlined in the **Economic and Market Analysis**: Interstate 35; Highway 152; Interstate 435; and Highway 169. Consider future developments along Highway 92 and Highway 69, as identified in **Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Framework**. Growth areas should focus around urban areas and municipality boundaries.



# 05

## Mobility

**Section 5** identifies transportation-related goals and strategies, as well as priority transportation improvements. As the transportation system controls the movement of goods and people throughout the County and beyond, a thoughtfully planned and executed transportation framework is essential for providing efficient, convenient, and safe traffic flow. To be a well-balanced transportation system, both motorized and non-motorized modes of travel must be accommodated and have continuity throughout the county. This section works to ensure that Clay County's transportation system is safe, efficient, and well-balanced and supports the vision and values of this Plan.



## Direction Statement

Continues to repair and maintain existing County transportation infrastructure, providing safe access to recreation, healthcare, and economic opportunities for all users.

## Transportation Network Framework

**Figure 5.1** shows the recommended future transportation framework throughout the county, including both vehicular and active modes of transportation. The framework identifies and includes existing County-owned transportation corridors along with roadways in need of upgrading to increase overall traffic flow as the County continues to develop. Additionally, future roadway-adjacent and off-road trail connections previously recommended by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) and the Northland Trails Vision Plan are shown to visualize the entire transportation network.

### County Roads

The network of County-owned roadways are shown to visualize the extent of the transportation network that is currently operated and maintained by Clay County. While most of the recommendations included in this section are on or within the right-of-way of County roads, recommendations that continue through jurisdictional areas are shown to understand connection points and give additional context to the intended build-out of the network.

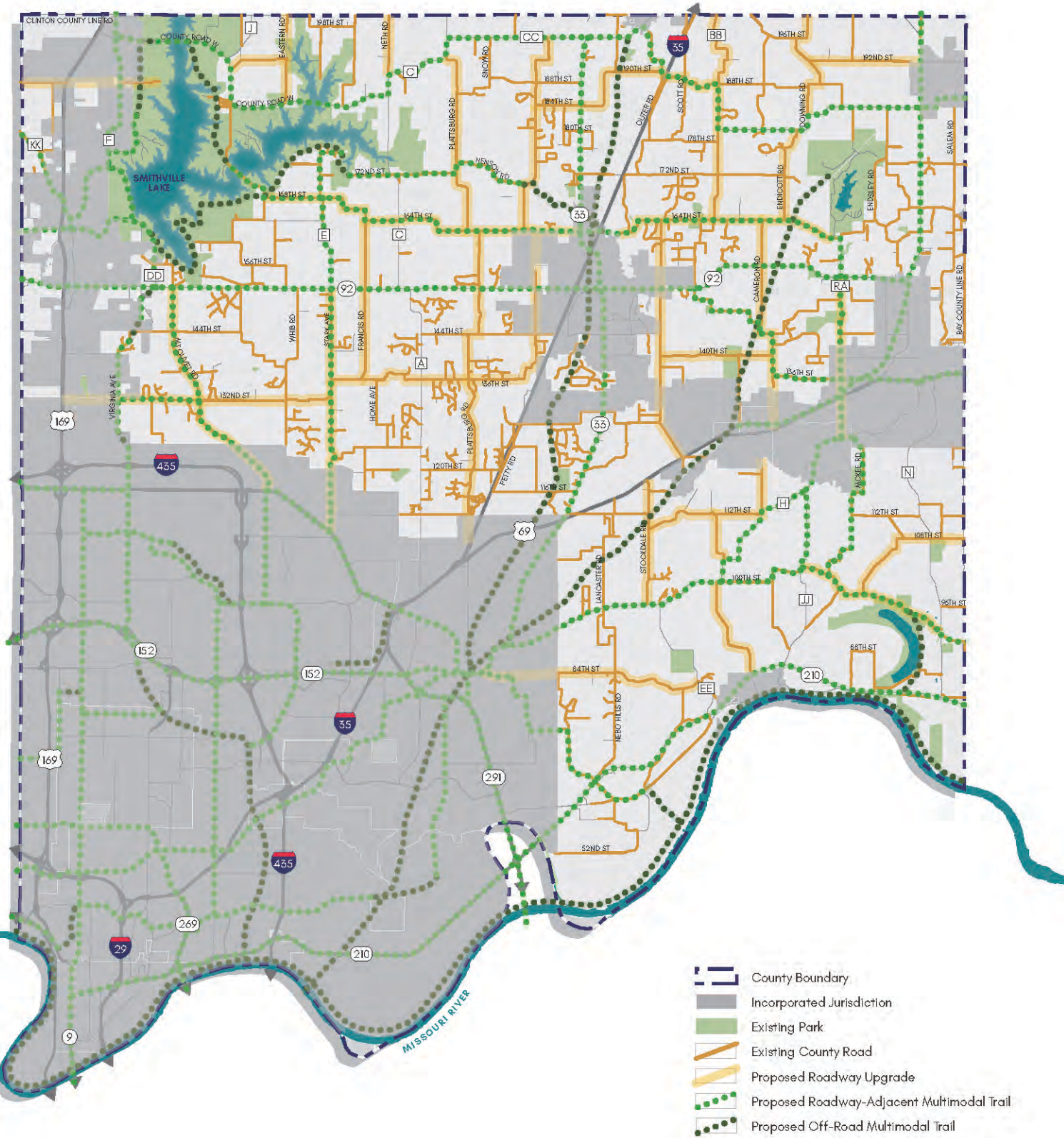
### Proposed Roadway Upgrades

Several County roadways throughout have been identified for priority upgrading to handle larger volumes of traffic, which will alleviate some traffic from the current principal and minor arterial roadway network. Improvements will also position the county to absorb any increase in traffic that may occur as jurisdictions continue to grow and increase in population. Roadway corridors should be landscaped and buffered with native plantings to reduce noise, chemical and light pollution.

### Proposed Trails

Proposed trails refer to multimodal corridors including but not limited to paved pathways, greenways, and soft-surface trails. Trail routes included as recommendations in this Plan come from previously completed trail plans for Clay County, including the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) Regional Bikeway Plan and the Northland Trails Vision Plan.

MARC maintains a Regional Bikeway Plan with proposed routes through the Kansas City Metropolitan Area, which includes Leavenworth County, Wyandotte County, Johnson County, and Miami County on the Kansas side and Platte County, Clay County, Jackson County, and Cass County on the Missouri side. **Figure 5.1** shows regional trail corridors from the 2022 plan document, defined as continuous routes that hold a primary position in the larger bikeway network.



**FIGURE 5.1**  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
**FRAMEWORK**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Olsson Studio

The Northland Trails Vision Plan was created in 2000 as a joint project by Platte County, Clay County, and MARC. The plan includes prioritized trail corridor recommendations between both counties, categorized as bike trails, shared-use trails, combined-use trails, and equestrian trails. **Figure 5.1** includes the bike, shared-use, and combined-use recommendations for Clay County.

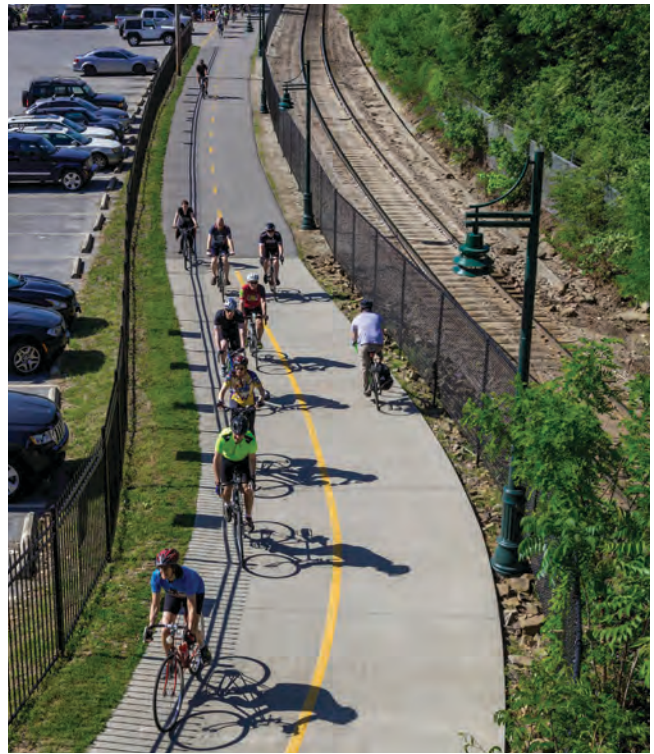
Trail network recommendations are broken into two categories:

## Proposed Roadway Adjacent Trails

Roadway-adjacent trails are located within or near the right-of-way of existing roadways. The pathways follow existing traffic corridors and prioritize safety through having mode-designated lanes. Depending on the width of the roadway and intended modes of transportation, roadway-adjacent trails should be specifically designed to not detrimentally impact traffic flow. Several routes shown on the map in **Figure 5.1** are located along County roads proposed for upgrades and should be completed as part of the upgrade.

## Proposed Off-Road Multimodal Trails

Trails that do not follow existing roadways offer active transportation routes away from vehicular traffic. Most of the routes shown in **Figure 5.1** follow railroad corridors or waterways. Routes to the south and west have potential connection points to existing and proposed trails in Platte County and Jackson County. While off-road trails are viable transportation routes, they are valuable recreational assets as well. Several of the proposed routes are through scenic areas and pass by parks and historic sites.



# Goals and Strategies

## GOAL 5.1: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN AN ACCESSIBLE, SAFE, AND EFFICIENT MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

### Strategy 5.1.1. Transportation Master Plan

While **Figures 5.1** represents a transportation plan with identified improvements for Clay County, it is important to understand that a dedicated, in-depth study of transportation must be completed. This Plan can only address vehicular and multimodal transportation at a high level. Transportation is a complex and multi-faceted issue. A transportation master plan would evaluate existing conditions, identify infrastructure needs, develop evaluation criteria to prioritize the greatest needs and create an action plan to implement the recommended infrastructure improvements or investments.

### Strategy 5.1.2. Functional Classification System Update

Revisit and update the current roadway functional classification system to reflect current traffic volumes. Utilize current best practices, such as those published by FHWA and NACTO, considering national practices and reviews of peer counties in the vicinity.

### Strategy 5.1.3. Create a Secondary Roadway Network

Create a secondary network of arterial and local roadways to keep local trips off regional routes.

### Strategy 5.1.4. Align Roadways with Land Use Type Expectations

Consider local context when assigning a functional classification to the roadway network to ensure that the roadway design appropriately matches its travel characteristics and surrounding land use. Use the Future Land Use Framework and Transportation Framework (see **Figures 3.1.** and **Figure 5.1**)

## GOAL 5.2: SET EFFICIENT AND CONSISTENT ROADWAY STANDARDS IN LINE WITH BEST PRACTICES.

### Strategy 5.2.1. Roadway Standards

Review and update county road standards according to current best practices, such as those published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), considering national practices and reviews of peer counties in the vicinity. Ensure the roadway standards consider and accommodate for transfer of roadway ownership from county to city as growth occurs.

### Strategy 5.2.2. Access Consolidation and Alignment

Enhance public safety using common drives and internal access between compatible properties to minimize conflict points and direct access off public section line roadways.

### Strategy 5.2.3. Context-Sensitive Design

Tailor the design of individual street segments to localized topography, drainage, natural features, and the surrounding development context.

### Strategy 5.2.4. Right-of-Way Preservation

Continue to preserve right-of-way for future roadway connections as a component of future development and redevelopment consistent with street classifications.

## **GOAL 5.3: ACTIVELY COORDINATE WITH REGIONAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL ENTITIES TO GARNER ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT IN CLAY COUNTY.**

### Strategy 5.3.1. County Grant Administrator

Hire a dedicated Grant Administrator for Clay County to coordinate grant fund acquisition on the local, state, and federal levels.

### Strategy 5.3.2. Federal Funding Strategies

Explore federal funding opportunities that may be available for Clay County.

### Strategy 5.3.3. Local Funding Strategies

Evaluate local funding strategies for roadway network expansion and maintenance..

### Strategy 5.3.4. Capital Improvement Program

Reflect the County's priorities for transportation needs as defined by the goals and strategies in this Plan and the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP)







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# 06

## Environment

**Section 6** focuses on Clay County's natural environment, as it helps define its quality of life and links to other facets of the communities. Other elements in this Plan contain goals and strategies related to preserving natural resources and protecting the natural functions of the environment in and around the urbanized areas. This section provides specific guidance on strengthening and expanding partnerships locally, regionally, and nationally to ensure appropriate environmental practices.



## Direction Statement

Engages proven environmental practices to preserve and conserve the County's agriculture, natural resources, local biodiversity, and rural landscape.

## Growth Management

As the County continues to grow it should proactively manage the green spaces and environmental assets that mean the most to the community. Growth management refers to a set of strategies, policies, and practices that aim to guide and control the physical, economic, and social growth of a community or region sustainably and equitably. It involves planning and regulating development to ensure that growth occurs in a way that maximizes benefits while minimizing negative impacts on the environment, infrastructure, quality of life, and its ecosystem. Growth management typically includes elements such as land use planning, zoning regulations, infrastructure investment, environmental protection, and community engagement. The goals of growth management vary depending on the specific needs and priorities of the local communities but commonly include promoting smart land use and development practices principles, preserving natural resources, enhancing livability, and fostering economic vitality. Overall, growth management seeks to achieve balanced and responsible growth that meets the needs of current and future residents.

## Natural Resources Stewardship

Identify and protect natural areas, green spaces, and critical habitats through conservation easements, conservation building practices, land trusts, and partnerships with conservation organizations. This helps maintain vegetation and habitats for biodiversity, protect water quality, and provide recreational opportunities for residents. Several tactics are discussed in the following pages.

## Trees

Community forests are maintained for health and functionality. The tree canopy is crucial because trees provide environmental and economic benefits by improving air quality, managing water by reducing stormwater runoff, and preventing erosion. Tree canopy supports biodiversity and enhances public health and well-being. Trees also play a key role in building community resilience to climate change and extreme weather events.

Future County growth should be managed in a way that avoids habitat destruction and fragmentation. Tree canopy helps mitigate habitat fragmentation, which occurs when natural landscapes are divided into smaller, isolated patches by human development. As a continuous canopy, trees provide essential corridors and connections between fragmented habitats, allowing wildlife to move and disperse more freely. This connectivity is vital for maintaining biodiversity, facilitating species migration, and supporting healthy populations of plants and animals. By preserving and expanding tree canopy cover, counties can mitigate the negative effects of development, promote biodiversity, and enhance resilience in the face of urbanization and land use changes.

## Agrotourism

Agricultural Tourism Operations (ATOs), also known as agritourism operations, are agricultural businesses that open their doors to visitors for recreational, educational, or experiential purposes. These operations can include a wide range of activities and attractions, such as farm tours, u-pick experiences, farm stays, farm-to-table dinners, agricultural workshops, and festivals. ATOs offer visitors the opportunity to learn about farming practices, interact with farm animals, and experience rural life firsthand. These operations not only provide additional income for farmers but also help promote agricultural awareness, support local economies, and preserve rural heritage.

While the County's Land Development Code encourages ATOs, there has been minimal interest among Clay County businesses. Encouraging farms to join ATOs will involve a multifaceted approach. Outreach and education efforts are crucial, involving workshops, seminars, and networking events to showcase the benefits of participating, like additional revenue and engagement. Providing resources, guidelines, and support helps farmers navigate the process, while financial incentives, grants, and collaborations with agricultural organizations can offset costs and provide technical assistance. Highlighting success stories and tailoring offerings to local resources inspires participation while addressing concerns like liability issues and time constraints builds assurance. Promoting networking and collaboration among farmers fosters peer support and knowledge sharing, further building Countywide resilience and collaboration. Together, these efforts can help facilitate farm participation in ATOs, furthering the opportunities for agritourism in Clay County.

## Water

Surface waters, including streams, springs, and ponds/lakes/impoundments, are carefully managed with native plant buffers to safeguard against nonpoint source pollution and provide vital habitat for wildlife. These water bodies are easily accessible to the community through designated access points on public land. The stormwater management approach, also known as rainwater management, operates on a watershed scale, implementing treatment trains that effectively filter nonpoint source pollution from runoff while simultaneously reducing its velocity and volume. This strategy prioritizes surface drainage over buried infrastructure such as pipes and culverts. Moreover, it involves daylighting previously buried streams and incorporates native plants into all vegetated stormwater management practices, ensuring a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to water management.

## Biodiversity

In Clay County, invasive plant species should be managed through prohibition or upon detection to prevent their spread and protect native ecosystems. Conversely, native plants are not only permitted but encouraged for use in both residential and commercial landscaping projects. This approach promotes biodiversity, supports native wildlife habitats, and enhances the overall ecological health of the region. By prioritizing native plants and actively managing invasive species (e.g., bradford pears, burning bush, and non-native honeysuckle), the County can assist in maintaining a balanced and sustainable landscape alongside growth and development.



## Inter-Governmental Collaboration

Conservation planning at the landscape- or regional scale requires multi-jurisdictional coordination by groups such as regional planning organizations, local governments, nonprofit groups, and large land managers or easement holders. Amongst other stakeholders, participants in the planning process may include representatives from parks departments, transportation departments, greenway or trail groups, land trusts, and utility companies.



### Case Study: MetroGreen, a Greenway Plan for the Kansas City Region

In 1991 the American Society of Landscape Architects held its annual meeting in Kansas City. The society's local Prairie Gateway Chapter worked on a Community Assistance Team Project which became MetroGreen ten years later. The MetroGreen Action Plan is a greenprint for a metropolitan trails system that connects urban and rural green corridors throughout seven counties in the Kansas City region. The plan is also designed to protect and improve water quality in the region for the next 100 years, conserving and enhancing the region's existing natural elements.

Implementation of MetroGreen is complex and requires coordination between the local governments, private interests, and residents of the Kansas City region. MetroGreen is a visionary, large-scale system of connected landscape corridors that will span 1,144 miles, link city to suburb to countryside, and connect residents with nature. To achieve the plan's vision, MetroGreen will become more than a system of trails and bike paths--seeking to conserve the unique native landscapes of the Kansas City region and help unify the relationship between land development and land stewardship (Mid-America Regional Council, 2017).



# Goals and Strategies

## **GOAL 6.1: ASSESS AND SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE CLAY COUNTY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS BY UTILIZING POLICIES THAT PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP**

### **Strategy 6.1.1. Identify key assets and strategically preserve the green space surrounding it and connecting key destinations.**

Assets like Smithville Lake, Cooley Lake, Watkins Woolen Mill State Park, and Rocky Hollow Park, among others, should be identified, and a plan for their preservation, connectivity, funding, and promotion within the County for future improvements and/or development.

### **Strategy 6.1.2. Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan with actionable policies and goals for improvements, preparing for the growth and management of Clay County's recreational facilities and programs.

## **GOAL 6.2: CLAY COUNTY SHOULD EMPLOY CONSERVATION TACTICS FOR DEVELOPMENTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.**

### **Strategy 6.2.1. Tree Preservation Ordinance**

Actively protect native trees currently in and around destination areas. Ensure any key greenbelt or corridor forestry lost is replaced tree for the tree.

### **Strategy 6.2.2. Encourage sustainable building and development practices.**

Reduce heat island effects by encouraging green roofs, tree canopies, and permeable surfaces. Preserve and augment existing native vegetation within commercial and residential development and rights-of-way through predevelopment plant inventories and conservation/replacement incentives.

### **Strategy 6.2.3 Identify and conserve natural wildlife corridors to incorporate them into development.**

Preserve greenbelts and wildlife corridors for long-term recreational connectivity throughout Clay County. This will enhance quality of life and become a marketable asset over time.

### **Strategy 6.2.4. Environmental Impacts Assessment for Greenfield Development**

Development policies and management decisions are based on ecological site data. Conservation development practices incorporate and protect existing soils, topography, vegetation, wildlife, and hydrology when land is developed or redeveloped.



### Strategy 6.2.5. Improve stormwater management facilities and practices for treatment quantity and quality.

Ensure adequate construction planning to protect natural vegetation and minimize changes to ground topography. Encourage natural stormwater control methods that maintain or minimize changes to natural systems and decrease the potential damage to private property.

### Strategy 6.2.6. Infrastructure Management Policies

Clay County should seek to integrate green infrastructure within the built environment. These natural systems and/or resources can accomplish tasks that are traditionally associated with gray infrastructure (e.g., rainwater management, wastewater treatment, air quality protection, etc.).

## GOAL 6.3: DEVELOP AND PROMOTE AGRO- AND ECO-TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN CLAY COUNTY.

### Strategy 6.3.1. Development of Outdoor Recreation, Agro- and Eco-Tourism, and Food Literacy.

Promote outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, birdwatching, fishing, or kayaking in the County's natural areas, parks, and waterways. Encourage and support the development of unique agricultural experiences by combining local agriculture processes with outdoor activities.

### Strategy 6.3.2 Coordination with Local Businesses and Organizations

Forge partnerships with local businesses, tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, and agricultural associations to jointly promote agro- and eco-tourism initiatives, cross-promote each other's offerings, and attract visitors to the area.

## GOAL 6.4: PREPARE CLAY COUNTY FOR FUTURE CHANGES IN THE REGIONAL CLIMATE THROUGH STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC CLIMATE-MINDED POLICIES.

### Strategy 6.4.1. Proactive Climate Strategies

Strategies that address climate-related stressors and climate-related vulnerabilities help prepare for shifts in local climate patterns.

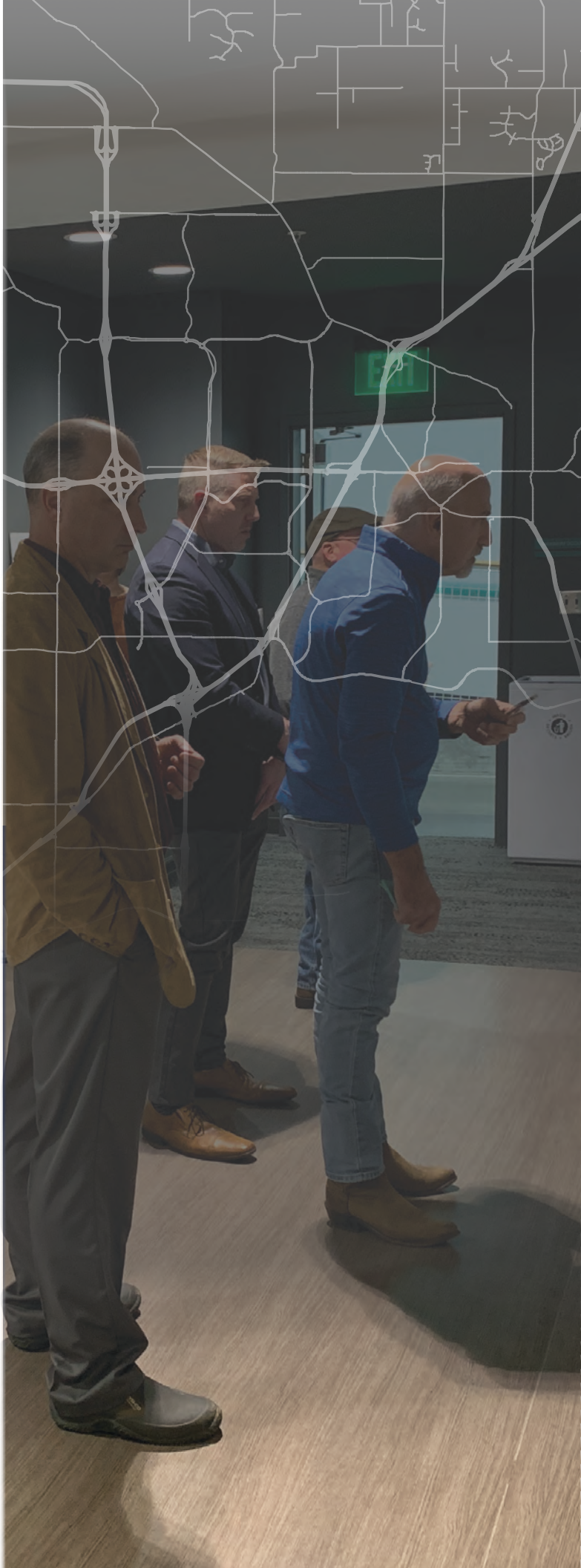
#### Definition: Green vs. Gray Infrastructure

*Green infrastructure consists of strategically planned and managed networks of natural lands and engineered systems, working landscapes, and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to human populations (Benedict & McMahon, 2006).*

*Gray infrastructure (aka built or constructed infrastructure) consists of man-made systems that support communities, including roads and other transportation systems, stormwater management systems, and utilities (Benedict & McMahon, 2006).*



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# 07

## Collaboration

**Section 7** identifies communication and governmental relations-related goals and strategies, as well as ideas for future coordination efforts. As a county, a great deal of time and energy is required to effectively coordinate and communicate changes between all governmental agencies found within the county's jurisdiction. This section works to ensure that Clay County has a comprehensive approach to its discussions, involvement, and communication with various agencies, municipalities, business owners, developers, and citizens.



## Direction Statement

Strive to develop and maintain strong working relationships within the County, its unincorporated community, municipalities, local and regional agencies, and other counties through its policies, regulations, and communications.

### Leading the Way - Collaboration Framework

Counties have a unique position within our society, providing a structure and leadership between states and cities, and caring for the unincorporated land outside between municipalities.

As mentioned in **Section 1, Introduction** the Clay County Planning and Zoning Commission and the County Commission are responsible for managing the growth and development of the County's unincorporated areas. This includes coordinating the individual plans for all districts and cities found within the County. This requires a great deal of communication and collaboration from Clay County! For this reason, the County needs to continue and grow its coordination efforts with each municipality and various agencies.

During the planning process, the planning team met with various stakeholders from around Clay County. The Clay County Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee (CPSC) included members of municipal administrations (e.g., planning and zoning directors, city administrators, etc.), interested business owners, local developers, and more. For more information about the role and formation of the Clay County CPSC, please see **Appendix B - Public Engagement Summary**. Additionally, the planning team held separate stakeholder

interviews with several school districts, public water districts, and municipalities in Clay County. The planning team also met with members of the Clay County Public Health Center, Clay County Highway Department, the Clay County Economic Development Council, and Kearney and Smithville Fire Districts.

Through these efforts, stakeholders and members of the public identified several critical issues, or areas for improvement, about inter-county collaboration and communication. These can be found below:

- Some agencies indicated they would like additional coordination with the Clay County Administration and County Commission.
- Several municipalities indicated they would attend bi-annual, quarterly, or monthly meetings with the County Planning and Zoning Department.
- Citizens were uncertain whether they understood how the County operates on a monthly or annual basis.
- There was a strong desire to see a county newsletter to provide county-level news to citizens about administrative changes, upcoming events, or county services; and
- There was a lack of understanding regarding county services (i.e., fire and emergency medical services).

Although public and organizational stakeholders indicated that they felt the County was by and large transparent and communicative, it is clear from the touchpoints that additional communication efforts should be encouraged. Fortunately, Clay County can build on its existing programs and outreach.

- **Clay County Online.** Clay County can continue to provide additional information on its website, supplying educational resources for developers, homeowners, and business owners to read and understand at their leisure.
- **Civic Education for Youth.** The County can further improve the public's awareness of its roles and responsibilities through outreach efforts with local educational institutions. Partnering with high schools, junior high schools, and middle schools can be a great way to raise awareness about the County. Considerations may include field trips, presentations, or participatory demonstrations.
- **Municipal Coordination.** To encourage further coordination between the County and its municipalities, the County could organize annual, semi-annual, or monthly meetings between key members of their administrations. This could include coffee-style meetings, luncheons, and group meetings to discuss development-type questions, transportation coordination, etc.
- **Regional Coordination.** Clay County should continue to develop its relationships with regional and state entities, scheduling regular check-ins or meetings with members of these entities. Additional coordination should focus on building relationships, learning about other planning efforts in the region, and collaborating where possible.

## Missouri and its Counties

The very first county in Missouri was established in 1812. Today, there are 114 counties present within the State. This means Missouri has the fifth-most in the nation, many more counties than other states. Clay County was officially established in 1822, one year after Missouri officially gained Statehood in August of 1821.

The Missouri State Constitution divides counties into four classes based on assessed property valuations. Clay County is designated as a first-class charter county, giving the Clay County Planning Commission the right to prepare and adopt a "Master Plan" (Missouri Revised Status, Chapter 64, et. Seq).

Since a county is seen as an extension of the State in which it resides, it is responsible for providing and coordinating public services between municipal governments and communities. These services include various county administrative tasks (e.g., County Administrator, operating voting booths); land use regulations and guidance (e.g., planning and zoning, managing unincorporated lands); law enforcement (e.g., County Sheriff, operating county jails); judicial duties (e.g., county courthouse, jurisdictional disputes); road maintenance (e.g., snow removal, repairing rural roads), and much more.



# Goals and Strategies

## **GOAL 7.1: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CLAY COUNTY'S PROCESSES AND ORGANIZATION THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS.**

### **Strategy 7.1.1. Clay County Civic Academy**

Support and encourage the growth of the Clay County Civic Academy, providing opportunities for the public to learn more about how county government operates.

### **Strategy 7.1.2. Youth Outreach**

Support the inclusion of government and civic education through engagement with local educational institutions.

### **Strategy 7.1.3. Municipal Education**

Continue to support and educate municipalities and their officials in their understanding of Clay County's processes and organization.

### **Strategy 7.1.4. Online Resources**

Develop dynamic educational resources that describe Clay County's history, internal processes, and jurisdictional powers and house these on Clay County's website, ensuring that anyone can access them at any time.

## **GOAL 7.2: WIDELY PUBLICIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE CLAY COUNTY COMPASS 2040 PLAN AND ITS GOALS AND STRATEGIES, ENSURING THAT THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS ARE AWARE OF ITS EXISTENCE.**

### **Strategy 7.2.1 Public Acknowledgement**

After the Plan is adopted, acknowledge the plan's success through various public and stakeholder engagement opportunities online and in person.

### **Strategy 7.2.2. Internal Coordination**

Ensure that all Clay County departments and staff are aware of the Plan and understand how to implement the goals and strategies that pertain to their department.

### **Strategy 7.2.3. County Leadership Coordination**

Coordinate with members of the Clay County Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission to ensure that all members are aware of the goals and strategies of the Plan.

### Strategy 7.2.4. Agency and Organization Partners

Work with local and regional partners to ensure they are educated on the Plan’s goals and strategies, providing them an opportunity to join in the Plan’s implementation where appropriate.

### Strategy 7.2.5. Plan Progress and Amendments

Regularly review and update the Plan’s implementation matrix, ensuring that it is updated and as current as possible. Consider possible amendments that align the Plan with existing economic and demographic changes.

## GOAL 7.3: INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PLANNING AND ZONING INFORMATION, AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, TO THE PUBLIC, ENSURING TRANSPARENCY.

### Strategy 7.3.1. Transparency and Online Resources

Increase transparency regarding planning and zoning information on the County’s website including pertinent maps, zoning codes, and development regulations.

### Strategy 7.3.2. Annual Planning Seminar

Hold annual planning seminars for interested stakeholders, allowing them to learn more about Clay County’s Planning and Zoning Department and ask questions of staff members.

### Strategy 7.3.3. GIS Data

Continue to develop and improve the availability of data on the Clay County GIS web portal.



**GOAL 7.4: DEVELOP A SEMI- OR BI-ANNUAL COUNTY NEWSLETTER THAT PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF RESOURCES, IMPORTANT COUNTY UPDATES, UPCOMING EVENTS, AND RECOGNITION OF CLAY COUNTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.**

**Strategy 7.4.1. Funding and Operations**

Identify and allocate funding for the creation and development of a County newsletter.

**Strategy 7.4.2. Partnerships**

Establish partnerships with Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Departments, and Municipalities to provide the most relevant event information.

**Strategy 7.4.3. Promote**

Work with local and regional outlets to market the availability and efforts of the County newsletter.

**GOAL 7.5: HAVE WELL-ESTABLISHED AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLAY COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS, COORDINATING REGULARLY AND OFTEN TO ENSURE THE ENTIRE COUNTY'S SUCCESS.**

**Strategy 7.5.1. Regular Touchpoints**

Schedule regular or semi-regular touchpoints between city administrators and members of the Clay County Administration.

**Strategy 7.5.2. Annual Symposium or Luncheon**

Consider creating an annual symposium or luncheon where city administrators, agency and organization directors, and County department heads join to discuss current concerns and ongoing projects. Encourage school district superintendents, service districts (i.e., water and fire districts), police chiefs, and others to attend.

**Strategy 7.5.3. County Planning Meetings**

Host semi-regular meetings with members from various municipal planning departments, sharing ideas for best practices, voicing concerns, and furthering collaboration between Clay County's planning and zoning department and municipalities.





# 08

## Implementation

**Section 8** sets specific actions that various departments, bodies, and organizations should take to advance the Plan’s recommendations. This section should be used as a decision-making tool as County staff members, vested organizations, and infrastructure-, and environmental-related opportunities and issues.

# How To Use The Action Plan

This section should be used as a decision-making tool as County staff members, vested agencies, and elected officials consider and allocate funding toward present and future opportunities.

## Clay County Compass 2040

The Comprehensive Plan is an essential tool for Clay County and provides a foundation for the County's zoning code, land use designations, and relevant policies and programs. Through enactment of this implementation matrix, the vision and policies will help direct the growth of Clay County.

## Implementation Matrix

This implementation matrix, **Table 8.1 - Table 8.5**, includes goals and strategies that were listed in each of the Plan's chapters. The following tables build on these by identifying specific actions that need to be completed to successfully attain these goals and strategies. This matrix should be regularly revisited to ensure that is successfully being implemented and to make sure it remains current with the County's needs and expectations.

This matrix is organized so that every action has an assigned stakeholder and a suggested time frame. An overview of the different stakeholders and definitions of each time frame is provided in the descriptions below.

## Partners

The implementation of the Plan is a collaborative effort, one that not only includes County staff, but also regional and local partners as well. With that being said, it is imperative that Clay County leadership leads these efforts and directs or assists its partnerships in the necessary steps to fulfill this implementation matrix.

Please note that the 'assigned partners may change as the Plan is revisited and updated throughout the Plan's life cycle. Names of departments, organizations, and local and regional agencies may be reassigned or changed in the event of an amendment.

### Clay County Staff

- County Commission
- County Planning and Zoning Commission
- County Administration
- Human Resources
- Communications and Tourism
- County Planning and Zoning
- Facilities
- Information and Technology
- Budget and Finance
- Maps and Geographic Information Systems
- Midwest National Air Center / APEX
- Parks and Recreation
- Road and Bridge
- Clay County Sheriff

## Clay County Organizations

- Clay County Public Health Center
- Clay County Economic Development Council

## Municipal / Local Organizations / Local or Regional Agencies

- Kearney Fire District
- Smithville Fire District
- Municipalities
- Municipal Chambers of Commerce
- Municipal Planning and Zoning
- School Districts
- Public Water Districts
- Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT)
- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)
- Platte County Administration

## Time Frame

Some actions can be started immediately and/or continued throughout the Plan's life. Others will take time and preparation, sometimes taking years to complete.

SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM	CONTINUOUS
<i>Short-term strategies and actions are targeted for completion within five years. Some of these steps may take some additional planning and study to implement while others are relatively simple and may be ready for immediate implementation.</i>	<i>Medium-term strategies and actions are targeted for within ten years. These policies will require additional coordination and planning to reach a point where they can be implemented.</i>	<i>These strategies and actions will extend beyond ten years and will require significant preparation, study, and planning to ensure their implementation is assured.</i>	<i>Any policy that is labeled as Continuous may be completed as funding and time allow. It may also require ongoing support from County staff to ensure its application is effective.</i>

TABLE 8.1

# LAND USE ELEMENT



This section includes the goals, strategies, and actions pertaining to **Section 3: Land Use**. The following table, **Table 8.1**, outlines the specific actions needed to complete the land use strategies and fulfill the land use goals for the County.

**GOAL 3.1: PROMOTE A BALANCED MIXTURE AND DISTRIBUTION OF LAND USES THAT BALANCES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH LONGSTANDING RURAL CHARACTER AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**

**Strategy 3.1.1. Future Land Use Framework** - Update the County’s zoning regulations to support the uses, intensities, and design principles outlined in the Future Land Use Framework.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Conduct a thorough review of the existing Land Development Code (LDC) and compile a comprehensive list of changes (with exact policy text) necessary to align the LDC with intent of the Plan.	Short-Term	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission
Communicate changes with County residents through the Planning and Zoning Department’s webpage on the County website.	Short-Term	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Information and Technology, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission
Present proposed plan amendments to the Planning and Zoning Commission for recommendation of approval and to the County Commission for approval.	Short-Term	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission

**Strategy 3.1.2. Land Use, Development, and Infrastructure Policy Coordination** - Coordinate land use policies, zoning, and subdivision regulations, and infrastructure investment plans to focus new growth in or adjacent to incorporated communities easily served by infrastructure and envisioned for growth of the local communities.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Examine innovative options for infrastructure cost sharing mechanisms (consider public private partnerships, re-examine impact fees).	Medium-Term	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission

**TABLE 8.1**

**Strategy 3.1.3. "Land First" Conservation Approach** - Maintain a "land first" development mentality when evaluating County development proposals. "Land First" refers to a set of principles and strategies designed to create more livable and sustainable communities in which development should first take into consideration the value of natural ecology, features, and functions of land before determining the most appropriate development and site design. Conservation design, which requires the conservation, preservation, and enhancement of natural and environmental resources, is one way to implement a "land first" approach to development.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Update the County's Land Development Code (LDC) to align with the Clay County Compass Comprehensive Plan Land Use Framework</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission
<i>Work with and educate development review applicants on ways to incorporate conservation design principles into their development proposals.</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Information and Technology, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission

TABLE 8.1

**GOAL 3.2: PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFICIENT PATTERN OF GROWTH.**

**Strategy 3.2.1. Community Growth Management Areas** - Maintain a coordinated intergovernmental growth management policy with each incorporated community (e.g., “Managed Growth Area” a buffer around each incorporated community one to three miles in width) within the County to ensure development and infrastructure decisions are mutually beneficial to both the individual community and County, with the overarching goal that growth should be focused within the communities.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Encourage for a unified and cohesive intergovernmental growth management agreements between the County and all incorporated communities for ease of implementation and enforcement</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission

**Strategy 3.2.2. Intergovernmental Coordination** - Collaborate with the incorporated communities, surrounding counties, and Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) on issues and initiatives of mutual interest where shared revenue and joint governance may be advantageous, such as open space preservation, recreational programs, and conservation easements.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Regularly coordinate and hold meetings with local partners to continue efforts for collaborative growth.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission

**Strategy 3.2.3. Inter-Municipality Collaboration** - Establish open communication lines between the County and all incorporated communities to determine consistent, streamlined, and transparent development review processes to create a culture of Countywide economic development.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Coordinate with each municipality when potential development is in the Managed Growth Area designated in <b>Figure 3.1 Future Land Use</b>.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Municipal Planning and Zoning
<i>Establish a standard operating procedure for an efficient development review and coordination process.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Municipal Planning and Zoning

TABLE 8.1

**GOAL 3.3: ENSURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CAPITALIZES ON AND PRESERVES THE COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL CHARACTER AND FUNCTION WHILE EXPANDING HOUSING OPTIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

**Strategy 3.3.1. Mixture of Housing Types, Densities, and Values** - Warrant that the Future Land Use Framework (see Figure 3.1) and zoning regulations provide opportunities for a mixture of housing options at varying densities and price points, especially in areas where sewer and water services are available. To maintain the rural character that draws and keeps many residents within the County, three residential land use designations have been identified. Such land use types secure areas for agricultural practices, recreational uses, and large lot residential. As developments move closer to the existing municipalities, residential densities should increase.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Periodically evaluate the Land Development Code to ensure that it does not have unnecessary barriers preventing affordable housing and new housing trends.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning
Promote quality housing options for people of all ages, incomes, and housing preferences.	Continuous	County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Municipalities

**Strategy 3.3.2. Housing Needs Assessment** - Collaborate with existing municipalities to periodically evaluate their existing housing stock to assess county housing needs, and set county policies and actions to achieve the ideal housing, type, density, price, and location mixture. Update **Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Framework** to reflect the appropriate mixture of housing types and densities, as determined by the housing needs assessment.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Coordinate with municipalities when developments are located within the Managed Growth Area to ensure a mixture of housing types.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, Municipal Planning and Zoning
Update <b>Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Framework</b> to reflect the appropriate mixture of housing types and densities, as determined by each municipalities needs.	Medium-Term	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Planning & Zoning Commission, County Commission

**Strategy 3.3.3. Residential Buffers** - Review County zoning regulations to ensure and require appropriate size and type of buffer between residences and commercial and industrial uses.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Annually review and maintain the Land Development Code requirements to ensure residential developments are protected from higher intensity uses.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Planning & Zoning Commission, County Commission



TABLE 8.2

## ECONOMY ELEMENT



This section includes the goals, strategies, and actions pertaining to **Section 4: Economy**. The following table, **Table 8.2**, outlines the specific actions needed to complete the economic strategies and fulfill the economic goals for the County.

### GOAL 4.1: CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION WHEN APPROPRIATE, PROVIDING NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND WORKFORCE AMENITIES.

**Strategy 4.1.1. Economic Development Strategy** - Consider developing an Economic Development Strategy that aligns and works with the 2023 Clay County Strategic Plan and Clay County Compass 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Partner with Clay County Economic Development Council to identify and assess future development projects and identify any barriers that could be streamlined or simplified.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Economic Development Council, Budget and Finance
<i>Consider hiring a consultant team to assist in the development of an Economic Development Strategy, gaining insight from experienced economic professionals.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Economic Development Council, Budget and Finance
<i>Develop and publish an Economic Development Strategy that provides for a prosperous future for Clay County.</i>	Long-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Economic Development Council, Budget and Finance, County Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission
<i>Align all future economic development strategies with the goals outlined in the County Strategic Plan and the Clay County Compass 2040.</i>	Long-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Economic Development Council, Budget and Finance, County Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission



TABLE 8.2

**Strategy 4.1.2. Affordable Housing Developments** - Support the development of affordable housing through development patterns and zoning regulations. Consider both state and national programs that provide financing for affordable workforce housing projects.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Ensure that land use policies and zoning regulations provide for healthy environments in anticipation of future housing developments. Coordinate with municipalities to ensure nearby land aligns with their plans for annexation.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning
Support municipal and state programs involved in housing rehabilitation efforts.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration
Promote and advertise regional, state, and national programs aimed at housing maintenance and assistance to new homeowners, renters, and landlords.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration

**Strategy 4.1.3. Public Transportation** - Support local and regional efforts to better public transit connections between municipalities and the Kansas City MSA. Seek partnerships and conversations with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), Kansas City, MoDOT, and other agencies where applicable.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Work with municipalities to determine missing connections and/or first and final connections for local transit lines.	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Municipalities, Municipal Chamber of Commerce, Municipal Planning and Zoning
Evaluate the role that Clay County can take in facilitating conversations between the necessary entities to complete these connections.	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Municipalities, Municipal Chamber of Commerce, Municipal Planning and Zoning

**TABLE 8.2**

**Strategy 4.1.4. Small Business Growth** - Ensure the availability of funding opportunities (e.g., grants, loans, etc.) for small and medium-sized entrepreneurs by partnering with the Small Business Association (SBA) and state and local institutions.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Work with public and private partners to support the education of new entrepreneurs, connecting them with the resources they need to learn and succeed within Clay County’s business climate.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council
<i>Retain and support existing small businesses within Clay County by connecting them to state and local technical assistance programs.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council
<i>Consider partnering with the Missouri Department of Economic Development, Clay County’s Economic Development Council, and Clay County’s municipalities to support the creation of small-business incubators where there’s interest.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipalities

**Strategy 4.1.5. Business Workshops** - Partner with municipalities and the Clay County Economic Development Council to provide business workshops for entrepreneurs, new businesses, and companies. Include welcome packages and a list of resources for existing businesses.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Identify and share state, private, non-profit, and federal funding opportunities available to existing and potential business owners.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council
<i>Lead the effort and encourage the start of county business workshops and/or seminars for entrepreneurs, businesses, and companies.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council

**Strategy 4.1.6. Resident Support** - Partner with local agencies and schools to provide financial literacy and educational workshops for residents.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Encourage local and educational institutions to provide materials and sessions on financial literacy within the County.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council

TABLE 8.2

**GOAL 4.2: CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND ENCOURAGE RECREATIONAL AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT CLAY COUNTY BY MARKETING THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND THE STATE OF MISSOURI.**

**Strategy 4.2.1. Municipal Coordination** - Continue to coordinate with local municipalities and their chambers of commerce to develop targeted marketing efforts to increase the level of tourism to the County.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Set semi-regular meetings with different chambers of commerce to ensure that communication is consistent with Clay County.	Continuous	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce
Assist municipalities as they advertise and promote unique experiences for residents and visitors alike.	Continuous	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce

**Strategy 4.2.2. VisitClayMo Website** - Continue to manage the VisitClayMo website, maintaining its high level of quality and making regular updates as needed.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Ensure that all website information is updated and current with upcoming event details, including dates, times, and how to attend.	Continuous	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council
Encourage municipalities and Chambers of Commerce to reach out to staff and provide them with details of upcoming events.	Continuous	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce

**Strategy 4.2.3. Create a 2026 World Cup Strategic Marketing Plan** - Prepare a specific marketing plan for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, actively advertising and aligning local and regional events before the national/international event. Collaborate with chambers of commerce, municipalities, and surrounding counties to capture economic spending on goods, services, and lodging during the event.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
In association with municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Clay County Economic Development Council, create a strategic marketing plan to advertise the various things-to-do, places to explore, and unique histories present within the northland for the 2026 World Cup	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, County Administration, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Platte County
Ensure that unique strategies that are tailored to the northland are present within the strategic marketing plan.	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Clay County Economic Development Council, County Administration, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Platte County



TABLE 8.2

**Strategy 4.2.4. Marketing, Tourism, and Communications Plan** - Develop and implement a Marketing, Tourism, and Communications Plan, collaborating with municipalities, their chambers of commerce, and the Clay County Economic Development Council.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Maintain and annually revise a Marketing, Tourism, and Communications Plan.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism
<i>Encourage a robust stakeholder and engagement period during the plan development, ensuring that the public, local business owners, Chambers of Commerce, and others are aware of the planning effort.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities
<i>Maintain a marketing, tourism, and communications plan with specific goals and strategies that seek to market Clay County as an exciting and fun county full of things to do, whether it be play, shop, or eat.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities

TABLE 8.2

**GOAL 4.3. ACTIVELY PURSUE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT EXISTING AND EMERGING INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES, EXPANDING THE COUNTY'S TAX BASE.**

**Strategy 4.3.1. Attracting Economic Growth** - Actively work with municipalities and the Clay County Economic Development Council to attract commercial, employment, and industrial opportunities to the County.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Partner with municipalities to identify key issues and concerns their businesses are voicing.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities
<i>Develop a one-for-one solution-focused strategy to try and address concerns identified from Action 1.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning, County Planning and Zoning
<i>Encourage private investment through continued maintenance, investment, and growth in facilities, infrastructure, and services.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Road and Bridge, Parks and Recreation, County Planning and Zoning
<i>Work with the Clay County Economic Development Council to advertise new commercial, employment, and industrial opportunities.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning, County Planning and Zoning

**Strategy 4.3.2. Incentives** - Explore the use of new county-level economic development incentives to encourage commercial, employment, and industrial opportunities in the County.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Continuously seek out incentives to attract economic development prospects for redevelopment of existing buildings and new business development.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Economic Development Council



TABLE 8.2

**Strategy 4.3.3. Growth Corridors** - Prioritize commercial and industrial development, where appropriate, along the principal urban growth corridors outlined in the **Economic and Market Analysis**: Interstate 35; Highway 152; Interstate 435; and Highway 169. Consider future developments along Highway 92 and Highway 69, as identified in **Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Framework**. Growth areas should focus around urban areas and municipality boundaries.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Partner with the Clay County Economic Development Council and municipalities to identify underutilized or dilapidated properties.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Administration</b> , <i>Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, County Planning and Zoning</i>
<i>Using the Economic and Market Analysis, develop specific strategies that target the growth of each corridor.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Administration</b> , <i>Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, County Planning and Zoning</i>
<i>Facilitate meaningful conversations whenever possible to connect property owners with potential buyers.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Administration</b> , <i>Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, County Planning and Zoning</i>

TABLE 8.3

# MOBILITY ELEMENT



This section includes the goals, strategies, and actions pertaining to **Section 5: Mobility**. The following table, **Table 8.3**, outlines the specific actions needed to complete the specific strategies and fulfill the transportation-related goals for Clay County.

## GOAL 5.1: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN AN ACCESSIBLE, SAFE, AND EFFICIENT MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

**Strategy 5.1.1. Transportation Master Plan** - While **Figure 5.1 Transportation Network** represents a transportation plan with identified improvements for Clay County, it is important to understand that a dedicated, in-depth study of transportation must be completed. This Plan can only address vehicular and multimodal transportation at a high level. Transportation is a complex and multi-faceted issue. A transportation master plan would evaluate existing conditions, identify infrastructure needs, develop evaluation criteria to prioritize the greatest needs and create an action plan to implement the recommended infrastructure improvements or investments.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Allocate funding for a transportation master plan in the County's upcoming budget cycle.	Long-Term	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission
Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to develop a Transportation Master Plan.	Long-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission
Encourage a robust stakeholder and engagement period during the transportation master planning process, ensuring that the community is aware of the transportation planning effort.	Long-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission
Develop a transportation master plan with specific goals and strategies that seek to enhance and address the transportation needs of Clay County.	Long-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission

**Strategy 5.1.2. Functional Classification System Update** - Revisit and update the current roadway functional classification system to reflect current traffic volumes. Utilize current best practices, such as those published by FHWA and NACTO, considering national practices and reviews of peer counties in the vicinity, where applicable.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Update and classify appropriate roadways as arterial roadways to better compete for grant funding opportunities on the local, regional, and federal levels.	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission



TABLE 8.3

**Strategy 5.1.3. Create a Secondary Roadway Network** - Create a secondary network of arterial and local roadways to keep local trips off regional routes.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Designate current roadways underneath these classifications using the framework map in <b>Figure 5.1 Transportation Network</b> as guidance.	Short-Term	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission
Provide connections between developments for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, and balance access points along major roadways to promote even traffic flow throughout the entire transportation system.	Medium-Term	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, County Commission

**Strategy 5.1.4. Align Roadways with Land Use Type Expectations** - Consider local context when assigning a functional classification to the roadway network to ensure that the roadway design appropriately matches its travel characteristics and surrounding land use. Use the Future Land Use Framework and Transportation Framework (see **Figures 3.1. and Figure 5.1**)

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Determine appropriate roadway typology and characteristics, including surfacing, sidewalk placement, lighting, and maintenance recommendations.	Medium-Term	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning



**GOAL 5.2: SET EFFICIENT AND CONSISTENT ROADWAY STANDARDS IN LINE WITH BEST PRACTICES.**

**Strategy 5.2.1. Roadway Standards** - Review and update county road standards according to current best practices, such as those published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), considering national practices and reviews of peer counties in the vicinity. Ensure the roadway standards consider and accommodate for transfer of roadway ownership from county to city as growth occurs.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
Regularly review best practices set forth by FHWA.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning
Coordinate with peer counties, identifying the successful implementation of best practices in their jurisdictions.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning
Ensure county roads within identified municipal annexation areas are consistent with municipal roadway standards.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Municipalities

**Strategy 5.2.2. Access Consolidation and Alignment** - Enhance public safety using common drives and internal access between compatible properties to minimize conflict points and direct access off public section line roadways.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
Align driveway locations with existing or proposed driveways on opposite sides of streets, especially in commercial and industrial areas.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning

**Strategy 5.2.3. Context-Sensitive Design** - Tailor the design of individual street segments to localized topography, drainage, natural features, and the surrounding development context.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
Collaborate with developers to ensure future projects account for the natural features of individual sites.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Road and Bridge

TABLE 8.3

**Strategy 5.2.4. Right-of-Way Preservation** - Continue to preserve right-of-way for future roadway connections as a component of future development and redevelopment consistent with street classifications.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Work with incorporated municipalities to ensure that the right-of-way is consistent with future development needs when located within municipal growth areas.</i>	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Municipalities

TABLE 8.3

**GOAL 5.3: ACTIVELY COORDINATE WITH REGIONAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL ENTITIES TO GARNER ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT IN CLAY COUNTY.**

**Strategy 5.3.1. County Grant Administrator** - Hire a dedicated Grant Administrator for Clay County to coordinate grant fund acquisition on the local, state, and federal levels.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify if the needs, workflow, and task items related to this position.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>Human Resources</b> , County Administration, Road and Bridge
<i>Publish and seek applications from highly qualified and experienced professionals.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>Human Resources</b> , County Administration, Road and Bridge
<i>Pursue available grants for transportation, safety, economic development, or other specific needs for identified transportation projects.</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<b>County Administration</b> , Road and Bridge

**Strategy 5.3.2. Federal Funding Strategies** - Explore federal funding opportunities that may be available for Clay County.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Work with MARC to designate priority projects throughout the county and gain funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, MARC
<i>Identify other eligible federal funding sources with local and regional partners.</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration



TABLE 8.3

**Strategy 5.3.3. Local Funding Strategies** - Evaluate local funding strategies for roadway network expansion and maintenance.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Revisit current impact fee requirements to ensure policies align with long-term transportation infrastructure goals.	Short-Term	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration
Identify other eligible local funding sources with local and regional partners.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration

**Strategy 5.3.4. Capital Improvement Program** - Reflect the County’s priorities for transportation needs as defined by the goals and strategies in this Plan and the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Review transportation recommendations identified in <b>Section 5</b> of the Clay County Compass 2040 plan and determine remaining improvements.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, MARC
Prioritize remaining improvements, to be considered for inclusion in the CIP.	Continuous	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Planning and Zoning, County Administration

TABLE 8.3

**GOAL 5.4: DEVELOP AND PRIORITIZE A COUNTYWIDE TRAIL SYSTEM.**

**Strategy 5.4.1. Northland Trails Vision Plan** - Revisit the 2000 Northland Trails Vision Plan to ensure that all trail recommendations are relevant.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Review and update the Northland Trails Vision Plan to realign the goals with the current needs throughout the County.	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Platte County Administration, MARC, Municipalities, Parks and Recreation
Work with Platte County, MARC, County municipalities, and other surrounding communities to align trail recommendations with regional goals and visions.	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , Platte County Administration, MARC, Municipalities, Parks and Recreation

**Strategy 5.4.2. Park Tax** - Explore utilizing a park tax to fund future trail network expansion.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Work with Platte County officials to understand their tax funding mechanisms and determine what could work for Clay County.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, Platte County Administration
Identify strategies for developing a park tax, with consideration to funding for trail maintenance and expansion.	Medium-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration

**Strategy 5.4.3. Recreational Trail Easement** - A recreation or trail easement allows public trails to be used as a right-of-way for recreational activities. Ensure that policy language appropriately protects property owners from liability.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Develop policy language and/or guidance for the County to obtain recreational easements for trail network expansion.	Medium-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning
Develop educational material to inform the public about this policy, its benefits, and individual property owner protection.	Medium-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning
Utilize resources from the Rails to Trails Conservancy and investigate case studies in similar counties initiating trail development.	Medium-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning



TABLE 8.3

**GOAL 5.5: PROACTIVELY PLAN FOR EMERGING TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGIES AND MODES TO ENSURE CLAY COUNTY MAINTAINS ITS RELEVANCY AS AN ATTRACTIVE PLACE FOR COMMERCE.**

**Strategy 5.5.1. Emerging Transportation Technology Education** - As technology progresses, integration of new modes, such as connected vehicles (meaning vehicles that communicate with nearby vehicles and infrastructure), electric vehicles, and automated vehicles (meaning vehicles that operate with varying degrees of autonomy with varying degrees of driver dependence) should be considered as connections are facilitated.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Remain up to date on regional trends and implementation projects related to emerging transportation technology.</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning
<i>Ensure the readiness of existing infrastructure for the potential integration of AV and EV technology.</i>	<i>Medium-Term</i>	<b>Road and Bridge</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning

TABLE 8.4

## ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT



This section includes the goals, strategies, and actions pertaining to **Section 6: Environment**. The following table, **Table 8.4**, outlines the specific actions needed to complete the environmentally focused strategies and fulfill the identified goals for the County.

### GOAL 6.1: ASSESS AND SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE CLAY COUNTY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS BY UTILIZING POLICIES THAT PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP.

**Strategy 6.1.1. Identify key assets and strategically preserve the green space surrounding it and connecting key destinations** - Assets like Smithville Lake, Cooley Lake, Watkins Woolen Mill State Park, and Rocky Hollow Park, among others, should be identified, and a plan for their preservation, connectivity, funding, and promotion within the County for future improvements and/or development. investments.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Continue to update and maintain a list of all natural assets found within Clay County.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Facilities, Communications and Tourism
Determine the maintenance needs of all identified natural assets. Include details pertaining to their preservation, rehabilitation, or maintenance. Create a plan to address these needs, assigning responsibilities as needed.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Facilities, Communications and Tourism
Identify any limitations in funding or skillsets to accomplish the aforementioned plans.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Facilities, Communications and Tourism, Budget and Finance, County Administration

**Strategy 6.1.2 Parks and Recreation Master Plan** - Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan with actionable policies and goals for improvements, preparing for the growth and management of Clay County's recreational facilities and programs.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Develop a Request for Qualification (RFQ) to hire a consultant to develop a Parks and Recreation Plan.	Short-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Parks and Recreation
Encourage a robust stakeholder and engagement period during the planning process, ensuring that the public, municipalities and their parks and recreation departments.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, Communications and Tourism, Municipalities
Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan with specific goals and strategies that promote Clay County's parks and recreational opportunities.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation</b> , County Administration, Communications and Tourism, Municipalities



TABLE 8.4

**GOAL 6.2: CLAY COUNTY SHOULD EMPLOY CONSERVATION TACTICS FOR DEVELOPMENTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.**

**Strategy 6.2.1. Tree Preservation Ordinance** - Actively protect native trees currently in and around destination areas. Ensure any key greenbelt or corridor forestry lost is replaced tree for the tree.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Develop and adopt a tree preservation ordinance to prevent unnecessary tree removal with existing and future developments.	Medium-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation, County Planning and Zoning, County Planning and Zoning Commission, County Commission</b>
Using the <b>Future Land Use Framework</b> (see <b>Figure 3.1</b> ), identify key greenbelts within the County where native trees should be preserved.	Short-Term	<b>Parks and Recreation, County Planning and Zoning</b>

**Strategy 6.2.2. Encourage sustainable building and development practices** - Reduce heat island effects by encouraging green roofs, tree canopies, and permeable surfaces. Preserve and augment existing native vegetation within commercial and residential development and rights-of-way through predevelopment plant inventories and conservation/replacement incentives.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Partner with municipalities to encourage the use of native and noninvasive vegetation within commercial and residential developments.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning</b>
Require plant inventories be included as requirement of residential, commercial, or industrial site plan submittals within the County.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration</b>
Partner with municipalities to encourage commercial and residential properties to create green roofs, grow their tree canopies and employ permeable surfaces where appropriate.	Continuous	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipalities, Municipal Planning and Zoning</b>

**Strategy 6.2.3 Identify and conserve natural wildlife corridors to incorporate them into development** - Preserve greenbelts and wildlife corridors for long-term recreational connectivity throughout Clay County. This will enhance quality of life and become a marketable asset over time.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Work with local and regional organizations to identify all wildlife corridors, advertising their location and importance to the region.	Short-Term	<b>County Administration, MARC, Clay County Public Health Center, Municipalities</b>
Seek opportunities to place passive and active recreational activities in these specific areas and locations, preventing high-density or intensive development from taking place.	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipalities</b>



TABLE 8.4

**Strategy 6.2.4. Environmental Impacts Assessment for Greenfield Development** - Development policies and management decisions are based on ecological site data. Conservation development practices incorporate and protect existing soils, topography, vegetation, wildlife, and hydrology when land is developed or redeveloped.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Ensure that all greenfield developments are required to provide an environmental impacts assessment as part of their application. This should include screening, scoping, impact analysis, mitigation measures, etc.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration

**Strategy 6.2.5. Improve stormwater management facilities and practices for treatment quantity and quality** - Ensure adequate construction planning to protect natural vegetation and minimize changes to ground topography. Encourage natural stormwater control methods that maintain or minimize changes to natural systems and decrease the potential damage to private property.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Partner with municipalities to ensure that development policies protect existing vegetation as much as possible.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Municipal Administrations
Work with municipalities and agencies to educate developers about natural stormwater control methods, minimizing the potential negative impacts to ecosystems and natural systems that are present.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Municipal Administrations
Discourage developments from installing water-intensive landscapes.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Municipal Administrations

**Strategy 6.2.6 Infrastructure Management Policies** - Clay County should seek to integrate green infrastructure within the built environment. These natural systems and/or resources can accomplish tasks that are traditionally associated with gray infrastructure (e.g., rainwater management, wastewater treatment, air quality protection, etc.).

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Partner with municipalities to learn more about new practices related to green infrastructure whenever possible (e.g., seminars, hosting round-table discussions, or hiring infrastructure experts during development periods).	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Municipalities
Encourage developers to implement green infrastructure within their projects, where appropriate.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, County Administration



TABLE 8.4

**GOAL 6.3: DEVELOP AND PROMOTE AGRO- AND ECO-TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN CLAY COUNTY.**

**Strategy 6.3.1. Development of Outdoor Recreation, Agro- and Eco-Tourism, and Food Literacy -**

Promote outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, birdwatching, fishing, or kayaking in the County’s natural areas, parks, and waterways. Encourage and support the development of unique agricultural experiences by combining local agriculture processes with outdoor activities.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Partner with municipality leaders and advocacy organizations to update zoning codes and building codes to promote agricultural tourism in line with their individual municipal codes.	Long-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Municipal Planning and Zoning
Identify underutilized natural areas, parks, and waterways, searching for unique ways to promote new activities wherever possible.	Medium-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Municipal Planning and Zoning, Parks and Recreation
Partner with local and regional partners, like Clay County Public Health Center, to promote programs and initiatives that provide education on food literacy.	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Clay County Public Health

**Strategy 6.3.2 Coordination with Local Businesses and Organizations -** Forge partnerships with local businesses, tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, and agricultural associations to jointly promote agro- and eco-tourism initiatives, cross-promote each other’s offerings, and attract visitors to the area.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Identify existing agro- and eco-tourism businesses within Clay County.	Short-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Communications and Tourism
Partner with Clay County Economic Development Council and other partners to develop a marketing strategy to promote Clay County’s existing agro- and eco-tourism businesses.	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Communications and Tourism, Clay County Economic Development Council
Collaborate with agro-and eco-tourism advocates to continuously identify best practices and partnerships to help grow agro-and eco-tourism within Clay County.	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning

GOAL 6.4 PREPARE CLAY COUNTY FOR FUTURE CHANGES IN THE REGIONAL CLIMATE THROUGH STUDIES AND ASSESSMENTS, AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC CLIMATE-MINDED POLICIES.

**Strategy 6.4.1 Proactive Climate Strategies** - Strategies that address climate-related stressors and climate-related vulnerabilities help prepare for shifts in local climate patterns.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Support the KC Regional Climate Action Plan’s strategies and tailoring and implementing policies that meet the local needs and priorities of Clay County.</i>	Medium-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, MARC, Municipalities
<i>Promote the findings of climate-related assessments and the KC Climate Action Plan. Support the public education of climate resilience.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , County Planning and Zoning, MARC, Municipalities

TABLE 8.5

# COLLABORATION ELEMENT

This section includes the goals, strategies, and actions pertaining to **Section 7: Collaboration**. The following table, **Table 8.5**, outlines the specific actions needed to promote collaboration between a range of partners and the County.

## GOAL 7.1: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CLAY COUNTY’S PROCESSES AND ORGANIZATION THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS.

**Strategy 7.1.1. Clay County Civic Academy** - Support and encourage the growth of the Clay County Civic Academy, providing opportunities for the public to learn more about how county government operates.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Consider the staff members and current operation of this program, evaluating its current needs and shortcomings.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b>
<i>Evaluate the effectiveness of the program by including a pre-program and post-program test or evaluation to gather metrics on the program’s effectiveness.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b>
<i>Conduct a questionnaire with previous Clay County Civic Academy participants, eliciting what worked and/or did not work.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b>
<i>Invite members of former academies to come and participate in current academies or events.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration</b>
<i>Encourage municipalities to send one representative per session to provide their input, providing the municipality’s point of view.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration, Municipalities</b>
<i>Market the Clay County Civic Academy through social media channels and local organizations to raise the number of applications received.</i>	Continuous	<b>County Administration, Communications and Tourism</b>

**Strategy 7.1.2. Youth Outreach** - Support the inclusion of government and civic education through engagement with local educational institutions.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify a member of Clay County’s administration to be responsible for communications with local high schools.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Administration, School Districts</b>
<i>Develop a short presentation that can be given to high school-level students, providing them a better understanding of the county’s role and purpose.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Administration, School Districts</b>

**TABLE 8.5**

**Strategy 7.1.3. Municipal Education** - Continue to support and educate municipalities and their officials in their understanding of Clay County’s processes and organization.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify a member of Clay County’s administration to be responsible for meeting quarterly with each incorporated municipality staff (administration, GIS, Planning, Public Works etc.) and maintaining ongoing communications outside of the scheduled meetings.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Administration</b> , Municipalities

**Strategy 7.1.4. Online Resources** - Develop dynamic educational resources that describe Clay County’s history, internal processes, and jurisdictional powers and house these on Clay County’s website, ensuring that anyone can access them at any time.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Evaluate the County’s website at present, taking note of which resources are currently available and what could be included.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, Maps and GIS
<i>Maintain the language that describes the founding of Clay County, its governmental model, and its authority in the context of the State of Missouri and local municipalities.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, Maps and GIS
<i>Continue to include visualizations such as graphics, timelines, diagrams, or flow charts to better illustrate the educational materials.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, Maps and GIS
<i>Provide informational videos featuring members of the Clay County Administration, describing certain county processes.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, Maps and GIS
<i>Consider developing an interactive webpage for the Clay Compass 2040 Comprehensive Plan to provide quick access to the plan and ongoing metrics of the plans implementation progress.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , County Administration, County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, Maps and GIS



**TABLE 8.5**

**GOAL 7.2: WIDELY PUBLICIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE CLAY COUNTY COMPASS 2040 PLAN AND ITS GOALS AND STRATEGIES, ENSURING THAT THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS ARE AWARE OF ITS EXISTENCE.**

**Strategy 7.2.1 Public Acknowledgment** - After the Plan is adopted, acknowledge the plan’s success through various public and stakeholder engagement opportunities online and in person.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Post the final Plan on the County’s website and create a shortcut for site visitors to quickly access and review it.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Information and Technology
<i>Send an email with a copy of the final Plan to all municipalities, allowing them a chance to have the most recent version of the Plan.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Municipalities
<i>Consider holding one or two in-person informational sessions with the public within the first year of the Plan’s adoption.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration

**Strategy 7.2.2. Internal Coordination** - Ensure that all Clay County departments and staff are aware of the Plan and understand how to implement the goals and strategies that pertain to their department.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Provide a copy of the final Plan to all County departments for their review.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration
<i>Consider holding an internal, information session within the first six months of the Plan’s adoption to make sure each department is aware of the goals and strategies and which ones pertain to them.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Communications and Tourism, Facilities, Information and Technology, Budget and Finance, Maps and GIS, Parks and Recreation, Road and Bridge, Sheriff

**Strategy 7.2.3. County Leadership Coordination** - Coordinate with members of the Clay County Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission to ensure that all members are aware of the goals and strategies of the Plan.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Host a joint or separate work session(s) to ensure that all members are aware of the goals and strategies of the Plan.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, County Commission, County Planning and Zoning Commission

**TABLE 8.5**

**Strategy 7.2.4. Agency and Organization Partners** - Work with local and regional partners to ensure they are educated on the Plan’s goals and strategies, providing them an opportunity to join in the Plan’s implementation where appropriate.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Identify all local and regional partners that should be aware of the Plan’s adoption.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b>
<i>Create and provide a one-pager that summarizes the Plan and the County’s goals and strategies for the Plan’s planning period.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b>
<i>Send the one-pager to the list of identified local and regional partners, ensuring they are able to ask follow-up questions as needed.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration</b>

**Strategy 7.2.5. Plan Progress and Amendments** - Regularly review and update the Plan’s implementation matrix, ensuring that it is updated and as current as possible. Consider possible amendments that align the Plan with existing economic and demographic changes.

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS</b>
<i>Provide an annual report to the County Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission, updating them on the status of the implementation matrix.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Maps and GIS, Information and Technology</b>
<i>Meet annually with department heads to assess the status of the implementation matrix and identifying.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>County Planning and Zoning, County Administration, Maps and GIS, Information and Technology</b>



TABLE 8.5

**GOAL 7.3: INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PLANNING AND ZONING INFORMATION, AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, TO THE PUBLIC, ENSURING TRANSPARENCY.**

**Strategy 7.3.1. Transparency and Online Resources** - Increase transparency regarding Planning and Zoning information on the County’s website including pertinent maps, zoning codes, and development regulations.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Evaluate the current availability of resources online, ensuring that all information is kept up to date.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , Maps and GIS, Information and Technology
<i>Identify and provide other information on the County’s website that may prove to useful to the public, developers, and organizations.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Maps and GIS, Information and Technology

**Strategy 7.3.2. Annual Planning Seminar** - Hold an annual planning seminar for interested stakeholders, allowing them to learn more about Clay County’s Planning and Zoning Department and ask questions of staff members.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Based on feedback from the Planning and Zoning Director and the rest of the Clay County Planning Department, identify and prepare presentations based on current key planning topics and necessary conversations.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration
<i>Organize and host a planning seminar, providing an option for municipalities, developers, and other stakeholders to ask questions and learn about Clay County’s planning matters.</i>	Short-Term	<b>County Planning and Zoning</b> , County Administration, Municipal Planning and Zoning



**Strategy 7.3.3. GIS Data** - Continue to develop and improve the availability of data on the Clay County GIS web portal.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify data that could be included in an available, online format through Clay County's GIS web portal.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>Maps and GIS</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology
<i>Gather relevant GIS data and layers from state and national agencies to update Clay County's GIS web portal.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>Maps and GIS</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology, MARC, MoDOT, Municipalities
<i>Determine if current and upcoming GIS needs warrant additional role or team responsibilities. If so, identify relevant training and seminars for personnel to attend and learn.</i>	<i>Short-Term</i>	<b>Maps and GIS</b> , County Planning and Zoning, Information and Technology

TABLE 8.5

**GOAL 7.4: DEVELOP A SEMI- OR BI-ANNUAL COUNTY NEWSLETTER THAT PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF RESOURCES, IMPORTANT COUNTY UPDATES, UPCOMING EVENTS, AND RECOGNITION OF CLAY COUNTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.**

**Strategy 7.4.1. Funding and Operations** - Identify and allocate funding for the creation and development of a County newsletter.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify all potential costs that may relate to the newsletter in terms of printing costs, digital marketing, distribution services, and software (i.e., Adobe InDesign, MailChimp, etc.). Determine if the existing marketing budget can take on the added cost. If not, work with the County Commission to distribute the appropriate funding for this task.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Human Resources, Budget and Finance, County Administration, County Commission

**Strategy 7.4.2. Partnerships** - Establish partnerships with Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Departments, and Municipalities to provide the most relevant event information.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Establish a list of key partners within each municipality's respective agency, gathering all pertinent contact information.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Municipalities, Municipal Chambers of Commerce
<i>Provide the latest edition of the newsletter to each key partner.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Municipalities, Municipal Chambers of Commerce

**Strategy 7.4.3. Promotion** - Work with local and regional outlets to market the availability and efforts of the County newsletter.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
<i>Identify the local and regional outlets that would be open to promoting the County newsletter.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> ,
<i>Work with municipalities to identify local partners that would like to sign up. Coordinate with each community as needed.</i>	Short-Term	<b>Communications and Tourism</b> , Municipalities, Municipal Chambers of Commerce
<i>Provide the respective outlets with online links to and/or paper copies of the most recent editions of the County newsletter.</i>	Continuous	<b>Communications and Tourism</b>

TABLE 8.5

**GOAL 7.5: HAVE WELL-ESTABLISHED AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLAY COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES, AGENCIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS, COORDINATING REGULARLY AND OFTEN TO ENSURE THE ENTIRE COUNTY'S SUCCESS.**

**Strategy 7.5.1. Regular Touchpoints** - Schedule regular or semi-regular touchpoints between city administration/departments and members of the Clay County Administration.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Determine the best time to meet with different city administration/departments and schedule a one-on-one or small group meeting.	Short-Term	County Administration, Municipalities
Set consistent and reoccurring meeting times based on the concerns and needs of the respective city administrator.	Short-Term	County Administration, Municipalities

**Strategy 7.5.2. Annual Symposium or Luncheon** - Consider creating an annual symposium or luncheon where city administrators, agency and organization directors, and County department heads join to discuss current concerns and ongoing projects. Encourage school district superintendents, service districts (i.e., water and fire districts), police chiefs, and others to attend.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Plan for an annual luncheon where city administrators, agency and organization directors, and County department heads join to discuss current concerns and ongoing projects. Include these individuals' respective agencies in creating the agenda and its items. Highlight best practices, draw attention to state and national concerns that may affect the County and its municipalities, and seek methods to increase collaboration and communication between different County and municipal agents.	Short-Term	County Administration, County Planning, Clay County Public Health Center Road and Bridge, Clay County Economic Development Council, Municipalities, Municipalities, Municipal Chambers of Commerce, Municipal Planning and Zoning, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)

**Strategy 7.5.3. County Planning Meetings** - Host semi-regular meetings with members from various municipal planning departments, sharing ideas for best practices, voicing concerns, and furthering collaboration between Clay County's Planning and Zoning department and municipalities.

ACTION	TIME FRAME	ACTION OWNER/PARTNERS
Determine the best time to meet with planning administrators and schedule a one-on-one or small group meeting to discuss best practices and concerns.	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, Municipal Planning and Zoning
Set consistent and reoccurring meeting times based on the concerns and needs of the respective planning administrators	Continuous	County Planning and Zoning, Municipal Planning and Zoning



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# A

## Existing Conditions

Long-range planning must be founded on an understanding of a community's past and present.

**Appendix A** presents a summary of the analysis of the current state of Clay County. This section acknowledges the importance of well-informed recommendations and strategies that properly respond to existing realities.

**Appendix A** provides an overview of Clay County's place and role within the region, natural and physical characteristics, and demographic and economic trends.

# Existing Land Use

## Land Use Tier Policy

With the purpose of protecting the future environmental and economic health of Clay County, the Future Land Use map created as part of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes a three-level land use tier strategy. The tier policy was adopted as a plan recommendation and is now utilized to direct land development in the unincorporated areas of the County.

The tier concept is designed to conserve agricultural uses, open space, and rural land as the County continues to develop. Growth is directed to designated urban growth areas that can meet public service and infrastructure needs alongside new development. For these reasons, the development tiers are based upon the following factors:

- Proximity to an incorporated municipality;
- Location within a major watershed served by/planned for service by municipal wastewater systems; and,
- Location within an identified municipal Annexation Intent Area.

**Figure A.1** shows a map of the planning tiers as established by the 2008 Clay County Comprehensive Plan, which includes the three land use tiers as described below.

## Natural Resources Tier

Areas designated within the Natural Resources Tier are intended to remain generally undeveloped. Such areas are primarily used for agricultural production. Rural residential development is allowed but limited to one (1) dwelling unit per 20 or more acres.

## Rural Low-Density Tier

The Rural Low-Density Tier generally consists of areas with no immediate or near-term urban services. In most cases these areas are beyond one mile of an existing city and beyond one mile from a major drainage way having existing or planned sanitary sewer service. These areas are intended for low-density residential development.

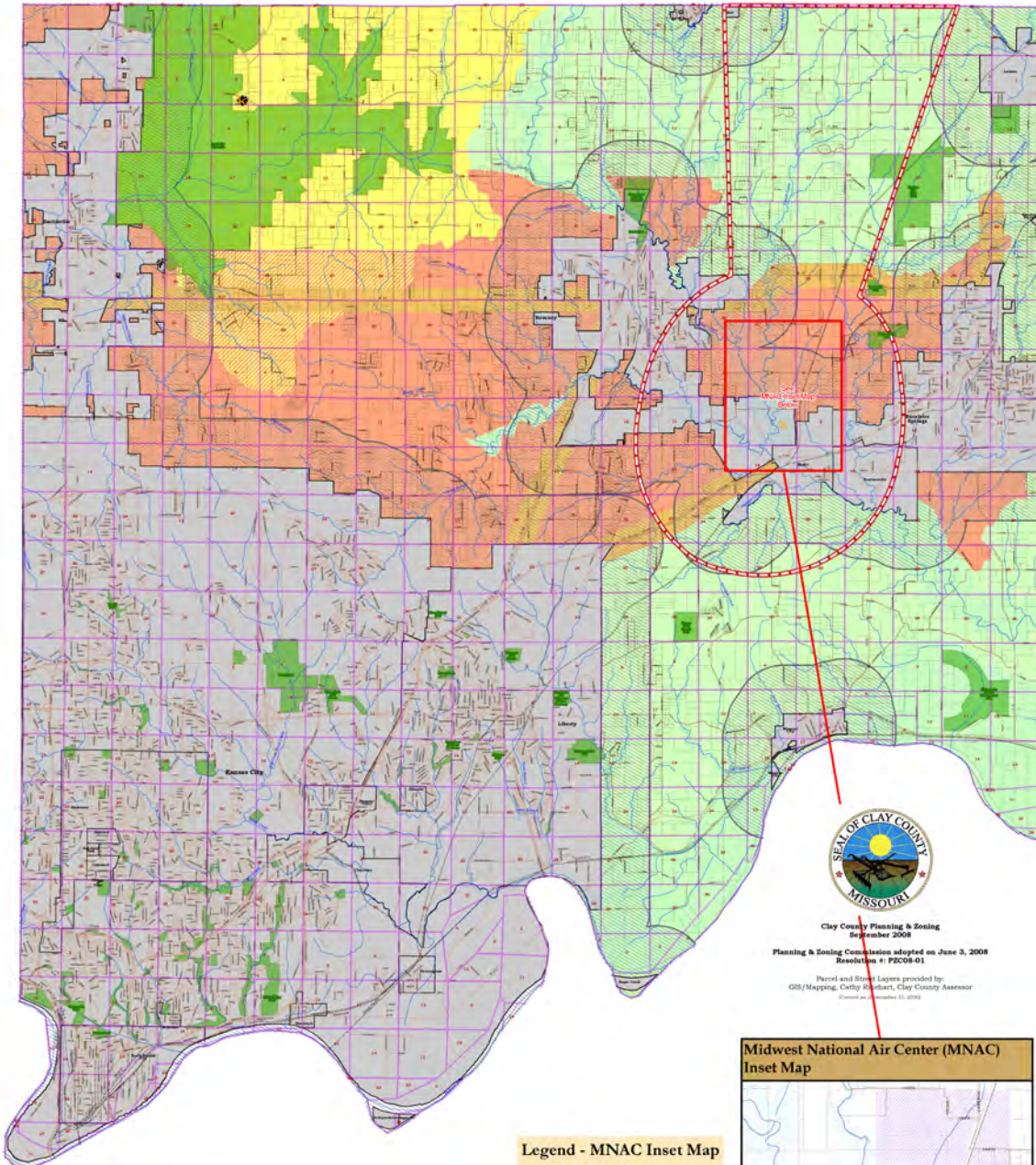
## Urban Services Tier

Areas within the Urban Services Tier have ready access to municipal or regional sewer districts with a full range of urban services available. Typically, such designated areas are within a mile of a city boundary. Land uses within this tier are expected to remain agricultural in nature unless the infrastructure can support more intense urban development.

**FIGURE A.1 PLANNING TIER MAP, 2008**

**Clay County Comprehensive Plan 2008**

**Planning Tier Map**



Clay County Planning & Zoning  
September 2008  
Planning & Zoning Commission adopted on June 3, 2008  
Resolution # PZ08-01  
Parcel and Street Layers provided by:  
GIS/Mapping, Cathy Alshart, Clay County Assessor  
(Created on November 10, 2008)

**Legend - Main View**

- Parcels w/Info (2006)
- Sec-Twn-Rge
- Highway
- Roads
- Railroads
- Parks
- Streams (EPA)
- Floodplain
- 2008 City Limits
- Special Districts
- 2008 Comp Plan - Density Tiers**
  - Urban Services Tier
  - Urban Services Transition Sub-Tier
  - Natural Resources Tier
  - Rural Low Density Tier
- Highway Corridor Overlay Dists.
- 1-Mile Urban Coordination Sub-Tier
- Airport Area Overlay
- County Boundaries

5

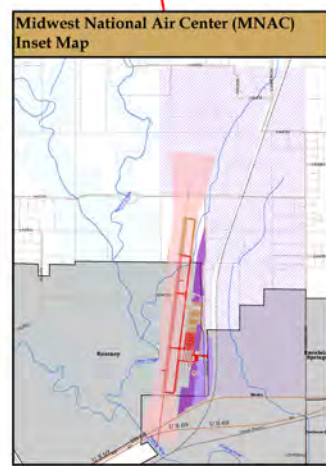
0 0.5 1 2 Miles  
1 inch equals 3,000 feet

**Legend - MNAC Inset Map**

- MNAC Facilities**
  - Existing Airport Facilities
  - Future Airport Facilities
  - MNAC - Future Runway
  - Runway Protection Zone
- Airport-Related Uses**
  - Future Aviation Use
  - Future Non-Aviation Use
  - Airport-Compatible Land Use
- Streams (EPA)
- Floodplain

**Scale - MNAC Inset Map**

1 inch equals 1,200 feet



**Table A.1** shows the percentage of acreage breakdown for land uses within the County. **Figure A.2** shows the distribution of land uses within the County. Each land use category is defined as follows:

- Open Space: Common land
- Agricultural: Farming and forestry
- Parks and Recreation: Parks, golf courses, and community gardens
- Residential: Homes, both single-family and multi-family
- Commercial: Service, retail, office, industrial, manufacturing, and hotels/motels
- Utilities: Utility uses (e.g., cell towers, gas pipelines, etc.)
- Civic/Public: Churches, schools, and other not-for-profit uses
- Unoccupied: Land with few to no structures and no primary use

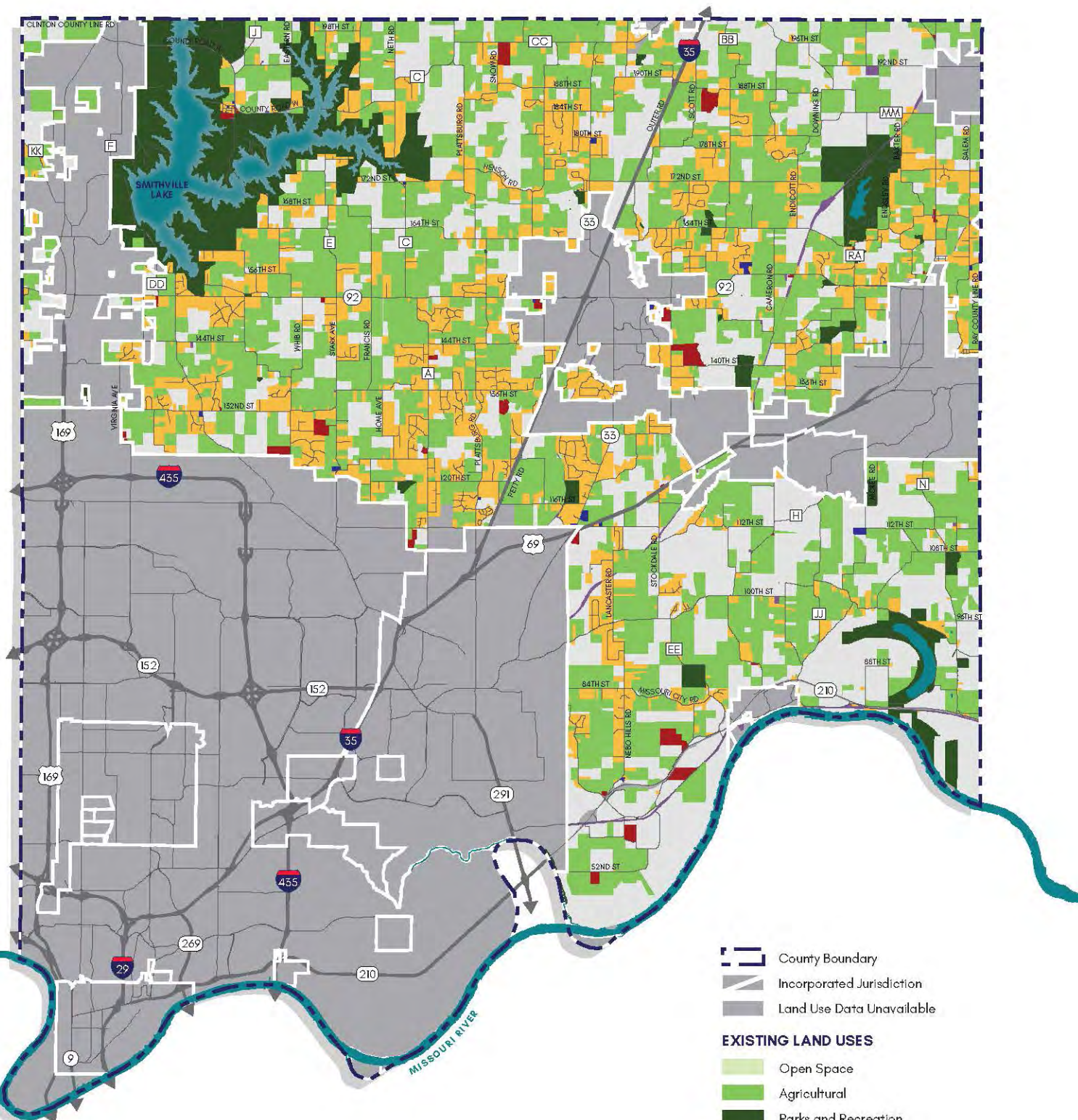
**TABLE A.1, EXISTING LAND USE**

LAND USE CATEGORY	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Open Space	0.00%
Agricultural	37.1%
Parks and Recreation	11.8%
Residential	17.9%
Commercial	0.76%
Utilities	0.41%
Civic/Public	0.15%
Unoccupied	31.9%

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Current land use in Clay County is predominantly agricultural or undeveloped land with few to no structures. High concentrations of these land uses are found in areas further away from incorporated areas of the County. According to the Land Use Tier Structure from the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, this pattern is logical as it is more difficult to develop and maintain the infrastructure and public services necessary to sustain more intensive development. As shown by the land use data, Clay County is largely agricultural in nature and the focus on limiting development to urban service areas, as stated in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, has been maintained.





**FIGURE A.2**  
**EXISTING LAND USE**

0' 8,000' 16,000' 24,000' 32,000'  
 1-inch NORTH

Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Olsson Studio

# Existing Zoning

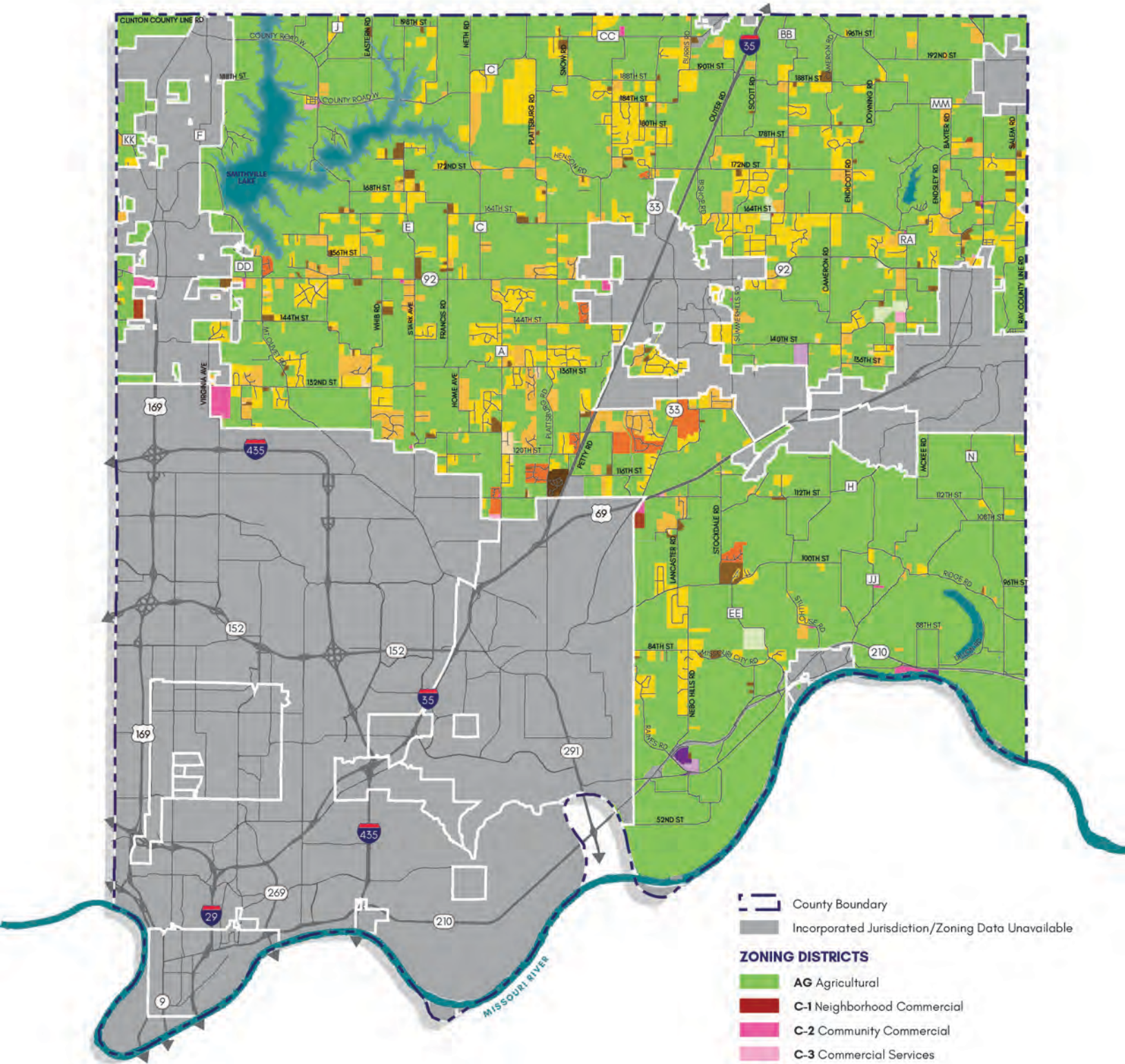
**Figure A.3** illustrates existing zoning within Clay County. Currently, there are 14 zoning districts which include:

- **AG:** Agricultural
- **C-1:** Neighborhood Commercial
- **C-2:** Community Commercial
- **C-3:** Commercial Services
- **I-1:** Limited Industrial
- **I-2:** General Industrial
- **OP:** Open Space/Trails/Parks/Public Use
- **RU:** Residential Urban Density
- **R-1:** Residential Rural
- **R-1A:** Residential Low-Density
- **R-1B:** Residential Urban
- **R-3:** Residential Multi-Unit
- **R-5:** Residential Ranchette
- **R-SDM:** Residential Services District Multi-Family

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Zoning within Clay County consists only within unincorporated areas while zoning for incorporated areas of the County is controlled by local municipalities. The County is largely zoned for agricultural with areas of residential zoning districts sporadically spread throughout the County. The south-east quadrant of the County has less residential districts with a small bundle of industrial zoned districts towards the southern tip of the County just the east of Liberty. Additionally, there are more Residential Services District Multi-Family and Residential Ranchette just east of Smithville Lake than other areas of the County that slightly extend past MO-92.

A high concentration of R-1B and R-1A (Residential Urban and Residential Low-Density) are located between US-69 and I-35 and adjacent west of I-35. There are C-1, C-2, C-3 (Neighborhood Commercial, Community Commercial, and Commercial Services) located along the western boundary of the County near Smithville, west of I-35 along MO-92, north of CR-CC, and south of MO-210 east of CR-JJ.



**FIGURE A.3**  
**EXISTING ZONING**



Data Sources: Clay County UrbanFootprint.org, OpenStree

# County Facilities and Services

Essential services and facilities are provided by the government that safeguard public well-being. Included in these essential services and facilities are fire and police protection, community facilities, schools, parks and recreation facilities, utilities, and solid waste management. These services are foundational to a sustainable and vibrant community. They provide space and services to maintain the quality of life residents expect as they choose to live in Clay County. Community facilities should work in harmony as they encourage social cohesion and a better quality of life for all residents of the County.

It is essential to understand what and where community facilities are within the County, as they help to facilitate growth and increase quality of life. Such facilities need to be developed in a thoughtful and measured way to provide the adequate level of service for all residents within the County. The development pattern, economy, health, and safety of the County will all be affected by the location and quality of community facilities throughout the County.

## County Office Buildings

Public buildings are essential to the life and health of many community facilities. The following is an overview of buildings used by Clay County to provide services for its residents.

**Clay County Administration Building:** The main County office building is located in the center of the historic downtown square in Liberty (1 Courthouse Square, Liberty, MO 64068). The County Administrator, Assessor's Office, Auditor, County Clerk, and County Recorder of Deeds are located in the Administration Building.

**Clay County Courthouse:** The Clay County Courthouse is located in downtown Liberty (11 S Water Street, Liberty, MO 64068) and houses the Clay County Sheriff Administration Offices, Detention Center, Emergency Management, and Prosecuting Attorney.

**Clay County 234 Shrader Building:** Located in downtown Liberty, (234 W Shrader Street, Liberty, MO 64068), this building houses the Clay County Maps and GIS, Planning and Zoning, Public Administrator, and Information Services Departments.

**Clay County Extension Center/Westside Annex:** The annex building is located at the intersection of I-35 and I-29 (1901 NE 48th Street, Kansas City, MO 64118) and contains offices for the Clay County Collector and Assessor Departments.

**Clay County Parks and Recreation Office:** The Parks and Recreation Office located at Smithville Lake (17201 Paradesian, Smithville, MO 64089) houses the Clay County Parks and Recreation Department.

**Clay County Road & Bridge Department Office:** The Road & Bridge Department Office located in Kearney (16616 NE 116th Street, Kearney, MO 64060) houses the Clay County Road & Bridge Department.

**ED Quick Building:** The ED Quick Building is located in downtown Liberty (16 W Franklin, Liberty, MO 64068) and houses the Clay County Human Resources Department, Treasurer's Office, and Clay County Purchasing Department.

## County Facilities and Services

The following facilities and services are maintained by the County as public amenities.

**Civic Academy:** The Clay County Civic Academy is a six-week program that provides citizens with the opportunity to learn more about the inner workings of their government. The County offers two sessions a year in the spring and fall.

**Clay County Public Health Center:** The public health center is located at 800 Haines, Liberty, MO 64068 and offers a range of clinical services, including primary care, dental, immunizations, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) services. The Clay County Health Department, Environmental Health Services, and Birth and Death Certificate Services are housed here as well.

**Emergency Management Team:** The Clay County Emergency Management Team focuses on public education and awareness surrounding weather and fire-related emergencies.

**Jesse James Museum:** The Jesse James Museum is located at his birthplace in Kearney (21216 Jesse James Farm Road, Kearney, MO 64060). The museum is open to the public and houses the Clay County Historic Sites Department.

**Midwest Natural Air Center:** The Midwest Natural Air Center in Excelsior Springs (13106 Rhodus Road, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024) is owned and operated by Clay County. Opened in 1996, the air center serves the Kansas City metropolitan area by fulfilling both local and transient corporate and general aviation needs.

**Schools:** There are five different school districts within Clay County, including

- North Kansas City School District
- Liberty School District
- Excelsior Springs School District
- Kearney School District
- Smithville School District

Additionally, the Missouri City School District is a K-8 school district that feeds into the Excelsior Springs and Liberty districts once students advance to high school. The Missouri City School District is the smallest school district in Missouri and is fully accredited with distinction under the current State accreditation system.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

Residents of Clay County enjoy a high quality of life due to the excellent facilities and services available to the community. Maintaining quality services requires staff time and coordination with city departments within incorporated areas of the County to ensure that all residents can access services as needed.

# Existing Parks, Recreation, and Destinations

The Clay County Parks, Recreation and Historic sites offers several destinations and activities totaling over 6,000 acres of parks. While there are many historic sites spread throughout the County, many amenities are located primarily within Smithville Lake. The County also maintains three parks – Rocky Hollow Park, Claybrook Park, and Tryst Falls. A full description of destinations is listed below:

**Smithville Lake:** Located towards the western border of the County, Smithville Lake has 7,200 acres and 175 miles of shoreline. The lake expects to see approximately 2 million visitors per year due to features such as boating, camping, golf, and special events. Additionally, there are 37 miles of walking/ biking trail, 11.5 miles of single-track mountain bike trails, and 32 miles of equestrian trails.

**Kelsey Short Youth Area:** Located within the Kelsey Short Outdoor Education Campus, this is on the east side of Smithville Lake. It offers three areas that are available for youth group activities only.

**Camp Branch Campgrounds:** This campground offers 346 campsites at Smithville Lake. The campsites offer access to walking trails, shower facilities, and a playground. A 9-hole disc golf course is located on this campsite. Campgrounds are open from April 1 to October 1.

**Crows Creek Campgrounds:** This campground offers 406 campsites that offer electric sites, equestrian trails, walking trails, shower facilities, and a playground. Both campgrounds on Smithville Lake are available for a camping fee. If you do not have a reservation, a campsite is available on a first come first serve basis for additional fees. The campground offers 406 campsites that are unimproved or improved with electric and water, equestrian trails, walking trails, shower facilities, and a playground.

**Paradise Point:** Two 18-hole golf courses located at Smithville Lake with natural wildlife exhibits, rolling terrain, zoysia fairways, and views of the lake.

**Little Platte Park:** A day use area located on the west side of Smithville Lake, with a swim beach, two-disc golf courses, shelter houses, boat ramp, and Paradise Pointe Marina.

**Jesse James Birthplace:** A historic site that allows visitors to tour the birthplace of Jesse James, a well-known bank and train robber from the 1800s. The site is open throughout the year with varying hours of operations based on the time of year.

**Jesse James Bank Museum:** This museum, located in the Liberty historic square, was the site of the nation's first successful daylight peacetime bank robbery likely attributed to the James Gang.

**Mt. Gilead Church:** The church was organized in 1830 as a Primitive Baptist Church, then it became Mt. Gilead Christian Church in 1844. The historic Mt. Gilead Church is available for public use such as weddings, reunions, showers, and business meetings.

**Mt. Gilead School:** This one room schoolhouse operated until its closure in 1946, now provides opportunities for school field trips and an educational destination for kids. The Mt. Gilead School is open by appointment only.

**Pharis Farm:** Donald Pharis, who purchased the farm in 1927, donated this farm to Clay County. The history of the Liberty farm predates the Civil War and has been a point of interest to area residents. This is open during special events.

**Claybrook Park:** This park located across from the Jesse James Birthplace offers features including a shelter with electricity that can accommodate 100 people, a restroom, and a sign providing the history of the Claybrook home.

**Tryst Falls:** Located between Excelsior Springs and Kearney, this park offers features such as a waterfall, a playground, and shelter houses.

**Rocky Hollow Park:** Located between Excelsior Springs and Kearney, this park offers features such as a shelter, restrooms, fishing lake, and two ballfields.

**Watkins Mill State Park:** Located north of Excelsior Springs, this state park offers a 100-acre lake, a paved bike bath, a campground, picnic areas, and a shelter.

**Cooley Lake Conservation Area:** While maintained by the Missouri Department of Conservation, this lake offers a hiking trail, restrooms, a campground, fishing, and hunting.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Clay County provides a wide variety of community facilities to its residents and visitors. In addition to the 6,000 acres of parks and almost 90 miles of trails, Clay County provides recreational and educational programming through their Parks and Recreation Department. The County also features places of historical significance, community entertainment venues, and areas of recreation maintained by the state.

# Existing Transportation and Connectivity

The transportation network for Clay County consists of a range of roadways that span from controlled access interstates to low-volume paved roads. The transportation network within the County is provided by the County, as well as by the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), and local municipalities.

## Roadway Network

### Interstates

Interstate 35 (**I-35**) is the longest spanning interstate that runs diagonally through the County. There is an interchange with Interstate 29 (**I-29**) located just north of North Kansas City, and another interchange with Interstate 435 (**I-435**) located within Claycomo, MO. These three interstates serve as valuable connections within the County because they offer additional connectivity between several municipalities and other roadway options.

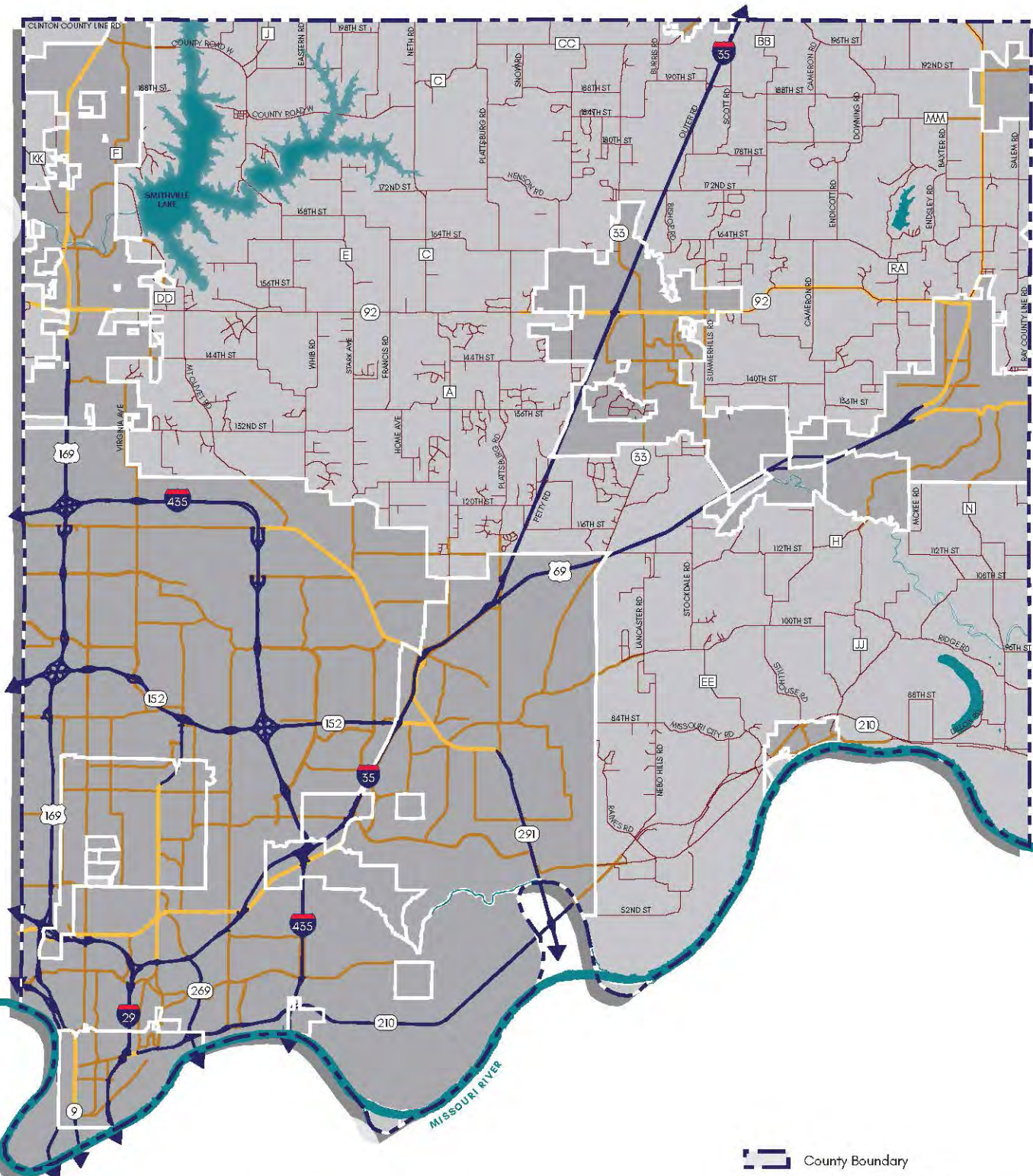
### Highways

MoDOT maintains several United State (U.S.) and Missouri State Highways throughout Clay County. Many of these facilities share multiple designations of both U.S., state, and even city streets. MoDOT facilities are briefly described as follows.

- **I-435:** Serves as a connecting highway between I-35 and MO-210 with one intersection at NE Parvin Road.
- **US-69:** A four lane freeway that continues from an interchange with I-35. This freeway has interchanges at:
  - » I-35
  - » I-435

- » NE Pleasant Valley Road / S Liberty Parkway
- » NE Barry Road / W Kansas Street
- » NE Cookingham Drive
- » N Lightburne Street
- **US-169:** A four-lane limited access highway that runs north and south on the western border of the County. North of NE 114th Street and NW Martin Road, the highway becomes an arterial connection for Smithville and other municipalities. This highway has interchanges at:
  - » NW Harlem Road / Richardson Road
  - » MO-9
  - » NW Briarcliff Pkwy
  - » I-29
  - » NW Englewood Road
  - » NW 68th Street
  - » NW Barry Road
  - » MO-152
  - » NW 96th Street
  - » NW 108th Street
  - » NE Cookingham Dr
  - » I-435
- **MO-9:** Serves as an arterial highway along the western border of North Kansas City with three lanes on each side, eventually splitting between US-169 and N Oak Trafficway.
- **MO-33:** A primary north/south route stemming from US-69, extending from Liberty to the south and Holt to the north.
- **MO-92:** A primary east/west route, extending from Excelsior Springs to the east and Smithville to the west.
- **MO-152:** A highway that runs primarily east/west with interchanges between US-169, US-435, and I-35.





**FIGURE A.4**  
**EXISTING ROAD**  
**CLASSIFICATIONS**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Olsson Studio

- **MO-210:** An east/west route along the southern border of the county, extending from I-29 with connections at I-435, MO-291,
- **MO-291:** This north/south route extends diagonally from southern Liberty through the southern boundary of the county.

## State Highways in Unincorporated Areas

(as shown in Road Classifications)

- **CR-A:** A north/south route that connects from US-169 to MO-152.
- **CR-B:** A north/south route between US-169 and CR-H.
- **CR-BB:** A primary north/south route that branches from Jesse James Farm Road to SE PP Highway
- **CR-C:** A primary north/south route west of Kearney to Plattsburg.
- **CR-CC:** A connecting road from county road C to MO-33.
- **CR-DD:** A route running along the southern edge of Smithville Lake from US-169 to MO-92.
- **CR-E:** This route serves as an access road from Crows Creek Park to MO-92.
- **CR-EE:** This road can be accessed by CR-H and runs south to Old State Highway 210
- **CR-F:** This road serves as a connection north/south connection from NE 172 Street and NE 180th Street.
- **CR-H:** A east/west route that runs from Liberty to Excelsior Springs.
- **CR-J:** This road runs along the eastern border of the Smithville Lake from CR-C and CR-W
- **CR-JJ:** A primary north/south route between MO-210 and CR-H.
- **CR-N:** A primary north/south route between Excelsior Springs and MO-210 east of Cooley Lake.

Clay County roadways have been classified and are shown on **Figure A.4.**

- **Highways:** Roads designed for high-speed traffic that serves as a connection between major towns or cities.
- **Arterial:** High-capacity roads that connect collector roads to freeways or highways.
- **Collectors:** Roadways often providing lower-capacity facilities that allow access from local roadways and properties to arterials.
- **County Roads:** Facilities primarily serve adjacent land and development only with the highest amount of access and generally represent the lowest volume roadways in the County.

## Active Transportation

Clay County has a series of dedicated bikeways/trails spread throughout the County spanning more than 30 miles, with a significant emphasis in parks. Many of these trails are surrounding Smithville Lake, Watkins Mill Lake, and Cooley Lake. The trails located within the County include the following:

### Smoke and Davey Trail System

- **Backbone Trail:** A total of 2.7 miles with features including grassland recreation, benches, waterfowl, and restrooms. This trail allows access to Whispering Pine and Copperhead bike trails
- **Whispering Pine:** A total of 1.4 miles with a path of red cedar trees.
- **Copperhead Ridge Trail:** A total of 0.7 miles along the lakes edge with a covered shelter.

### Camp Branch Trail System

- **Bonebender Trail:** A total of six miles with features including two lookout points, benches, shelters, and restrooms. This path provides accessibility to Camp Beaches Disc Golf Course, Swim Beach, and Outdoor Amphitheater.
- **Campground Trail:** A total of 2.9 miles with features including a lookout point and a bench.
- **Eagles View Trail:** A total of 1.5 miles located across from the park office entrance.

## Crows Creek Trail System

- **Anita B. Gorman Trail:** A total of 1.9 miles with features including consistent grade, grassland restoration, shelters, and access to other hiking trails.
- **Cabin Fever Trail:** A total of seven miles with features including two lookout points, benches, playgrounds, shelters, and restrooms.

### Other Trails

- **Little Platte North Trail:** A total of 2.5 miles with features including a restroom, bike rack, and bicycle fix it station.
- **Little Platte South Trail:** A total of 5.5 miles with features including a swim beach restrooms, picnic areas, a playground, and disc golf courses.
- **Litton Control Trail:** Accessible from NE 156th Street and Litton Way, extending along the southern edge of the lake with features including a shelter and a visitor center.
- **Watkins Mill State Park and State Historic Site:** This site offers a trail wrapping around Watkins Mill Lake with features including shelters, restrooms, a playground, a campground, and a boat launch.
- **Cooley Lake Conservation Area:** Around the northern portion of the lake, a trail provides access to Elliot Cemetery and Cooley Lake Lookout.

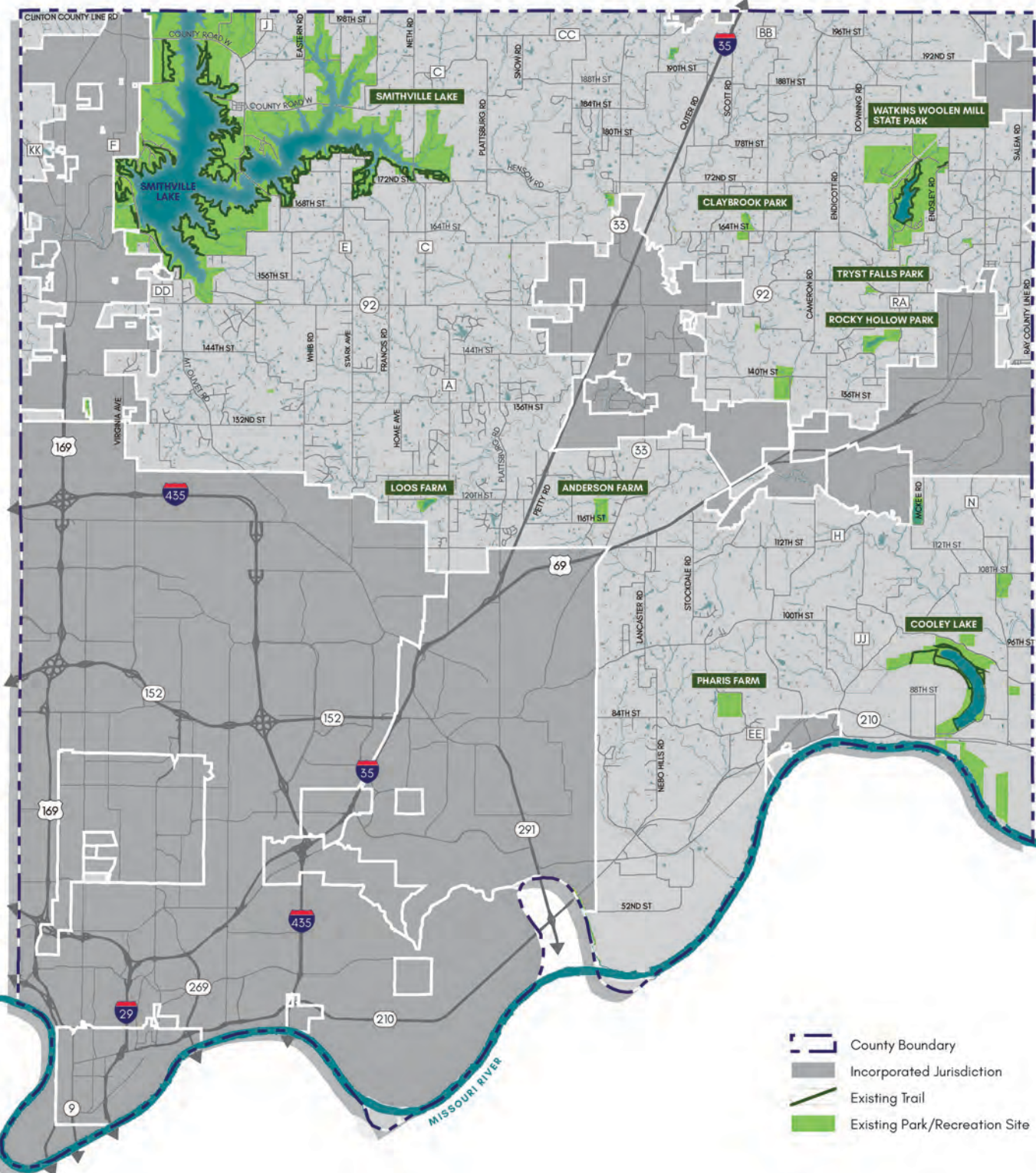
## Public Transportation

Clay County does not provide direct transportation for residents, but there are services that provide access throughout the County. These services include:

- **Kansas City Area Transportation Authority:** RideKC bus system offers routes that run within Clay County including North Oak, Meadowbrook, and Tiffany Springs. RideKC Freedom is available as an on-demand service for older adults and disabled that requires an application and additional reservations. RideKC Freedom on Demand offers a 24/7 taxi service.
- **OATS:** A non-profit corporation providing transportation to 87 counties in Missouri. This service is accessible to cities in Clay County including Excelsior Springs, Kearney, Liberty, and Smithville. General information pertaining to routes, fees and schedule can be found via the OATS website.
- **Clay County Senior Services:** A service for older adults 65+ that provides transportation within a 50 mile radius.
- **Liberty Access Bus:** A service provided by Liberty that assists older adults within city limits by appointment only.
- **Excelsior Springs Bus:** A fixed route within Excelsior Springs providing local transportation options to its residents.
- **Rideshare:** This commuter matching service is free to Clay County residents. It is organized by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) to pair residents that have similar origins and destinations.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

There are a wide variety of interstates, highways, and county roads that connect residents throughout the Clay County. Though the interstates and highways are primarily used by residents to commute to other cities and outside of the County while county roads are only available within the unincorporated areas. While Clay County offers pedestrian/bicycle trails primarily along Smithville Lake and other recreational areas, commuting in the County is primarily focused on the use of a vehicle. Within the County, private services and local municipal transit options are limited but available to connect residents in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Clay County.



**FIGURE A.5**  
**EXISTING RECREATION**  
**AND ACTIVE**  
**TRANSPORTATION**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Olson Studio

# Existing Natural Features

The natural environment is a critical consideration for future development and planning efforts and is illustrated in **Figure A.6, Existing Natural Features in Clay County**. By better understanding how the environment interacts with local ecosystems, communities, and wildlife, the County can better understand the impact on these developable areas, natural hazard risk mitigation, the efficiencies or inefficiencies of ecological services, and much more.

## Waterbodies, Waterways, and Wetlands

Water resources, including waterbodies and waterways, are widely dispersed throughout Clay County, with a large amount making up smaller waterways and small bodies of water such as ponds, streams, brooks, and small waterbodies within residential developments. One of the most prominent waterbodies is Smithville Lake. Located in the northwestern portion of the County near the City of Smithville, Smithville Lake encompasses 7,200 acres and has more than 175 miles of shoreline, providing locals with beaches and natural recreation areas. The lake is home to a variety of fish species including largemouth bass, white bass, white and black crappie, walleye, channel catfish, and flathead catfish.

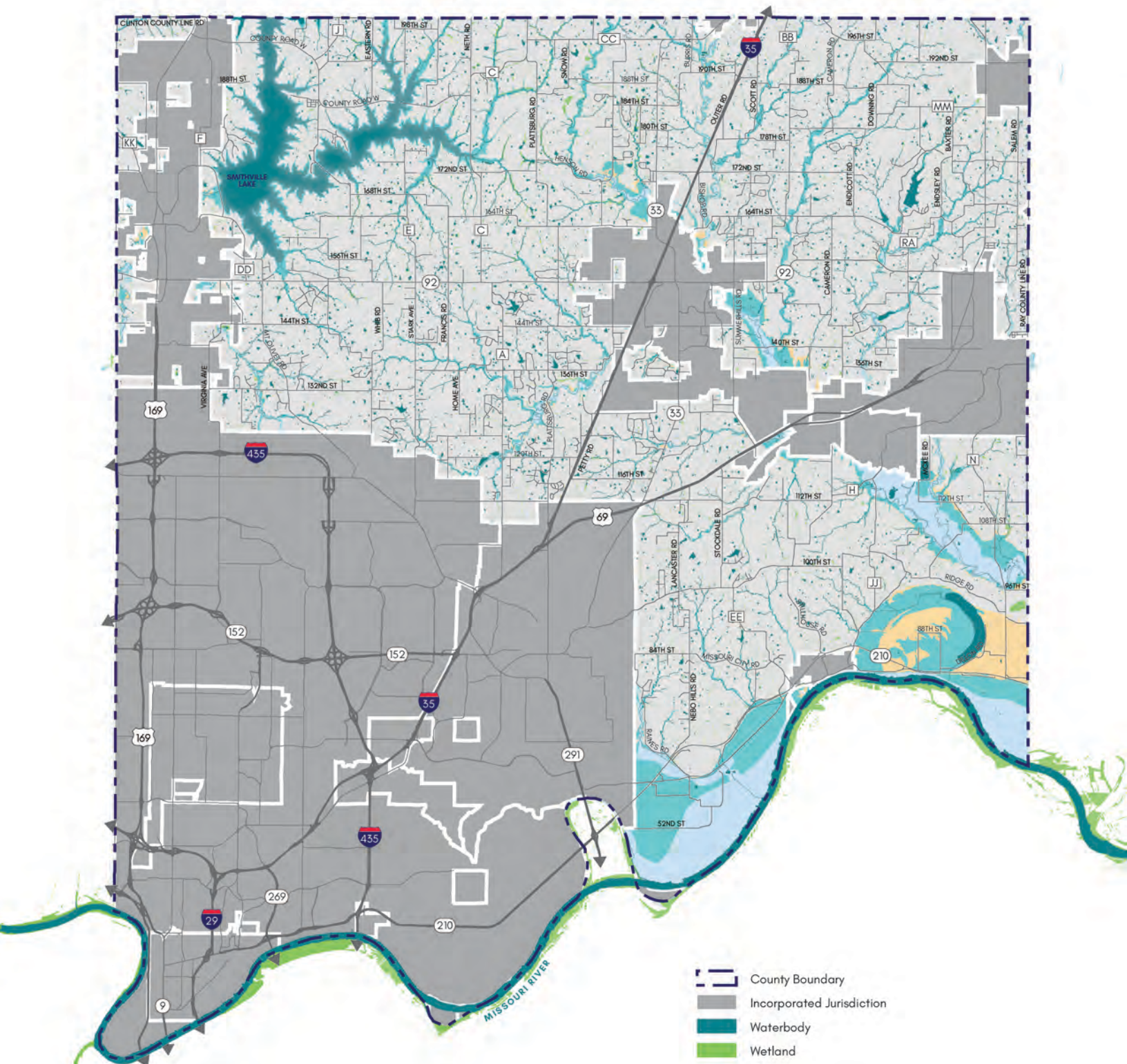
Perhaps the most prominent waterway in Clay County, the Missouri River runs along the lower boundary of the County, marking the divide from Jackson County. North Kansas City, Thornton, Randolph, Cemetery City, and Missouri City are some of the major municipalities situated on the river's banks. Fishing River is the other river located in the County, running from the southeastern border inwards towards the center of the County.

Small portions of land are classified as wetlands throughout Clay County; however, the primary and largest area is located along the Missouri River at the southern boundary. These areas are also prone to flooding events, with much of the wetland's area overlapping the observed floodway.

## Floodways and Floodplains

Flood risk has been mapped throughout the County through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA typically identifies flood-prone areas through detailed hydrologic and hydraulic modeling and occasionally through approximate methods to assist with planning, management, and risk assessment within watersheds.

Based on FEMA's assessments, portions of Clay County exhibit two types of flood areas, with both areas primarily located in the southeastern portions of the county as illustrated in **Figure A.6, Existing Natural Features**. The Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) is defined as the area that will be inundated by a flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year; this includes FEMA Zone A and Zone AE. The moderate flood hazard areas are between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2 percent-annual-chance (or 500 year) flood; this includes FEMA Zone B and Zone X.



**FIGURE A.6**  
**EXISTING NATURAL FEATURES**

- County Boundary
- Incorporated Jurisdiction
- Waterbody
- Wetland
- Floodway
- 100-Year (1% Annual Chance) Flood/  
Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)\*
- 500-Year (2% Annual Chance) Flood\*\*

\* SFHA are defined as the area that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year; includes FEMA Zone A and Zone AE.

\*\* Moderate flood hazard areas are the areas between the limits of the base flood and the 0.2-percent-annual-chance (or 500-year) flood; includes FEMA Zone B and Zone X.



Data Sources: Clay County, Federal Emergency Management Agency, UrbanFootprint, and Discern Studio

# Prime Farmland and Soil Conditions

According to the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), the majority of the land in the unincorporated areas of Clay County are considered to be prime farmland or land with the potential for farming. Much of the area that is adjacent to the Missouri River is considered to be either prime farmland or prime farmland if the land were to be properly drained. Prime farmland is considered to be the best for producing crops due its soil, which exhibits the best chemical and physical characteristics for agriculture. The area surrounding Smithville Lake is considered to be farmland of statewide importance, indicating that the soil meets the requirements for prime farmland and could potentially produce high yields of crops after being treated.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

While certain areas within Clay County are at some risk for large flooding events, such as the southeastern portion beside the Missouri River, most of the unincorporated area is at low to zero risk of flooding. Overall, the County has a large amount of land that is considered to be prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance by the USDA.

### **How is Prime Farmland Defined?**

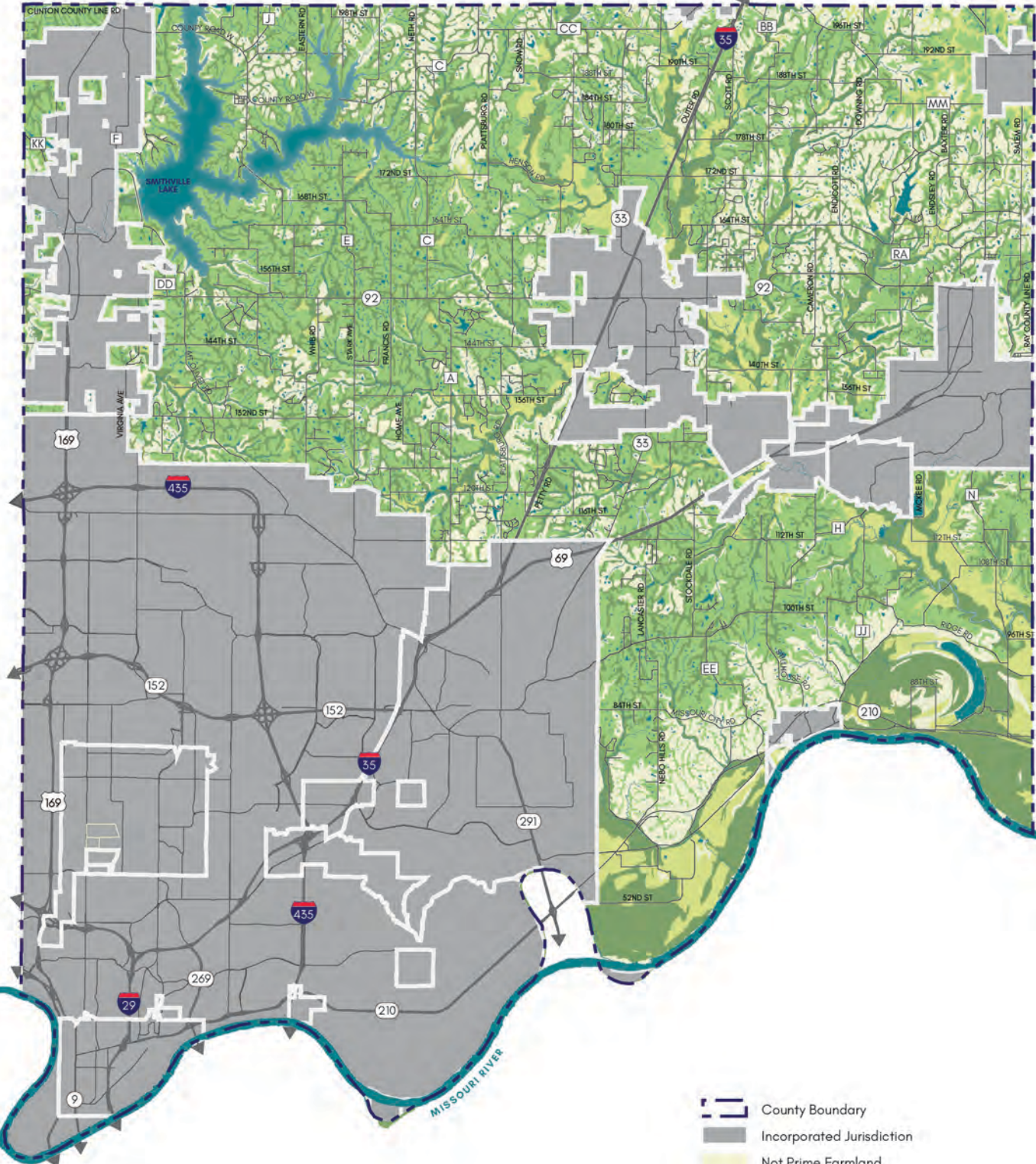
**Prime Farmland if Drained** is land that, if properly drained, is considered prime farmland.

**Farmland of Statewide Importance** is land that nearly meets the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

**Prime Farmland** is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses.

Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service





**FIGURE A.7**  
**EXISTING FARMLAND**

Based on USDA Soil Classification



Data Sources: Clay County, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, UrbanFootprint, and Olson Studio.

- County Boundary
- Incorporated Jurisdiction
- Not Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained\*
- Farmland of Statewide Importance\*\*
- Prime Farmland\*\*\*

\* Land that, if properly drained, is considered prime farmland

\*\* Land that nearly meets the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods

\*\*\* Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses

# Existing Community Health and Quality of Life

Health factors have a significant impact on the quality of life (e.g., how long and how well someone lives) experienced in a community. Clay County's health factors are broadly explored at the county level in this section through data and findings provided by County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (CHR&R).

Health outcomes represent the current level of health of a county and are determined by both length and quality of life. Different datasets are used to determine length and quality of life, detailed as follows:

## LENGTH OF LIFE DATASETS

**Premature Death Dataset** refers to years of potential life lost before age 75 per 100,000 population (age-adjusted). In Clay County, 6,400 years of life were lost to deaths of people under age 75, per 100,000 people, compared to 8,900 years in Missouri and 7,300 years across the United States. The leading causes of death in Clay County are malignant neoplasms (742 deaths), diseases of the heart (440 deaths), accidents (258 deaths), chronic lower respiratory diseases (148 deaths), and intentional self-harm (144 deaths).

## QUALITY OF LIFE DATASETS

**Poor or Fair Health** refers to the percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health (age-adjusted). In Clay County, 13 percent of adults reported that they consider themselves in fair or poor health, compared to 15 percent in Missouri and 12 percent across the United States.

**Poor Physical Health Days** refers to the average number of physically unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days (age-adjusted). In Clay County, adults reported that their physical health was not good on 3.3 days of the previous 30 days, compared to 3.4 days for Missouri and 3.0 days for the United States.

**Poor Mental Health Days** refers to the average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in the past 30 days (age-adjusted). In Clay County, adults reported that their mental health was not good on 5.0 days of the previous 30 days, compared to 4.9 days in Missouri and 4.4 days across the United States.

**Low Birthweight** refers to the percentage of live births with low birthweights. In Clay County, 7 percent of babies had low birthweights (under 5 pounds, 8 ounces), compared to 9 percent for Missouri and 8 percent across the United States.

# Health Factors

Health factors represent those things that can be modified to improve the length and quality of life for residents. Health factors include health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. Physical environment characteristics in a community can be affected by comprehensive planning, though policy changes can be explored to better health behaviors, clinical care, and social and economic factors.

The following tables indicate how Clay County compares to both the State of Missouri and the United States regarding each of the health factors. Clay County had a higher or equal rate of adult smoking, adult obesity, physical inactivity, and excessive drinking when compared to the state and national rates. Clay County’s rate for alcohol-impaired driving deaths is 37 percent, surpassing the respective statewide and national rates of 28 percent and 27 percent

**TABLE A.2 HEALTH BEHAVIORS COMPARISON  
(CLAY COUNTY VS. MISSOURI VS. UNITED STATES)**

HEALTH BEHAVIORS	CLAY COUNTY	MISSOURI	UNITED STATES
Adult Smoking	19%	19%	16%
Adult Obesity	34%	34%	32%
Physical Inactivity	22%	25%	22%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	81%	76%	84%
Excessive Drinking	20%	20%	19%
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	37%	28%	27%

Exercise opportunities are often correlated with the ‘walkability’ of a county or city. Walkability is a term for planning concepts best understood by the mixed use of amenities in higher-density neighborhoods where people can access said amenities by foot. Walkability is dependent on available pedestrian infrastructure.

**Figure A.8 National Walkability Index** demonstrates the walkability of Clay County.

### Walkability Index

The Walkability Index dataset characterizes every Census 2010 block group in the U.S. based on its relative walkability. Walkability depends upon characteristics of the built environment that influence the likelihood of walking being used as a mode of travel.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

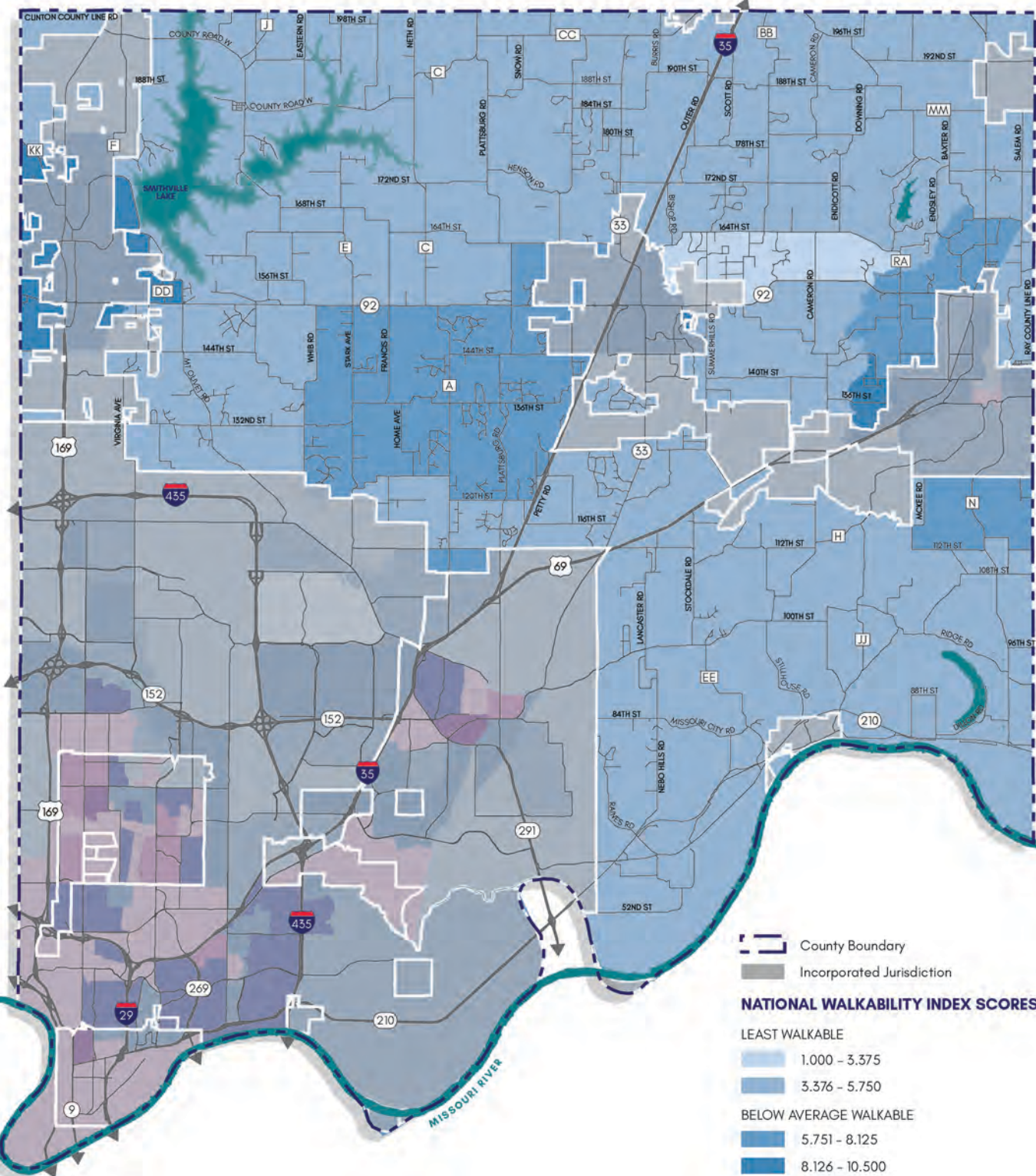
Municipalities toward the southwestern portion, near Kansas City, display an average or above-average walkability. However, much of the County is rated as being below-average or severely below-average walkability, indicating little to no pedestrian infrastructure is available.

The degree to which a place is walkable is typically determined by the physical environment and condition of the pedestrian network. However, there are other physical characteristics that may influence a person’s desire to walk. These measurements are displayed in **Table A.3 Physical Environment Comparison (Clay County vs. Missouri vs. United States)**. A city, town, or county may be constructed to support personal automobile rather than public transportation use. This can depend on outside factors, including the municipality’s economy and trade, the surrounding natural features, or the societal influence at the time of construction. Residents may be forced to utilize the existing system at the city or county level, regardless of their personal preference.

**TABLE A.3 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT COMPARISON  
(CLAY COUNTY VS. MISSOURI VS. UNITED STATES)**

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	CLAY COUNTY	MISSOURI	UNITED STATES
Air Pollution - Particulate Matter	6.2	7.6	7.4
<i>*(Average daily density of fine particulate matter in micrograms per cubic meter)</i>			
Severe Housing Problems	10%	13%	17%
Driving Alone to Work	80%	79%	73%
Long Commute - Driving Alone	32%	32%	37%

Clay County does well in comparison to the State of Missouri and the United States on particulate matter measured in the air. This metric is determined by the average daily density of fine particulate matter in micrograms per cubic meter. In Clay County, an annual average of 6.2 micrograms per cubic meter of fine particulate matter was measured in the air. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has primary annual average standards of 12.0 micrograms per cubic meter. Other metrics also indicate that those that live in Clay County are less likely to suffer from severe housing problems and are slightly less likely to drive along when compared to the national rate.



**FIGURE A.8**  
**NATIONAL WALKABILITY INDEX**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and OpenStamps

County Boundary  
 Incorporated Jurisdiction

**NATIONAL WALKABILITY INDEX SCORES\***

LEAST WALKABLE

- 1.000 – 3.375
- 3.376 – 5.750

BELOW AVERAGE WALKABLE

- 5.751 – 8.125
- 8.126 – 10.500

ABOVE AVERAGE WALKABLE

- 10.501 – 12.875
- 12.876 – 15.250

MOST WALKABLE

- 15.251 – 17.625
- 17.626 – 20.000

\*The National Walkability Index dataset characterizes every U.S. Census block group based on its relative walkability. Walkability is scored on a scale from 1 to 20, with 20 being Most Walkable.

Scores are given based on built environment conditions that affect people's decision to walk, including street intersection density, proximity to transit stops, and diversity of land uses.

Health factors also consider the level of clinical care a county citizen might receive. For example, some measures are conveyed as a ratio, indicating how many physicians or dentists there are per number of residents. In Clay County, there are 1,580 residents for every one primary care physician. This ratio is higher than those reported for the State of Missouri and the United States, indicating that Clay County has less physicians when compared to state and national numbers.

**TABLE A.4 CLINICAL CARE COMPARISON  
(CLAY COUNTY VS. MISSOURI VS. UNITED STATES)**

CLINICAL CARE	CLAY COUNTY	MISSOURI	UNITED STATES
Uninsured	10%	12%	10%
Primary Care Physicians	1,580:1	1,410:1	1,310:1
Dentists	1,560:1	1,620:1	1,380:1
Mental Health Providers	670:1	430:1	340:1
Preventable Hospital Stays	2,751	3,052	2,809

A person’s level of education can also affect a person’s level of health. Attaining a certain level of education may allow a person to pursue a career that provides a level of financial security, which may allow for this individual to access greater health benefits. In Clay County, high school completion rates were reported at 94 percent, higher when compared to the 91 percent and 89 percent for the State of Missouri and for the United States, respectively. Clay County residents also reported as having a higher rate of some college experience. At 72 percent, Clay County is higher than the state’s rate of 67 percent and the national rate of 67 percent. Conversely, a lower level of education or training may make an individual less desirable in the workforce, thereby making it difficult to obtain a job. Clay County’s rate of employment was reported at 4.9 percent in 2021, which is higher than for the State of Missouri at 4.4 percent but lower than the national percentage of 5.4 percent, as evidenced in **Table A.5, Social and Economic Factors Comparison (Clay County vs. Missouri vs. United States)**.

**TABLE A.5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS COMPARISON  
(CLAY COUNTY VS. MISSOURI VS. UNITED STATES)**

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS	CLAY COUNTY	MISSOURI	UNITED STATES
High School Completion	94%	91%	89%
Some College	72%	67%	67%
Unemployment	4.9%	4.4%	5.4%
Children in Poverty	10%	17%	17%

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

According to the County Health Rankings data, Clay County is ranked among the healthiest counties in the State of Missouri (75 percent to 100 percent). Both health outcomes and health factors data contribute to this ranking and indicate that Clay County scores well when compared to other nearby counties in the state. Again, health outcomes represent how healthy a county is currently, in terms of length of life and in quality of life.

Despite being one of the healthiest counties, it is important to note that this is a comparison to other counties across the State of Missouri. Therefore, even though the county may be one of the healthiest, it could still score poorly in comparison to statewide and national rates. This is particularly evident regarding alcohol-impaired driving deaths as indicated in **Table A.2, Health Behaviors Comparison (Clay County vs. Missouri vs. United States)**, with the County rate being higher than both statewide and national rates. However, Clay County has a higher percentage of individuals who have completed high school or attended some college. The County also has a lower percentage of children who are in poverty. More notably, Clay County often scores better than national rates but lower or equal to statewide rates.

# Existing Utilities

Residents and businesses in Clay County are served by municipal utility services, as well as County public water and private sewer systems. To ensure the proper infrastructure for future development, redevelopment, it is necessary to review the existing utility infrastructure within the County.

**WATER:** Clay County is served by a total of 15 water districts, most of which are Clay County public water districts. Public water districts from Clinton, Platte, and Ray Counties also serve parts of Clay County. In addition, some residents of unincorporated Clay County are served by an adjacent municipal water supply. These water supply systems are regulated by Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The Clay County Planning & Zoning Department works closely with the public water districts as well as each individual municipality to determine that the water supply system can serve any proposed development. The County has water supply and fire protection requirements included in the subdivision design and improvements section of the Land Development Code.

**WASTEWATER:** Clay County is served by a total of 15 water districts, most of which are Clay County public water districts. Public water districts from Clinton, Platte, and Ray Counties also serve parts of Clay County. In addition, some residents of unincorporated Clay County are served by an adjacent municipal water supply. These water supply systems are regulated by Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The Clay County Planning & Zoning Department works closely with the public water districts as well as each individual municipality to determine that the water supply system can serve any proposed development. The County has water supply and fire protection requirements included in the subdivision design and improvements section of the Land Development Code.

**STORMWATER:** Stormwater originates from rain, snow, irrigation, or other activities that flow across streets, driveways, cropland, and yards. Stormwater management is a requirement of all development within unincorporated Clay County. There are several documents that help regulate stormwater management including the Land Development Code, Technical Specifications for Public Improvement Projects, and the Design Criteria for Public Improvement projects.

**ELECTRICITY:** The electric service for the unincorporated areas of the County are provided by Ameren, Evergy, or Platte Clay Electric.

**NATURAL GAS:** Natural gas service is provided to only a portion of the unincorporated areas by Spire Energy. For homes and businesses outside of Spire's service area propane is a popular choice as a fuel for home heat and backup electrical generation.



# Existing Demographics

This section provides a general overview of the existing demographics within Clay County, including population growth, population age, household composition, household income, and educational attainment. For additional information concerning the demographics of Clay County, please see the full Economic and Market Analysis report in **Appendix D**.

## Population Growth

The 1980 Census recorded Clay County's population at 136,488 residents. By 2020, this number increased by nearly 117,000 residents resulting in a total population of 253, 335 residents. This is illustrated in **Table A.6, Population Growth Trends Clay County Cities; 1980-2020**.

Due to Clay County's location the Kansas City Metropolitan Service Area (MSA), the population has continued to expand and grow over the past four decades. The increase in population has led to a strong need for housing, commercial, retail, and industrial space. According to the Economic and Market Analysis, the 1980s the population growth rate seen in Clay County has outpaced the Kansas City MSA's growth rate.

In total, Clay County consists of 24 incorporated communities and nine unincorporated communities. The largest incorporated communities in Clay County include Kansas City, North Kansas City, Gladstone, Liberty, Excelsior, Kearney, Smithville, Sugar Creek, Pleasant Valley, and Lawson that in 2020 collectively totaled 248,671 residents or 98.2 percent of the County population.

**FIGURE A.6, POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS CLAY COUNTY CITIES; 1980-2020**

City	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	Growth 1980-2020	% Change
Clay County	136,488	153,411	184,006	221,939	253,335	116,847	85.61%
Kansas City*	64,137	74,101	90,488	121,761	147,156	83,019	129.44%
Liberty	16,251	20,459	26,232	29,149	30,167	13,916	85.63%
Gladstone	24,990	26,243	26,365	25,450	27,063	2,073	8.30%
Excelsior Springs	10,424	10,354	10,847	11,084	10,553	129	1.24%
Smithville	1,873	2,525	5,514	8,425	10,406	8,533	455.58%
Kearney	1,433	1,790	5,472	8,381	10,404	8,971	626.03%
North Kansas City	4,507	4,130	4,764	4,208	4,467	-40	-0.89%
Pleasant Valley	1,545	2,731	3,321	2,961	2,743	1,198	77.54%
Lawson	1,743	1,836	2,336	2,473	2,541	798	45.78%
Claycomo	1,671	1,668	1,267	1,430	1,343	-328	-19.63%
Glenaire	541	597	553	545	539	-2	-0.37%
Holt	276	311	405	447	471	195	70.65%
Avondale	612	550	529	440	436	-176	-28.76%
Oakview	497	351	386	375	366	-131	-26.36%
Missouri City	343	348	295	267	217	-126	-36.73%
Oakwood	227	212	197	185	198	-29	-12.78%
Oakwood Park	231	213	183	188	189	-42	-18.18%
Birmingham	240	222	214	183	189	-51	-21.25%
Oaks	126	130	136	129	128	2	1.59%
Prathersville	141	130	111	124	121	-20	-14.18%
Mosby	284	194	242	190	101	-183	-64.44%
Randolph	91	60	47	52	57	-34	-37.36%
Excelsior Estates		274	263	147	209	-65	-23.72%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Notes: \*Population includes City of Kansas City and unincorporated Clay County.

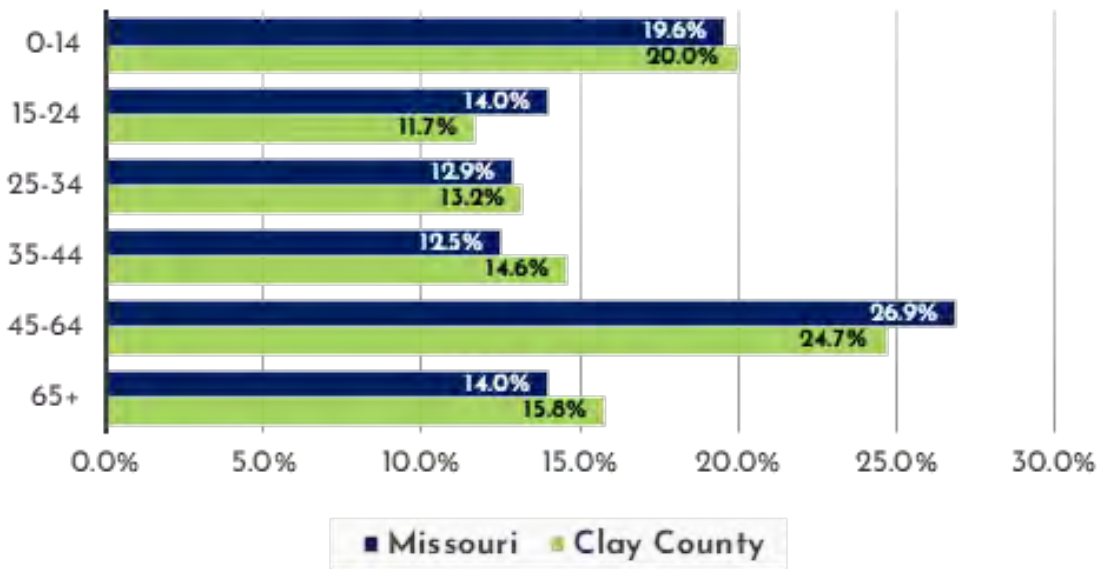
# Population Age

Age is an important indication in consumer identity and consumption patterns, housing needs, and financial security. In **Figure A.9, Population by Age Comparison**, a comparison of Clay County's and Missouri's population are broken down by six primary age groups, including:

- Children (0-14 years);
- Adolescent (15-24 years);
- Young adults (25-34 years);
- Family/working adults (35-44 years);
- Empty nesters (45-64 years);
- And elderly (65+ years).

Each of these age groups possesses distinctively different consumption and housing needs.

**FIGURE A.9 POPULATION BY AGE COMPARISON**



According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, Clay County has a high rate of children (0-14 years), young adults (25-34 years), family/working adults (35-44 years), and elderly (65+ years). These age ranges indicates a likelihood of retail expenditures like apparel, accessories, groceries, electronics, and entertainment. The high rate of young adults indicate a need for electronics, apparel and accessories, and rental housing. The high rate of elderly (65+ years) indicates a need for healthcare, senior rental housing, and downsized housing options.

**Table A.8, Clay County’s Principal Cities, Comparison of Population Age Distribution**, provides a comparison of population age distribution among four principal cities in Clay County.

The high percentages of school age children and family/working adults (35-44 years) in each city suggest the need for for-sale, single-family housing. High percentages of empty nesters (55-64 years) in Liberty and Excelsior Springs and seniors (65+ years) in Excelsior Springs and Kearney suggest a growing need for smaller, maintenance-free housing and senior rental housing.

**TABLE A.8, CLAY COUNTY’S PRINCIPAL CITIES, COMPARISON OF POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION**

Household Type	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
Total Population	262,586	30,129	10,595	10,211	10,260
0 - 14	20.0%	21.8%	19.6%	22.5%	19.4%
15 - 24	11.7%	13.1%	15.9%	14.6%	14.3%
25 - 34	13.2%	12.6%	13.4%	10.7%	13.0%
35 - 44	14.6%	13.9%	11.7%	14.5%	14.4%
45 - 54	12.4%	11.0%	10.1%	12.1%	14.5%
55 - 64	12.2%	14.2%	13.8%	11.7%	11.3%
65+	15.8%	13.1%	15.5%	13.8%	14.0%

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

# Household Composition

Household composition is an important indicator of retail expenditures and housing needs. There was an estimated 104,401 households residing in Clay County with an average household size of 2.49 persons in 2023. This is slightly higher than the Missouri average household size of 2.44 persons. Both of these averages are typical with what has been seen nationally. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, over the past six decades, the average household size in the United States has declined steadily from 3.33 persons per household in 1960 to 2.52 persons per household in 2020.

**TABLE A.9, CLAY COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE; 2023**

Household Type	Clay County	State of Missouri
Total Households	104,401	2,375,611
Family Households	67.7%	65.3%
Married Couple Households	51.8%	48.4%
With Related Children	24.0%	20.7%
Other Family (No Spouse Present)	15.9%	16.7%
With Children Present	10.8%	11.0%
Householder Living Alone	26.2%	28.3%
All Households with Children	35.3%	31.8%
Average Household Size	2.49	2.44
Average Family Size	3.08	3.00

Source: Esri Business Analyst.

Family households account for 67.7 percent of all households with 10.8 percent of all households having children present. Married couple families account for 51.8 percent of all households, of which 24.0 percent had related children. These percentages are indicated in **Table A.9, Clay County Households by Type; 2023**. These household compositions characteristics indicate a propensity for single-family housing an above average retail expenditures for household furnishings, groceries, clothing and accessories, sport goods, books, and other family-related goods and services.

**TABLE A.10, CLAY COUNTY’S PRINCIPAL CITIES,  
COMPARISON OF HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE**

Household Type	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
Total Households	104,401	11,515	3,696	3,694	3,824
Family Households	67.7%	71.4%	71.6%	77.4%	76.9%
Married Couple Households	51.8%	56.7%	51.8%	56.8%	56.6%
All Households Children Present	35.3%	37.8%	32.4%	44.0%	39.5%
Householder Living Alone	26.2%	25.9%	24.5%	20.4%	20.3%
65 Years and Older	8.1%	8.6%	9.8%	10.4%	13.2%
Average Household Size	2.49	2.55	2.73	2.74	2.68
Average Family Size	3.08	3.05	3.25	3.14	3.05

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

**Table A.10, Clay County Principal Cities Comparison of Households by Type** provides a comparison of household composition among four principal cities in Clay County: Liberty, Excelsior Springs, Smithville, and Kearney.

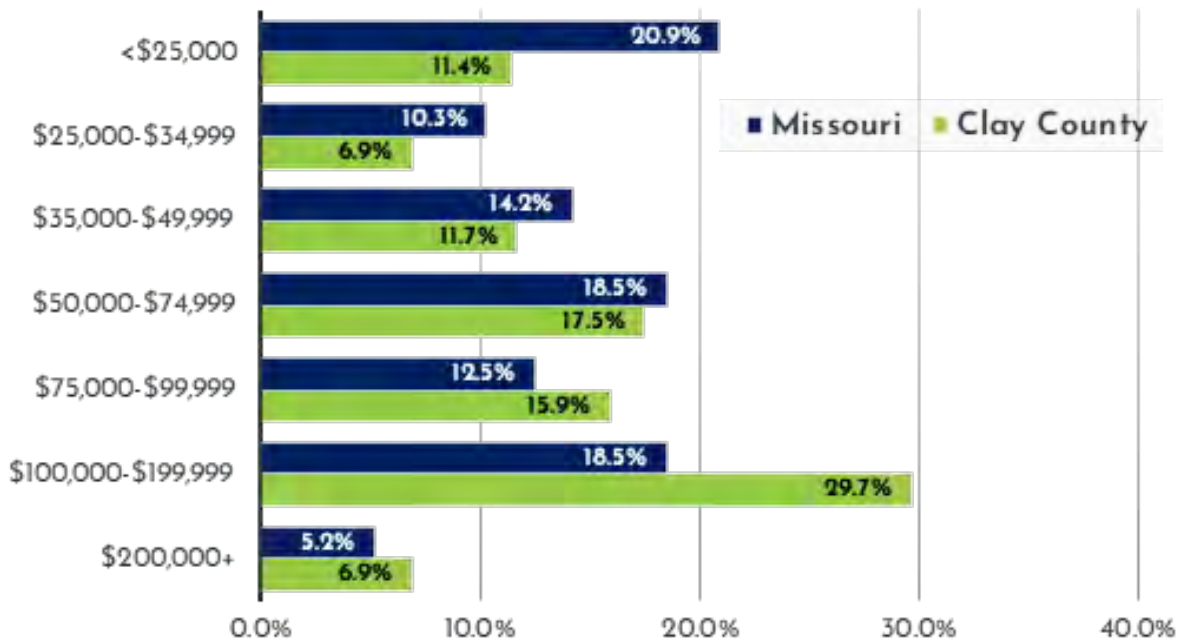
- Liberty is a growing, suburban community featuring above average rates of family households, married couple households, households with children, and seniors living alone when compared to Clay County.
- Smithville and Kearney both feature the highest rates of family households, married couple households, households with children present, and seniors living alone.
- Since 1980, Excelsior Springs’ population has remained stagnant. This is evidenced by the below average rates for married couple households, households with children present, and householders living alone when compared to the other Clay County communities.

The household compositions for Liberty, Kearney, and Smithville suggest a need for larger, single-family homes to accommodate the high rate of children present. In addition, according to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, the large senior population living alone in Excelsior Springs, Kearney, and Smithville may indicate a need for smaller, maintenance-free housing and senior rental housing.

# Household Income

Household income levels have a direct impact on retail expenditures, housing needs, for-sale housing values, and residential rents. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, Clay County’s median household income of \$77,819 is higher than Missouri’s median household income of \$54, 596. There is also a much lower rate of households earning less than \$35,000 and a much greater rate of high-income households earning \$100,000 or more annually in Clay County. These average household income levels can support above average retail sales, housing values, and residential rents. These rates are illustrated in **Figure A.10, Household Income Distribution Comparison**.

**FIGURE A.10, HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON**



An estimated 18.3 percent of Clay County’s households earn less than \$34,999 annually. While this is well below the estimated 31.2 percent of households in Missouri that earn less than \$34,999 annually, a need still exists for affordable and income-based rental housing. These households tend to be perpetual renters with the lowest incomes households, potentially qualifying for some form of housing assistance. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, the U.S. Census reports that the median housing rent in Clay County to be \$1,034 per month. This requires an annual household income of approximately \$35,000.

**Table A.10, Clay County’s Principal Cities, Comparison of Household Income Distribution** provides a comparison of household income distribution among the four principal cities in Clay County.

**TABLE A.11, CLAY COUNTY’S PRINCIPAL CITIES, COMPARISON OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION**

Household Income Range	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
Total Households	104,399	11,515	2,647	3,694	3,824
Less than \$25,000	11.4%	10.9%	5.8%	3.0%	4.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.9%	7.8%	8.4%	0.3%	5.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	11.7%	10.0%	10.7%	6.3%	6.5%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17.5%	16.7%	22.6%	19.8%	10.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	15.9%	14.3%	16.1%	17.9%	18.4%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	29.7%	35.7%	32.7%	50.9%	46.3%
\$200,000 +	6.9%	4.6%	3.8%	2.1%	8.7%
Median Household Income	\$77,819	\$81,576	\$68,679	\$103,413	\$103,737
Mean Household Income	\$93,361	\$99,271	\$89,345	\$107,351	\$114,780

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

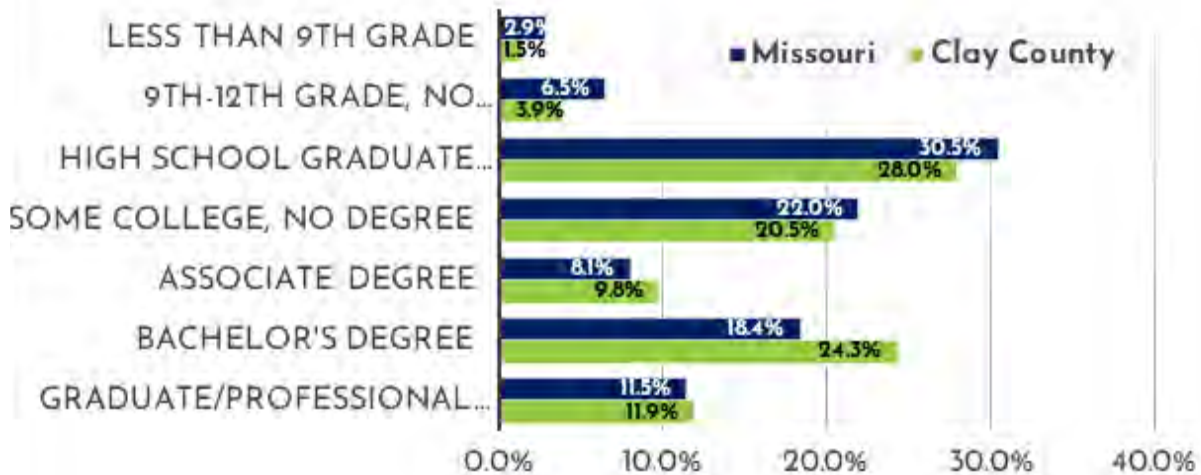
- Kearney supports the highest median household income and the highest percentage of high-income households earning \$100,00 and more, suggesting the financial capacity to support the highest for-sale housing values and residential rents. Kearney’s small percentage of households earning less than \$25,000 suggests only a modest need for income-based rental housing.
- Smithville supports an above average median household income, particularly high-income households with the capability of supporting above average for-sale housing values and residential rents. Smithville also supports an above average rate of households with income of \$50,000 to \$74,999 with only three percent of Smithville households earning less than \$25,000. This indicates a demand for first-time homebuyers and a modest need for income-based rental housing.
- Liberty’s household income distribution is comparable to Clay County as a whole, supporting a strong need for both entry-level and move-up for-sale housing. An estimated 10.9 percent of Liberty households earn less than \$25,000, suggesting a need for income-based rental housing.
- Excelsior Springs maintains the lowest household income among the County’s four principal cities, with both median and mean annual incomes well below countywide norms. An estimated 22.6 percent of households earn \$50,000 to \$74,999 annually, supporting the need for entry-level, for-sale housing and market-rate rental housing. Nearly one-third of Excelsior Springs households earn \$75,000 to \$99,999, generating the need for move-up for-sale housing and upscale rental housing. Just 5.8 percent of Excelsior Springs households earn less than \$25,000, generating a modest need for income-based rental housing.



## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels indicate a community’s ability to attract and retain knowledge-based industries and ability to support above-average wages. They also have a direct impact on achievable income levels, retail expenditure patterns, housing values, and the demand for commercial space. **Figure A.11, Educational Attainment Levels** provides a comparison of educational attainment levels between Clay County and the State of Missouri.

**FIGURE A.11, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS**



Clay County’s population is well-educated with 46.0 percent of all residents ages 25+ attaining an associate degree or higher, compared to 38.0 percent for Missouri. Clay County’s above average educational attainment levels improve the potential to support above average job growth, income levels, retail expenditures, and housing values and rents.

**TABLE A.12, CLAY COUNTY’S PRINCIPAL CITIES, COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS**

Education Level	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
Population 25 Years and Over	179,275	20,616	6,831	6,417	6,813
Less than 9th Grade	1.5%	1.9%	4.3%	0.8%	1.1%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	3.9%	4.1%	8.9%	2.6%	2.8%
High School Graduate or GED	28.0%	27.4%	44.7%	28.6%	26.9%
Some College, No Degree	20.5%	21.8%	20.7%	24.1%	25.9%
Associate Degree	9.8%	8.0%	4.8%	15.6%	9.2%
Bachelor’s Degree	24.3%	25.4%	11.2%	21.5%	21.6%
Graduate/Professional Degree	11.9%	11.5%	5.3%	6.7%	12.6%

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

### Figure A.12, Clay County's Principal Cities Comparison of Educational Attainment Levels

provides a comparison educational attainment levels among the four principal cities in Clay County.

- Liberty supports the highest educational attainment levels with 44.9 percent of its residents ages 25 years and older possessing an associate degree or better and only 6.0 percent of Liberty's adult population not graduating high school. These high educational attainment levels are consistent with Liberty's well-above average income levels.
- Smithville supports the second highest level of educational attainment among Clay County's four principal cities, with 43.8 percent of the adult population attaining an associate degree or better. It also has the lowest rate of residents who have not graduated from high school.
- Kearney's adult population ages 25 years and older is also well educated with 43.4 percent of residents ages 25 years and older attaining a bachelor's degree or better and 12.6 percent of adult residents attaining a graduate or professional degree, the highest rate among Clay County's four principal cities.
- Educational attainment for Excelsior Springs adult population is slightly below the countywide average with 43.8 percent of residents 25 years of age and older possessing an associate degree or better. A reported 13.2 percent of Excelsior Springs' adult population has not graduated high school.

These educational attainment levels suggest that Clay County's overall population, regardless of being in a rural or urban setting, is well educated. This provides for a diverse population base that can support a wide range of job types and a diverse economy.

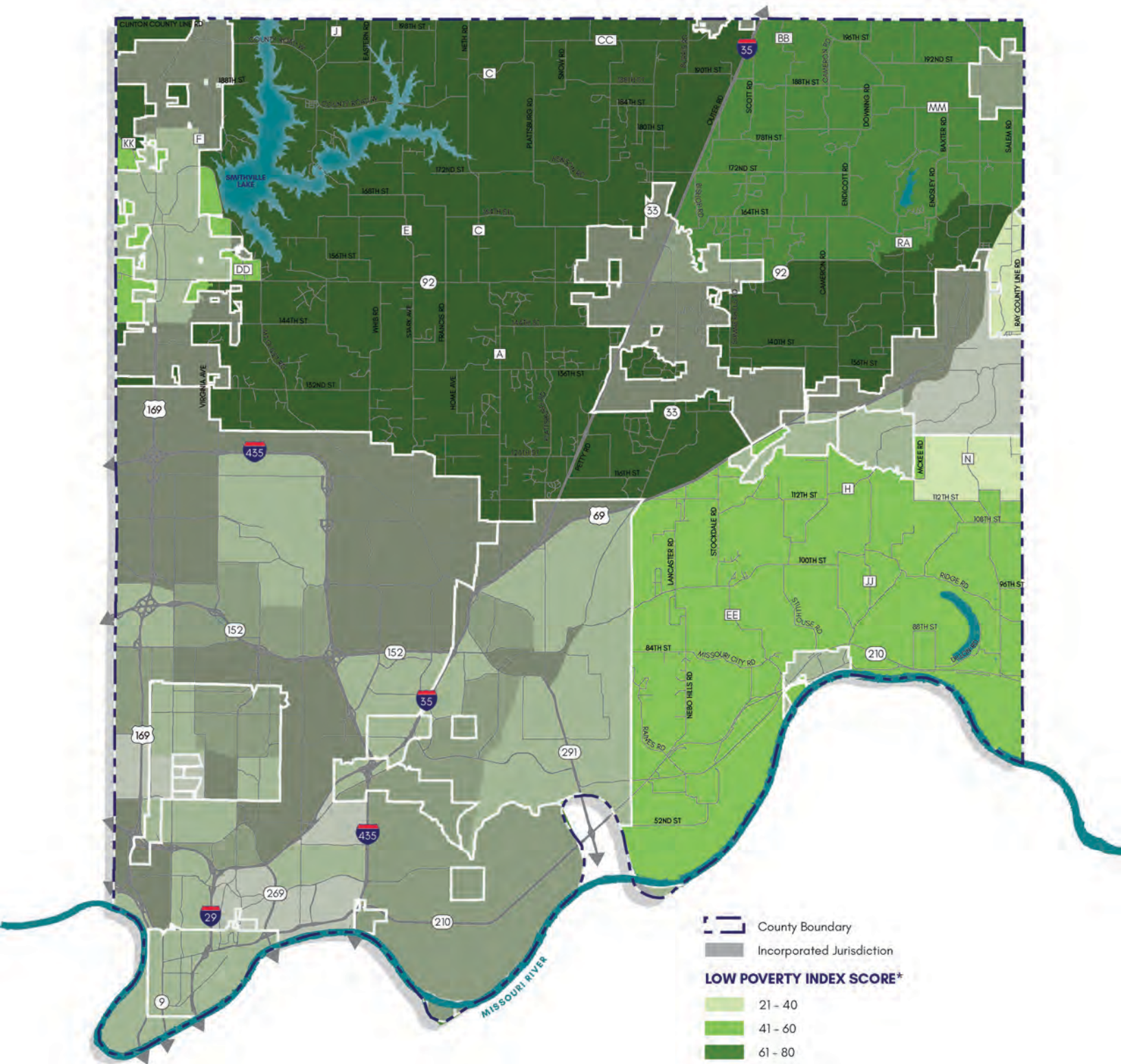
## Poverty Index

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development generates the Low Poverty Index (LPI), which captures the depth and intensity of poverty in a given neighborhood. The index uses both family poverty rates and public assistance receipt, in the form of cash-welfare, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The index is a linear combination of two vectors, the family poverty rate (pv) and the percentage of households receiving public assistance (pa). The poverty rate and public assistance for neighborhoods are determined at the census tract level. Values are inverted and percentile ranked nationally. The resulting values range from 0 to 100. **The higher the score, the less exposure to poverty in a neighborhood.**

As shown in **Figure A.12**, a large portion of Clay County falls within the 60.0- 80.0 and 80.0-99.0 national percentiles for poverty. This indicates that large portions of Clay County are less exposed to poverty than other areas. However, areas located in North Kansas City and Excelsior Springs fall within the 20.0-40.0 percentiles for poverty, indicating a greater likelihood that these areas are exposed to poverty.

## Social Vulnerability

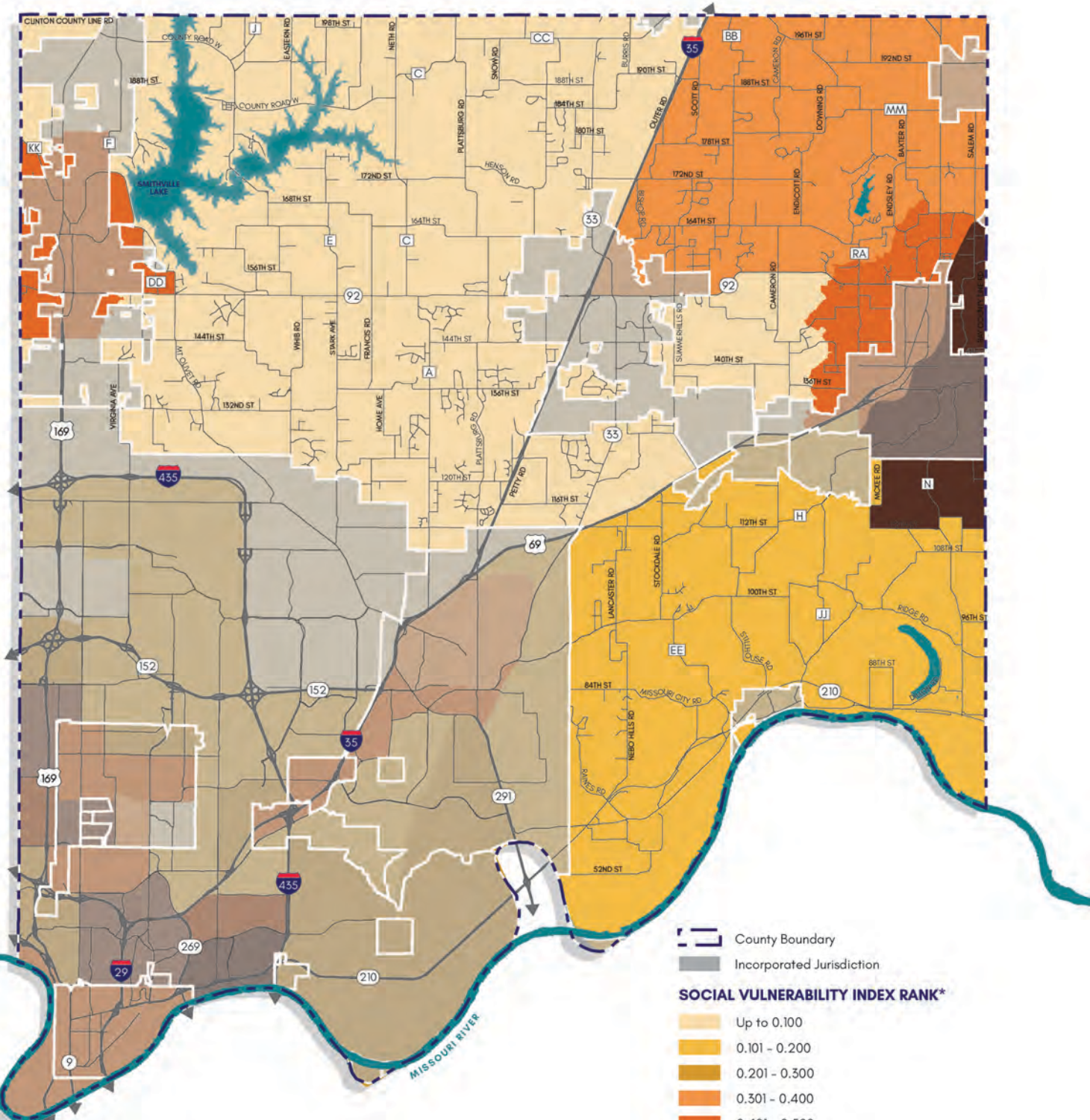
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) uses U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of every census tract. The SVI rank each tract on 15 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access and crowded housing, and groups them into four related themes. The SVI can help public health officials and local planners better prepare for and respond to emergency events like disease outbreaks or exposure to dangerous chemicals. **The lower the number, the less likely residents will be at risk during a public health emergency.**



**FIGURE A.12**  
**LOW POVERTY INDEX**



Data Sources: Clay County, UrbanFootprint, and Census 5 shells



**FIGURE A.13**  
**SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX**

- County Boundary
  - Incorporated Jurisdiction
- SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX RANK\***
- Up to 0.100
  - 0.101 - 0.200
  - 0.201 - 0.300
  - 0.301 - 0.400
  - 0.401 - 0.500
  - 0.501 - 0.600
  - 0.601 - 0.700
  - 0.701 - 0.800
  - 0.801 - 0.900

\*The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) is a database maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to identify and characterize communities that are less able to prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health crises. A numerical ranking is given on a 0 to 1 scale, with 1 being most vulnerable.

SVI uses U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of each census tract and determines ranking on 16 social factors. Rank groups are created for four related themes (socioeconomic status, household characteristics, racial and ethnic minority status, and housing type/transportation) as well as overall vulnerability (as shown on this map).



Data Sources: Clay County UrbanFootprint and Olson Studio

According to the SVI, major portions of Clay County experience a low to moderate range of social vulnerability. However, certain areas indicate being in a heightened range of social vulnerability. Smithville and portions of North Kansas City display a moderate to high-moderate level of social vulnerability. Furthermore, a large portion of Excelsior Springs displays a high level of social vulnerability. This indicates that based on the 15 social factors, county residents located near Excelsior Springs are more likely to be at risk during public health emergencies.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Clay County experienced an 85.61 percent change in population from 1980 to 2020. This equates to approximately 116, 847 additional residents. This growth rate outpaces the Kansas City MSA's growth rate for the same period.
- The County has a high rate of children (0-14 years), young adults (25-34 years), family/working adults (35-44 years), and elderly (65+ years).
- Clay County has a median household income of \$77,819, which is higher than Missouri median household income of \$54,596.
- Clay County's population is well-educated with 46.0 percent of all residents ages 25+ attaining an associate degree or higher, compared to 38.0 percent for Missouri. Clay County's above average educational attainment levels improve the potential to support above average job growth, income levels, retail expenditures, and housing values and rents.
- Based on national datasets, large portions of Clay County are less exposed to poverty than other areas and are less socially vulnerable. However, there are certain areas located in North Kansas City and Excelsior Springs that are more exposed to poverty and are considered to be more socially vulnerable.

## Helpful Terms and Facts

**Social Vulnerability** refers to the resilience of communities (the ability to survive and thrive) when confronted by external stresses on human health, stresses such as natural or human-caused disasters or disease outbreaks. Reducing social vulnerability can decrease both human suffering and economic loss.

**Socially Vulnerable Populations** include those who have special needs, such as, but not limited to, people without vehicles, people with disabilities, older adults and people with limited English proficiency.

Census tracts are subdivisions of counties for which the Census collects statistical data. The SVI ranks each tract on 15 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access, and crowded housing, and groups them into four related themes. Each tract receives a separate ranking for each of the four themes, as well as an overall ranking.

### SVI Themes and Social Factors:

- Socioeconomic status (below poverty, unemployed, income, no high school diploma)
- Household composition and disability (aged 65 or older, aged 17 or younger, older than age 5 with a disability, single-parent households)
- Minority status and language (minority, speak English "less than well")
- Housing type and transportation (multi-unit structures, mobile homes, crowding, no vehicle, group quarters)

Source: U.S. Census

# Existing Employment Conditions

Employment conditions are an important component that influence population, income and retail expenditures. Job growth is a reliable indicator of general economic conditions and demands for housing and commercial and industrial space. Since households prefer to live near work for convenience and affordability, items such as housing costs, reduced commuting times and a higher quality of life can motivate employees to relocate from elsewhere in a metropolitan area to the community where their jobs exist.

## Employment Conditions and Trends

According to the ***Economic and Market Analysis***, Clay County added 18,408 jobs from 2013 through 2019. This increased the employment base by 21.4 percent. Due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Clay County lost 3,416 jobs in 2020. However, by 2022, total employment in Clay County totaled 110,567 jobs, surpassing the pre-pandemic levels.

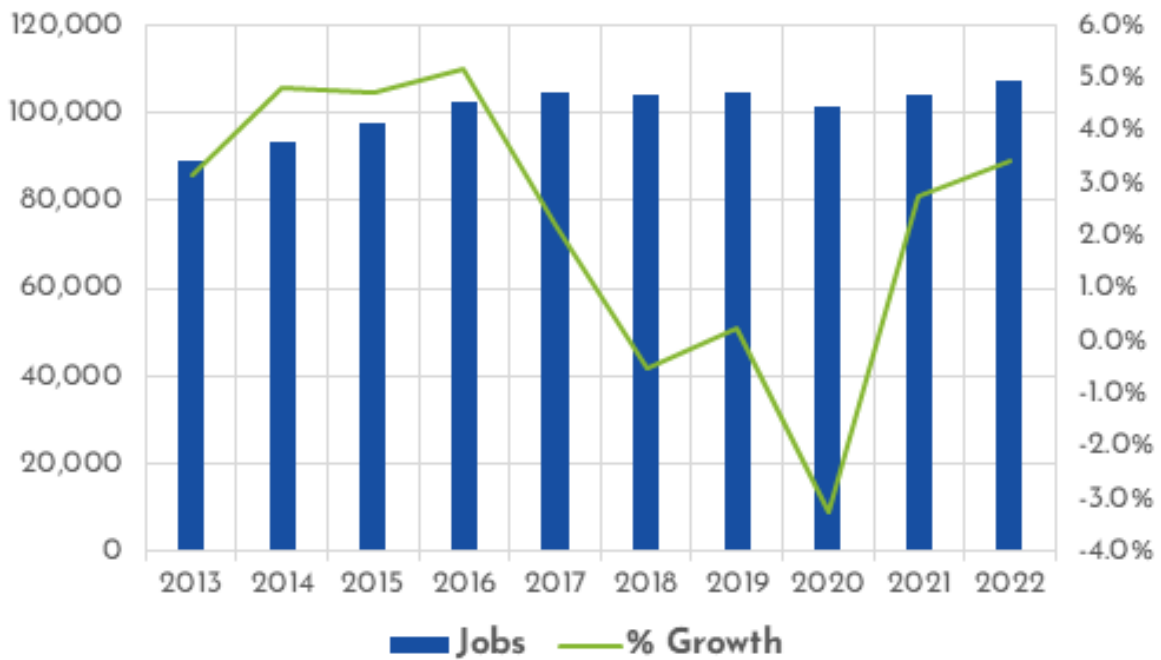
Leading employment sectors in Clay County include trade, transportation & utilities (25,801 jobs); education & health services (21,523 jobs); professional and business services (16,237 jobs); and manufacturing (14,365 jobs). These occupations generally produce a strong demand for industrial, office space, market-rate rental housing, and for-sale housing.

**TABLE A.13, CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR COMPARISON  
CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI AND KANSAS CITY MSA; 2022**

Industry Classification	Clay County	% of Total	State of Missouri	Kansas City MSA
<b>Total Nonfarm Employment</b>	<b>107,501</b>		<b>2,957,000</b>	<b>1,135,400</b>
Construction	5,494	5.11%	4.62%	5.08%
Manufacturing	14,365	13.36%	9.82%	7.62%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	25,801	24.00%	18.88%	20.66%
Information	629	0.59%	1.64%	1.49%
Financial Activities	4,129	3.84%	6.37%	7.04%
Professional & Business Services	16,237	15.10%	13.20%	17.08%
Education & Health Services	21,523	20.02%	16.66%	14.51%
Leisure & Hospitality	13,528	12.58%	10.26%	9.67%
Other Services	2,922	2.72%	3.95%	3.96%
Government	2,604	2.42%	14.45%	12.89%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**FIGURE A.14, CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI EMPLOYMENT TRENDS**



Compared to the State of Missouri, Clay County possesses above average concentrations of employment in occupations such as construction; manufacturing; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; professional and business services; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality. Conversely, Clay County lags below the statewide norms in the sectors of information; other services; and government.

When compared to Kansas City MSA averages, Clay County supports a higher rate of employment in the manufacturing; trade, transportation, and utilities; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality sectors. Employment sectors where Clay County lags include information; professional and business services, other services; and government.

## Major Employers

Major employers have a positive impact on a local economy by generating direct and indirect jobs, retail expenditures, and housing demand. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, private employers operating in Clay County include the Ford Motor Company (7,200 employees), North Kansas City Hospital (3,551 employees), Cerner Corporation (2,972 employees), Liberty Hospital (1,775 employees), and Hallmark Cards (1,150 employees). Major employers in Clay County are in the manufacturing, logistics, gaming, and healthcare industries.

**TABLE A.14, CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI MAJOR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS**

Company Name	Business Type	# of Employees
Ford Motor Corporation	Motor Vehicle Manufacturing	7,200
North Kansas City Hospital	Healthcare Services	3,551
Oracle	Healthcare Information Systems	2,972
Liberty Hospital	Healthcare Services	1,775
Hallmark Cards	Greeting Cards	1,150
Elms Resort & Spa	Resort Hotel	1,105
FedEx	Delivery Services	960
Union Pacific Railroad	Railroad	920
VMLY&R	Web Design	610
Harras’s North Kansas City Casino & Hotel	Riverboat Gaming	596
Ameristar Casino	Riverboat Gaming	531
Musician’s Friend	Music Equipment Distribution Center	385
RR Donnelly	Printing	350
Magna Seating of America	Automotive Seat Manufacturing	280

Source: Clay County EDC.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Even though Clay County experienced some job loss during the COVID-19 pandemic, total employment rebounded in 2022 culminating in a total of 110,567 jobs. This surpassed the pre-pandemic employment levels.
- Leading employment sectors in Clay County include trade, transportation & utilities (25,801 jobs); education & health services (21,523 jobs); professional and business services (16,237 jobs); and manufacturing (14,365 jobs).
- Major employers are in the manufacturing, logistics, gaming, and healthcare industries. Major employers include For Motor Company, North Kansas City Hospital, Cerner Corporation, Liberty Hospital, and Hallmark Cards.

## Residential Housing Market

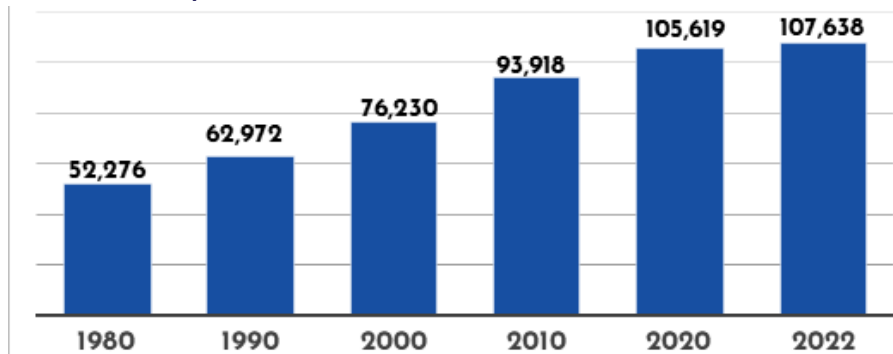
This section evaluates Clay County's single-family and multi-family residential housing markets as well as the existing housing stock characteristics. These characteristics include dwelling units, housing tenure, and mix of housing types. Evaluating an existing residential market can help explain housing needs and capacity within a community.

### Housing Stock and Inventory

The Clay County housing stock totaled approximately 52,276 dwelling units in 1980. This number more than doubled by 2020, culminating in a total of 107,638 dwelling units in 2022. The largest increase of housing occurred between 2000 to 2010 with the addition of 17,688 dwelling units to the market. These trends are illustrated in **Figure A.15, Clay County Housing Stock Growth**.

Between 1990 and 2020, the housing stock within Clay County's largest cities increased by 87.4 percent. By 2020, Clay County's largest cities account for 89.5 percent of the countywide housing stock, approximating 94,531 dwelling units.

**FIGURE A.15, CLAY COUNTY HOUSING STOCK GROWTH**



**TABLE A.15, HOUSING STOCK GROWTH TRENDS CLAY COUNTY CITIES; 1990-2020.**

City	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	Growth 1990-2020	% Change 1990-2020
<b>Clay County</b>	<b>63,000</b>	<b>76,230</b>	<b>93,918</b>	<b>105,619</b>	<b>42,619</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
Kansas City	23,117	34,935	47,891	55,557	32,440	140.3%
North Kansas City	2,616	2,779	2,565	3,067	451	17.2%
Gladstone	11,076	11,919	12,148	12,521	1,445	13.0%
Liberty	7,645	9,973	11,284	11,505	3,860	50.5%
Excelsior Springs	4,229	4,350	4,771	4,223	-6	-0.1%
Kearney	738	1,995	3,120	3,824	3,086	418.2%
Smithville	1,016	2,220	3,280	3,834	2,818	277.4%
Total Housing Units	50,437	68,171	85,059	94,531		
% of County Total	80.1%	89.4%	90.6%	89.5%		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Table A.15, Housing Stock Growth Trends Clay County Cities; 1990-2020** breaks down the dwelling units by Clay County’s largest cities.

- Kansas City is the largest city in Clay County, supporting a total of 55,557 dwelling units. Since 2000, Kansas City’s housing stock grew by 32,440 dwelling units. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, new home constructions is very active and expected to continue growing northward.
- Liberty is Clay County’s second largest city, with a 2020 population of 30,167 residents and with an estimated 11,505 dwelling units. Liberty is expected to continue to support strong growth due to an industrial construction boom.
- Gladstone is Clay County’s third largest city with a 2020 population of 27,063 residents. Due to being a landlocked community, new home constructions is expected to remain modest for the foreseeable future.
- North Kansas City is also a landlocked community, experiencing an increase of 451 dwelling units since 1990.
- Both Kearney and Smithville are expected to experience continued new home construction and population growth due to continued population and urban expansion of the Kansas City MSA and available open space for development.

**TABLE A.16, CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI HOUSING STOCK BY TYPE; 2022**

Units in Structure	# of Units	% of Total	Missouri %
1-Unit, Detached	74,020	68.8%	70.0%
1-Unit, Attached	5,452	5.1%	3.7%
2 Units	1,196	1.1%	3.2%
3 or 4 Units	3,482	3.2%	4.7%
5 to 9 Units	5,872	5.5%	3.6%
10 to 19 Units	7,458	6.9%	3.6%
20+ Units	8,460	7.9%	5.9%
Mobile Home	1,702	1.6%	5.3%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0	0.0%	0.2%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>107,642</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The predominant style of housing in Clay County is single-family residences. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, as of 2022, detached single-family housing accounts for 68.8 percent of Clay County’s housing stock. This is much higher than multi-family housing, which accounts for 24.7 percent of the total housing stock. A breakdown of housing stock by type is listed in **Table A.16, Clay County, Missouri Housing Stock by Type; 2022**.

**TABLE A.17, HOUSING STOCK COMPOSITION CLAY COUNTY CITIES; 2021**

Units in Structure	Clay County	Liberty	Kearney	Smithville	Excelsior Springs
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>106,652</b>	<b>11,578</b>	<b>4,121</b>	<b>3,834</b>	<b>4,223</b>
1-Unit, Detached	69.2%	73.7%	79.0%	80.5%	75.8%
1-Unit, Attached	5.2%	5.1%	3.0%	8.9%	1.8%
2 Units	2.5%	2.2%	4.5%	1.7%	1.1%
3-4 Units	3.2%	2.3%	5.9%	7.2%	3.7%
5-9 Units	5.1%	3.2%	2.2%	1.5%	4.5%
10-19 Units	5.8%	4.8%	2.9%	0.0%	3.2%
20+ Units	7.4%	4.7%	1.5%	0.0%	7.4%
Mobile Home or Other	1.5%	4.1%	0.9%	0.1%	1.1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The four principal cities have slightly different housing stock compositions. These variations are included in **Table A.17, Housing Stock Composition Clay County Cities; 2021.**

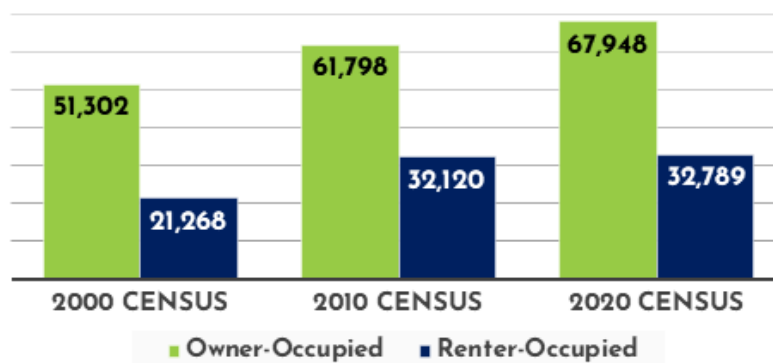
- Liberty supports the most diverse housing stock among the four principal cities with 69.2 percent being detached single-family homes and 17.2 percent being multi-family housing options.
- Kearney possesses the highest share of detached single-family homes at 81.6 percent of the total housing composition. Multi-family housing with three or more units accounts for 12.5 percent of the total housing stock.
- Smithville is predominately detached single-family homes, accounting for 80.5 percent of the total housing stock. Multi-family housing accounts for 10.4 percent of the total housing stock. No multi-family housing with ten or more dwelling units are present in Smithville.
- Excelsior Springs' housing composition includes 75.8 percent detached single-family homes. Multi-family structures account for 10.6 percent of Excelsior Springs' housing stock, the largest share among the four principal cities.

## Housing Tenure

The 2000 Census reported that 72,570 housing units were occupied in Clay County, including 51,302 owner-occupied units and 21,268 renter-occupied units. The housing tenure mix included 70.7 percent owner-occupied and 29.3 percent renter-occupied housing units.

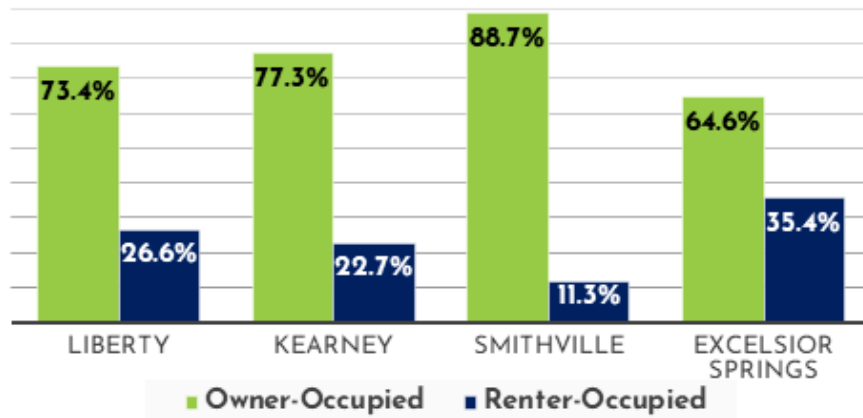
From 2000 through 2020, the housing tenure for Clay County increased by 16,646 owner-occupied housing units and 11,521 renter-occupied housing units. During the 20-year timeframe the percentage distribution declined for owner-occupied housing units from 70.7 percent in 2000 to 67.5 percent in 2020 and increased from 29.3 percent in 2000 to 32.5 percent in 2020 for renter-occupied housing units. These changes are illustrated in **Figure A.16, Clay County, Missouri Housing Tenure Trends.**

**FIGURE A.16, CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI HOUSING TENURE TRENDS**



Among the four principal cities, Smithville supports the highest rate of owner-occupied housing at 88.7 percent with renter-occupied housing accounting for just 11.3 percent. Excelsior Springs maintains the highest level of renter-occupied housing, with a total of 35.4 percent compared to owner-occupied housing at 64.6 percent. Liberty supports the most diverse housing stock with owner-occupied housing units accounting for 73.4 percent of all occupied housing units and renter-occupied housing at 26.6 percent. Kearney supports a well above average rate of homeownership accounting for 77.3 percent of the total occupied housing stock and renter-occupied accounting for the remaining 22.7 percent. These breakdowns are illustrated in **Figure A.17, Clay County, Missouri Housing Tenure Trends.**

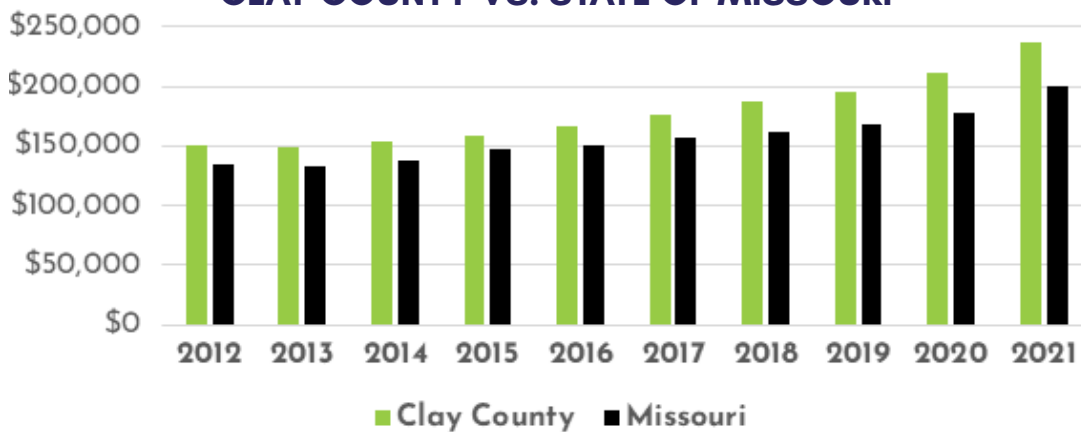
**FIGURE A.17, CLAY COUNTY CITIES HOUSING TENURE, 2021**



## Housing Values

**Figure A.18, Median Housing Value Trends, Clay County vs. State of Missouri** provides a comparison of median housing values for Clay County and the State of Missouri from 2012 to 2021. Since 2012, Clay County’s median housing value has trended higher than the State of Missouri’s median housing value. From 2014 to 2021, the median home value in Clay County rose by 54.4 percent compared to 44.1 percent for the State of Missouri.

**FIGURE A.18, MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE TRENDS, CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI**



According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, only 14.1 percent of the homes in Clay County are valued under \$150,000 compared to 29.5 percent statewide. Inversely, 68.7 percent of Clay County’s housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000 compared to 55.4 percent statewide. A comparison between Clay County and the State of Missouri is provided by **Table A.19, Housing Value Comparison; 2021, Clay County vs. State of Missouri**.

**TABLE A.19, HOUSING VALUE COMPARISON; 2021  
CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI**

Price Range	Clay County	State of Missouri
Less than \$50,000	3.6%	8.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	5.8%	15.3%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.5%	17.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	21.4%	17.7%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	28.0%	20.9%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	17.6%	14.7%
\$500,000+	4.2%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Among the four principal cities evaluated in the **Economic and Market Analysis**, Excelsior Springs represents the most affordable housing market with a median value for owner-occupied housing of \$147,200. This is lower than the countywide of \$199,600. Additionally, over half of the owner occupied housing stock is valued \$100,000 to \$199,999 with just 4.8 percent valued at \$300,000 or more.

**TABLE A.20, HOUSING VALUE DISTRIBUTION BY CLAY COUNTY CITIES; 2021**

Value Range	Clay County	Liberty	Kearney	Smithville	Excelsior Springs
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	66,178	8,026	2,957	3,275	2,389
Less than \$50,000	3.6%	3.5%	4.7%	3.7%	8.3%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	5.8%	3.8%	0.7%	1.4%	12.3%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.5%	17.3%	10.6%	8.8%	31.2%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	21.4%	23.1%	23.9%	26.5%	20.1%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	28.0%	31.7%	40.6%	43.5%	23.3%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	17.6%	18.4%	17.5%	14.4%	4.2%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	3.6%	2.1%	1.3%	1.6%	0.6%
\$1,000,000 or More	0.6%	0.1%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Median Value	\$199,600	\$206,800	\$219,400	\$217,800	\$147,200

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

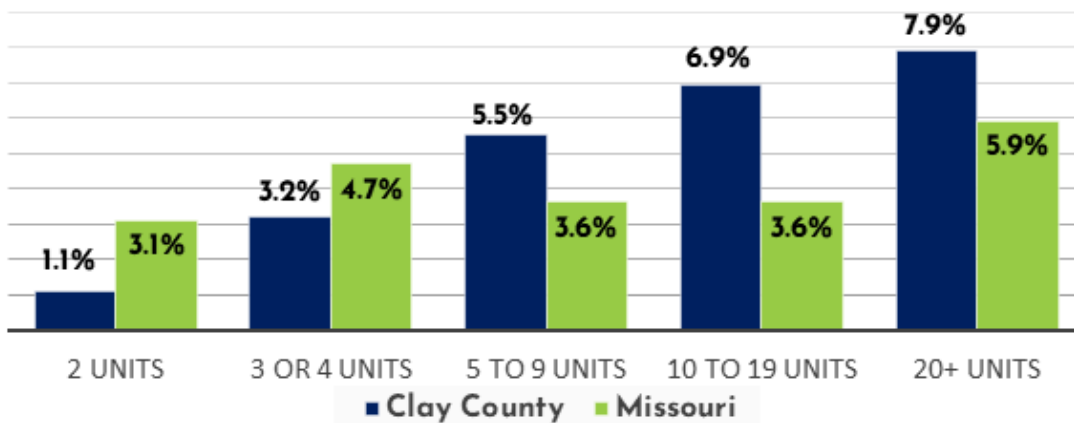
Kearney supports the most expensive housing market with a median home value of \$219,400. This may be due to strong new home construction in recent years. Only 5.1 percent of owner-occupied housing in Kearney is valued at less than \$100,000 while 70.0 percent is valued at \$150,000 to \$299,999.

Liberty supports the highest level of new home construction since 1990 with the housing stock increasing by 3,860 dwelling units. The median housing value is \$206,800. Only 7.3 percent of owner-occupied housing stock is valued at less than \$100,000 while 54.8 percent is valued between \$150,000 to \$299,999. Approximately, 20.6 percent of the total housing stock is valued at \$300,000 or more. This is the highest percentage amount of the four principal cities.

Smithville has also experienced significant new home construction over the past 30 years and now supports the second highest median housing value of \$217,800. A reported 70 percent of Smithville’s housing stock is valued from \$150,000 to \$299,999, with 16.0 percent valued at \$300,000 or more.

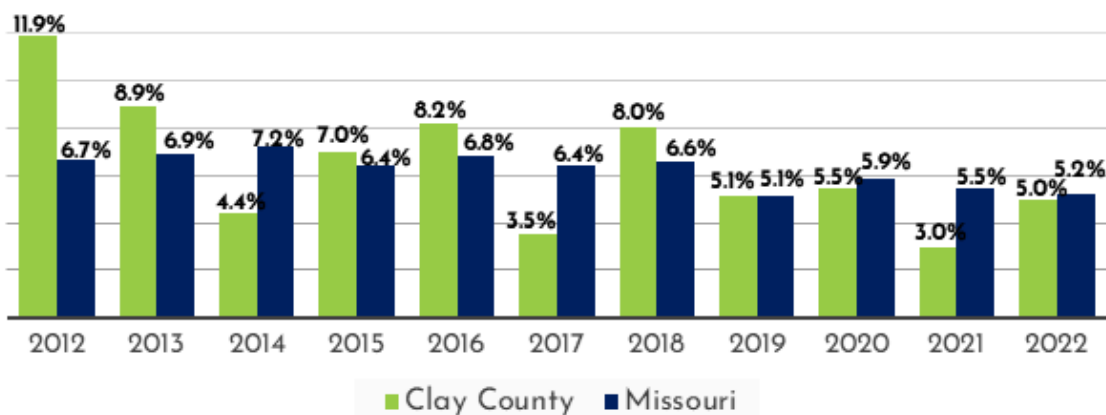
## Apartment Market

**FIGURE A.19, COMPARISON OF MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING STOCK, CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI, 2022**



According to the *Economic and Market Analysis*, Clay County’s multi-family housing stock totaled approximately 26,468 dwelling units, or 24.6 percent of the County’s total housing stock. This is slightly higher than the 20.9 percent of the statewide inventory. Properties with 20+ units account for Clay County’s largest share of multi-family housing at 6.9 percent of the housing stock, compared to 3.6 percent statewide. Properties consisting of 10 to 19 dwelling units account for 7.9 percent of Clay County’s total housing stock, compared to 3.6 percent statewide.

**FIGURE A.20, COMPARISON OF MULTI-FAMILY VACANCY RATES, CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI**



From 2012 to 2016, Clay County’s rental housing market operated at a vacancy rate above that for Missouri. From a high of 11.9 percent in 2012, Clay County’s rental housing vacancy rate steadily declined to a well below market equilibrium rate of 4.4 percent by 2014. According to the **Economic and Market Analysis**, Clay County’s rental housing has operated at a vacancy rate well below market equilibrium since 2019, suggesting near-term new rental housing is supportable. These vacancy rates are illustrated in **Figure A.21, Comparison of Multi-Family Vacancy Rates, Clay County vs. State of Missouri**.

**FIGURE A.21, GROSS RENT AS A % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME, CLAY COUNTY VS. STATE OF MISSOURI; 2022**



## Income-Based Rental Housing

Housing stress occurs when the cost of housing (either as rent or as a mortgage) is high relative to household income. A household spending 30 percent or more of its income on housing can be considered under housing stress. The gross rent for 45.5 percent of renter households in Clay County accounts for 30 percent or more of total income compared to 46.0 percent statewide, suggesting a slightly below average need for affordable and income-based rental housing. A comparison of the gross rent for Clay County and the State of Missouri are illustrated in **Figure A.21, Gross Rent as a % of Household Income, Clay County vs. State of Missouri**.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- By 2022, the Clay County stock totaled 107,638 dwelling units. The predominant style of housing in Clay County is detached single-family residences, accounting for 68.8 percent of the housing stock. Clay County’s multi-family housing stock totaled approximately 31,920 dwelling units, or 24.7 percent of the county’s total housing stock.
- The housing tenure mix in 2000 was 70.7 percent owner-occupied and 29.3 percent renter-occupied housing units. Compared to the housing mix in 2020, this indicates a rise in renter-occupied units compared to owner-occupied units. The housing tenure mix in 2020 was 67.5 percent owner-occupied and 32.5 percent renter-occupied units.
- Since 2012, Clay County’s median housing value has trended higher than the State of Missouri’s median housing value.
- The gross rent for 45.5 percent of renter households in Clay County accounts for 30 percent or more of total income compared to 46.0 percent statewide, suggesting a slightly below average need for affordable and income-based rental housing.



## Retail, Office, and Industrial markets

The following subsections provide an overview for the retail, office, and industrial submarkets within Clay County. For a more detailed analysis of these markets, please refer to the **Economic and Market Analysis** in **Appendix D**.

### Retail Market Overview

Due to strong population growth and high tenant demand over the past decade, Clay County's retail market grown with new retail construction activity. While the COVID-19 pandemic reduced the level of new construction, a continued tenant demand for new retail space has produced a steady decline in retail vacancy rates, totaling 2.1 percent by the middle of 2023.

**TABLE A.21, CLAY COUNTY SUBMARKET  
RETAIL MARKET CONDITIONS; 2023 Q2**

Center Type	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption 2023 YTD	Space U/C
Power Center	606,650	0.3%	\$20.93	0	0
Neighborhood Center	5,607,495	1.8%	\$17.77	44,624	0
Strip Center	764,435	4.6%	\$16.88	6,227	0
General Retail	6,863,270	2.1%	\$15.56	-10,524	87,060
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,841,850</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>\$16.76</b>	<b>40,327</b>	<b>87,060</b>

Source: CoStar.

Clay County maintains an inventory of approximately 13.8 million square feet of retail space, with general retail and neighborhood centers accounting for a large portion of the measurement. The principal concentrations of retail space are located at Interstate 35 (I-35) and Highway 152 (Hwy 152), Hwy 152 and Barry Road, and Highway 169 and N. Oak Street Trafficway. The larger rural communities of Kearney and Smithville support modest retail markets given their small populations and proximity to established shopping destinations in the Northland.

The Hwy 152 Corridor in Clay County from Platte Purchase Drive east to I-35 represents Clay County's newest shopping, dining, and entertainment destination. Two principal concentrations of retail development are present along the Hwy 152 Corridor in Clay County, including the intersections at I-35 and Hwy 169. The Highway 152 Corridor retail market supports approximately 3.86 million square feet of retail space currently operating at a vacancy rate of just 0.6 percent. Similar to the overall Clay County submarket, the modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location within the Highway 152 Corridor.

According to the Economic and Market Analysis, Clay County, despite supporting strong population growth and a large inventory of retail space, Clay County is still suffering from significant retail sales leakage into the balance of the Kansas City MSA. However, the continued population growth in Clay County will produce future retailer demand and development opportunities.

## Office Market Overview

There are 12,319 office-related jobs in Clay County. These jobs are in management and administrative, legal services, information, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors, accounting for approximately 10.3 percent of total employment in the County. This is lower than the 21.0 percent of office-related employment opportunities for the State of Missouri.

Office space within Clay County can be found in the I-35 Corridor submarket. The existing inventory of office space in Clay County totals 8.35 million square feet, operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 5.2 percent. From 2013 to 2022, an additional 491,099 square feet of office space was constructed. The net office space absorption totaled 829,177 square feet of space. These figures are broken down by Class A, Class B, and Class C in **Table A.22, Interstate 35 Corridor Submarket, Office Market Conditions; 2023 Q2**.

- **Class A** office properties represent the newest and highest quality buildings in the market.
- **Class B** office buildings are a little older but retain good quality management and tenants.
- **Class C** is the lowest classification of office buildings and are older buildings located in less desirable areas and are often in need of extensive renovations.

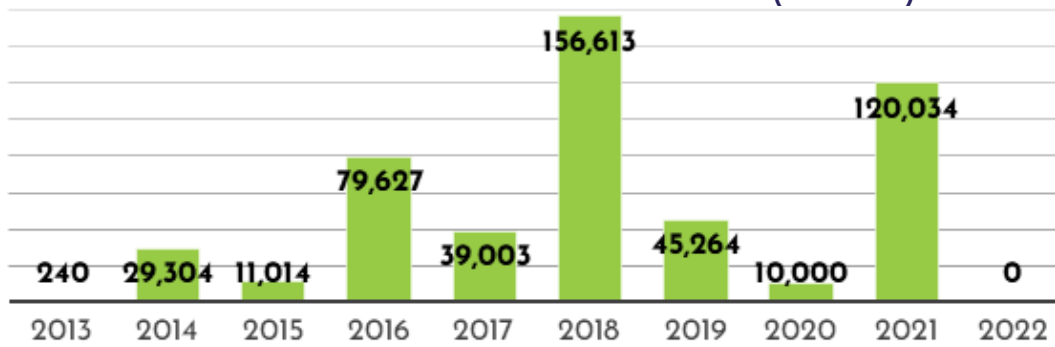
**TABLE A.22, INTERSTATE 35 CORRIDOR SUBMARKET OFFICE MARKET CONDITIONS; 2023 Q2**

Building Type	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption 2023 YTD	Space U/C
Class A	1,016,594	3.5%	\$26.80	1,200	0
Class B	4,356,609	5.8%	\$19.93	34,187	0
Class C	2,995,949	4.8%	\$16.49	17,800	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,369,152</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>\$19.53</b>	<b>53,187</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: CoStar.

As of the second quarter 2023, no office space was under construction in Clay County. However, two office buildings totaling 120,000 square feet of space are planned for future construction.

**FIGURE A.22, I-35 CORRIDOR OFFICE SUBMARKET,  
TRENDS IN NEW SPACE INVENTORY (SQ. FT.)**

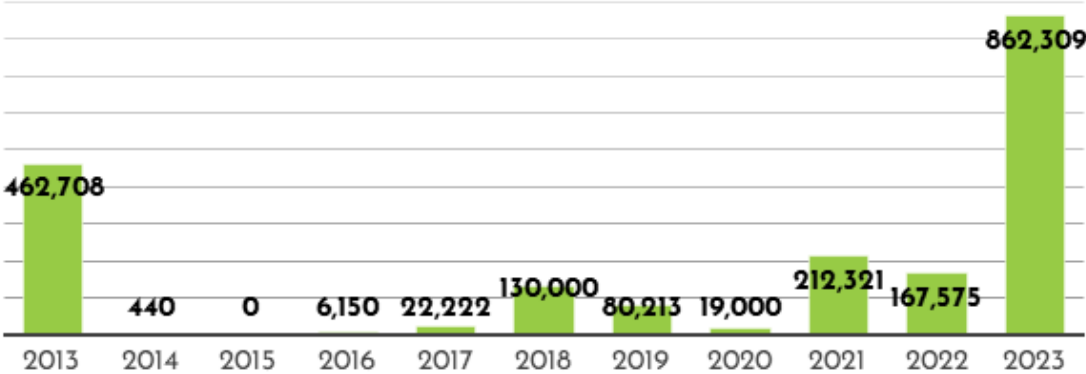


## Industrial Market Overview

Industrial-related employment in Clay County totals 25,645 jobs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities sectors, accounting for approximately 21.8 percent of total employment. This is lower than the 29.0 percent industrial-related employment opportunities for the State of Missouri.

By the second quarter 2023 the Clay County industrial market supported a total of 8.96 million square feet of space operating at an overall vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent, providing support for new, near-term additions. The I-35 Corridor in Liberty serves as the principal concentration of industrial space with a large inventory of land improved with streets and infrastructure available for future development.

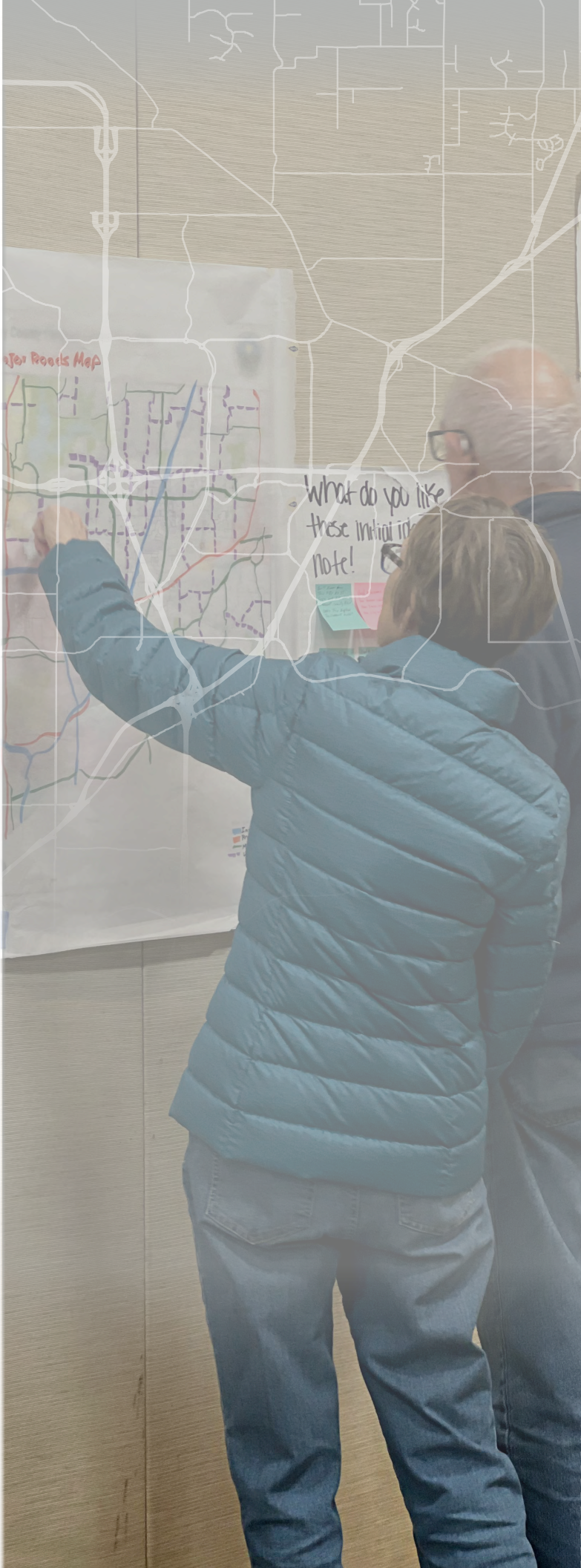
**FIGURE A.23, LIBERTY INDUSTRIAL SUBMARKET TRENDS  
IN NEW SPACE INVENTORY (SQ.FT)**



Given the presence of I-35 and Kansas City’s central location within the Midwest, Clay County is evolving into a major logistics and warehouse center. Since 2021, over 1.24 million square feet of industrial space has been constructed in Clay County with over 1.01 million square feet now under construction. Some major companies such as Hallmark, Amazon, and Walgreens have recently opened facilities in Clay County.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- The principal concentrations of retail space are located at I-35 and Hwy 152, Hwy 152 and Barry Road, and Hwy 169 and N. Oak Street Trafficway. However, Clay County still suffers from retail sales leakage due to their proximity to the Kansas City MSA.
- Office space within Clay County can be found in the I-35 Corridor submarket. The existing inventory of office space in Clay County totals 8.35 million square feet, operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 5.2 percent.
- The I-35 Corridor in Liberty serves as the principal concentration of industrial space with a large inventory of land improved with streets and infrastructure available for future development. Due to Kansas City’s central location within the Midwest, Clay County is growing into a major logistics and warehouse center.



# B

## Public Engagement Summary

A good plan is developed with the community, and not just for it. Through a series of online and in-person engagement opportunities, the planning team was able to collaborate with the community on the thoughts, ideas, and comments that became the recommendations put forth in this Plan.

**Appendix B** summarizes both that process and its outcomes.

# Engagement Overview and Key Findings

**Appendix B** summarizes the stakeholder and public engagement opportunities that were conducted to collect valuable input that helped guide this planning process. Stakeholder and public engagement is a critical component of any public planning process as it capitalizes on the knowledge and desires of those who know the community best.

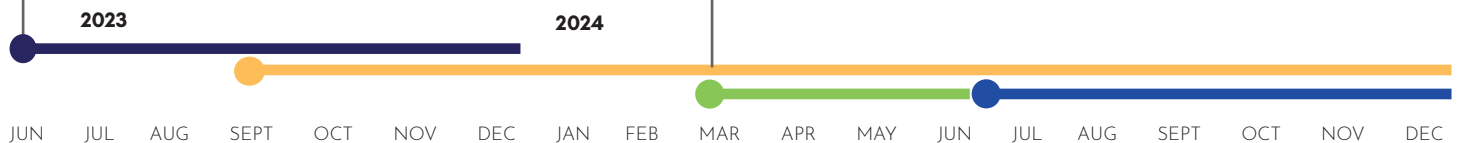
The planning team and the county worked together to involve stakeholders from different facets of the community, including local business leaders, county staff members, and the local youth. These stakeholder groups held their respective meetings and were invited to several public events. These stakeholders were asked to function as a sounding board, providing their insight and information to assist the planning team in the direction and recommendation of the Plan.

## DISCOVER

Assessed existing physical, economic, demographic, regulatory, and operational conditions Countywide Reference Appendix A, Appendix C, and Appendix D for more information.

## PLAN

Created alternative plans, strategies, and programs and prepared draft plan recommendations in the form of this document.



## ENGAGE

Identified issues and opportunities facing Clay County and formulated a clear vision for the future. Appendix B provides a summary on public and stakeholder engagement throughout the planning process.

## REFINE AND IMPLEMENT

Presented the Plan to the public, stakeholders, and County leadership for revisions and consensus building. Developed specific strategies and tasks to ensure the Plan is achieved day-by-day and step-by-step.

## Visioning Phase Key Findings

The visioning phase of the engagement process provides crucial input from stakeholders, County staff, and members of the public. While the planning team considers the existing conditions of the County and the 'what is,' the primary purpose of this phase is to ask County stakeholders what they envision for the County and 'what could be.' Responses gathered during this period are the result of visioning exercises that the planning team led stakeholders through at various engagement events and work sessions, including leadership work sessions, pop-up events, and the Visioning Workshop.

- **Costs and Financial Needs.** Multiple stakeholders indicated that additional revenue streams were needed to support county services. Comments indicated concern about the rising costs of multiple products and services and the effects of inflation.
- **Housing.** Stakeholders iterated their concern of the lack of available workforce and affordable housing options. This included housing for all ages, including seniors and younger generations. There were also calls for support services for those that are homeless or struggling to remain in their homes.
- **Communication.** Throughout the visioning phase, several comments suggested that additional coordination and communication was needed. This included communication between Clay County and municipalities and its citizens. Suggestions included making information about County programs and services more available online.
- **Retail, Dining, and Groceries.** There were calls for attracting different dining and retail options to the County. Multiple comments called for additional grocery stores options, particularly in places where there are few that available.
- **Infrastructure and Transportation.** Stakeholders indicated that an improved traffic flow and less traffic congestion was needed along certain transportation corridors. Additionally, some comments voiced concern about the lack of available transit options. Other concerns were for the maintenance of existing infrastructure, particularly some County roads.
- **Open Space, Parks, and Trails.** Multiple comments indicated the desire to see a more connected trail system, particularly between different parks and County assets. Some priorities included expanding walking and biking amenities and to plan for new parks facilities. There was also strong desire to see the preservation and protection of natural resources and recreational spaces throughout the County.
- **Public Involvement.** Stakeholders felt that there was a general lack of involvement from the public and a sense of unwillingness to change. There was also a sense of "Not in my backyard" or NIMBYISM present within communities.

These themes that were gathered throughout the visioning phase helped the planning team to create more pointed questions as engagement continued during the planning phase.

## Planning Phase Key Findings

While Visioning looks at the overarching big picture, the planning phase begins to narrow the focus on specific items that could be addressed in the Plan. During this phase of the engagement process, more specific questions were asked about issues and opportunities that exist in the following subject areas: Land Use; Economic Development; Mobility and Transportation; Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; and Government and Regional Relations.

The planning phase included the Countywide Planning Charrette, two In-Person Public Open Houses, and the Virtual Public Open House. Themes that emerged during the visioning phase were further elaborated in responses to the topic questions, giving the planning team more detail and ideas of how to address each area of concern. A summary of responses for each topic area are provided below.

- **Land Use.** Stakeholders indicated that future growth should occur near incorporated portions of the County and along thoroughfares, particularly along Highway 69 and Highway 92. This growth includes commercial and residential growth. With regard to residential growth, stakeholders suggested that the most in-demand housing options included affordable senior housing, single-family, and multi-family housing. Other suggestions included mixed-use residential and cottage communities as potential options. Stakeholders also identified large unincorporated areas of Clay County as areas where open space should be preserved and kept natural. Comments indicated that these areas were not appropriate for new growth and development. This includes the area directly adjacent to Smithville Lake and immediately to the north of the Missouri River, along the County line.
- **Economic Development.** Comments indicated that new economic development could take the form of commercial, light industrial, or heavy industrial land uses. Again, the areas that were identified by stakeholders included space along High 69 and Highway 92, with development in green spaces being inappropriate. Stakeholders also indicated that the County is missing commercial locations for mom-and-pop style establishments and large, event gatherings. Other comments indicated a strong desire to see new and unique retail options. Some comments indicated that the current state of infrastructure was holding the county back from economic growth.
- **Mobility and Transportation.** Overall, stakeholders indicated they would like to see the continued maintenance and improvement of County roads; the creation of new bike and walking trails; and the encourage bicycle/trail connections to public spaces.
- **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.** Stakeholders indicated they would like to preserve access to Smithville Lake and other green spaces within the County. Additionally, they would like to see trails or bike paths connecting parks and other areas around the County (e.g., areas within and between municipalities, to Smithville Lake, to Watkins Mill Trail, etc.). One consistent comment called for the preservation of trees and natural space.
- **Governmental and Regional Relations.** Comments consistently called for additional communication efforts from the County. This includes communications about Clay County's available services, current plans, upcoming events, and processes. Some comments called for additional social media use and marketing efforts, particularly with regard to tourism. A few comments called for the use of a monthly newsletter. Another suggestion was providing more services and County GIS data online for public consumption and use.



# Project Marketing

Multiple media outlets were utilized to ensure that residents throughout Clay County were aware of the opportunities to be involved in the planning process. These communication channels included a dedicated project website, the city’s social media accounts, press releases, email blasts, and text alerts. These various methods are described below.

## Project Website

A dedicated project website ([claycountycompass.com](http://claycountycompass.com)) was created to provide a land page for anyone interested in learning more about the planning process for Clay County’s comprehensive plan. The website provided information on a variety of topics related to the Plan, including:

A project overview, which details the purpose of the Plan and the goals of the planning process;

- A project timeline that shows the phases of the project;
- A listing of the different ways to engage in the planning process as a member of the public (e.g., public survey, in-person open house, virtual open house, etc.);
- Project downloads that summarize findings at engagement events and the Plan drafts; and
- An opportunity to ask questions or provide comments to the County

The website was regularly updated throughout the planning process, providing one consistent location for project-related information.

## Project Kick-off Video

An interview-style, project kick-off video was developed in coordination with Kipp Jones, Planning and Zoning Director of Clay County, to announce the kickoff of the comprehensive planning process, the purpose and need, why the process matters, and the importance of community involvement. This video was embedded on the project website and shared on the County’s social media platforms and website.

## Social Media

Clay County’s social media platforms promoted project information and informed residents of upcoming engagement efforts. The planning team developed and created the social media graphics and captions to encourage engagement with the project.



## Press Releases

Four press releases were distributed and used to formally announce milestones in the planning process. Each press release included basic project information and directed readers to the project website. The four press releases focused on the following topics:

- Press Release 1: project kick-off
- Press Release 2: public survey and pop-up events
- Press Release 3: virtual open house
- Press Release 4: plan recommendations review period
- Press Release 5: final plan review period and pop-up event
- Press Release 6: final plan adoption

## Email Blasts

The project website provided the public with the option of joining the contact list to receive project communications. Various e-blasts were sent to those who opted into email notifications about the project to provide information on engagement opportunities.

## Postcard

A postcard announcing the kickoff of the planning process and encouraging participation and feedback was mailed to unincorporated Clay County residents. This postcard can be found at the top of the next page.

## Project Graphics

The graphics on the following page are examples of the marketing and outreach materials designed and distributed for the planning process.

A unified brand was created for the Plan, including set colors, fonts, and logo. The brand standardized the visual identity of materials related to the planning process, so that outreach efforts could be easily attributed to the Plan.

# CLAY COUNTY 2040 COMPASS

**Be a part of the process  
Voice Your Opinion!**

Clay County's new comprehensive plan is under development and we need your help to determine the County's priorities.

## What is a comprehensive plan and why should it matter to me?

A comprehensive plan is a long-range document that guides the County's future growth and development, its priorities, and its services. It is a road map to visualize where we want to go as a county and the path to reach that destination. Your input in the planning process is essential to ensure Clay County's future.

[www.claycountycompass.com](http://www.claycountycompass.com)



### Attend the Pop-Up Events

Engage with the County and planning team at multiple pop-up events this fall. Visit the website to learn more.



### Sign Up for Project Alerts

Visit the project website to sign up for email alerts, or text **ClayCoCompass** to 888.521.3871.



### Participate in the Open Houses

Sign up for project alerts to learn more about public open houses as day/time details are announced.

# CLAY COUNTY 2040 COMPASS

The Public  
Survey is live  
and we need  
**YOUR** input!



Scan the QR code to take the survey online!  
Learn more about the Comprehensive Plan  
at [claycountycompass.com](http://claycountycompass.com)

You can also subscribe to project alerts via text message by texting  
ClayCoCompass to 888.521.3871 and follow the prompts.

## CLAY COUNTY 2040 COMPASS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE  
AND  
PUBLIC SURVEY  
Available until January 31



# County Leadership Work Session #1

The first County Leadership Work Session took place on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The planning team provided an overview to county leadership about the comprehensive planning process. The planning team also outlined the stakeholder engagement period, including several events that had occurred in the previous weeks. A preliminary existing conditions analysis including existing land use, housing market trends, and demographic data was provided. After the presentation, the planning team led County Leadership through a visioning exercise to help members identify their Needs, Wants, Desires, Barriers, Obstacles, and Annoyances. Once these items were identified, the planning team then asked County Leadership to provide their priorities for each section, listed to the left. The full list of responses are provided in the **Full Documentation of Responses**.

## Leadership Priorities

### Needs

- Pay scale
- Money, diversify revenue streams for County services

### Wants

- Increased revenue to improve County services
- Better communications with citizens and other cities
- Higher end restaurants, retail, and grocery stores

### Desires

- Convention center/arena
- Countywide signature event

### Barriers

- Technology
- Lack of funding sources

### Obstacles

- Funding sources

### Annoyances

- Streamlined processes County - city - state



# Visioning Workshop

## Why Visioning?

The Visioning Workshop is a critical milestone in this planning process. Not only is the visioning workshop the first in-person opportunity for community members, stakeholders, and County staff members to meet and work together, it is the time when the collective tone for the process to come is set. The goal of the workshop is to guide the development of the Plan, ensuring it is reflective of the community's overarching goals.

This visioning process is meant to uncover the needs, wants, and desires of the community without being clouded by constraints. While it is important to be realistic about what can be implemented, visioning is a time when participants are encouraged to ignore the price tag and timing concerns.

In addition to providing a dedicated time and space for community members to participate actively in the planning process, this time is also important for the planning team, allowing them the opportunity to listen intently to what the community hopes to achieve from the project. Although the facilitated dialogue and exercises provide rich input, the act of simply listening to conversations between neighbors, acquaintances, County staff members, and city leadership with their constituents is invaluable to shaping the Plan.



# Visioning Workshop Overview

Before a plan's vision and ultimate plan can be crafted, it is important to meet with various stakeholders to (1) ensure a clear understanding of their desires for the future of the County; (2) to gather local knowledge related to the issues and opportunities facing the County; and (3) to build consensus around a multifaceted solution. As the first step in this planning process, a visioning and planning workshop was held by the planning team.

The stakeholder group is made up of members of the County with a vested interest in this planning process, such as property/business owners, municipal representatives, special interest advocates, developers, and more. The technical committee members are vested community members who possess technical expertise as County staff members.

The Clay County Visioning Workshop took place on Thursday, November 2, 2023, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00p.m. in Smithville, Missouri (18212 Golf Course Road, Smithville, Missouri, 64089). As the first stakeholder meeting, the planning team introduced themselves and presented a project overview, detailing the comprehensive plan's purpose, the project timeline, key public participation events, and the role of the members of Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee (CPSC), Technical Team and Core Team. The planning team also presented the initial findings from the existing conditions analysis and the economic and market analysis.

The rest of the presentation and the meeting focused on gathering and understanding the group's thoughts and ideas. The planning team led the CPSC and Technical Committee and Core Team through a series of exercises to better characterize these ideas.

## Individual Exercise: Word Clouds

The first exercise asked attendees the following questions:

- What are three things that make you **PROUD** of Clay County?
- What are three **CHALLENGES** we face in Clay County?
- What is **ONE THING** that must happen for you to say this project is a success?

Attendees were able to provide their feedback via Mentimeter, a real-time audience participation platform software. The responses to the first two questions generated two digital word clouds. The larger the word size in a word cloud, the more times it was repeated as a response to the question. Word clouds are helpful in finding similar trains of thought between respondents.

The responses were varied by overall trends, but the groups' appreciation was primarily focused on parks, the County's history, schools, nature, accessibility and affordability. The groups' concerns for the County were focused on growth, development, transportation, infrastructure, County Commission, and politics.



## Group Exercise: Needs, Wants, Desires, Barriers, Obstacles, and Annoyances

After the word cloud exercises, the planning team split the members into six groups. Each group was asked to provide their own input by recording their needs, wants, desires, barriers, obstacles, and annoyances for Clay County. These categories are defined as follows:

- **Needs:** We need to address this critical issue.
- **Wants:** If we had the choice, we would choose to have this...
- **Desires:** Wouldn't it be nice if..., but if we don't get it, that's okay.
- **Barriers:** Immovable objects or obstructions that we must go around. (We cannot simply eliminate them; we must define a path that minimizes or mitigates them.)
- **Obstacles:** Things that can be surmounted or changed (hopefully in our best interest); get in the way of what we want to accomplish (but not just a nuisance). (We can go over, through or around them, but we must engage directly with them.)
- **Annoyances:** Things we just do not like; tend to be nuisances and personal; do not prevent you from achieving your goals.

### Group Prioritizations

After the groups came up with their initial ideas, they were asked to review other groups' responses and evaluate their own, prioritizing their top three choices for each section. These prioritizations are listed in **Table B.1 - B6**. A full list of the groups' responses can be found in the **Full Documentation of Responses**. Following the prioritization exercise, each group elected a spokesperson to provide a verbal summary of their group's priorities to the rest of the workshop's attendees.

Table B.1 - Group 1 Priorities	
<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Broadband</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 92 and 291 Hwy - 4 lanes, 112th Ave Exp.</li> <li>• Trails - community to community</li> <li>• Midwest National Air Center (better use)</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big attraction</li> <li>• 587</li> <li>• Agritourism</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topography</li> <li>• Land use: 5-10 acre lots surrounding cities</li> <li>• Outdated bureaucracies</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shadow of KC</li> <li>• Communication between counties/cities</li> <li>• Stigma of Old Clay County</li> </ul>

Table B.2 - Group 2 Priorities	
<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health services</li> <li>• Homeless services</li> <li>• Sustainability (food literacy)</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve farms through agritourism</li> <li>• Transportation road/trail improvements</li> <li>• Sewer districts</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine Country</li> <li>• Dark skies</li> <li>• Streetcar/mass transit connection</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased costs/loan financing</li> <li>• NIMBY</li> <li>• Floodplain</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of willingness to approve funding</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Lack of community involvement</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of animal control with county</li> <li>• No trash pickup</li> <li>• Infrastructure maintenance</li> </ul>



**Table B.3 - Group 3 Priorities**

<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart growth - plan for climate change</li> <li>• Infrastructure -maintain-</li> <li>• Money</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve/protect natural resources</li> <li>• Better communication</li> <li>• trails/parks/greenspace/wildlife corridors</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food production/food literacy</li> <li>• Clay Co local first</li> <li>• Cooperation between county + cities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation networks</li> <li>• Lack of public participation/comm.</li> <li>• Increased costs on everything</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of innovative thinking</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Inadequate enforcement</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdated inadequate processes</li> <li>• Light pollution</li> <li>• Noise pollution</li> </ul>
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**Table B.4 - Group 4 Priorities**

<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Affordable/workforce housing</li> <li>• Smart growth</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sewer districts</li> <li>• Preserve/Protect natural resources</li> <li>• Regional recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor recreation space</li> <li>• Development of airports</li> <li>• Trails</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floodplains</li> <li>• Inflation/increased costs</li> <li>• Large parcel</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Lack of affordable workforce housing</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Government dysfunction</li> <li>• Stigma of "Old Clay County"</li> </ul>
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**Table B.5 - Group 5 Priorities**

<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Agriculture open space balance</li> <li>• Family support services</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food entertainment</li> <li>• Grocery stores</li> <li>• Trail connectivity</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community gathering place</li> <li>• Support local</li> <li>• Broadband</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topography</li> <li>• Public participation</li> <li>• Major highways</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good ol' boys politics</li> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Insufficient funding</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistency</li> <li>• Infrastructure maintenance</li> <li>• Governmental dysfunction</li> </ul>
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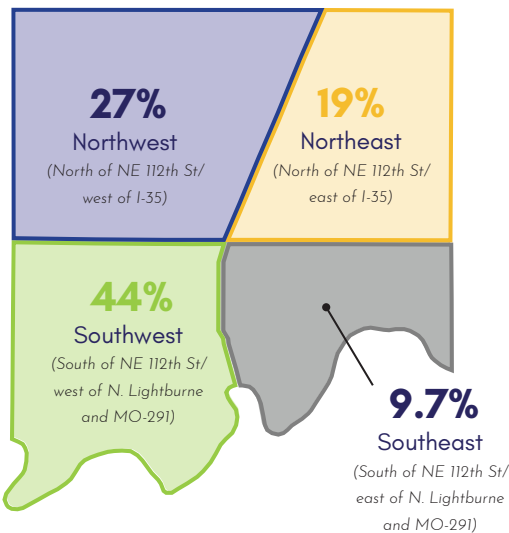
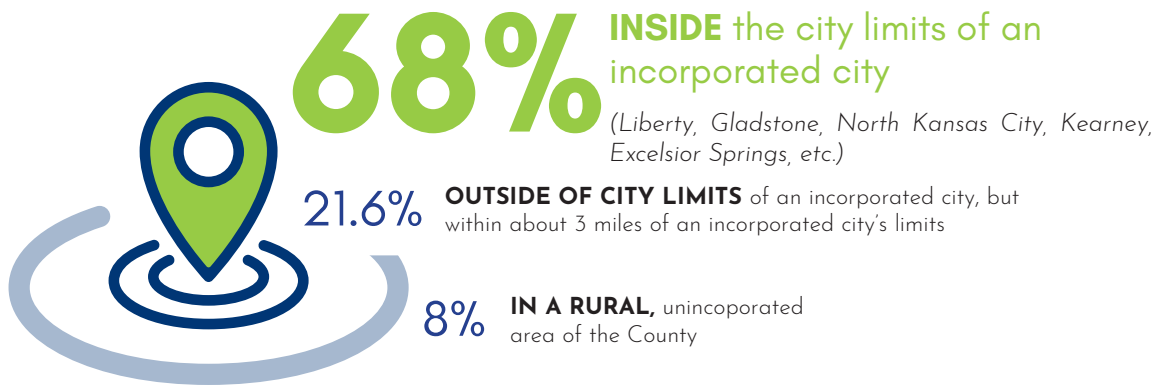
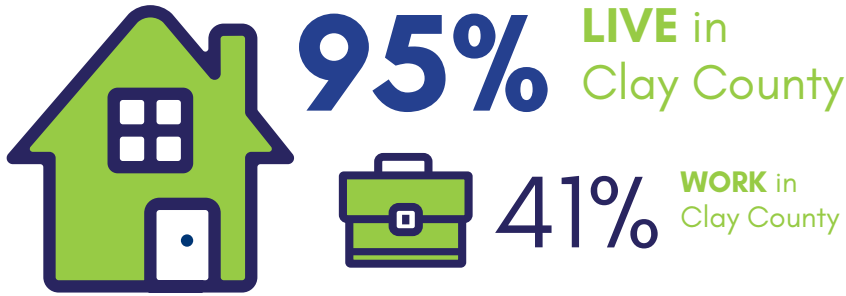
**Table B.6 - Group 6 Priorities**

<p><b>Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Package growth + development w/ intentional green corridors, trails + greenways</li> <li>• Affordable housing + affordable childcare</li> <li>• Quality community with economic development</li> </ul> <p><b>Wants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing for all age groups</li> <li>• Preserve + protect natural resources</li> <li>• Access to emergency healthcare</li> </ul> <p><b>Desires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dark skies</li> <li>• Community gathering places (library, coops, centers)</li> <li>• Connectivity trails w/community assets (parks, schools etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floodplains</li> <li>• Public participation + engagement</li> <li>• Costs of everything going up</li> </ul> <p><b>Obstacles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication: relationship between county, cities, people</li> <li>• Funding/resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Annoyances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure maintenance</li> <li>• Communications between county + cities</li> <li>• Lack of cooperation</li> </ul>
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# Public Survey

As part of the public participation process, a public survey was distributed to residents and stakeholders. This survey focused on residents' and stakeholders' preferences for the County's future, including questions about housing, economic development, and other topics. The results were used to identify areas of focus for the planning process.

The survey was available from November 17, 2023, to January 31, 2024, via the project website. The survey was completed by 726 respondents. The results of the survey are in the following **Public Survey Findings**.



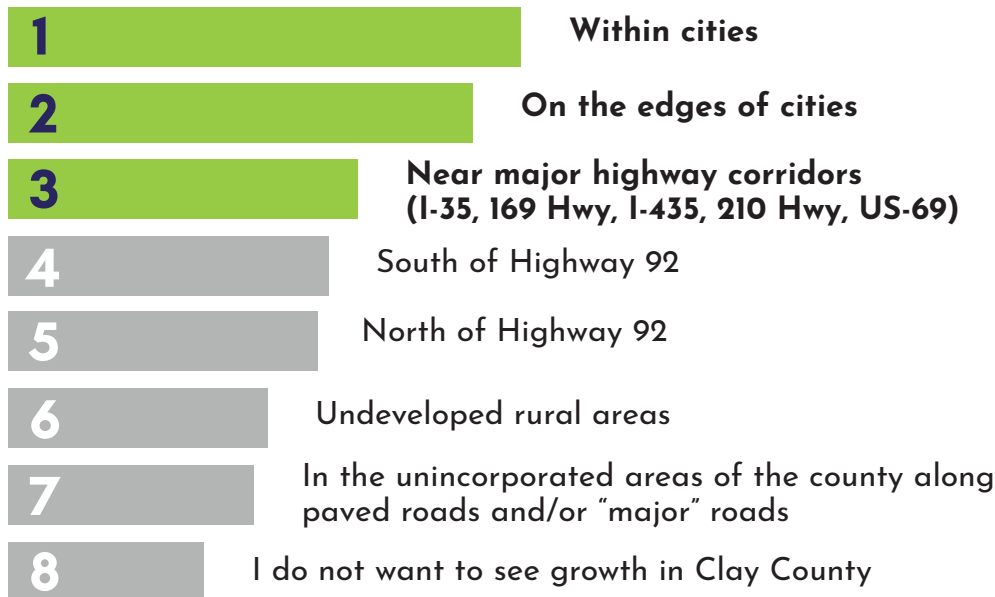
## If you live within 3 miles of an incorporated city, which city do you live in or near?

1. Kansas City (north of the river)
2. Liberty
3. Kearney
4. Gladstone

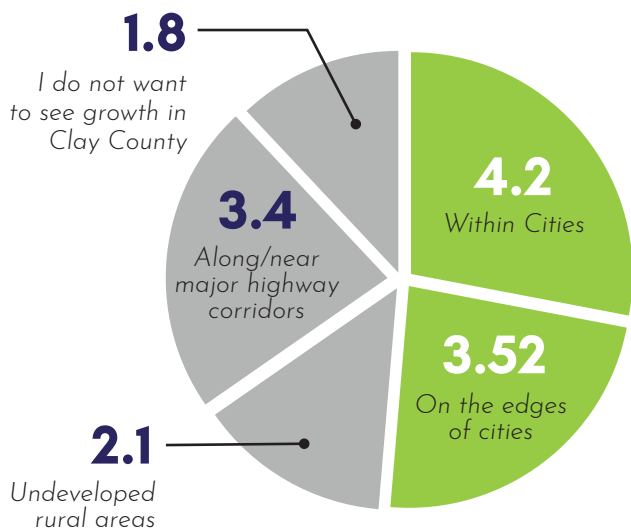
# Future Residential Growth

should be located...

(in order of importance)



# Future Commercial and/or Industrial should be located...



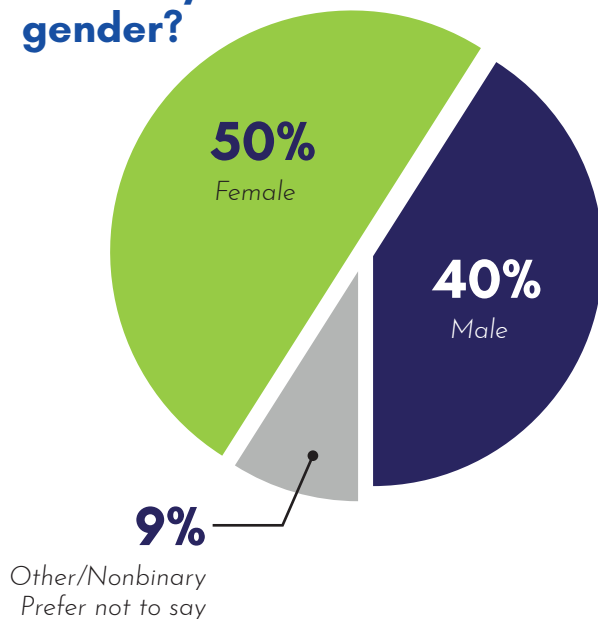
**YES**  
**countywide internet access**  
 is a concern for **53%** of respondents.  
 39% are not concerned and 9% are not sure.

# What are the **CRITICAL ISSUES** facing Clay County over the next **10 - 20 years?**

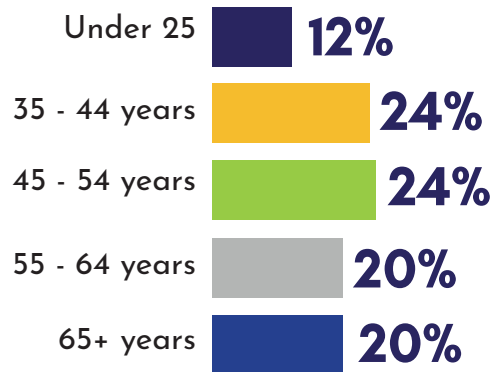
1. Rapid population growth
2. Higher taxes
3. Government transparency and honesty
4. Deteriorating infrastructure
5. Rising crime rates and the importance of neighborhood safety and collaboration with law enforcement
6. Affordable housing

**74%** of respondents are **Married,** or in a domestic partnership.

## What is your gender?



## What is your age?

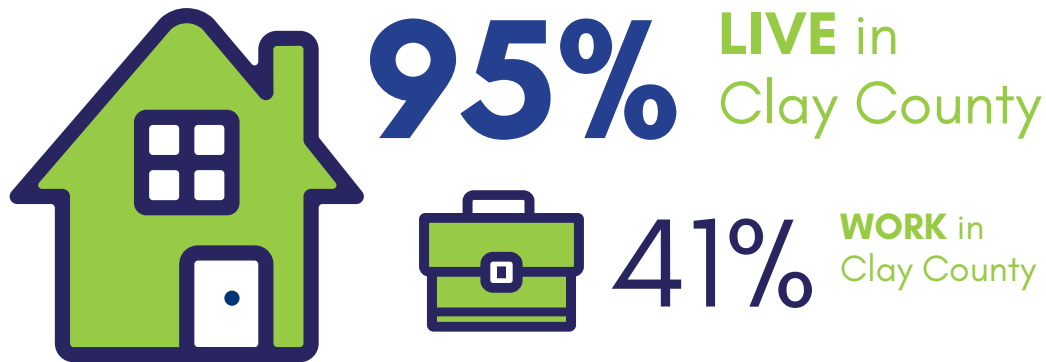


**71%** of respondents are **Employed** (Full Time)  
19% are retired.

# Clay County Survey Narrative

## Q1. I am interested in Clay County because I...

(Please select all that apply.)



A significant proportion of the participants (94.37%) indicated their interest in Clay County due to their residency status, while 41.35% cited employment in the County and 15.93% expressed interest in County governance. Additionally, 3.71% of respondents indicated that they visit the County frequently, while 6.59% stated “Other (please specify).” Question 1 was also compared to question 3, which inquired about the incorporated city in which respondents reside, in order to determine whether or not the responses varied significantly by community. A city within the city limits of an incorporated municipality (e.g., Liberty Gladstone, North Kansas City, Kearney, etc.) is where 67.46% of the respondents reside. The data indicates that a majority of respondents reside in the County, while nearly half of them are not employed there. This suggests that residents of the Kansas City metropolitan area are more likely to be employed elsewhere rather than within the County.

### Other Responses

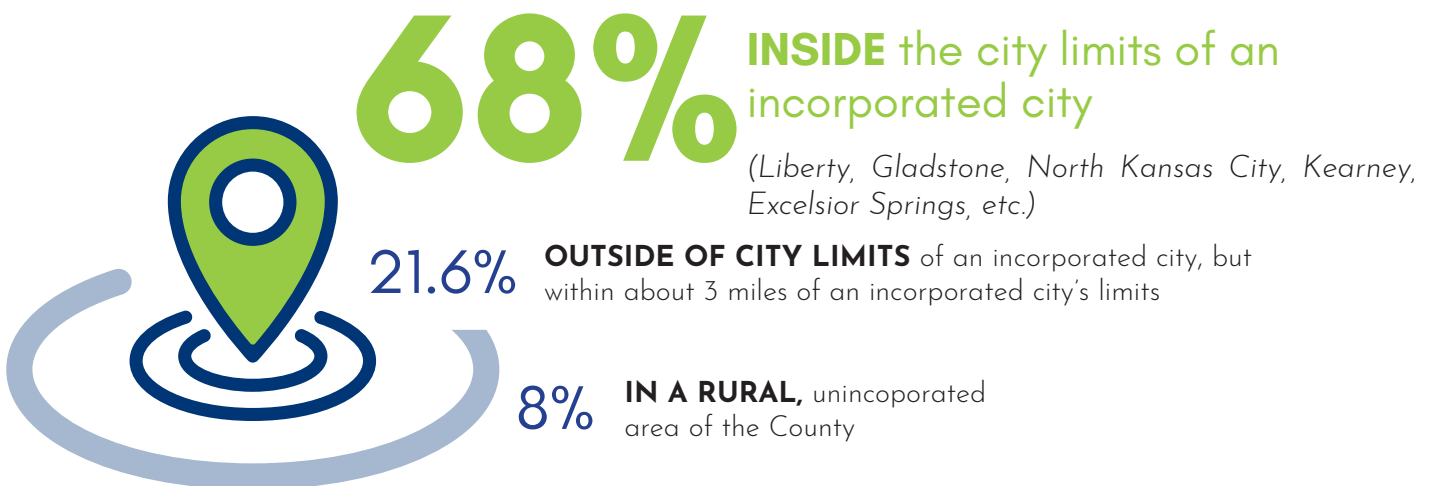
Respondents described the arts and cultural scene as a magnet, attracting people seeking inspiration and immersion in creative expressions. Property ownership emerged as a significant driver, reflecting the allure of Clay County’s real estate landscape and the desire to settle in a vibrant community. Furthermore, the diversity of community activities appealed to respondents, providing opportunities for engagement, connection, and enrichment. For some, working as a County employee provided a direct link to Clay County’s growth, instilling a sense of purpose and commitment to public service. Furthermore, the prospect of contributing to County projects sparked a sense of civic pride and dedication to shaping the county’s future direction.

## Q2 Do you currently live in Clay County?

Respondents who live within the county made up of 94.64% of the completed survey. Those who lived outside of Clay County were another 5.36% of the respondents. With 728 respondents participating in this question, there is a clear interest in the plan from those who live within Clay County.

## Q3 Where do you live?

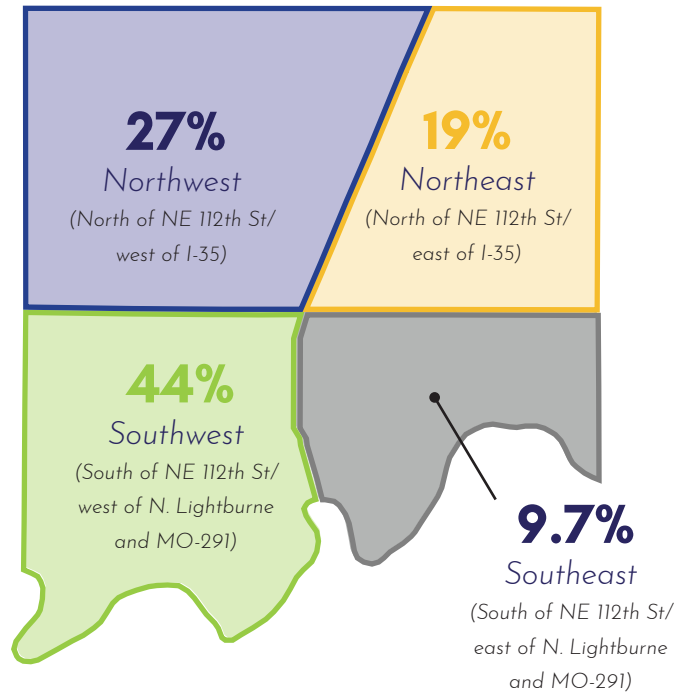
This breakdown is as follows: 67.46% live within the city limits of an incorporated city, 21.64% live outside the city limits of an incorporated city but within three miles of its limit, 8.21% live in a rural, unincorporated area of the county, and 2.69% respond with other. Residents who identified as other stated that they lived in Kansas City, Smithville, Randolph, Missouri, and the Missouri City township. In question 6, we calculated the percentage of respondents who live in or within three miles of an incorporated city. The majority of those respondents indicated that they lived in Kansas City (north of the river), which corresponds to the most popular response in this question, "Inside the city limits of an incorporated city".



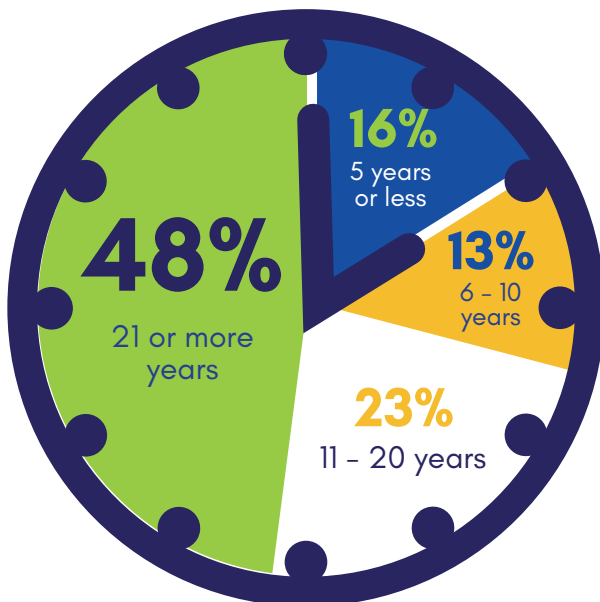
## Q4 In which quadrant of the county do you live in?

(See area map)

The findings revealed a predominant concentration in Quadrant 4: Southwest, with an overwhelming 44.03% of respondents calling this area home. Following closely behind was Quadrant 1: Northwest, encompassing 27.16% of respondents, indicating a significant presence in the northwestern reaches of the county. Quadrant 2: Northeast accounted for 19.10% of respondents, while Quadrant 3: Southwest represented the smallest share at 9.71%. Interestingly, a notable portion of respondents resides in Kansas City (North of the River), underscoring the interconnectedness of residential patterns across neighboring areas of the county.



## How long have you lived in the county?



## Q5 How long have you lived in the county?

People who have lived in Clay County for 21 or more years account for nearly half of the survey respondents, collecting 47.91% of the responses, followed by 22.99% for those who have lived in Clay County for 11-20 years, bringing the next response to 1-5 years at 14.48%, and those living less than a year accounting for 1.64%. There is a significant divide between long-term inhabitants and those who have just moved to Clay County, indicating that, while the county's population has increased over the last 20 years, it has done so gradually and steadily. According to the US Census, Clay County's population increased by 14% between 2010 and 2020, from 221,939 to 253,35 individuals.

## Q6 If you live in or within three miles of an incorporated city, which city do you live in or near?

According to survey respondents who live in an incorporated city or within 3 miles of one, the most popular cities are Kansas City (north of the river) (27.91%), Liberty (17.31%), Kearney (14.03%), and Gladstone (11.64%). Respondents from each city consistently chose within the city limits of an incorporated city as their top choice, with the exception of those who lived outside the city borders of an incorporated city but within three miles. The significant number of respondents who live within three miles of Kansas City (north of the river) indicates that citizens outside of Clay County are interested in the comprehensive plan. It is possible that those residents visit or own businesses in Clay County.

## If you live within 3 miles of an incorporated city, which city do you live in or near?

1. **Kansas City (north of the river)**
2. **Liberty**
3. **Kearney**
4. **Gladstone**



## Q7 Please choose the TOP THREE reasons you live in Clay County (Please select up to three responses.)

The popular response of the options from was the strong pull of family ties; 43.49% of those who chose Clay County as their home said that being close to family was the main reason. Close proximity to the bustling Kansas City metropolitan area emerged as another significant factor, with 39.96% valuing the accessibility to urban amenities and opportunities while still enjoying the charm of suburban or rural living. Additionally, 37.55% highlighted the convenience of living close to their workplace, emphasizing the importance of minimizing commute times and enhancing work-life balance. The results show that Clay County has a special mix of family-friendly atmosphere, easy access to cities, and shows it a desirable place to live for people who want to live in a lively community.

### Other Responses

Other responses to question 7 were written by 53 participants (9.85%) to explain why they live in Clay County. Of those responses there were three main themes. The top three were: I have family, and always have grown up here, Quiet, peaceful, and private atmosphere, and safe and secure place. Write-in responses that were duplicates of multiple-choice options are not noted.

"Residents of Clay County ENJOY the family friendly environment and proximity to Kansas City Metropolitan Area."

# Top 3 Reasons to live in Clay County:

1. **Close to family**
2. **Proximity to Kansas City metropolitan area**
3. **Schools or other educational opportunities**

Others:

- Close to work
- Rural atmosphere / character

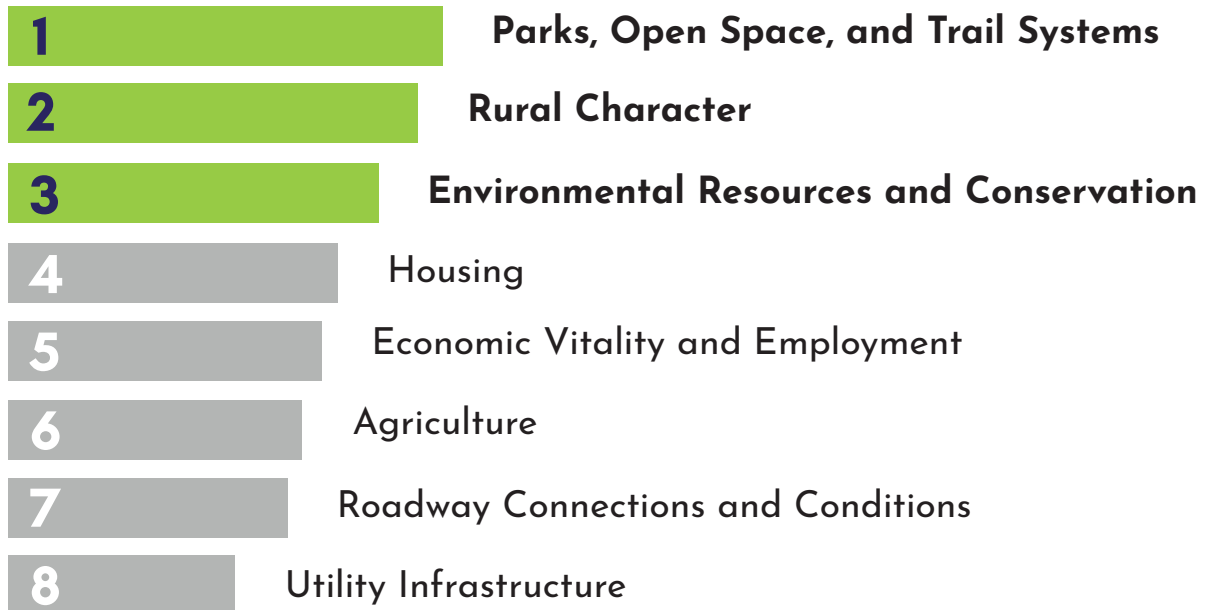
## Q8 Which of the following factors is MOST important to you when deciding where development should occur in Clay County?

(Please order your responses from 1 to 8, with 1 as most important and 8 as least important by using the arrows on the right to move selections.)

This question showed the different viewpoints of the community. Respondents believed that the rural character was the most crucial location for development to occur, with 36.75% voting 1. However, Parks, Open Space, and Trail Systems received the greatest overall percentage of importance from respondents, with a 5.88 out of 10 total score. Those who supported preservation emphasized the necessity of preserving Clay County's natural beauty and historical integrity.

### When deciding WHERE development should occur in Clay County, it is most important to consider...

(in order of importance)



## **Q9 Choose the TOP THREE issues your MOST concerned about regarding Clay County's future?**

*(Please select three responses.)*

The answers from question 9 displayed the different perspectives from the respondents. For example, more than half of the people who answered (56.01%) were interested in higher property taxes, which could make homeowners worried about the extra costs. Also, 52.65% of those who answered were worried about improving current roads, building new thoroughfares, and changing the types of pavement. This shows how infrastructure affects people's daily lives. Additionally, the question showed a rising worry about the effects of fast residential growth on rural areas. About 37.36% of those who answered were worried about how it would change the character and resources of the county. These results not only explain the most important problems Clay County is facing, but they also show how important it is to take action and let the community lead the way to solve these problems.

### **Other responses**

Other responses to question 9 were written by 38 participants (6.71%) to explain what three issues they were most concerned about regarding Clay County's future. There were a few answers that were duplicates from the default question options but there were two themes those respondents addressed, government transparency, and amenities for residents who live within the county. Write-in responses that were duplicates of multiple-choice options are not noted.

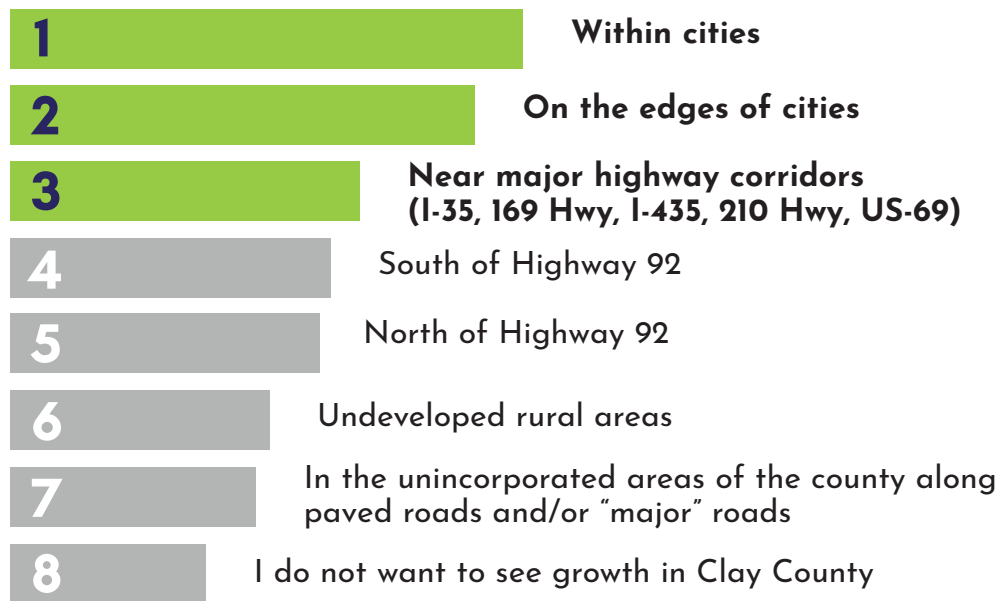
# Q10 Where do you think future RESIDENTIAL GROWTH in Clay County should occur?

(Order your responses from 1 to 8, with 1 as most important and 8 as least important by using the arrows on the right to move selections.)

The responses showed a range of preferences, with some focal points standing out as top choices. The most popular answer, which got 6.97 out of 10 points, was for concentrated growth within existing city limits. This showed a desire for urban revitalization and densification. At the same time, respondents gave support for growth on the edges of cities with a score of 6.31 out of 10. This would create a balance between the conveniences of cities and the peace and quiet of suburbs. Also, a score of 4.75 out of 10 was given for strategically placing residential developments near major highways like I-35 and US-69. This shows how important accessibility and connectivity are in building community infrastructure. These insights give us useful information for figuring out a way to move forward that will last as population and urban trends change.

## Future Residential Growth should be located...

(in order of importance)

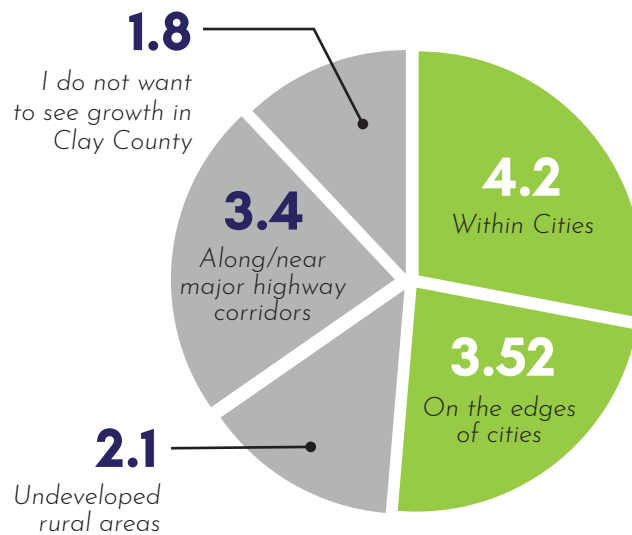


# Q11 Where do you think future **COMMERCIAL AND/OR INDUSTRIAL** (e.g., business parks, retail, dining, etc.) in Clay County should occur?

(Order your responses from 1 to 5, with 1 as most important and 5 as least important by using the arrows on the right to move selections.)

Like in question 10, most of the answers to question 11 were about how commercial and/or industrial growth should happen in cities, with 1 getting 49.29% of the votes as the most important answer. Respondents clearly stated their goals in a number of areas, such as accessibility, infrastructure, and community integration. With a score of 4.20 out of 5, those who supported commercial and industrial growth within current city limits were especially strong, pointing out the chance for economic synergy and revitalization in urban centers. Also, with a score of 3.52 out of 5, respondents were in favor of building on the edges of cities, hoping for a balance between city services and easy access to the suburbs. With a score of 3.40 out of 5, respondents also wanted to see the strategic importance of placing commercial and industrial businesses along major highway corridors like I-35 and US-69. This would show that people understood how important transportation networks are for boosting economic growth and connectivity. These results can help produce well-thought-out plans that balance economic growth with community needs.

## Future Commercial and/or Industrial should be located...



## **Q12 Choose the TOP FIVE types of new development that are MOST IMPORTANT to be pursued in the UNINCORPORATED areas of Clay County?**

Among the top-ranked preferences, outdoor recreation emerged as the most popular, with an 71.38% of respondents advocating for initiatives that fostered an appreciation for the natural beauty and recreational potential of the region. Additionally, 52.30% expressed a strong inclination towards preserving and promoting agriculture, underscoring the enduring importance of rural heritage and sustenance in the collective consciousness. Lastly, 48.06% emphasized the significance of small lot suburban housing, reflecting a desire for residential options that balance community familiarity.

### **Other Responses**

Other responses to question 12 were written by 44 participants (7.77%) to discuss other options for new development in unincorporated areas of Clay County. Of those responses, there were two common themes which were, to avoid development in rural areas of the county and preserve and/or add green space for areas of development. Write-in responses that were duplicates of multiple-choice options are not noted.

## **Q13 Should new development be prioritized in locations where road and utility infrastructure are near or already exists?**

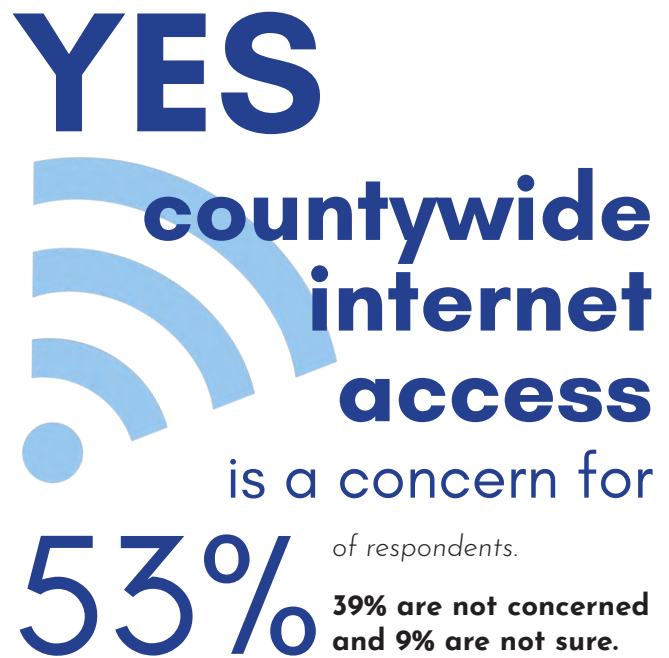
79.33% of respondents strongly supported focusing on new developments in areas with existing road and utility infrastructure or nearby. This endorsement highlights a practical strategy for development, focusing on the effective use of current resources to reduce environmental harm and enhance accessibility. 5.83% of individuals had concerns about this strategy, while 14.84% were unsure. However, the majority showed a strong dedication to responsible and sustainable development practices.

## **Q14 Who should be responsible for the cost of extending road improvements and services such as sewers, waterlines, and other utilities to new residential or commercial development owned by private industry.**

The findings revealed a number of opinions, with 56.36% of respondents advocating for developers to shoulder the primary financial burden. This response displays a belief in the principle of private enterprise assuming costs associated with expanding infrastructure. 32.69% proposed a collaborative approach, suggesting that both the county and developers share the fiscal responsibilities, thereby distributing costs more equitably. While a minority of 2.37% and 2.47% looked to the county or local municipalities, respectively, to bear these expenses, and 6.01% remained uncertain.

## Q15 Is countywide internet access a concern of yours?

The findings underscored a notable concern, with 52.83% of respondents affirming the necessity for expanded internet connectivity. This majority highlights the increasing recognition of internet access as an essential utility vital for education, employment, healthcare, and social connectivity. While 38.52% expressed less apprehension about the issue, and 8.66% remained uncertain.



## Q16 When considering Clay County's future over the next 10 to 20 years, what are critical issues facing the county?

People expressed their thoughts about the country's changing situation over the next 10 to 20 years through written comments. Respondents felt rapid population growth might become an issue, presenting both opportunities and challenges. At the same time, the community was opposed to higher taxes, demonstrating the importance of government transparency and honesty. Much attention was paid to deteriorating infrastructure, with calls for investments to upgrade roads, services, and technology to support long-term growth. Concerns about rising crime rates highlighted how it is important to maintain neighborhood safety and encourage law enforcement and residents to collaborate. Finally, the critical issue of affordable housing surfaced, emphasizing the need for policies that ensure everyone has equal access to housing even as prices rise.

### What are the **CRITICAL ISSUES** facing Clay County over the next **10 - 20 years?**

1. Rapid population growth
2. Higher taxes
3. Government transparency and honesty
4. Deteriorating infrastructure
5. Rising crime rates and the importance of neighborhood safety and collaboration with law enforcement
6. Affordable housing



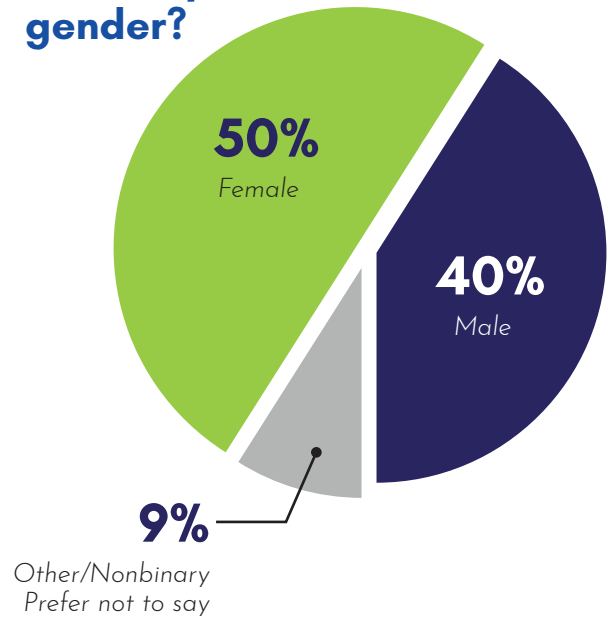
## **Q17 What have we missed? What do you want to see for the future of Clay County? What should be thinking about as we plan for the future of the county?**

The majority of responses include a need for regular improvement and maintenance for transportation infrastructure, signaling the importance of efficient mobility networks to connect communities and drive economic growth. Additionally, respondents called for school improvements underscored a commitment while advocating for safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists reflected a shared commitment to fostering inclusive and sustainable modes of transportation. Also, respondents emphasized protection for parks and green spaces, recognizing them as vital sanctuaries for recreation, conservation, and community cohesion. However, concerns about potential tax increases highlighted the delicate balance between funding essential services and ensuring affordability for residents, as some respondents looked for the addition of more multi-use developments.

## Q18 What is your gender?

More women participated in this survey than men, at 50.44% versus 41.03%. Additionally, 7.82% of respondents selected prefer not to answer on the gender question and 0.71% identified as other/nonbinary. When looking at the demographics for Clay County, according to the USA Census, the county percentage of females is equivalent to the national average at 50.4%. This information shows that the survey is dedicated to inclusivity and to make sure that everyone's voice is heard and valued.

## What is your gender?



## Q19 What is your marital status?

The findings displayed the diverse array of relationship statuses within the community, reflecting the multifaceted nature of modern family structures. A significant majority, comprising 74.42%, identified as married or in a domestic partnership, underscoring the importance of these relationships in the community. Additionally, 7.46% identified as single, never married, while 2.31% disclosed being widowed and 8.17% reported being divorced. A small fraction, comprising 0.18%, indicated being separated, while 6.93% opted not to disclose their marital status, respecting their privacy. Furthermore, a minuscule portion, 0.53%, specified their marital status as "Other". These insights provide valuable context for Clay County's comprehensive planning efforts, ensuring that policies and initiatives are tailored to meet the diverse needs of residents across various marital statuses.

**74%** of respondents are **Married, or in a domestic partnership.**

## Q20 What is your age?

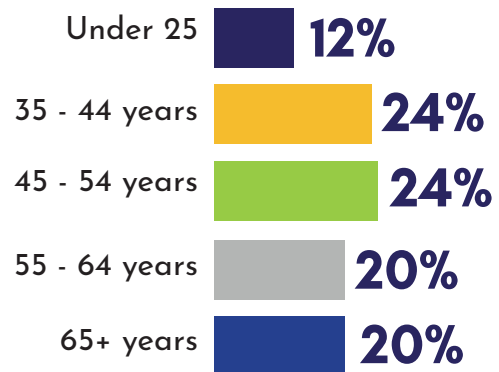
The results painted a picture of the county's population distribution across different age brackets. Notably, the largest cohort, comprising 24.33%, fell within the 45-54 age range, followed closely by individuals aged 55-64, constituting 19.54% of respondents. Additionally, those aged 65 and above accounted for a substantial 19.89%, reflecting the county's aging population. Meanwhile, the younger demographic was also represented, with 10.66% falling within the 25-34 age group and 1.60% aged 18-24. Interestingly, 0.18% indicated being under 18, highlighting the predominance of adult respondents in this survey question.

## Q21 What is your employment status best described as?

The findings reflected a diverse range of occupational roles and life stages within the community. A significant majority, comprising 71.40%, reported being employed full-time, highlighting the county's active workforce and economic vibrancy. Additionally, 4.09% indicated being employed part-time, while 1.07% identified as unemployed, underscoring the challenges faced by some members of the community in securing stable employment. Notably, a substantial portion, accounting for 19.18%, reported being retired, reflecting the county's sizable retiree population. Furthermore, 1.07% identified as students, while 3.20% identified as caregivers, highlighting the varied roles and responsibilities assumed by individuals within the community. These insights help us understand how jobs change in Clay County and help us come up with specific plans to help the economy and the development of its workers.

## Q22 Email Address

### What is your age?



**71%** of respondents are **Employed (Full Time)**  
19% are retired.

## City Meetings

The planning team met with various municipalities throughout the engagement process. These municipalities are situated within Clay County and vary in their land area, population, and economic situations. Some of these municipalities are completely landlocked with little to no existing land to develop while others straddle county lines, having to coordinate with adjacent counties in addition to Clay County. The following is a list of the municipalities that agreed to meet with the planning team.

- City of Excelsior Springs.
- City of Gladstone
- City of Kansas City
- City of Kearney
- City of Liberty
- City of Lawson
- City of North Kansas City
- City of Pleasant Valley
- City of Smithville
- City of Sugar Creek

Many municipalities indicated that they were feeling development pressures and trends that came about from the pandemic. For example, a few cities indicated that while they would like to see more office space available within the community; however, the demand for this kind of development has declined since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Another large concern that nearly all municipalities encountered was the need for additional housing and housing variety within their communities. There is a consistent struggle to provide affordable housing options of various sizes that work for the workforces present within each community. Some municipalities indicated they would continue to explore different options and tools to help provide this to their constituents. In addition to unique development struggles, some cities indicated they were grappling with aging infrastructure.

For the most part, many municipalities indicated that communication with Clay County's Planning and Zoning Department was largely positive. Many indicated they felt like they could reach out to the department and speak with them as needed, in addition to their regular communications. However, some municipalities indicated they would like to see additional communication efforts with the County's administration. Some even suggested that bi-annually, quarterly, or monthly meetings would be highly beneficial, providing a set touchpoint for their organizations.

## School District Meetings

To understand the needs of the local school population's needs and constraints, the planning team met with several school districts within Clay County. These conversations occurred over a three-month period and were often with each district's superintendent. The following is a list of all school districts that agreed to meet with the planning team.

- Excelsior Springs School District #40
- Kearney R-1 School District
- Liberty School District #53
- Missouri City School District #56
- Smithville R-11 School District
- Lawson R-XIV School District
- North Kansas City School District

The superintendents of these school districts have a strong, informal coalition that meets regularly to share advice and best practices as well as discuss issues and concerns. Some of the concerns that school districts are experiencing are a result from COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. While these concerns may vary from district to district, they are by and large very similar with regional and national trends. These include:

- Staffing shortages, including teachers, administrative assistants, bus drivers, paraprofessional, and other school staff;
- Teacher salaries, difficulty in keeping up within inflation;
- Teacher turnover, older professionals have chosen to retire;
- Real-world preparedness, changing trends and demands of students and young adults.

Although similarities do exist between school districts, each has its unique pressures and concerns as well. Depending on the community they're situated in, each school district varies in population size and demographics; the age and condition of their facilities; whether their student populations are experiencing stagnation, growth, or decline; differing level of income levels within their communities; and much more. Despite these differences, every school district tries to provide the right kind of access for their students. For example, all of Clay County's school districts participate in Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies (Northland CAPS), which provides professional education experiences for students in the Northland region of Kansas City. This is a full-year program accessible to high school juniors and seniors and allow for students to access business locations through Clay and Platte Counties. Students can choose from five discipline pathways (Digital Media and Design, Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing, Global Business and Logistics, Medicine and Healthcare, and Technology Solutions).

In addition to the discussions around the current and future operations of their respective school districts, the planning team discussed the relationship that each district had with the Clay County administration. While County-level communication was commented on as being positive, some conversations indicated that additional coordination with the Clay County Administration and County Commission as whole would be highly welcomed and beneficial.

## Agency Meetings

In an efforts to better understand the perspective of local agencies situated within Clay County, the planning team reached out and requested to meet with several different agencies. These included local Fire Districts, Water Districts, and several Clay County agencies. Some of the water districts lie outside of Clay County; however, they provide service to some residences or businesses within the Clay County and were important to speak with as part of the engagement process. The following are those agencies that met with the planning team:

- Platte County Public Water Service District #8
- Clay County Public Water Service District # 8
- City of Lathrop (water utility services)
- Clay County Highway
- Clay County Public Health Center
- Clay County Economic Development Corporation
- Kearney Fire District
- Smithville Fire District

Brief descriptions of each meeting are located below.

### Clay County Highway Department

Members of the Clay County Highway Department met with the planning team on Friday, December 8, 2023. The department share that recent and future efforts will seek to repair and maintain the roads they oversee, including resurfacing and upgrading from chip n' seal to asphalt where appropriate. The department also coordinates with MoDOT, the Clay County Administration, and MARC. In terms of funding, the department receives limited funding from the state gas tax, a road and bridge levy that is related to the property tax within Clay County, and some sales tax. However, the department must also coordinate with cities that have special road districts, providing funding for these districts throughout the County. The department indicated that this limited funding is one of their main concerns, in addition to staffing concerns. Staff members indicated they would like to see additional coordination between MARC and MoDOT where appropriate.

### Clay County Public Health Center

The planning team met with members of the Clay County Public Health Center on Thursday, December 21, 2023. This included the Director, Deputy Director, and Program Manager of Environmental Health. The Public Health Center (PHC) team shared that they work to provide health policy programming and are heavily involved within the Northland Health Alliance, a coalition of local health organizations that seek to improve the health and quality of life of residents in the Northland, which includes both Clay and Platte Counties. At the time of the meeting, members of the PHC team spoke about the Northland Health Alliance's Community Health Assessment, a report that pulls information from public health data, census reports, and hospital data to identify the most critical health problems facing Northland residents. The PHC team also looks at a multitude of factors to address health in a comprehensive manner including mental and behavioral health, access to transit and food, and much more.

## Clay County Economic Development Corporation

The planning team met with the Executive Director of Clay County's EDC on Wednesday, December 15, 2023. As a fifty-year old organization, the goal of Clay County's EDC is to promote economic development job growth with the County. One of the most prominent, and perhaps time-consuming projects is the 587 project. This project intends to develop a stretch of vacant land along I-435 and highway 152. The development will seek to create Class A office space with civic and entertainment spaces. The Clay County EDC also works closely with all municipalities within the County and collaborates with Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), Clay County Commission, and Platte County.

## Water Districts

Through discussions with members of each districts' staff, the planning team was able to better understand the concerns and pressures that local water districts are encountering. These concerns include the inability to find new qualified staff members, including generational turnover; the loss of knowledge as district clerks leave or retire from a water district; and the occasional burden of having a limited staff. In addition to these concerns, some districts are split by county lines, forcing them to collaborate with multiple agencies. These are crucial relationships, particularly on matters of lots splitting, right of way crossings, or easements. It is understood that each water district is different in its operations and constraints.

## Fire Districts

Each Fire District that met with the planning team provides both fire and emergency medical services within their respective districts. They also review development applications for Clay County, particularly in unincorporated portions of their districts to ensure that there is adequate property access in the event of an emergency. Both also feel the nationwide concern to find qualified personnel members. This includes finding licensed paramedical professionals.

All of Smithville Fire District's personnel are career employees that help cover the approximate 112 miles of the district. The district has also experienced growth in the past years and continue to provide public safety materials and seminars within the district. Additional collaboration with the County could benefit this fire district.

The Kearney Fire District is approximately 85 square miles in size and comprised mainly of full-time employees with some volunteers on staff. Similarly to the Smithville Fire District, this district works with Clay County's Planning and Zoning Department to review applications for property access in the case of an emergency. Additionally, Clay County's Sheriff Department provides dispatch services for this fire district.

# Focus Groups

To better understand key interest groups in Clay County several focus groups were facilitated from October to December 2023. Individuals were encouraged to share their priorities were for several topic areas specific to land use, development, redevelopment, and overall future of the County. The following are those key interest groups that met with the planning team:

- Clay County Seniors
- Kearney High School Students
- Harbortowne Homeowners Association
- Oakbrooke Homeowners Association
- Local farmer and environmental advocates
- Local county business owners

The following pages are a full list of responses to each groups topic areas facilitated by the planning team.

## Clay County Seniors

### How can Clay County attract better diversity?

- Tell the Clay County story of: Race/Income/Religion
- Affordable Housing
- Promote small businesses - walkable for start-ups
- Walking trails/public transportation
- Publicize Clay County and that we are diverse
- Recreational improvement for teens as part of Parks Dept? With good transportation

### What are the needs of seniors in Clay County?

- Affordable Senior Living (apts, patio, ranch style)
- Round robin or staggered transportation (small bus/vans) and county needs to assist
- Senior Home Maintenance Program (handyman programs)
- Legal aid - in-person - not only online as well as services
- Health Services with transportation
- Voter turnout promotion

### What might Clay County do to differentiate itself from other areas of the region? Think BIG and outside the box.

- Large public venue for conventions, graduations and trade shows.
- Publicize more existing events (587 project - don't take a backseat to stadium news)
- Publicize Clay County history (Jesse James/Liberty/Interurban Railroad)
- Publicize "CKC-110".
- Tell the story of Clay County to attract business/residents/tourism



- Create a County PR Plan

**What trends are you seeing in the community to attract more retail and business? How can the positive trends be capitalized on?**

- Develop airport - potentially regional airport (Mosby)?
- Transportation - develop transit authority
- Workforce Housing - In excellent school districts
- Get real estate realtor's to publicize
- County funding of historic sites to promote new businesses

## **Kearney High School Students**

**What would bring you back to live in Clay County or your hometown after you graduate?**

- Good schools for my children
- Better County utilities (roads, septic)
- Low cost of living
- Recreation facilities
- Keep small towns small
- More culturally diverse retail
- 0% chance I'm coming back to this town
- Less single family subdivisions, more farmland space
- Sources for entertainment
- Low cost of living
- Good job opportunities
- Lower cost of groceries/entertainment
- Restricted income housing
- Less restrictions on first time renters
- More evening entertainment venues
- No state income tax
- More specialized job opportunities
- Develop major cities but keep hometown feel
- More apartments
- More community centers
- Keep prices down

**What are unique amenities (parks, destinations, etc.,) that could be added to Clay County to distinguish itself in the region? Think BIG and outside the box.**

- More dog parks
- Night life - music venues, theater
- Recreation facilities
- Public transportation (trains, subways, buses)
- Parks that are more focused on nature/being outdoors
- Public transportation
- Public pools
- Amusement parks
- Forrests with trails
- Conservation
- Walkable cities
- Create more activities for younger people
- More community centers
- More malls
- More trails without sewage facilities in the middle of it
- Transportation/Shopping Districts
- Military/National Intelligence Opportunities
- Make a new "wonder of the world"
- Public transportation
- More commercial areas
- Larger sidewalks

**If you had the choice, I would choose to have this in unincorporated Clay County: Be specific...think about types of places, attractions, businesses, etc.**

- More dog parks
- Night life - music venues, theater
- Recreation facilities
- Public transportation (trains, subways, buses)
- Parks that are more focused on nature/being outdoors
- Public transportation
- Public pools
- Amusement parks
- Forrests with trails
- Conservation
- Walkable cities

- Create more activities for younger people
- More community centers
- More malls
- More trails without sewage facilities in the middle of it
- Transportation/Shopping Districts
- Military/National Intelligence Opportunities
- Make a new “wonder of the world”
- Public transportation
- More commercial areas
- Larger sidewalks

## **Harbortowne Homeowners Association**

**What might Clay County do to differentiate itself from other areas of the region? Think BIG and outside the box.**

- More specialty healthcare
- Finish trail around Smithville Lake
- More nature parks north of I-435
- More dock space
- More walking trails
- More bike lanes
- Promote Blue Zone thinking
- Lower property tax
- Maintain green space
- Encourage the arts, culture, entertainment
- Encourage/Welcome non-franchise restaurants
- Provide emergency response North of I-435
- New stadium?
- Create riverwalk
- Promote lake

**How can Clay County attract better diversity?**

- More bike lanes
- Better and safer roads
- Affordable housing
- Education and training schools
- More community events – arts, culture and entertainment

- Small manufacturing
- More parks
- High speed internet in rural areas
- Senior housing
- Senior centers

**What are the needs of unincorporated communities in the County?**

- Sidewalks and trails that connect to cities
- Convenient connections
- Response to specific requests
- High speed internet
- Road improvements
- Pedestrian connections
- Trail improvements and maintenance
- Better and safer roads
- More transportation options
- Design bikeway
- Better roadway markings
- Roadside beautification
- Street sweepers
- Easement issues
- Bike lanes/trails
- More coffee/less tea

**What trends are you seeing in the community to attract more retail and business? How can the positive trends be capitalized on?**

- Low crime rate
- Low taxes and work on more incentives
- Industry - short commute
- Affordable housing
- Training and education
- High speed internet
- Continue events in Smithville which attracts businesses/retailers
- Schools are great
- Roads
- Access to services
- Growing area yet uncongested and low crime
- TIFS are a trend we don't like

## **Oakbrooke Homeowners Association**

**What might Clay County do to differentiate itself from other areas of the region? Think BIG and outside the box.**

- Invest in old town
- Long-term planning
- Find your sweet spot
- Density
- Decentralize essentials
- Lack of congestion

**How can Clay County attract better diversity?**

- Zones for entertainment
- Parks
- Tax incentives
- North Town
- Upscale apartments
- Mix of small and large housing scale
- Outdoor recreation stuff

**What are the needs of unincorporated communities in the County?**

- Roads
- Infrastructure
- Freedom
- Drainage
- Fast construction
- Limited county rules/taxes

**What trends are you seeing in the community to attract more retail and business? How can the positive trends be capitalized on?**

- 19th interchange
- Working from home
- Lean in to rural suburbs
- Corporate areas
- Liberty Triangle congestion
- Co-working space

## Local County Business Owners

**What might Clay County do to differentiate itself from other areas of the region? Think BIG and outside the box.**

- Less government regulations
- Grants to help businesses get started
- Eliminate or freeze property tax for 65+ people
- Workforce development
- Little childcare services available
- Be more supportive of new business growth/less red tape
- Curtail KCMO annexation

**How can Clay County attract better diversity of business and retail?**

- Make childcare a priority
- Affordable housing
- Trades training
- Eliminate property tax for 65+
- Focus on housing inventory to accommodate those moving in for 6,000 new jobs
- Be more proactive with infrastructure development in the future

**What are the needs of small and start-up businesses in the County? (e.g., incubator space, business skills training and/or other resources)**

- Financing/tax incentives
- Grants to help make it easier
- Childcare facilities
- Convention Center at 435/152 that also is a community center and sports venue
- Trade school training in high school
- Enforce laws to prevent crime especially big box retail/people will move away
- Infrastructure needs to expand septic sewer
- Decentralize sewage treatment
- Lower rent in strip centers that are empty and offer as incubator spaces
- Simplify development process
- Create advisory advocate group of business people to help County.

**What trends are you seeing in the community to attract more retail and business? How can the positive trends be capitalized on?**

- Create zoning category for small homes
- Address affordable housing
- Less square footage to live in
- Expand zoning tiers for higher density to expand development

- Embrace grassroots grants/funding

## **Local Farmers and Environmental Advocates**

### **What are the concerns and pressures related to farmers market regulation?**

- Unfettered health department regulations that limit offerings
- How to balance safety regulations with ability for farmers to participate
- Cost of entry/permit fees/insurance/staffing and ROI
- Sales of product restrictions such as raw milk.
- Need permanent infrastructure to support product/crop sales in communities
- High vendor fees/license permits (sampling, meat sales)
- Food security included in county budget

### **What kind of support would you like to see the County give to farmers that is not currently available?**

- Figure out ways to incentivize farmers not to sell their land. Programs exist that pay farmers not to develop.
- Stronger penalties for ignoring seasonal needs of farm equipment operators
- Create and stick to developer impervious surface offsets with greenspace preservation at a robust percentage to add farmland/county area space to city infrastructure.
- Food literacy education
- Involvement in economic assessments and planning
- Leadership champion where policy is being made
- Protection and preservation of tree canopy
- Protection and preservation of fresh water
- Protection and regulation of invasive species and create MO invasive species task force
- Require developer to include green space to be managed as sustainable agriculture
- Create Dept of Food Security at County level
- Exploration of mixed-use codes
- Protections of regulations of chemical trespass
- HOA template to protect food growing
- Include food growers in County publications

### **What are your concerns in relation to land use as it pertains to the unincorporated areas of the County?**

- Sprawl with a large and special eye on limiting 3-5 acre lots w adequate sewage/septic installed and maintained
- Political favoritism toward developers (clump growth)
- Connectivity of green space for wildlife corridors, biodiversity and trail system
- Absentee landowners
- Over developed urban sprawl

- Water quality stormwater erosion
- Plundering of natural resources
- Soil quality degradation
- Devaluing of natural resources/preservation – soils, biodiversity, water, air quality
- Developers don't pay true costs ex: erosion affecting nearby properties
- Fragmentation of biodiversity and wildlife corridors
- County lacks natural resource database

### What would help you grow sustainability?

- Growth regulations. Grow up not out. Use mixed use. Use ½ mile buffers.
- Protect stream headwaters and buffer zones.
- Create ordinances to increase native plants and hedge rows including plantings with specific plants.
- Zoning that includes agricultural zone requirements
- Developers that understand agricultural needs
- Include food growers in Clay County economic development council
- Farmers at seat of all decision tables
- Regenerate resources from past plundering
- Mitigate/adapt to climate change while focusing on quality of life
- County-level policy aligned with codes that support ag and resource preservation
- Development of agrihood spaces – Integrative of housing, ag and business





# Countywide Charrette

The Countywide Charrette took place at the Woodneath Library Center of the Mid-Content Public Library, located at 8900 NE Flintlock Rd, Kansas City, MO 64157, from Tuesday, November 28 to Wednesday, November 29, 2023.

## Day One

The planning team met with members of the stakeholder and technical committees to go over the charrette process and schedule for the subsequent charrette sessions that would take place over the two-day period. The planning team also provided participants with an overview of the existing conditions and economic and market analyses as well as the preliminary results of the public survey. After the presentation, the planning team then split the participants into five groups and asked them to work their way through five different topic stations. Each group was given enough time at each station to provide their comments to different questions created by the planning team. The different topic stations included the following:

### Overarching Vision

- Six-word story – individual and then as a group?
- “Paint a picture of your ideal Clay County in six words only”

### Land Use

- Where is growth (generally speaking) appropriate in Clay County?
- Indicate on the map where new land uses are appropriate in Clay County.
- What land uses are missing from or desired in the County?
- What land uses should be preserved?
- What area should be targeted for development?

### Economic Development

- What areas of the county are primed and ready for economic development? What are the priority areas for development?
- Where should development not occur in the county?
- What type of new development should be pursued for the county?
- What’s missing from the county’s current business and employment environment?
- What’s missing from the county’s retail/entertainment environment?
- What’s missing from the county’s housing options?
- Is county branding important for business attraction?
- What holds the county back from economic growth?

### Transportation and Mobility

- Are there any missing vehicular connections throughout the county? If so, where? Be specific.
- What roads need to be upgraded to pavement? Be specific.
- Should the county encourage pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure? If so, how and where? Be specific.

- Should the county encourage transit use/options? If so, how? Be specific.

### Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- What recreational opportunities are missing or desired in the county?
- Should additional trails be developed in the county? If so, where?
- Should new park facilities be developed in the county? If so, where?
- How should your environmental resources (such as Smithville Lake, Watkins Mill State Park, etc.) be protected? What measures should be put in place?

### Government and Regional Relations

- What existing county services are lacking?
- What county services should be added?
- How can county communication (i.e., resident/business to county and vice versa) be improved?
- What technological advancements/investments should the county make to remain competitive in the future?
- Does Clay County’s perception in the KC metro need to improve? If so, how?

This exercise allowed for participants to work together and discuss their thoughts at each topic station. All comments received during this period are listed in the Full Documentation of Responses.

## Day Two

The second day of the charrette began with open studio time. Members of the stakeholder and technical committees were able to come in and view what the planning team were busy working on. Later that day, these stakeholders were invited to a concept review period. During this period, the planning team presented their concepts to both committees. Stakeholders and city staff members were then able to leave detailed comments on the concepts. These comments are list in the **Full Documentation of Responses**.



## Public Open Houses

At the end of the Countywide charrette, two public open houses were available to residents and members of the community. The public open houses occurred on December 6th at Excelsior Springs Community Center, and December 7th at Gladstone Community Center from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Similarly to the stakeholder and technical committees' meeting, the public had the opportunity to work through the different topics stations and provide their direct feedback. Members of the public were also able to view the initial concepts the planning team had presented earlier that day during the concept review period. These comments are included with the rest of the comments received during the Countywide charrette in the **Full Documentation of Responses**.

## Virtual Public Open House

For those that were unable to make the in-person public open houses, a virtual public open house was available via the project website from Tuesday, December 12, 2023 to Wednesday, January 31, 2024. The virtual public open house was set up in the same manner as the in-person public open house, with participants able to navigate between separate stations by scrolling through the PDFs. As they followed the questions through the virtual open house, participants were able to pin their comments to the pages of the virtual stations. The virtual open house was viewed 297 times and received a total of 82 comments. These comments were gathered and incorporated into the **Full Documentation of Responses**.

## Pop-Up Events

The planning team attended four festival events early in the visioning phase of the planning process to engage attendees and talk about the Comprehensive Plan. Participants were asked to identify the opportunities they see for the future of Clay County and to answer the question "I Love Clay County, because..."

The planning team attended the following events and engaged 600+ event-goers.

- Jesse James Days | September 16, 2023
- Liberty Fall Festival | September 22-23, 2023
- Gladfest | September 29 - 30, 2023
- North Kansas City Halloween in the Park | October 28, 2023



## Final Virtual CPSC and TC Meeting

The final Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder (CPSC) and Technical Committee (TC) meeting was held virtually on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Stakeholders were presented with a draft version of the Plan's compass statement (vision) and direction statements (values) as well as the three framework plans which included the Future Land Use, Trails and Connectivity, and Transportation framework plans. Stakeholders were able to voice their thoughts and concerns in breakout groups and providing constructive feedback to the planning team by making virtual comments on an online public engagement tool.

## Draft Plan Recommendations Review Period

An initial draft of the Plan was uploaded online to Konveio for stakeholders and the public to review. Konveio is an online engagement platform that allows participants to comment directly on documents, while also making it simple to organize, understand, and compile the input that was received.

The online draft Plan recommendations section was available for stakeholders to review from May 27, 2024 to June 10, 2024. Participants were asked to review each section of the draft Plan and provide their thoughts and comments directly on the Plan. After the review period ended, the comments were downloaded and recorded verbatim. All comments from this review period are in the **Full Documentation of Responses**.

## County Leadership Work Session #2

The second County Leadership Work Session took place on Thursday, June 13, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the County Administration Building. The Planning Team presented the draft plan to members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and County Commission. This included an overview of the compass statement, the goals, and strategies. The Planning Team reviewed public comments received to date and provided an overview of engagement events during the planning process.



## County Leadership Work Session #1

### Needs

- Prioritize projects
- Diverse business base
- Teamwork + harmony with county leaders
- Increase TIFS etc. to promote diversified economic growth
- Competitive pay for county employees
- Road maintenance
- Bridge improvements
- Revenue growth for the County.
- Infrastructure improvements - roads and bridges
- Diverse economic growth
- Find employees to fill vacant slots to provide better county services.
- Strong schools
- Payscale
- Money, diversify revenue streams for county services

### Wants

- Increased staff
- Cooperation with local cities
- Improved health care facilities
- Recreation royals (entertainment venues)
- Increased revenue to improve county services
- Better communication with citizens and other cities
- Higher end restaurants, retail, and grocery stores.

### Desires

- Upscale entertainment district
- Major university
- New royals stadium, additional restaurants + amenities
- Convention center/arena
- Countywide signature event

### Barriers

- Lack of revenue
- Perpetual personal and property tax increases
- Red tape from different levels of Gov.
- Reconcile competing interests/needs
- Technology
- Lack of funding sources

### Obstacles

- Find and Build an "A-Team" that is focused on diversified development
- Communication - which office has the info I need?
- Quality customer service
- Funding sources

### Annoyances

- Accurate information on the County's website.
- Streamlined processes county - city - state.

## Visioning Workshop

### The One Thing

- Cooperation and open minds
- Compromise
- Clarifying purpose
- A plan that provides organized, logical, and sustainable growth
- A clear and concise plan.
- Just to have a thoughtful vision put in place for the future of Clay County.
- A cohesive transportation plan for the future of the county
- Add clarity and guidance to th development plan. Facilitate and invite growth
- Comprehensive inclusion of climate change mitigation plans.
- Community buy-in
- Fluid and flexibility with all stakeholders
- Must have vision and commitment to growth while maintaining agriculture areas
- Attraction and retention of new businesses.
- Protect natural resources and farms
- Manage growth without straining resources
- Open minds
- Clear direction for the organization of future development
- Clear communication of outcomes to stakeholders especially cities
- A consensus that the plan will further and not hinder the Counties best attributes.
- Public support
- Upkeep the infrastructure. Protect the rural setting.
- From a city perspective it needs to be applicable and useable “in town”.
- Quick implementation to help small cities prosper
- A lot of engagement
- Set the county on a course to be fiscally sound and work with cities towards common goals
- Provide a balanced plan that meets the desires of the most people not the deepest pocketed people.
- Vision
- Keep in mind environmental concerns
- Address issues as one county rather than each city addressing the issues separately
- How can we increase public transportation!!
- Listening to stakeholders to allow everyone to layer what they see as important to the community, then ADDING said data into project
- Plan acknowledges residential growth belongs within cities and county has a plan for transportation, housing and future growth areas
- Actually have a vision of what future growth is that WE ACTUALLY FOLLOW instead of ignoring because we don't like making loud minority voices mad.
- Defining a plan that citizens can understand which helps preserve what we value and prevents developments that are against these values.

### Needs

- Infrastructure - maintain
- Transportation - lack of options
- Housing - workforce, infiltration in unincorporated area
- Plan for growth areas (be intentional) Smart Growth
- Agriculture, open space (protect/balance with the development)
- Package growth/development with intentional green corridors/trails/greenways
- More funding for roads/road safety/
- Children (affordable)

- Family support services
- Broadband
- Affordable housing
- Light rail
- Infrastructure - roads, sanitary sewer
- \$\$\$
- Medical care
- Mental health
- Childcare
- Collaboration schools, workforce, education training, career center - working together
- Multimodal transportation.
- Bike lanes
- Trails
- Utilize the Animal Health Corridor
- Diversity
- Legacy planning
- Climate change
- Mitigation/adaptation plans!
- How will this county feed itself? (Food literacy)
- First responder funding
- Mental health services
- Consolidated approach to Animal control
- Availability of affordable healthy foods
- Consistency follow through balance
- Senior services
- High speed broadband internet
- Homeless services
- 

**Wants**

- Preserve and protect natural resources
- Market and communicate community events
- Sewer Districts
- Regional Recreational at Smithville Lake
- Trail connectivity b/w communities
- Affordable housing (across age/income groups)
- Food/Entertainment - walkable zones
- Continued focus on safety (sheriff/police)
- Access to emergency health care
- Grocery stores
- Variety of shops
- Senior housing
- Usable green space
- Flood control
- Agri-tourism
- 291- 4 lanes
- 92 - 4 lanes
- 112th Ave expansion (between A+Plattsburg Rd)
- Funding
- Continued focus on safety
- Trails - community to community
- Higher & Better use of MW National Air Center (Industry/Business)



- Marketing for Clay County
- A Hwy + 144th St Improvements
- Youth Involvement
- Preserve farms through agritourism
- Animal Control

### Desires

- Wine country
- Street Car Connection
- Money To Afford
- Support local/community business show
- Coops (food, tool library)
- Community Solar, gardens
- Community center, classes
- Agri-tourism (x2)
- Dark Skies (downtown lighting) reduce light pollution
- Lots of Trails connecting to parks/roadways
- Urban farms/agriculture
- Broadband
- Royals
- 587
- Urban Farms
- The Gathering Place
- Big Attraction
- Cooperation - city - county

### Barriers

- Nimby
- Local governments working together
- Airports
- Major highways
- Flood Plain
- Energy infrastructure systems Needs Location
- KCMO Annexation
- Light Pollution
- Legislation power to reduce taxes
- Monies
- Reluctance for Taxes
- Cell phone towers increasing w/ growing technology (make more aesthetic)
- Differing opinions
- SEMA
- Landscape
- Topography
- Infrastructure
- County lines
- Flood plains (x2)
- Bridge
- Land owner (large parcels)
- Control/resistant to change
- Increased cost to everything
- 5-10 acre lots surrounding cities. Difficult to grow/annex
- Public participation



- Funding (stop reducing taxes)
- Outdated bureaucracies
- Noise pollution

### Obstacles

- Major
- Sewage system planning/zoning
- Communication between cities counties + residents (ex. Development, tax impact)
- Funding insufficient
- Childcare, county services - many much needed
- Good ol' Boys Network
- Lack of community improvement
- Working Relationships Between Political/Government entities.
- Transportation
- Resistance to change/Growth - Citizens (inhospitable to growth/change)
- Lack of Affordable Housing
- Workforce Development
- Lack of Code Enforcement
- Population
- HOA's
- Inadequate Regulation (enforcement)
- Staffing
- Law enforcement
- True Cost Paid by Developers
- Different codes, different municipalities
- Legislature bodies diff in legal perspectives
- Individual vs Corporation
- Colegal Powerless Aid
- Lack of innovative thinking (processes funding, engineering, design)

### Annoyances

- Inconsistency
- Overlooked
- Politics
- Look where the money is
- Competing between cities
- Water districts
- Infrastructure
- Fire-police dispatch
- Jesse James as the front face of County
- Littering
- Water districts (enough resources to accommodate growth/exp)
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Stigma of "old Clay County"
- Shadow of KC
- Competition w/ KC
- Social Media
- "That's the way we have always done it."
- Processes not adequate for residents - David - Need more resources
- Industry/corporations favored - Goliath
- Traffic
- Governmental dysfunction

- (Better communication between County and Cities)
- Waste from KC spread to on County fields (awful smell)
- No animal control
- No weight limit on roadways
- Lack of resources

## Countywide Charrette

### Overarching Vision

**Paint a picture of your ideal Clay County in six words only. Can be a phrase or several words. Please tell us with your sticky note.**

- Natural resource regeneration/quality life protection
- Large recreation areas
- Where developers pay true costs
- Everyone feels welcome and heard.
- Quality of life, work/life balance
- Green biodiversity, equity, accessible parks
- Restaurants - shopping better snow removal emergency services - staffed
- Governmental efficiency
- Openness in commission decisions and governance
- Diversity
- Urban and rural, all in one
- Keep unincorporated rural
  - This!
- Beautiful business friendly cooperation recreation jobs (family supporting)
- Continue to develop and grow our inner city and preserve the townships and rural community, inner city - kc, liberty, gladsome, preserve- northlands
- Restaurants - Shopping - Better Snow Removal - Emergency Services Better Staffed
- Agriculture natural resources active lifestyle ARTS!
- Access to high quality and affordable daycare. Workforce! Need
- Preserve Agriculture. Minimize light pollution & noise. Utilize open space
- Keep Big Development in City Limits
- Arts and music development.
- Great place for raising families
- Kids can bike to school safely
- Self Sufficient
- Green Clean and part of KC
- Community involvement arts and humanities Improve environment (air, land, etc) advance educated programs.

### Land Use

**Where is growth (generally speaking) appropriate in Clay County? Use the green dots to indicate where you think growth is appropriate and the red dots to indicate where you think growth is not appropriate.**

- Mixed use and mixed income
- Enhance growth areas by building UP not OUT
- Growth should be limited to incorporated areas and corridors
- The 92 corridor between & outside of Kearney & = should not be developed except for QuikTrip/ convenience store.

- Hoping to see greater density in south clay county exp - a very desirable area for proximity to downtown
- Growth important south of liberty North High School
- Less large average subdivisions, more higher density near cities
  - Yes! Mixed use development - small businesses mixed with housing
- Growth should consider required improvements on existing roads. Developers should be required to fund improvements bordering new developments

**What land uses are missing from or desired in the County? Please tell us with you sticky note.**

- Agritourism
- Mixed use spaces
- Commercial along major roadways
- Athletic or sports complexes, like Cap Federal in Liberty
  - Yes, but keep it in a municipality
  - County can too!
- Greenbelts, development "red line" to protect agriculture, open spaces (Growth boundary)
- The gathering place
- Athletic or Sports complex like cop federal in liberty
  - Yes, but keep it in a municipality
  - County can too!
- Soccer complex - excelsior springs
- 5+ acre single family homes, Say catesun for 10+ acres 20+ etc
- Urban AG.
- Ballet, music, etc. arts training and education facilities which can greatly benefit by being in a postcard setting not just stuck inside a city
- Entertainment venue
- Arts, museums, humanities
- Multimodal transportation - bike lanes, pedestrian places, bus - only routes
- School districts have massive sports complexes, partner w/ them fun more efficient
- Partner w/ school districts that have already immersed in art facilities
  - Yes!
- Walkable areas
- Local business
- Native wildlands conserved

**What land uses should be preserved? Please tell us with your sticky note.**

- Agricultural
- Mo river bluffs - bird habitat
- Agriculture
- Wooded area
- All riparian corridors - > 100 ft wide from top of bank
  - Yes!
- Agriculture and family farms -
  - Yes!
- Watersheds (x2)
- Watershed
- Wildlife habitat
- Historical sties watersheds streams
- Hedgerows
- Grassland areas w/ native plants
- Protect vitality and transportation corridors develop stream set back ordinances/develop linear parks

**Should new housing be developed? If so, what kinds? Please tell us with you stick note.**

- Yes, single family
- Senior affordable
- Senior housing multi-level care communities, 55+ apartment slab patio homes + duplexes
- Affordable higher density walkable/bikeable neighborhoods
- Single family, affordable multi-family
- Multi-family mixed use retail
- Cottage communities with small/medium size single family and shared open spaces
- Add green roofs to condos, apt, businesses
- Keep it in the core of existing suburbs/exurbs
- Housing development should be within cities, not an county responsibility.
- All housing types needed.
- Affordable entry level housing
- Mixed use -affordable -market rate- no more corporate suburbs - multi family
- Within incorporated areas
- Housing within incorporated areas in conjunction with other public services- planned growth vs boom
- Higher density units, affordable
- Yes! Multi. Family & mixed use
- Yes, but no sprawling single - fam suburbs on greenfield land
- Mixed use
- Emergency housing, winter cold rules, summer bed and breakfast
- Affordable and small cottage style housing, mixed use + agriculture

**Economic Development**

**What areas of the county are primed and ready for economic development? What are the priority areas for development? Use your pink dots to show us where and your sticky notes to tell us why.**

- Commercial light industrial
- Commercial development and residential house 152 and 435
- Develop efficiently in existing municipalities
- Growth increasing along 92 Hwy over next 20 years, Smithville/Kearney
- Office complexes 435 and 152
- Growth along 69 from KL to Excelsior
- Around the airport - has room and utilities and away from residential
- Core areas and redevelop unused buildings
- Property along 69, e.g. Airport in Ex Springs. Has water and sewer recess to road 69 could include
  - Spot on
- Along the RR
- Ensure that development including roads, sewers, utilities along w/ development & not often. HAVE developers have some (50%) responsibility for infrastructure
- All industrial & commercial development should occur in adjacent to incorporated area
- Put business in already populated areas -NKC, Gladstone, Southern NKC where people can access transit & home
- Continue to develop southern clay county w/ density & mixed use. NOT sprawling suburbs on greenfield land

**Where should development not occur in the county? Use your orange dots to show us where and your sticky notes to tell us why.**

- Preserve and regenerate ag, open space, parks
- Provide wildlife corridors under major roadways and connecting bodies of water, forest, parks
- Flood plain currently farmland should be maintained 210 from 291 over RR
- Mo River bluff habitat - wildlife and migratory songbirds

- No landfill!
  - THIS
  - 100%
- No landfill
- Economic Development should focus on location in city limits
- Protect existing greenspace
- Try to preserve the open spaces and keep dense development in densely populated areas where vacant land is still grass
- Outside city limits
- Preservation and value of rural/acreage
- Protect existing greenspace
- Economic development should focus on limitation in city limits
- Around Watkins mill state park
- Outside of incorporated areas
- Agricultural open spaces
- Develop smaller lot/acreage neighborhoods, Develop & enforce codes for surface water runoff to protect downtown properties

***What's missing from the county's current business and employment environment? Please us your sticky notes to tell us.***

- Updated commercial buildings
- Having too many of the same development
- Maybe not missing keeping separation from residential areas and business development
- Ownable business -2-4 acres, 2,500 -10,000 sq ft warehouse owner occupied space
- Value agriculture + family/urban farms for food
- 300 + business venue, convention space
- Transportation light rail, bus
- Craftsman promotion
- Agritourism
- Super sites for industry - 1000 + acres
- Mass transit
- Transit
- Upgrade road infrastructure
- But not gravel to pavement ... focus on developed areas.
- Hotels

***What's missing from the county's retail/entertainment environment? Please your sticky notes to tell us.***

- Large gathering spaces like city, farm market
- Restaurants (X2)
- Not enough staff/employee
- Not enough gathering spaces (Halls)
- Spaces for preteens/kids to gather play games in bad weather
- Mixed use
- Better use/re-use of older structures and our "small town" communities - sense of place.
- Originality, everything feels like a haven for chain restaurants and big box retailers.
- Diversity and lack of options.
- Ethnic food options
- Event venue
- Have arts & theater productions & spaces
- Third spaces
- Nature based/food and soil

- Non chain restaurants
- Youth nature groups
- We need a theater large enough for ballets, plays, civic band & orchestra concerts and other events. Schools are not sellable

**What holds the county back from economic growth? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.**

- Flood plains
- KC government, permits difficult to work with, excessive time frame
- Not enough ++ pluses for development
- Silos, independent views, lack of collaboration
- No public infrastructure, sewer districts
- Infrastructure
- Road infrastructure
- Integrated business - conservation practices, green roofs, green space and around commercial areas.
- Poor maintenance of existing infrastructure
- NIMBYISM
- Nobody can afford anything for discretionary use
- Rural water districts
- Airport (Kearney) is underutilized - use for business
- Affordable and quality daycare
- Infrastructure
- Community members isolated - lack of communication
- Office parks in incorporated areas
- Limited public transportation
- Lack of density, mass transit, and active transit
- Too many subdivisions

**Mobility and Transportation**

**Are there any missing vehicular connections throughout the county? Use the green dots to show us where and your sticky notes to tell us why.**

- Just maintain and improve existing more circle roads at dangerous intersections.
- Straighter shot to I-35 from Lawson - PP Hwy is Dangerous
- Trail connecting state/county parks to population density
- Actually have and follow a strategic road plan 5-10 yrs
- 291 in KC, 92 between Smithville & Kearney need to be improved with limited access
- More bus transportation is need east to west across the county
- Vehicle traffic should be calmed in housing & dense areas

**What roads need to be upgraded to pavement? Show us where by placing a yellow dot on the map and use your sticky notes to describe any relevant issues.**

- Improve and widen 112th st stark to A hwy
- Yes the visibility is very hard at 1 lane bridges dangerous
- Upgrading gravel to pavement should not be encouraged, unless more dense development occurs.
  - Agreed!
- Take over an pave foster rd.
- What is the policy on building, improving and manufacturing roads
- 184th St/Lancaster new asphalt
- Nebo hills, Lancaster 112th Francis
- Can't take care of what we have - why add more?
- We can't maintain current roads and shouldn't add the problem. Focus on existing maintenance needs
- Development in county stresses existing roads and infrastructure, also increase traffic on inadequate



connector roads

***Should the county encourage pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure? Show us whereby placing a red dot on the map and use your sticky notes if desired.***

- Roadways must be addressed before walking/bike paths.
- (paths) connect Kearney to Smithville Lake and Watkins Mill
- Cost to build that may be high
- Resurrect and operationalize previous bike/regional plans
- Encourage bicycle/trail to all public spaces
- There are 4 major bike routes traveling through Ex. Springs from SE and then N
- Connect Lawson and Excelsior to Watkins Mill
- Bike and pedestrian infrastructure is important if it can be safe. There are limited opportunities in unincorporated.
- MARC is gathering info on climate reduction projects (trails) they plan to apply for a \$500m grant from EPA. County and cities could apply (green trails) connect Smithville Lake to Kearney.
- Yes in collaboration with municipalities (where population is dense and some infrastructure already exists)
- Need to spend money on roads for vehicles before bikes & pedestrian. Rural areas don't need to spend money on a few bikes. Take care of roads first
- Please god - no more bicycles on H highway
  - Please god - protect bike infra on H hwy
- 112th directly off Stockdale is a mess - broken pavement narrow passages. Stockdale Rd gets heavy residential & agri use - It needs help!
- Have bicycle use bicycle lanes already made. They use what they have.
- Only in recreation areas in incorporated cities
  - Nope- biking is for transportation too, not just recreation
- Yes! And should protected have protected network N-S and E-W so that it's a viable option
- Residents between 152 & 35 should be able to bike downtown on protected or slow lanes from their home
- Active transit as option bike & walk

***Should the county encourage transit use/options? If so, how? Be specific and tell us with your sticky note.***

- Commuter lots/buses from Smithville Mo. City Excelsior
- Transit between municipalities bus/light rail
- Need more options from public transportation for work elderly health care access
- Who has any ideas what is available now? Where could I get to using it?
- Public transit to connect to business parks
- Transit to jobs/industrial parks and b/w cities
- Coordination between MoDOT / county to add sidewalks/trails etc.
- Green non-pollutant transport
- "fun" transport for agritourism purposes (train, trolley, etc.)
- Public transit service for pleasant valley
- Streetcar connects to NKC
- I-35/435 corridors connections to downtown, KCI, NKC.
- If nothing else but enhanced light rail and mass transit comes out of this plan, I will consider it an overwhelming success. This is priority 1,2,3,4 and 5.
- Reduce sprawl - encourage efficient municipality development, decrease traffic congestion with "smart" signals
- Does the county have a "seat" at the streetcar discussion? Is there a future for transit N to S (into city) only E-W (to airport)
- "fun" transport for agritourism purposes (train, trolley, etc)



- Public transit service for pleasant valley
- Connections east to west with buses
- Streetcar all the way!
- Streetcar connects to NKC
- Public transportation now practically non existent
- Yes, along heavy traffic corridors
- Yes - bus service & other transit to & from KCMO
- Green non-pollutant transport
- YES Boo IRIS - bad option for Gladstone

### Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

**What recreational opportunities are missing or desired in the county? Please use your sticky notes to tell us why.**

- Organized County sponsors sports activities
- Develop additional golf courses and easily access Smithville Lake
- Trails connecting parks
- Does Clay county have a universal parks dept or Smithville lake parks dept.
- Pocket parks
- Need more community gardens - work with municipalities
- Connected bike paths/walk paths
- More linear parks especially along water tributaries
- Sports complexes for club and rec teams, mixed use options
- Trail connections from city to city - through the county.
- Places for kids to play "in nature"
- Pocket park to allow entertainment/outdoor market/festivals
- Trails connecting parks/community
- Green roofs for "top yards" in apartments, businesses, etc.
- Rec. spaces that draw in visitors provides more rev.
- Regenerate riparian corridors in subdivision for forest farming, forest bathing charge developers the true cost of maintaining them.
- Green spaces, passive recreation trails protected riparian corridors - great place for trails of Chicago open lands
- Sport complexes for club & rec teams mixed use options. See Johnson city model of mid America sports complex- see JCPRD is amazing
- Have to decide if parks (recreation/trails) have nus in a county wide emphasis, with dedicated formal parks department with master plan dedicated funding
- Fully connected trail systems
- Low cost physical activity opportunities for all ages
- Sport complex in excelsior springs - baseball, soccer
- I commend the trail system that exists between kcmo & gladstone. It is well used and maintained
- Soccer complex in ex. Springs
- The county is responsible for infrastructure safety not responsible for entertainment
- More public parks
- Plant trees for every new road!
- Pleasant public spaces - that people like to hang out in. walkable. Low level can traffic

**Should additional trails be developed in the county? Use the purple dots to show us where and your sticky notes to tell us why.**

- Linear parks along tributaries especially rivers on 303d list
- Connect trail using unused rail between cities Liberty to Kearney
  - YES
- Protecting river corridors helps \$ infrastructure maintenance too



- Use clay county trails plan submitted to county in 2020
- City of Lawson to Watkins Mill Trail
- Add Trails on Mo. River Levees
- Kearney to Smithville Lake. Kearney to Watkins Mill
- Protect corridors from development for trails
- Trail connections: Smithville Lake - Jesse James park - Watkins Mill (Implement Metro Green and Northland Trails Plans)
  - Yes, please
- 4 major bike routes moving through Ex Springs from SE to N
- Yes, and existing trails should be enhanced
- Trails connecting to outer cities to KCMO via county roads
- Yes - connected trails between parks, schools, libraries, sport fields, streams green infrastructure.
- Trails should extend into incorporated areas!
- River corridor greenways

***Should new park facilities be developed in the county? Use the blue dots to show us where and your sticky notes to tell us why.***

- Parks with various uses/entertainment/sports/multiuse
- Is more spaces like cap federal park possible?
- New commercialized parks
- Partner w/ industry to create green "wellness" spaces around facilities
- A greater array of parks pocket, neighborhood, linear, etc.
- It is more important to continually develop Smithville lake and expand its offerings
- Yes, large regional parks
- Community center Kearney area
- The Gathering Place
- Continue trail connections w/ Platte County (if they will)
- Indoor basic theaters in Kearney & Gladstone for performance in bad weather
- Soccer complex - ex springs
- Find ways to partner with the school districts
- Community center Kearney area
- Perhaps on the west side of 119/i35 interchange before development absorbs too much of it

***How should your environmental resources (such as Smithville Lake, Watkins Mill State Park, etc.) be protected? What measures should be put in place? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.***

- Environment must be protected but in the most minimally invasive way possible
- #1 conduct natural resource assessments | Tree freshwater biodiversity food production
- Tree preservation ordinances
- Re: Smithville lake and Watkins mill protect upstream stream corridors make sure riparian buffer zones are robust (3 -zone) and enforced)
- Partner w/ EPA Dept of Ag and Energy
- Restrict increase of more docks at lake to limits boat traffic for environmental protection and safety.
- Enhance green infrastructure in incorporated areas
- Get our high school and MCC students involved in clean water initiatives
- Use tree cover maps to protect and grow tree cover
- Grants for trees etc or private land
- Concentrate growth in incorporated areas to protect green space.
  - Yes, concentrate growth n the cities, yes!
- Keep "development" in municipalities, county should be generated for climate change mitigation/adaptation
- Required developers to offset impermeable surface w/permeable surface
  - Agree!



- Mimic natural hydrology when developing urban areas to protect the whole
- Protect finishing river watershed N, I ExSpp from dv. - flooding downtown
- Minimize natural hydrology developing urban areas to protect the whole
- Revitalize tryst falls recreation area
- Protective land use partnerships w/ other govt entities & civic orgs.
- Revitalize mineral water resources in excelsior springs for health and wellness tourism
- Preservation natural areas trees, green land, creeks
- All stream corridors should be protected
- Protect new trees and water them!
- Tree canopy preservation ordinances, EPA funding, natural vegetation w/ regenerative Ag

### Government and Regional Relations

#### **What existing county services are lacking? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.**

- Parks department needs to be better funded, staffed and valued.
- Five service county wide
- Professional fire/ambulance county - wide - graduate from volunteer depts.
- Mental health services
- You shouldn't expect city services in unincorporated areas
  - Agree
- Rural water districts should be eliminated or merged into city water services
- Public transit, connected trails, side routes to school, growth management plan/guidance
- Services lack good communication to the public regarding processes, plans, events (City/county depts)
- Address expansion of mutual and between rural and urban fire departments
- Infrastructure that is need specific w/in political boundary like drainage
- Unified fire protection, trash pickup, sewers, broadband
- Interesting - I live in city but just realized if my house was on fire - who to call? I guess communication is needed!
- Fire Dept.
- Transportation recreation facility
- Pushing DNR to better monitor stream health and mitigate/protect
- Affordable quality day care
- Make less elected officials sheriff, prosecutor, assessor. Make them more accountable.
- Emphasis on mental health and wellbeing, including crisis services
- Lack ability of annexation - rural vs urban
- Citizen representation developers have staffs/attorneys
- Infrastructure that is need specific w/in political boundary like drainage
  - Ditto
- Unified fire protection, Trash pickup, Sewers, Broadband
- Services (city/county depts) lack good communication to the public regarding process, plans, events
- Mental Health Services
- Fire Service County-Wide
- Emphasis on mental health & wellbeing, including crisis services
- Public Transportation From Liberty, Kearney, or Es. Springs to & From KC, MO - downtown
- Transportation Recreation Facility
- Pushing DNR to better monitor stream health and & mitigate protect
- Affordable Quality Day Care
- Lack Ability of Annexation Rural vs. Urban
- We lack the manpower to realize the goals. Cant do any of this w/o the people and making a great environment for them at County/City
- Make less elected officials sheriff, prosecutor, assessor. Make them more accountable

**What county services should be added? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.**

- Encourage county wide broadband coverage
  - Yes, seems some entity should be interested in selling this service
- Instant message and text automation
- Ag economy protection thru enhancing partnering w/ NRCS, Extension Dept. of Ag Dept. of Tourism
- Better parking for county courts/jury duty
- Citizen protection department to guide us through regs and threats
- Better tourism information
- Animal control
- Access to healthcare, good transit option
- Sidewalks/bike routes from neighborhoods to elementary schools and parks/trail heads
- Further deployment of grn infrastructure including green roofs grassy swales, swaled medians, et. Al.
- Marketing and info

**How can county communication (i.e., resident/business to county and vice versa) be improved? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.**

- Perhaps find residents with large databases to help get the word out.
- The citizen an online newspaper hour reaching 20,000 + that is being studies by Washington Post as a media outlet o be replicated across the county and financing supported
- Residents - workshops for property tax
- Business - new business welcome package
- List of resources for existing businesses
- County website not user friendly need sign up for impact notifications.
- Same newspaper serves Kearney, Liberty, Smithville diff in ExSpp - E.S. is isolated
- Better use of social media, bolstering processes w/YouTube video tutorials
- Transparency and less silos
- A unifying monthly newsletter/email would help with communications with and for residents and citizens
- Social media campaign, county FB page?
- Seek out neighborhood webpages as ask if they'd allow a link to county site, seek a page in the Tribune paper
- Guest speaker at every HS senior American Government class. Every school, every semester
- Market Ourselves - Assets
- Better access to educational programs/schools, and libraries

**What technological advancements/investments should the county make to remain competitive in the future?**

- Partner w/ large cell companies to increase SG rollout
- Emergency preparedness for climate/weather extremes
- Renewable energy investments
- Small scale food production enterprises
- Develop liveable wage green jobs (energy, ag, parks, etc.)
- Mass transit - why continue to live in the 20th century
- Monetize the value of natural resources to determine true costs of "developments"
- Reduce waste landfill minimization reuse/exchange facilities
- Mass transit above all else
- Participate/incorporate KC Regional Climate action plan!
- Conserve and restore green infrastructure and expand local food systems
- Improving technology regarding text/SMS messaging for passing along critical information would be helpful.
- Sequester carbon in pods through regenerative land stewardship

- Update energy efficiency of all county building require energy efficiency of all sprawl
- All warehouses should have green roofs or polar roofs
- Collaborate with healthcare, emergency management, food production and urban planners to protect undeveloped land and community health
- County GIS map - open to public/cities
- All services to have an online/virtual option
- Tax parcel vs legal lot lines
- GIS (continued) - more info for cities
- An urban farm on every block with livestock for eggs, dairy & meat. Divert facilities to them
- Improve educational systems, encourage library & museums activities, provide games and activities in parks related to printed & tech
- Internet google fiber everywhere
- Google & other elements are now in clay County, the future in tech in Quantum Computing - any initiative to be a quantum computing hub?
- Expansion of fiber infrastructure, what can the city do to this?

**Does Clay County's perception in the KC metro need to improve? If so, how? Please use your sticky notes to tell us.**

- Not important what KC Metro thinks - need to concentration on County - not KC
  - 100% agreed
- yes - getting better w/ new commission/model
- clay county has it all., urban suburban rural, diverse population, balance of retail, services, and industrial, great education, safety, clay has it all
- market ourselves - assets
- yes, improving our reputation will aide in our growth
- CC's reputation is in the process of repair. It is important to be overtly welcome to minorities and other cultures.
- Enact suggestions to #4 and perception will match reality
- I think Clay County has a good perception in metro. SKC doesn't like the strength of northland
- Definitely needs to be improved. Northland is regarded as "cultural arts wasteland"
- Clay County politics have tampered the county to move progressively forward. Our image makes us appear simple, uneducated, and difficult. We need to improve more than just our KC Metro image - we need to just be better.
- Agree w/ the "political Image" Does not have a professional image. The same 'guys" are always elected.
- Communication with the news organizations providing information about news. Cooperate in some news groups in providing local news
- Maybe, Need a great Clay County forward electronic newsletter for events & news
  - Yes
- Suburbia is in sad shape
- Strong leadership, Integrity only Hope
- KC metro thinks Clay County is the Sticks, backward, not forward thinking.

**Concept Review Period**

**What do you like or dislike about the Compass Statement? Tell us with sticky notes!**

- B - I don't think it's a county job to cultivate welcoming communities.
- A - I like that "the county is a leader in collaboration and communications"
- A 1-3 good vision to aspire to, A 4-6 like it, B-1 dislike taking responsibility for work of cities
- Prefer B yet still no language on building a sustainable community
- A preferred, county should collaborate w/ cities, etc....statement allows cities to do their job and allows county to focus on rural character
- B is best but want more specifics on how the vision will be realized

- Statement A – county in taking responsibility to collaborate/communicate to municipalities – really like that concept.
- Prefer statement B- must insist commission leave personal references out of implementation, buy in to protect, ego out.
- Statement B, and 4 effectively allowing urban growth while prioritizing natural preservation to maintain..
- A is better. Like the strive for communication and collaboration
- Total commission and admin buy in with unified support – by all
- A
- B is best but want more specific on how the visions will be realized
- Statement B is better statement in regards to life Clay County
- A, CC strive to lead the county through collab, B add embedded municipalities
- A4 natural resource, preservation
- Add historical natural resources clay county has a rich history
- B “whole providing clearly structured opportunities for new development. [tie in w/ economic develop & land use element]
- Rural character? Where is the majority population?
- Need to add something about being a great partner w/incorporated cities.

**What do you like or dislike about the Economy Direction Statement? Tell us with sticky notes!**

- Standard thinking, nothing new, forward – thinking, futuristic, include circular economy in this element
- Statement should include collaboration w/ city’s, business community, or the like.
- Agree
- Like
- Where’s “sustainability: in the desire grow, grow, grow with no recognition of limited resources.
- 3 supports quality of life natural resources and existing rural character while providing..
- 1 recognizes of support economic value of natural resources, existing businesses and proposed new land uses
- “strategically attracting” could be replaced or supplemented with innovation
- Need a more directive statement working w/developing companies
- Like but need more reference to following the guide likes as shown of the two land use charts.

**What do you like or dislike about the Mobility directional statement? Tell us with sticky notes!**

- #1 expressed need for seniors is access to health (medicine) lack of transportation options
- Needs access to medical and necessary needs – transportation that is adequate and connectivity
- 3 for creating wildlife corridors, rural character, economic..
- More opportunities to highlight forward thinking
- Line 2 – include diverse transportation infrastructure” mass transit trails.
- 3.. for recreation wildlife corridors rural character, economic
- Build a transportation infrastructure part supports A well laid out economic plan. If you do that “economic opportunity” will happen
- Be explicit about prioritizing active & mass transit.

**What do you like or dislike about the Environmental Direction Statement? Tell us with sticky notes!**

- Line 1 – define “appropriate” better words: sustainable, regenerative
- 1 delete the word “appropriate”
- Agree
- Engages scientifically support best land use practices
- To protect conserve and regenerate natural resources (i.e. trees, fresh water, biodiversity, clean air)
- Yes – but need cooperation across political boundaries to address watershed
- Maintain/preserve natural preservation and biodiversity and collaborate with municipalities i.e.: watershed

- Line #1 what is appropriate? Define

***What do you like or dislike about the Land Use Direction Statement? Tell us with sticky notes!***

- Line 1 - define "new land uses". I think you mean "additional and new development". Land uses - ag, open spaces, parks and rec, residential, commercial, industrial, transportation, medical and manufacturing, energy, watt
- Line 2 - include protecting "resources" as well as natural + Ag areas
- 2. Protecting and regenerating natural resources and ag uses
- 3 define rural character
- Addressing endangered species needs - monarch bees - important to future
- Supports a healthy economy through informed land resource uses
- Yes
- Start w/ line 2, then on line 3 while supporting limited economic growth
- Include supporting interests of municipalities
  - Agree
- Leave references to "natural, agricultural, & rural"
- 3 define rural character
- I Do Not Care About Rural Character
- More Natural Areas, More Greenhouse Gas Reduction

***What do you like or dislike about the Collaboration Use Direction Statement? Tell us with sticky notes!***

- Directs the Co. to develop and maintain
- This is a huge and bold goal - well done
- Like
- Like - collaboration with cities especially zoning regulation
- Need discussion w/surrounding counties and some from cities
- Like 1 - "county strives to develop and maintain strong working ..."

***[Land Use Categories] What do you like or dislike about these initial ideas? Tell us with a sticky note!***

- Need provisions for denser subdivisions than 3 acres outside the city buffer zone
- Renewable energy - is this part of "industrial"? New transmission lines will adversely impact the "rural" character
- Need to include utilities in land use - solar farms, cell towers, wind farms? Transmission lines
- I like that residential will be limited to 3A minimum in rural area
- Holding KCMO to any development plan - good luck! Weakness is KCMO vast boundary along unincorporated. County areas.
- I like this arrangements
- Residential acreage lot sizes (3 acres) are too large and will prevent growth of outlying cities. Lot size need to be decreased within 1 mile to 1.5 miles of cities
- Need specifics in forcing residential to tie into city sewer systems

***[Initial Ideas, Draft Future Land Use Categories] What do you like or dislike about the map? Tell us with sticky notes!***

- Need to set a growth boundary to retain "rural character" goal. Don't trust KCMO w/ urban sprawl
- Need to include to add wildlife corridors - along streams + crossing at watershed boundaries
- Would see some residential development between tourism and Ex Sp
- It appears we have like interest in allowing outlying cities to ever grow
- Do not allow commercial on Hwy 92 except within the ½ mile of urban boundaries as you split wildlife corridor

***[Mobility Element] What do you like or dislike about the mobility element? Tell us with a sticky note!***



**note.**

- Solar lighting for downward facing lighting on roads
- Good definitions
- Better roads for outdoor use
- Solar lighting on utility poles
- Grant funding will be difficult to get in rural areas with less traffic and higher income residents.

**[Transportation Maps] What do you like or dislike about the maps? Tell us with a sticky note!**

- Please don't write in expansion for Hwy 92 as it splits the largest wildlife corridor

## Virtual Public Open House

### Land Use and Development

**What areas should be focused on for redevelopment and infill (e.g., the re-use of existing properties)? Place a comment where you think this is appropriate and explain what kind of land uses you'd like to see there in your comment.**

**What areas should be targeted for new development in unincorporated Clay County? Place a comment where you think this is appropriate and explain what kind of land uses you'd like to see there in your comment.**

- Ideally a housing development closer to the city where infrastructure is already in could provide much needed attainable housing for our growing population
- I would like to see Pharis Farms expand to become a viable real world learning opportunity for schools in Clay County. Currently in education there is a big push for project based - real world learning experiences. I believe that Pharis Farms has the potential to provide these experiences to students throughout Clay County from Kindergarten through High School. Students can explore, research, and design on Pharis Farms. For example some of my students have already participated in learning experiences at Pharis Farms that could be expanded to reach more students. They are as follows - Water quality research on agricultural land - Sustainable agricultural practices (terracing) - Effects of agricultural practices on soil degradation - Community garden and orchard tending/ planning/design -Population surveys of pollinators in the wild flower garden -Coding historical documents on the farm for further educational use With the addition of proper infrastructure - Pharis Farms could serve a multitude of Clay County students and community members. With the addition of proper infrastructure - Pharis Farms could serve a multitude of Clay County students and community members.
  - This is a great idea and comment! Utilizing a resource such as this in the way, as an educational tool, is excellent! I also support the concept of community gardens in various areas of the cities. The communities' abilities to grow some of their own food is a key component to resiliency, which will be imperative.
- Why is this land is labeled as vacant? This land is being used for agriculture. Between KK and 169. East and west of Thomas lane road.
- Planned future Commercial
- Why is this land is labeled as vacant? This land is being used for agriculture. Between KK and 169. East and west of Thomas lane road.

**What land uses should be preserved?**

- Agriculture
- more spaces for parks should be allocated.
- Agriculture, parks and recreation, pastures and farm land.
- Natural waterway preservation to avoid impact by avoiding development of surrounding land

**Should new housing be developed? If so, what type? Use the examples below or indicate other types of housing. Large lot residential (e.g., 10- to 20-acre lots) Small lot suburban housing (e.g., three- to five-acre lots) Multi-family residential housing (e.g., duplexes, apartments, etc., only permitted if sewer is available)**

- If any, Large lot.
- more space for parks should be preserved. large lot is preferred but to accommodate growth there will need to be areas designated for multi-family.
- If the residential development is allowed, we need to get proper sewage and roads to the lots. Small lots need the infrastructure. If sewage and roads are not development, go with large lots. Roads in and out of small lots need to be improved to support the traffic. Restrict multi family residential to cities that have the utilities in place to support
- No, not unless you want to look more like an urban area. Let's be very careful of the end game and what we want to look like as a community/county. Large lot if I had to choose.
- Allow multifamily housing in town with limit to height and size. Currently Kearney has this mix with apartments, single family, and duplex options. Investors need to be local to be held accountable for upkeep. Infrastructure has to have been established for multi-family residential housing. Preserve large lots outside of towns 10-20 acres, and between town and country plan for 1-5 acre lots. All small lots need to grow from town out.

**What land uses are missing from or desired in unincorporated Clay County?**

- could you break up the commercial areas into business (strip malls, grocery stores, etc.) and industrial (plants, manufacturing)? seems like it would be good to have areas designated for future industrial growth or service sector growth.
- A variety of parks within walking distance of high-density housing. Recreation and shopping within walking distance of high-density housing. Small bus, tram, shuttle lines for older adults. Bike, buggy, horse trails/routes to allow safe travel to large attractions within the county. (Trails to Smithville Lake to avoid road rage drivers for slow moving vehicles).
- The opportunity exists to create family friendly areas. Camping area, fishing hole, community gardens, bicycling trails, walking trails through wooded areas, natural beauty.
- WE need more bicycle friendly roads.

**Mobility and Transportation**

**What roads need to be improved? Show us where by placing a comment and describe any relevant issues. Indicate IMPROVE in the comment box.**

- Many County roads like A Highway, Stark, Plattsburg RD and others have become major residential roads. Focusing on improving (widening) and new bridges is needed to keep up with the traffic flow
- IMPROVE: with future growth, A highway is a natural connection to Liberty and I-35
  - Im sorry but this comment makes no sense. Do you mean County road A? Or A highway in general. Liberty sits on I-35.
- IMPROVE: seems like hwy 33 will see more traffic as Kearney grows
- Some of the country roads have lots of potholes and the shoulders drop off considerably. The chip and seal is put down and then not finished correctly and then in the winter the plows come down and tears them all up. If more blacktop surfaces were used and fixed the right way they would not need to be repaired as much. (Not meaning to be harsh



- I am new to this method. The Map does not show the boundaries of the cities ie Kearney, KC, Smithville. Nor does it show the current roads in the dark grey areas. I find it difficult to locate my town and my towns needs without such information.

***Are there any missing vehicular connections throughout the County? Show us on the map and indicate CONNECTION in the comment box.***

***Should the county encourage pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure? Show us on the map and tell us where and why.***

- could see increasing the infrastructure around Smithville Lake. would be a family attraction and boost tourism.
- As more and more residential housing developments go into the county, pedestrians and bicycle trails add to increase value in the area.
- Bicycle infrastructure is a waste of space and money. Rarely used by anyone.
  - I think if it were built, people would use it. It is too dangerous to bike on the roads

### ***Parks and Recreation***

***Should additional trails be developed in unincorporated Clay County? Show us on the map and tell us why.***

- Do we have any abandoned rail lines? We could follow along what the Katy Trail has done. Great for pedestrians and cyclists.
- more trails around Smithville Lake. great activity for families and encourages healthy lifestyles.

***Should new park facilities be developed in unincorporated Clay County? Show us on the map and tell us why.***

- parks in areas where there could be flooding issues would be prudent. just picked this area because it had a stream and close to a city, but could be anywhere.

***What recreational opportunities are missing or desired in the County?***

- consider trails along the MO river
- pickle ball courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, Handball and Racquetball courts, additional horseback trails. Obstacle course, like they have at swope park. Possible short zip lines. Educator/ knowledge led nature hikes.

***How should environmental biodiversity resources (such as Smithville Lake, Watkins Mill State Park, rivers, streams, forests, tree cover, etc.) be protected? What measures should be put in place?***

- keep commercial areas away from streams/lakes. maybe have a 1-2 mile wide buffer strip
- Work with Missouri conservation with topographical maps, soil studies to determine impact on streams, etc. Evaluate impact on environment and only move plan forward if issues can be mitigated.
- Keep commercial and industrial facilities away from those areas.

### ***Economic Development***

***What areas of the County are primed and ready for economic development? What are the priority areas for development? Show us on the map and tell us why.***

- I-35 corridor would be best for development
- Keep the agricultural spaces and preserve our beautiful rolling hills, pastures and crops.

***Where should development not occur in the County? Show us on the map and indicate NO DEVO***

**in the comment box.**

- Preserve agriculture.

**What is missing from the County's current business and employment environment?**

- Trade schools and apprentice programs.
- public transportation to link housing with business
- niche bed and breakfast for those visiting the area. A campground that allows for personal campers, has tents to rent or provide own, and cabins to rent with bath and laundry facilities, small camp store. Near but not on Smithville Lake, possibly on 92 Hwy near Ectonville. Adventure business for area. Amish bakery/store where baking is on site. Permanent farmer's market like the one in O.P or in River Market. The makeshift one in the parking lot at 92 and 33 Hwy. is disappointing. A Ben Franklin or TG&Y.

**What is missing from the County's current retail and entertainment environment?**

- More family type restaurants instead of fast food. Trader Joe's, Chicken N Pickle.
- same as above comment.

**Government & Regional Relations/Overreaching Vision**

**Paint a picture of your ideal Clay County in six words only. Can be a phrase or several words.**

- Picturesque, wildlife, open spaces.
- simple resilient living, respecting natural resources
- Able to ride my bike safely from my home to Smithville or Watkins Mill. Enjoy seeing the countryside. Be able to move in town when older and be able to walk to all activities, doctor appointments, and shopping. Transit to needed services. Enjoy the peace and quiet and enjoy the abundance of wildlife I see daily.

**What existing County services are lacking?**

- roadway improvements and bridge replacements seem to not be keeping up with areas being developed
- Road maintenance.
- Health department satellite closer than Liberty, Mo. Bakery
- Civil Service Training, Meet and Greets with Sherriff's office. Public discussion of developing community issues. A focus on preparing the county residents of how to respond to local/regional/national disasters.

**What County services should be added?**

- partnership with schools to provide a well-educated workforce. this would help draw businesses to Clay County.
  - To piggyback on this idea; have trade schools and apprenticeship programs available.
- Civil Service Training, Meet and Greets with Sheriff's office. Public discussion of developing community issues. A focus on preparing the county residents of how to respond to local/regional/national disasters.
- Health department satellite once a month. Volunteer meeting place.

**How can Clay County's communication (e.g., resident/business/city to county and vice versa) be improved?**

- Do you have townhall meetings just for the county (aside from the commission meetings?) The commissioner meetings are not ideal to have conversations and develop feedback with residents. Are the commissioners visible in and around the cities (in public presence, at things like farmer markets, fall/spring festivals, meet and greets at libraries, things like that. Put flyer's at the grocery stores, etc. about upcoming open forums, be more open to communication in the



personal. Much is lost online.

- Can we set up a website for answers and questions?
- Send emails, texts or phone calls. It's not the how we communicate but the act of communication. If a business or residence is going to be affected by something that is going on then that business or residence needs to be notified.
- I am also wondering if people are even aware of this survey? I just stumbled across it after buying the local news paper which I rarely do but am now going to subscribe. I think there is a big communication gap. For example, my road was being resurfaced and torn up and no one on our road knew anything about it until some of us called about it as the work was being done. We weren't given a timeline or the steps that were taken.
- Utilize text message pushes. Support local paper to also get the word out.

**What technological advancements/investments should the County make to remain competitive in the future?**

- Continue with high-speed internet option to all. Improve and maintain roads. No TIFF. Offer Bonds for development that extinguish once bond paid.
- Competitive with who? for what? People will want to move to/and stay in, a community that provides for their safety, they have opportunities to grow their interests and skills, and a way to invest in their communities by supporting locally grown and produced goods, and independently owned businesses. People are realizing the value of simple lifestyles, focused around upholding traditional values and activities. Striving to be more resilient and focused on helping others. High tech does not equate to building community. Building community is what the focus should be.
- Continue upgrading access to high speed internet for everyone.

**Initial Ideas**

**Place comments here for Draft Compass Statement - Concept A**

- Concept A is the one I think represents Clay County best.
- "... regional agencies to balance urban growth and new development with preservation of natural resources, and strong, safe communities."
  - This is a rewording suggestion ... the use of the term "balance" should be used with the term "with" (i.e balance A with B). Also, I think part of statement B should be in here about safe communities.

**Place comments here for Draft Compass Statement - Concept B**

- like B better

**Proposed Directional Statements: Collaboration**

- Committing to core concepts, goals and direction are key for success. With a focus on communication to the community.

**Proposed Directional Statements: Economy**

- Strategy for keeping what we have and a slow steady growth is best.

**Proposed Directional Statements: Land Use**

- Keep rural rural.
- This statement seems contradictory. New land use continues to take away our agricultural and rural areas.

**Proposed Directional Statement: Mobility**

- There needs to be additional discussion on this topic, as what is good for some is not good for others.

**Proposed Directional Statement: Environmental**



- This is important and should not be punitive to the individual landowners. Assistance to preserve while not limiting the landowners right to use as desired.

### **Future Land Use Framework**

- The proposed managed growth area seems to be quite extensive and encroaches upon the agricultural and rural residential areas. I personally think that it is too much area/farm and pasture that is being given up. Please give thought to the residents in Clay County that moved to the country to remain in the country. When someone moves to an urban area they expect that growth and new businesses will continue to surround them. When someone moves to the country, they expect to remain in the country and be surrounded by rural topography.
  - I agree with this assessment, 100%!
- Hard to read the map except for the slash mark area for potential growth, but since roadways are not clear wondering if this is growth around existing town. I would need to attend an in person or Zoom or Teams meeting to better understand the real proposal for growth and type of growth. There is an area of future growth on the north border that is plopped down in a rural area. This doesn't make sense in this scenario.
- Agricultural land, 5 to 20 acre lots are already here and have been here for greater than 25 years. Initially the closest municipality did not come within 1.5 miles but only by annexing land in the last decade, did this area become with the border. This needs to be better defined to allow the rural feel to be present through out the entire county.

### **Proposed Connectivity Network**

- It looks wonderful to me. I can't wait until it's complete! I'm hoping that the rural aspects of Clay County will be preserved, with residential development and industrial development kept near existing cities. Some retail in leisure areas makes sense but for the most part, it should be minimal..
- I'd like to keep new development near existing towns and cities. Commercial development also makes sense near leisure destinations but I would prefer retail development in those areas, rather than industrial. I would prefer that residential development would be restricted to either large lot or small lot types. Multi family would fit in better nearer to towns and cities. Nation Rd. needs to be repaired near where it joins 136th St. The road washed out two years ago, so we have to take a long detour to drive to Kearney. In terms of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, I would love to see a walking/riding trail north of 92 connecting Smithville and the Lake with Kearney and perhaps Excelsior Springs. Any additional parks and trails would be very welcome. It seems to me that the county could use additional public places for swimming, as well as facilities like community centers, with places to get together, have meetings, play indoor games, etc. Protecting biodiversity resources is important. I believe education might be the most effective way to do that, as well as providing guidelines and instruction for what to do in specific scenarios. The area north of 92 and just west of Kearney is ready for development, and Smithville also has areas where economic development has been occurring. The area just east on Lightburne Street in south Liberty would also be good for economic development. I think economic development near Smithville Lake would be unfortunate, as well as the lake northwest of Kearney. Since I haven't been employed for many years, I'm not up to date on what might be missing on that front. In terms of retail and entertainment, it seems to me that we could use more opportunities for active pursuits, like bowling, trampoline, horseback riding, etc. Clay County - Lovely, peaceful place for work, play. I don't currently use a lot of Clay County services, so I'm not sure what's lacking. Perhaps transportation. I'm not sure what should be added. In terms of communication, it would help if commissioners would return phone calls. They're really hard to reach, and then when you do, they seldom have definitive answers. I have no idea about what tech advances or investments should be made. I prefer Draft Compass Statement B. I had trouble interpreting the Future Land Use map, but understood it better after reading the descriptions. It sounds very practical and it embraces my hope to preserve the agricultural nature of Clay County. Mobility looks like a dream come true for me!
- I like the idea of designated bicycle paths. The roads have become very dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians due to texting and inattentiveness.

### What Did We Miss?

- One of my concerns would be making sure that the needs and concerns of the citizens of Clay County are at the forefront of decision making. I'm concerned about decisions being made because it will make the county money. I believe that lifestyle and aesthetics of our land is more important than if more tax dollars can be generated if we just build more houses.
- While I understand the county's desire to expand taxable projects and developments, at this time, I think the focus of local governments should be to find ways to shore up resources and get prepared to help families in the communities. The economic pressures will be such that local governments may find themselves needing to provide housing/clothing/food if there is an economic downturn of the magnitude being forecast. Also, I think county resources should be directed at providing civil service instruction to defend our communities, and widescale dissemination of information about preparing for natural/economic/social disturbances. There is plenty of evidence that communities should be focused on being resilient to meet the coming time period. Building community gardens, barter stations, more places to conduct farmer markets or roadside produce stands, things like that. The communities that have strong agriculture stances are the ones that have historically survived/thrived during hard economic downturns like what is imminent.

## Draft Plan Recommendations Review Period

### Section 3 Future Land Use

- I am pleased with the map of the different zones of use. I was a bit surprised by how far south the Commercial zone went around 69 hwy and Stockdale Road. I would have kept the southern border at 112th street that connects with 69.
- In terms of the rules on the Agricultural land, I'm glad to see the majority of our family's land in this zone.
- One concern I have over this, however, is that the way it is stated that this cannot be under 20 acres. Theoretically all of this land could be broken up into 20-acre parcels, thus destroying the large parcels of open land that exists now.
- I'm not sure if this would go into the plan, or would have to be ordinances passed the Commission, but I believe there needs to be a high bar for breaking up large parcels of land into these 20-acre parcels. Like I said, theoretically, someone could come into the county and purchase every large parcel and break it up into 20 acre lots. I'm thinking there needs to be a much higher bar to do so.
- I believe there needs to be rules put into place that restrict just breaking everything up. Thoughts might be to say that any parcel purchased that is larger than 20 acres has to have a land use plan attached to it. Maybe say that if there are no properties less than 20 acres adjacent to it, it cannot be broken up into smaller parcels. Or possibly to break a larger piece up into smaller parcels there has to be a super majority vote of the P&Z and the Commission. Just some thoughts, but I'm sure there are some strategies.
- We would like see the individual acreage restriction STAY at 5+acres. This area is busy enough with lake traffic and people who live this far out would come here to be on acreage. We have a small cattle farm and everyone around us has at least 10 -40 acres or more.
- The Brooks family has been raising livestock in this area since the 1940's. We currently raise livestock with our sons, who are 4th generation farmers. Our hope is that our land in this area will one day earn the title of Missouri Century Farm. We support this change "The recommended minimum lot size for this land use category is 20 acres." Not only are the increased number of homes something to consider, but there is also an increase in daily traffic year-round, versus just with lake season.
- Thank you for considering changing the minimum lot size from 5 acres to 20 acres.
  - We moved here for the peacefulness, tranquility, views and beauty of this area. If you cut down



to smaller lots and add more homes, then we not only lose our views but it also adds more traffic, which has already picked up causing even more damage to our roads. We would most definitely approve the AG district to rid the 5+ acreages.

- I appreciate this area is still considered Ag/Ag Residential. That being said, why does P&Z recommend, and our county officials approve, Rural Residential lot splits in this area if 20 acres is “supposed” to be considered the “foundation” for zoning? Without providing a more transparent explanation, it gives landowners a false expectation for the land around them and their property values.
- Chuck and I would like to preserve the quality of rural living in our zone by not splitting up properties into small acreages! We would like the draft plan Not to change and approve the AG district to rid the 5+ acreages in order to maintain the quality of our land/property purchases for years to come. Thank you, Kathie Schoeck
- I would like the County to get rid of the 5+ acreage lots and revert back to the 20+ acreage lots proposed in this draft. I no longer want to see so many beautiful lots chopped up into small lots. The charm, beauty, views and scenery of our zone has already diminished because of these smaller lots. We need to preserve what we have left. Please approve this draft plan with the 20+ acreage for Res/AG.
- Please, delete the wording that land use should be determined by the market. The market, municipal plans and county plan should all have a place in urban/suburban locales. However, to protect both natural resources AND the rural quality of this county, we cannot let market drive actions taken in rural areas.
- County open spaces must receive funding and expert staffing to protect and regenerate the ecosystems services provided by those areas. Open spaces/watersheds in subdivisions should be included in homes association budgets for ecological management.
- Suggesting the market decides land use admits to allowing unplanned sprawl. Why have this plan if the “market” drives decisions. Contiguous communities will be involved as decision makers ...
- Please reduce heavy commercial activities along Hwy. 92 to correspond with the expanded growth boundaries of Kearney and Smithville only. This will leave a necessary buffer zone between the two cities to provide safe passage for wildlife traveling north and south - supporting stated goals of protecting natural resources
- I suggest extending the commercial designation on 69 highway all the way to Stockdale Road given that Stockdale will be trafficked more frequently in the coming years. Also the current designation of commercial use looks like it follows the property lines of 1 Family’s land. Should others in the area have the ability to benefit from growth beyond this one large land owner?
- The ballpark the County owns along Old Quarry Road, just up from Rocky Hollow isn’t identified on the map. I think it may be missing?
- We are at 13701 Jesse James Farm Rd, PLEASE leave our area alone, it’s quiet, we have space, we love the wildlife, don’t destroy more of their already cleared habitat
- All the uses produce a large amount of waste - where will the next landfill be located?
- Has anyone thought of major convention style space that could be used for graduations, proms, and conventions to bring business into the Northland. Graduation at the HyVee arena was congested and worse it was south of the river. We need to bring some convention business and concerts to the Northland. At an EDC meeting I once heard 77,000 cars go to work south of the river but much fewer come north, and that was several years ago. I would love a modern space with parking garages, fountains, art work, restaurants and space for public forums.
- Again, in the commercial section, please denote commercial nodes on Hwy 92 be limited to areas within the growth boundaries of Kearney and Smithville.
- Light, noise, and chemical pollution should be prevented by the commercial entity. The facility should be required to preserve or replace wildlife habitat and food. Current sprawl of all types displaces



wildlife onto neighbors and roadways. Roofs should be white or solar to prevent the formation of heat islands.

- Please, add a bullet under Smart Land Use and Development Practices to read to the effect of . . . Utilize practices to optimize resilience such as increased permeable surfaces in the built environment, dark sky approved street lighting, white or reflective roof coverings, green roofs where possible, and green streets to enhance stormwater control.
- if this document doesn't address the impacts of climate change it will be irrelevant at best and worthless at worst every month for the last 12 has been the hottest on record what is the plan for protecting forest cover; require developers to do species inventories to replace or protect ecological services how will the county prevent the continued formation of heat islands where are the expert staff (hydrologists, biologists, foresters, watershed engineers, etc.) to conduct research and inform decisions?
- In the industrial section, please add ... infrastructure including perimeter landscaping with native plants to enhance biodiversity and complement the balance of this plan.
- development currently disrupts and/or destroys habitat and food for most non-human life pockets of open space are necessary but insufficient developments must include protection/replacement/regeneration of site ecology
- on a realistic time frame developers have staffs to represent them, others mentioned have to respond to proposals amid already packed schedules
- Under 3.1.3. Please, add to the ending here (or where appropriate): Another tool is enhancing the variance process to insure conservation practices are maintained.

### Section 4 Economy

- the analysis failed to assess the economic value of natural resources it only assessed the results of plundering natural resources there are many models available for assessing the economic value of natural resources which should be included for a systems level assessment.
- all of these activities produce a tremendous amount of waste where will the next landfill be located what is the proposal for waste minimization
- don't see any mention of farmers' markets or agritourism
- In 4.3.3. as relates to Hwy 92, please add . . . consistent with growth boundaries of Smithville and Kearney . . . to the verbiage on growth along that highway.

### Section 5 Mobility

- I am pleased with the map of the different zones of use. I was a bit surprised by how far south the roadway corridors should be landscaped to absorb noise, chemical and light pollution
- they should not be maintained as lawns wildlife movement studies should inform the placement of dedicated wildlife crossings
- I see you are planning on making our relatively quiet road into a major thoroughfare,
- which means you will be widening our road backing up our property and removing
- our very large, old trees, this makes me want to cry, had we have known this was plan for our quiet are we NEVER would have bought our home here (140th Excelsior)
- Trail connectivity should be a priority. I encourage the use of adding trails in natural settings away from busy streets. To often, I see a "trail" is a wide sidewalk next to a busy road which is not relaxing nor safe. Rails to trails is a great source for funding. I also recommend reaching out to local endowment sources. Need a long trail similar to the Katy or Rock Island that brings in tourism dollars. Partnership with companies to create a trail easement such as Evergy which owns land under high voltage power lines.
- climate change mitigation demands a reduction in the use of fossil fuels this fact should underpin the

urgency and priority of this goal (Goal 5.1)

- asset preservation and maintenance is not free taxes should reflect the true costs of all county services (Strategy 5.4.3 Park Tax)

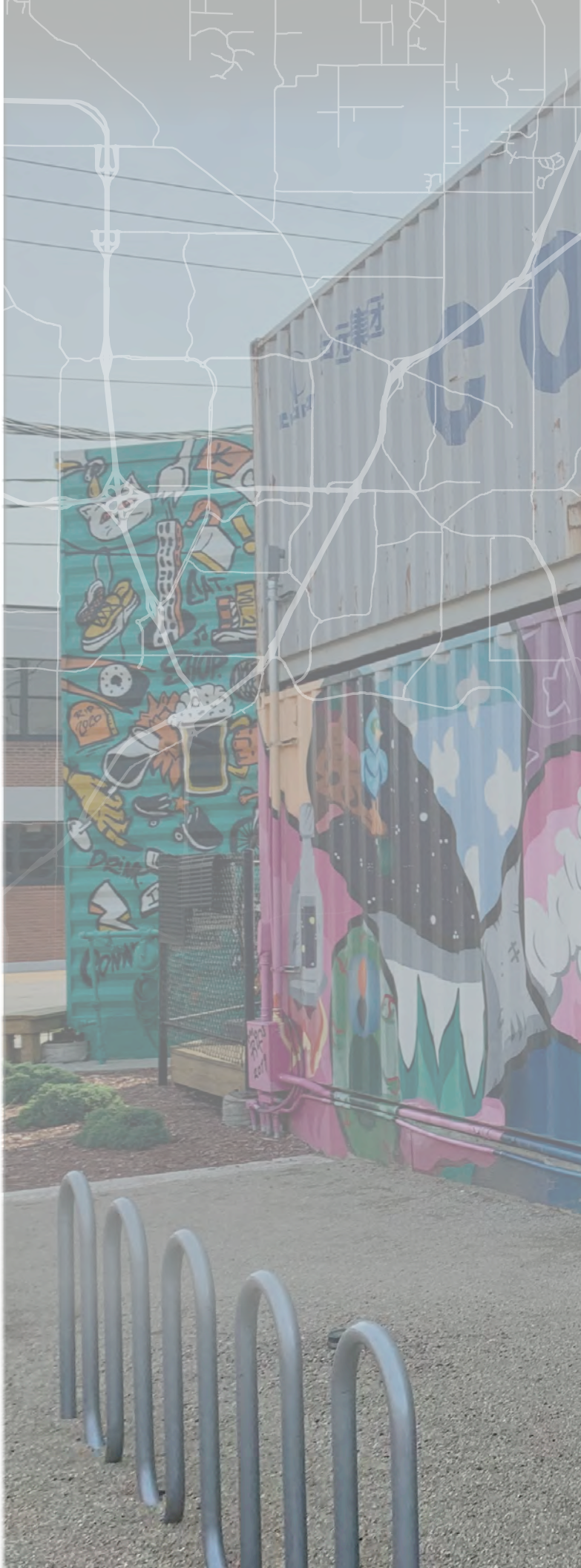
### Section 6 Environment

- climate change demands innovation based on the evolving weather conditions proven by whom, when, where we need to look outside the county for successes around the globe to make informed and proactive decisions current watershed engineering is based on historical data and is inadequate to address emerging conditions
- first sentence under Stewardship, please add in . . . and conservation building practices . . . as part of that string of "to do's."
- under Growth Management end of first sentence . . . mean the most to the community and surrounding ecosystems.
- Adding daylighting streams into the recreation section could be a good outlet for pocket parks and smaller urban parks.
- sprawling lawns are toxic home owners without ecosystems literacy are poisoning the watershed chemical applicators abound, no counter education exists
- Under Biodiversity: Super paragraph! It would be great if there could be some wording (regarding invasive exotics) to look toward more specific prohibitions of Bradford pears (and cultivars), Burning bush, and Non-native honeysuckle.
- Include link MO Prairie Foundation, Deep Roots Bridging the Gap Etc
- Regarding 6.2.3 . . . Cross-referencing this in the development section could make this point more robust.
- to prevent adjacent property damage developers should be paying the true cost of managing the consequences of their projects
- Under 6.2.5: I've always found inclusion of the verbiage "mimic natural hydrology" to be helpful when explaining why on other elements of this strategy.
- what is a "careful" environmental regulation are other regulations not "careful"

### Section 7 Collaboration

- current meeting notice function not working
- Please, include conservation nongovernment organizations (such as Deep Roots KC, MO Prairie Foundation) in the section on collaboration. Such organizations are key for elements of the plan focusing on natural infrastructure and open space planning.





# Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies

A critical component of any planning process is examining what has already been done. By reviewing the recommendations of recent plans, the work of this Plan is more focused and tailored to the specific needs that have yet to be addressed. The evaluation of other plans also allows for continuity on a broader scale instead of multiple plans for the same general area that have an individualistic approach. Recent planning efforts, documents, and recommendations thus serve as an integral starting point for this Plan. A summary of related plans is provided.

# Summary of Relevant Plans and Studies

## Comprehensive Plan, 2008

The updated plan for unincorporated Clay County, building upon the 1997 iteration, serves as a roadmap for growth and development decisions. It evolved through focus sessions and planning charrettes, addressing quality of life, economic development, and future land use. Recommendations from this process informed the plan's goals, covering environmental, commercial, residential, transportation, and other aspects.

A significant aspect of the plan is the Land Use Tier policy, aiming to guide growth towards urban areas while conserving agricultural land and open spaces. It delineates design standards, land uses, and zoning across three tiers: Natural Resources, Rural Low-Density, and Urban Services. Additionally, the plan underscores the importance of enhancing the transportation network, identifying key roadways like I-35 and Highway 69 for improvement to promote economic growth and connectivity. Road impact fees are proposed as a sustainable revenue source.

The plan also highlights the Midwest National Air Center as a pivotal component of Clay County's economic development strategy. It could potentially generate additional jobs in manufacturing, commercial, and industrial sectors due to its advantageous tax rates and transportation infrastructure. The plan outlines various planning policies and objectives, organized into ongoing, short-term, and longer-term categories, with actionable steps assigned to responsible parties. Immediate environmental considerations include watershed planning, green infrastructure, and farmland conservation measures to be integrated into the implementation process.

## Parks Master Plan, 2003

The primary focus of this plan was to evaluate the citizen support of the current park system, the values that citizens currently have, and if citizens are supportive of the changes to the park system. With the expectation of consistent population growth, it is important to identify clear goals to further serve current residents while anticipating needs of future residents. This plan identifies that the three core services for Clay County are Smithville Lake, Historic Sites, and the Golf Course. These were identified because they have long traditions, they appeal to a large demographic, and they have facilities dedicated to them with a designated budget. Based on the citizen participation by surveys, the planning charrette, and stakeholder meetings, the plan recommends to emphasize capital improvements for those core services. The plan further recommends these items:

- Adopt the Park Master Plan
- Adopt the Park Fee Ordinance
- Identify a revenue stream to augment the Park Fee Ordinance to further support other recommendations in the document.
- Design an Educational Plan to inform citizens of the benefits of implementing the Park Master Plan
- Seek our voter support for a funding mechanism to implement the Park System Master Plan
- Develop an Implementation plan for the Greenway System
- Develop a Marketing Plan which positions Clay County as a premier place to reside.
- Consider partnerships with organizations that are consistent with County goals.

## Land Development Code

This document serves to provide regulations that promote public health, safety, and general welfare of residents and visitors of Clay County. It is important that this code is consistent with that of the comprehensive plan. As the document progresses, it provides guidelines for development and use of property, including zoning, subdivisions, and other related land use activities.

## Midwest National Air Center Airport Master Plan

The Airport Master Plan is a comprehensive study intended to provide guidance for maintaining the current facility as well as identifying future airport improvements. Since the airport is centrally located in the northeastern cities of Clay County, the county recognizes the vital role that it plays in transportation and the economic development of the region. The plan develops specific goals to address the needs and wants of Clay County such as maintaining airport safety, promote local businesses, maintain demand as well as financial self-sufficiency.

Based on the airport's position in the region and demand forecasts, marketing the airport as a resource may spark economic development in the region which will promote local businesses to participate. The Facilities Master Plan recommends a plan to implement findings and recommendations by available factors such as funding, staffing, and other resources. The plan divides projects into short-term and long-term developments with the projects focusing on safety and capacity at a higher priority in the next five years.

## Strategic Plan, 2023

Clay County's strategic plan outlines important strategies for enhancing governance and community development. One significant strategy focuses on maintaining financial stability by implementing measures like securing legislation for a 911 fee (approved in 2023), considering a sales tax on marijuana, and exploring adjustments to the road levy. The plan emphasizes improving customer experience by enhancing communication methods, adopting best practices for customer interaction, and fostering a responsive, proactive government. There's an emphasis on enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness through continuous improvement and collaborative partnerships, including monitoring existing policies, implementing technology, and leveraging partnerships. These strategies take a comprehensive approach to addressing the county's needs and priorities across various areas.

The strategic plan includes a wide range of initiatives across different departments aimed at achieving specific goals. For example, within the Public Safety strategy, initiatives include conducting needs assessments for detention facilities, exploring options for consolidated dispatch services, and increasing support staff. Similarly, in the Financial Stability strategy, initiatives involve examining potential adjustments to road levies, and establishing a grant writing position. These efforts necessitate cooperation among departments, careful planning, and focused actions to tackle distinct challenges and achieve long-term objectives. Progress is tracked through targeted deadlines, with ongoing efforts directed at fostering continual improvement and effective governance.

## Northland Trails Vision Plan

Clay and Platte Counties have partnered to develop an extensive trail system in the Northland area, addressing the diverse recreational interests of the community with both on-road biking routes and off-road trails. Stemming from growing enthusiasm for hiking, biking, and horseback riding, the project gained momentum as studies underscored the need for increased trail length. Platte County's focus on enhancing parks and recreation, bolstered by voter-approved sales tax funding, complemented Clay County's trail concept plan, laying the groundwork for their joint endeavor.

Managed by a steering committee, the plan's formulation involved community engagement through public meetings, surveys, and newsletters, revealing widespread backing for the Northland Trail system, recognized for its various benefits—social, economic, environmental, and health-related. The plan encompasses a variety of facilities catering to pedestrians, runners, cyclists, and equestrians, utilizing natural pathways like stream banks and abandoned railway lines. Each county is tasked with implementing the plan within its jurisdiction, with funding sources including local taxes, grants, and private contributions, while regulations are being assessed to seamlessly integrate trails into new developments. Public input has played a pivotal role in shaping the plan, ensuring alignment with community desires, while proactive communication strategies are outlined to maintain involvement throughout the implementation process. Ultimately, the Northland Trails Vision Plan offers a unified strategy to establish a versatile trail network, enhancing mobility, recreation, and overall quality of life for residents across Clay and Platte Counties.



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## Economic and Market Analysis

This appendix outlines market strategies and opportunities for the future of Clay County, providing objective review of market conditions within the County and recommendations for improvements and future land uses. Please note this report does not represent the recommendations of the Clay County Compass Comprehensive Plan, but was used in the formulation of the final Plan recommendations as it provides objective, market-based information.

## SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Olsson has been retained to update the Comprehensive Plan for Clay County, Missouri. As a sub-consultant to Olsson, Canyon Research Southwest has prepared an **Economic and Market Analysis** that evaluates demographic, economic, and real estate market trends impacting future land use patterns in Clay County, Missouri ("Planning Area").

Based on the findings of the *Economic and Market Analysis*, a Market Positioning Strategy for Clay County is outlined, including: 1) long-term demand projections for retail, office, and industrial space as well as residential housing units and 2) countywide future land use and development patterns.

### Demographic and Economic Trends

Clay County's urban growth is influenced by an excellent transportation network and location at the urban fringe of the Kansas City MSA. As the Kansas City region continues to grow Clay County is anticipated to support population and job growth leading to the need for additional for-sale and rental housing as well as commercial and industrial space, and increased demands for municipal and transportation services.

There are many factors that contribute to Clay County's past and future growth including a high quality of life highlighted by good schools, low crime, and ample recreational amenities; availability of land and infrastructure; interstate and highway network; diverse housing stock; growing employment base; and proximity to the Kansas City CBD.

Clay County's four principal cities each maintain distinctive demographic and economic characteristics which should assist in promoting future employment and population growth.

From 2013 through 2022, the Clay County employment base increased 21 percent, adding 18,631 new jobs. Clay County supports a diverse economy supporting above average concentrations of employment in construction; manufacturing; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; professional and business services; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality.

Given Clay County's location, highway access, and population demographics, leading growth employment sectors through 2040 are anticipated to include logistics and warehousing, manufacturing, professional and business services, and education and health services.

Clay County has benefitted from its location at the urban edge of the Kansas City MSA, adding nearly 117,000 residents from 1980 through 2020.

By 2040, Clay County is forecast to add approximately 65,000 to 75,000 residents and 20,000 to 31,000 jobs, generating the need for new housing, retail goods and services, eating and drinking establishments, and commercial and industrial space.

Clay County's large Millennial population creates demand for rental housing, apparel and accessories, home electronics, entertainment, and eating and drinking establishments.

Compared to the State of Missouri, Clay County's household composition possesses above average rates for both of families with children, married couples with children, and all households with children and a below average population of other family and householder living alone.

Clay County's high educational attainment levels bode well for attracting employers and supporting above average income levels, retail expenditures, and housing values and rents. The presence in Clay County of both urban and rural cities provides for a diverse population base. The educational attainment levels can support a wide range of job types and a diverse economy.

Household income levels in Clay County suggest a future need for a wide variety of for-sale and rental housing products, including affordable, entry level, and move up housing.

Clay County supports well above average household income levels, generating a strong need for move-up and upscale for-sale housing and upscale rental housing. The deviations in household income levels among the county's four principal cities create the need for a wide range of for-sale and rental housing products. Liberty and Excelsior Springs maintain the highest rates of households earning less than \$25,000 annually and have the greatest need for affordable and income-based housing. Excelsior Springs and Smithville possess the highest rates of households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999, and thus the greatest need for entry-level for-sale and rental housing. Kearney and Smithville support the highest rates of high-income households earning \$100,000 or more annually, generating the need for move-up for-sale housing and upscale rental housing.

Clay County possesses ample advantages for attracting businesses, jobs, and development activity. The principal economic development benefit lies within being located at the periphery of a growing regional economy whose assets include a large population; diverse economy; convenient highway, air and rail access; well educated population; and high quality of life. Advantages offered by Clay County in retaining and attracting businesses include a central location within the Midwest, excellent highway system, rural lifestyle, shovel-ready business parks, affordable housing costs, diverse housing stock, and a well-educated population.

Challenges facing future economic development efforts in Clay County include a low unemployment rate that places constraints on the available labor force, high rate of residents commuting to work outside of the county, a no-growth sentiment among many long-time residents, limited inventory of industrial and office space available for immediate occupancy, and stiff competition from other cities within the Kansas City MSA.

## **Real Estate Market Trends**

The study evaluated Clay County's retail, office, industrial, and housing markets. The text to follow summarizes the major study findings.

### **Retail Market Overview**

Clay County maintains an inventory of 13.8 million square feet of retail space, with general retail and neighborhood centers accounting for the bulk of space. The principal concentrations of retail space are located at Interstate 35 and Highway 152, Highway 152 and Barry Road, and Highway 169 and Oak Street Trafficway. The larger rural communities of Kearney and Smithville support modest retail markets given their small populations and proximity to established shopping destinations in the Northland.

Over the past decade the Clay County retail market responded to strong population growth with heightened new retail construction activity and tenant demand. While the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the level of new construction, continued tenant demand has produced a steady decline in the overall vacancy rate to just 2.1 percent by mid-2023. This modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location in Clay County.

The Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County from Platte Purchase Drive east to Interstate 35 represents Clay County's newest shopping, dining, and entertainment destination. Two principal concentrations of retail development are present along the Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County, including the intersections at Interstate 35 and Highway 169. The Highway 152 Corridor retail market supports approximately 3.86 million square feet of retail space currently operating at a vacancy rate of just 0.6 percent. Like the overall Clay County submarket, the modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location within the Highway 152 Corridor.

Clay County, despite supporting strong population growth and a large inventory of retail space, is still suffering from significant retail sales leakage into the balance of the Kansas City MSA. The County's pull factor of 0.875 indicates that retail sales are being captured at a rate of just 87.5 percent of the statewide average.

Continued population growth in Clay County will produce future retailer demand and development opportunities. From 2023 to 2040 population growth in Clay County is forecast to generate the need for approximately 3.38 million to 4.48 million square feet of additional retail space. Through 2040, new retail development in Clay County is expected to occur within the Interstate 35 and Highway 152 corridors.

### **Office Market Overview**

Office-related employment in Clay County consists of 12,139 jobs in the management and administrative, legal services, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors, accounting for 10.3 percent of total employment. By comparison, office-related jobs account for 21.0 percent of employment in Missouri.

The existing inventory of office space in Clay County totals 8.35 million square feet, operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 5.2 percent. From 2013 to 2022, 491,099 square feet of office space was constructed in Clay County and net office space absorption totaled 829,177 square feet of space.

As of the second quarter 2023, no office space was under construction in Clay County. Two office buildings totaling 120,000 square feet of space are planned for future construction.

From 2023 through 2040, office-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for 955,292 to 1.5 million square feet of both owner-occupied and speculative office space. Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 25 percent to 30 percent, the forecast office space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 73 to 88 acres of commercial land under the conservative scenario and 115 acres to 139 acres under the optimistic scenario. Through 2040, new office development in Clay County is expected to concentrate along the Interstate 35 corridor and surrounding the intersection of Highway 152 and Interstate 435.

## Industrial Market Overview

Industrial-related employment in Clay County totals 25,645 jobs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities sectors, or 21.8 percent of total employment. By comparison, industrial-related jobs account for 29.0 percent of employment in Missouri.

By the second quarter 2023 the Clay County industrial market supported 8.96 million square feet of space operating at an overall vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent. The I-35 Corridor in Liberty serves as the principal concentration of industrial space with a large inventory of land improved with streets and infrastructure available for future development.

Given the presence of I-35 and Kansas City's central location within the Midwest, Clay County is evolving into a major logistics and warehouse center. Since 2021, over 1.24 million square feet of industrial space has been constructed in Clay County with over 1.01 million square feet now under construction. Major companies such as Hallmark, Amazon, and Walgreens have recently opened facilities in Clay County. With a vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent, Clay County is poised to support additional near-term new additions to supply.

From 2023 through 2040, industrial-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 8.6 million to 12.6 million square feet of owner-occupied and speculative industrial space. Through 2040, the Interstate 35 corridor will remain the dominant location for new industrial development.

Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 35 percent to 40 percent, the forecast industrial space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 493 to 563 acres of industrial land under the conservative scenario and 721 acres to 824 acres under the optimistic scenario.

## Residential Market Overview

Clay County is located at the urban edge of the Kansas City MSA and has experienced steady growth over the past 40 years. Given its location, Clay County possesses a mix of suburban and rural communities. Since 1980, Clay County's housing stock has more than doubled and now totals 107,638 housing units. Characteristics of Clay County's housing stock include:

- During 2022, detached single-family housing accounted for 68.8 percent of Clay County's housing stock, exceeding the statewide rate of 70.0 percent. Multi-family housing accounts for 24.6 percent of Clay County's housing stock compared to 20.9 percent for Missouri.
- Clay County's housing stock is newer than the statewide inventory with 32.5 percent of the existing inventory built since 2000 and just 14.6 percent built prior to 1960. By comparison, 22.3 percent of the state's housing stock was built since 2000 with 27.3 percent built prior to 1960. Clay County's newer housing stock can be attributed to the population boom since 1990.
- During 2022, owner-occupied housing in Clay County accounted for 68.2 percent of the entire occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 31.8 percent. By comparison, owner-occupied housing accounts for 67.6 percent of Missouri's total occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 32.4 percent.
- Homeowners in Clay County are more likely to occupy detached single-family housing while renters generally occupy attached multi-family housing. Detached single-family homes account for 93.1 percent of all occupied owner-occupied housing units, while just 21.2 percent renters occupy detached single-family homes.
- Large-scale multi-family properties with ten or more units are the most popular attached housing product for renters, accounting for 33.6 percent of all renter-occupied units.
- Since 2010, the median housing value in Clay County has outpaced the statewide norm. By 2022, Clay County's median home value of \$264,100 exceeded the statewide median value of \$221,200.



- The Clay County for-sale housing market caters to a wide range of buyers including first-time, move-up, and upscale homebuyers. Just 14.1 percent of the homes in Clay County are valued under \$150,000, compared to 29.5 percent statewide. A reported 68.7 percent of Clay County's housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000, compared to 55.4 percent statewide.
- Since 2000, Clay County's housing stock has operated at an annualized vacancy rate exceeding that of the statewide average. By 2022, Clay County's housing stock operated at an occupancy rate of 95.1 percent, compared to 89.2 percent statewide.
- Clay County's multi-family housing stock totals 26,468 dwelling units, or 24.6 percent of the city's total housing stock. Properties with 20+ units account for the largest share of multi-family housing at 7.9 percent of the housing stock, compared to 5.9 percent statewide. Properties consisting of 10 to 19 dwelling units account for 6.9 percent of Clay County's total housing stock, compared to 3.6 percent statewide.
- Compared to statewide norms, Clay County's rental housing market supports a below average inventory of low-priced rentals and an above average supply of high-priced rentals.
- Since 2019, Clay County's rental housing has operated at a vacancy rate well below market equilibrium, suggesting near-term new rental housing is supportable.
- Housing stress occurs when the cost of housing (either as rent or as a mortgage) is high relative to household income. A household spending 30 percent or more of its income on housing can be considered under housing stress. The gross rent for 45.5 percent of renter households in Clay County accounts for 30 percent or more of total income compared to 46.0 percent statewide, suggesting a slightly below average need for affordable and income-based rental housing.

Through 2040, Clay County is forecast to experience continued urban pressures, producing steady population growth and the need for additional housing. From 2023 through 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth and latent demand are anticipated to create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new occupied housing units. Detached single-family homes are anticipated to remain the dominant new housing product with more expensive move-up for-sale housing playing an increasing role. The trend in multi-family rental housing is anticipated to favor large-scale apartment properties as employment growth accelerates in Clay County. Given well above average single-family housing values a need for affordable housing exists in Clay County.

## Study Conclusions

Based on the findings of the *Economic and Market Analysis*, the following topics were addressed: 1) 20-year need projections for commercial, industrial, and residential housing and 2) countywide development opportunities.

## Commercial, Industrial, and Residential Need Projections

The table below summarizes the need through 2040 in Clay County for commercial and industrial space as well as residential housing units.

By 2040, Clay County's population growth is forecast to generate additional retail sales capable of supporting approximately 3.38 million to 4.48 million square feet of new retail space.

From 2023 through 2040, office-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 955,000 to 1.5 million square feet of professional office space.

By 2040, industrial-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 8.6 million to 12.6 million square feet of industrial space.

From 2023 through 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth and latent need will create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new housing units. The mix of future housing need was determined by evaluating Clay County's population demographics with that of the various housing life-cycle stages. Emphasis is placed on age, education, and income.

Detached single-family homes are anticipated to remain the dominant new housing product with move-up for-sale housing playing an increasing role. The trend in multi-family rental housing is anticipated to transition from small multi-family structures in favor of large-scale apartment properties. The study estimated housing need through 2040 at 22,508 to 25,862 detached and attached single-family homes and 7,911 to 9,087 multi-family dwelling units.

As illustrated, Clay County is forecast to experience considerable urban growth through 2040 with most of the retail, office, and industrial growth expected to occur with existing incorporated areas. Much of the urban development within the unincorporated areas of Clay County will consist of single-family housing.

### Forecast Retail, Office, Industrial and Residential Demand Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

Land Use	Growth (2023-2040)		Net Gain	
	Population	Jobs	Conservative	Optimistic
Retail	65,211 - 75,630		3,382,000 SF	4,482,000 SF
Office		3,860 - 5,715	955,000 SF	1,508,000 SF
Industrial		6,180 - 9,145	8,583,000 SF	12,568,000 SF
Housing	65,211 - 75,630		30,429 DUs	34,949 DUs
Single Family			22,508 DUs	25,862 DUs
Multi-Family			7,911 DUs	9,087 DUs

Assuming an average floor-area-ratio ("FAR") of 0.2 to 0.4 for the retail, office and industrial space and average residential densities of 3.5 to 4.0 dwelling units per acre for single-family and 15 to 18 dwelling units per acre for multi-family, through 2040 Clay County is estimated support the development of 6,970 to 7,997 acres of land under the conservative scenario and 8,254 to 9,473 acres of land under the optimistic scenario.

## Forecast Land Area Absorption in Acres Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

Land Use	Net Acres	
	Conservative	Optimistic
Retail	338 - 388	447 - 515
Office	73 - 88	115 - 139
Industrial	493 - 563	721 - 824
Housing		
Single Family	5,627 - 6,431	6,466 - 7,389
Multi-Family	440 - 527	505 - 606
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>6,970 - 7,997</b>	<b>8,254 - 9,473</b>

### Land Use Patterns and Development Opportunities

Clay County's large land area, natural resources, and transportation system afford the opportunity to create a blend of urban and rural environments that provides the template for Clay County and its principal population and economic centers to adapt to future trends in land use, economics, demographics, and transportation. The goal is to establish a land use plan that allows for continued urban growth and establishes a seamless transition from the County's existing urban areas into adjacent unincorporated lands and growing rural communities. Future urban growth should be sustainable featuring the optimal mix of complimentary land uses, transportation network, infrastructure, economic activity, housing, and land use flexibility. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening the urban centers and retaining the rural character of outlying lands. Open space and a trail network would assist in retaining the unincorporated areas rural character and protect natural resources.

To accommodate future development within Clay County urban growth boundaries should be established surrounding the county's largest cities that extend outside the existing urban land uses and municipal boundaries with emphasis placed on areas where infrastructure currently exists or is planned for expansion. Additional infrastructure investment within the urban growth areas will be required to accommodate future urban growth.

Most of the land designated for residential use within the urban growth areas should consist of low to medium density single-family housing closest to the existing urban boundaries. Higher-density housing is suitable adjacent to or in proximity to existing employment centers, retail cores, and multi-family housing. Residential growth corridors include Interstate 35, Interstate 435, and Missouri Highway 291. The balance of the County's unincorporated land located outside of the urban growth boundaries is best suited for a mix of large lot rural residential and agricultural uses.

Over the next 20 years detached single-family homes will remain the dominant new housing product in Clay County with most of the development activity occurring closest to the existing urban boundaries. Multi-family will assume a larger share of new construction prompted by growing employment opportunities and changing population demographics.

In recent years urban growth within Clay County has largely been influenced by the continued expansion of the Kansas City MSA and presence of several highways and freeways. Through 2040, urban development and population growth is expected to continue in Clay County, favoring the southern portion of the county. Principal urban growth corridors over the next 20 years include: 1) Interstate 35, 2) Highway 152, 3) Interstate 435, and 4) Highway 169.

Through 2040, the Clay County communities of Kansas City, Liberty, Kearney, and Smithville are forecast to capture the bulk of future population, employment, and urban growth. The unincorporated areas closest to these cities will also continue to support new home construction and population growth. The northern portions of the County are expected to remain primarily rural and agricultural.

Since 1980, Kansas City has accommodated Clay County's largest share of population growth and urban development activity. Development has progressed in a northerly direction and is now extended as far north as

Cookingham Drive/Highway 291. Over the next decade urban expansion consisting primarily of detached single-family subdivisions will continue within the Cookingham Drive/Highway 291 corridor before progressing northward towards Interstate 435. Commercial and multi-family residential development is best suited at the Interstate 435 interchanges at Highway 169, Woodland Avenue, and Cookingham Drive. Metro North Crossing and Twin Creeks projects at the intersection of Highways 152 and 169 and the 2,525 acres surrounding the intersection of Interstate 435 and Highway 152 will also serve as principal locations for future commercial and multi-family residential development.

Over the past 40 years the City of Liberty has been the second fastest growing community in Clay County. Given the availability of land and infrastructure, freeway and highway access, and a growing employment base, through 2040 Liberty will experience continued urban pressures. Urban expansion in Liberty will favor the northern and southern portions of the city. Principal growth areas will include the South Liberty Parkway corridor and the northern edge of the city adjacent to Interstate 35 and U.S. Highway 69. The Interstate 35 and South Liberty Parkway corridors will continue to evolve into Liberty's principal employment centers.

Infrastructure has been constructed in Liberty along the South Liberty Parkway from Interstate 35 east to Missouri Route 291, creating approximately 1,000 acres of developable land. Appropriate future development of the South Liberty Parkway corridor would include a mix of employment, retail, and high-density residential uses. Mixed-use development would create a vibrant employment corridor suitable for a mix of businesses.

The area in the vicinity of Interstate 35 and U.S. Highway 69 in Liberty supports a large inventory of vacant land suitable for a mix of land uses. The 1,073 acres of land on the north side of the interchange is planned for the Montage Liberty master planned community designed for a mix of residential, retail, office, tech, industrial, and hotel uses. Montage Liberty will have a significant impact on the velocity of housing, retail, and employment-related development in Liberty through 2040. Land on the south side of U.S. Highway 69 is suitable for industrial and medical office uses with land east of Route B suitable for residential use.

Over the past 30 years population growth has accelerated in the City of Smithville. Connected to the Kansas City MSA by Highway 169, over the next 20 years Smithville will capitalize on the continued northerly expansion of Clay County. Single-family housing will account for most of the future urban development activity in Smithville, expanding outside of the current incorporated city limits. The Highway 169 corridor between Kansas City and Smithville is poised to capture increased urban development activity.

The City of Kearney has also supported accelerated population growth over the past 30 years. Direct access to Interstate 35 will provide the opportunity to support continued population and urban growth over the next 20 years. Single-family housing will account for most of the future urban development activity in Kearney, expanding outside of the current incorporated city limits. The Interstate 35 corridor between Liberty and Kearney will experience increased urban development with the potential to expand the industrial development boom currently underway in Liberty.

ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS  
CLAY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI

September 2023

## INTRODUCTION

As a sub-consultant, Olsson has retained Canyon Research Southwest, Inc. has prepared an *Economic and Market Analysis* for the Clay County, Missouri Comprehensive Plan ("Planning Area"). The sub-consultant agreement calls for the following scope of work.

1. An economic and market analysis that evaluates the potential for Clay County to support future development of a variety of land uses and housing types.
2. Identify and analyze Clay County's existing residential, commercial, office, and industrial market conditions.
3. Forecast the future need in Clay County for housing units and commercial/industrial space.
4. Land use recommendations resulting from the findings of economic and market analysis, stakeholder interviews, and visioning and planning workshop.

### Study Objective and Scope of Work

The *Economic and Market Analysis* evaluates the historic, current, and future economic, demographic, and real estate market forces that influence the future urban growth patterns for Clay County, Missouri ("Planning Area"). In doing to the report consists of two sections, including: 1) Demographic and Economic Analysis and 2) Market Analysis.

The *Economic and Demographic Analysis* section of the study identifies economic trends and demographic characteristics that have an impact on the Planning Area's future need for commercial and industrial space as well as residential housing units. Economic forces and demographic characteristics evaluated include employment growth and composition, population growth, household composition, age distribution, household income, and educational attainment. Opportunities and constraints to support the County's ability to attract continued economic and population growth are identified.

The *Market Analysis* portion of the report evaluates directly competitive retail, employment, and residential market trends impacting the Planning Area. The market trends for each prospective land use were evaluated by quantifying such market forces as the inventory of housing units and commercial/industrial space, construction activity, and development patterns. The study also quantifies the Planning Area's long-term need for additional retail, office, and industrial space as well as residential housing units to determine the ability to support future real estate development. Potential development sites within the Planning Area were evaluated to identify future locations for retail, office, industrial, and residential development.

Based on the study findings, the Planning Area's long-term demand projections were prepared quantifying the need for additional commercial and industrial space as well as residential housing units and land absorption estimates. Based on the results of the long-term need projections future land use patterns and development opportunities are identified.

## Planning Area Defined

Clay County ("Planning Area") is located within Northland region of the Kansas City MSA consisting of the urbanized area north of the Missouri River. The Northland region is comprised of both Platte and Clay counties. As of the 2020 census, Clay County had a population of 253,335, making it the fifth-most populous county in Missouri. The county seat is Liberty. The county boundaries are depicted on the following page with the demographic characteristics provided by Esri Business Analyst summarized in the table on page 3.

The Clay County supports two highway-oriented commercial cores, including:

- Intersection of Interstate 29 and Highway 152
- Former Metro North Mall site at Barry Road and U.S. Highway 169

Clay County occupies approximately 409 square miles of land area and contains many of the metropolitan area's northern suburbs, along with a substantial portion of the City of Kansas City, Missouri. Twenty-four incorporated cities are in Clay County with the largest communities including North Kansas City, Gladstone, Liberty, Excelsior Springs, Kearney, and Smithville. Several unincorporated communities also exist in Clay County. The largest concentration of urban development in Clay County is from the Missouri River north to Cookingham Drive and Highway 291.



## Clay County, Missouri Demographic Trends

Demographic Characteristic	Clay County	% of Total
<b>Population</b>		
2000 Census	184,006	
2010 Census	221,939	
2020 Census	253,335	
2023 Estimate	262,586	
2028 Forecast	271,005	
<b>Households by Type (2023)</b>		
Total Households	104,401	100.0%
Households with 1 Person	27,353	26.2%
Households with 1+ Persons 65+ Years Old	26,413	25.3%
Family Households	68,232	65.4%
Married Couple Family	54,080	51.8%
With Own Children	25,056	24.0%
Other Family (No Spouse Present)	16,600	15.9%
With Own Children	3,132	3.0%
Nonfamily Households	6,368	6.1%
All Households with Children	36,854	35.3%
<b>Distribution of Population by Age (2023)</b>	<b>262,586</b>	
0-4 Years	16,543	6.3%
5-14 Years	35,974	13.7%
15-24 Years	30,723	11.7%
25-34 Years	34,661	13.2%
35-44 Years	38,338	14.6%
45-64 Years	64,859	24.7%
65+ Years	41,489	15.8%
Median Age	38.4	
<b>Distribution in Household Income (2023)</b>	<b>104,399</b>	
Less than \$15,000	6,786	6.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	5,116	4.9%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	7,204	6.9%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	12,215	11.7%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18,270	17.5%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	16,599	15.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	20,358	19.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	10,649	10.2%
\$200,000+	7,203	6.9%
Average Household Income	\$100,521	
Median Household Income	\$77,819	

Source: U.S. Census and Esri Business Analyst.



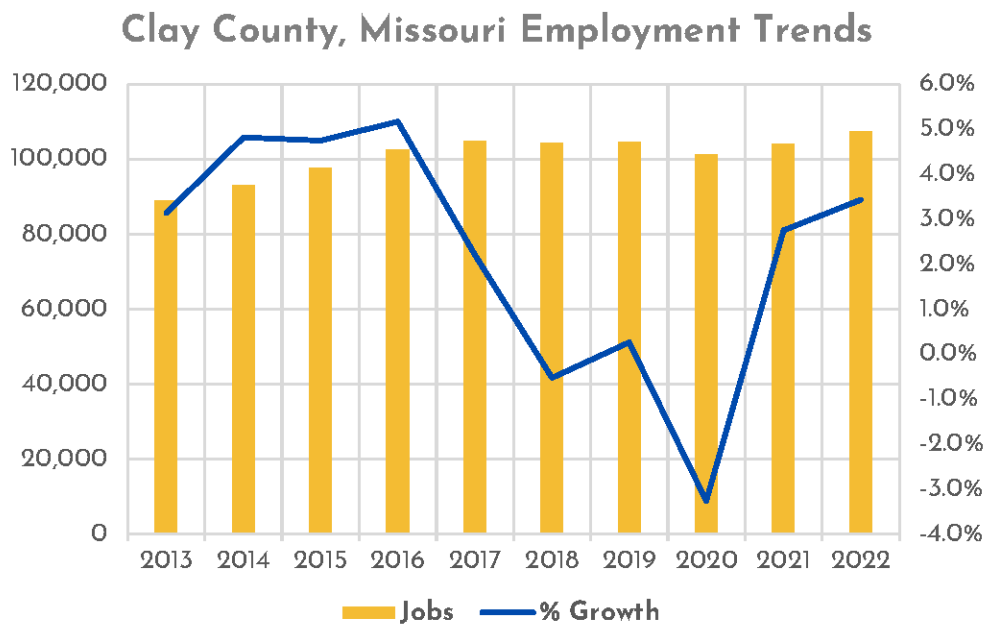
# ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

This section of the report examines the economic and demographic factors impacting real estate development trends in Clay County and the cities of Excelsior Springs, Kearney, and Smithville. Historic demographic trends were provided by the U.S. Census Bureau with 2023 estimates and 2028 forecasts provided by Esri Business Analyst, an international supplier of geographic information systems and data. Quantifying Clay County’s economic and demographic characteristics will assist in forecasting the future need for residential housing units and commercial and industrial space.

## Employment Trends

Since gains in employment generally produce growth in population, income, and retail expenditures, job growth is a reliable indicator of general economic conditions and demand for housing and commercial and industrial space. Typically, households prefer to live near work for convenience. Affordable housing costs, reduced commute times, and higher quality of life can also motivate employees to relocate from elsewhere in a metropolitan area to the community where their job exists.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, from 2013 through 2019, Clay County added 18,408 jobs, increasing the employment base by 21.4 percent. During 2020, due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Clay County lost 3,416 jobs. During 2021, the county’s economy began to recover, adding 2,783 new jobs. By 2022, total annualized employment in Clay County surpassed the pre-pandemic level with 107,501 jobs. By December 2022, total employment in Clay County totaled 110,567 jobs, up 5.0 percent over December 2021. Annualized employment levels for Clay County from 2013 through 2022 are depicted in the bar chart below.



As of July 2023, the unemployment rate for Clay County of 2.8 percent compared favorably to 3.2 percent for the Kansas City MSA and 3.5 percent for the nation.

Leading employment sectors in Clay County include trade, transportation & utilities (25,801 jobs); education & health services (21,523 jobs); professional and business services (16,237 jobs); and manufacturing (14,365 jobs). These occupations generally produce strong demand for industrial and office space, market-rate rental housing, and for-sale housing.

## Civilian Employment by Sector Comparison Clay County vs. State of Missouri and Kansas City MSA; 2022

Industry Classification	Clay County	% of Total	State of Missouri	Kansas City MSA
<b>Total Nonfarm Employment</b>	<b>107,501</b>		<b>2,957,000</b>	<b>1,135,400</b>
Construction	5,494	5.11%	4.62%	5.08%
Manufacturing	14,365	13.36%	9.82%	7.62%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	25,801	24.00%	18.88%	20.66%
Information	629	0.59%	1.64%	1.49%
Financial Activities	4,129	3.84%	6.37%	7.04%
Professional & Business Services	16,237	15.10%	13.20%	17.08%
Education & Health Services	21,523	20.02%	16.66%	14.51%
Leisure & Hospitality	13,528	12.58%	10.26%	9.67%
Other Services	2,922	2.72%	3.95%	3.96%
Government	2,604	2.42%	14.45%	12.89%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

When compared to statewide averages Clay County possesses above average concentrations of employment in occupations such as construction; manufacturing; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; professional and business services; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality. Conversely, Clay County lags below the statewide norms in the sectors of information, other services, and government.

Compared to Kansas City MSA averages, Clay County supports a higher rate of employment in the sectors of manufacturing; trade, transportation, and utilities; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality. Employment sectors where Clay County lags include information; professional and business services, other services; and government.

Clay County's strong manufacturing sector is highlighted by a concentration of logistics and light manufacturing firms operating within the Interstate 35 corridor. The healthcare sector is supported by the presence of

Oracle Health, North Kansas City Hospital, and Liberty Hospital.

The composition of Clay County's employment drives the need for industrial and office space with the Interstate 35 and MO 152 corridors anticipated to accommodate most of the future need for space over the next twenty years.

The Interstate 35 corridor serves as Clay County's leading employment center. A future location for employment growth in Clay County will emerge at the intersection of I-435 and Highway 152.

Liberty is currently experiencing a boom in industrial construction activity. Over the past 18 months 1.88 million square feet of industrial space has been built with an additional 2.9 million square feet under construction. The construction of the South Liberty Parkway between Interstate 35 and State Route 291 has made 1,000 acres available for future mixed-use development. Recently completed and active industrial projects in Liberty include the Heartland Cold Storage Logistics Center, Heartland Meadows Commerce Center, Liberty Heartland Logistics Center, Liberty Parkway Plaza & Logistics Center, and Liberty Commerce Center that will include an Amazon distribution center. These projects will support significant future employment growth.

The 587 Project is a blueprint for the development of 2,545 acres of vacant land surrounding the intersection of I-435 and Highway 152. Clay County retained Olsson to prepare plans for a regional destination development. The goal is to lay the groundwork for destination public/private development featuring Class "A" office space, shopping, dining, unique civic spaces, housing, and regional entertainment venues. Given the property's highway access and proximity to the airport, the land is suited for mixed-use development with the potential to create a vibrant urban center featuring areas of higher density and thousands of jobs.

Large employers have a positive impact on a local economy by generating direct and indirect jobs, retail expenditures, and housing demand. According to the Clay County Economic Development Council, major private employers operating in Clay County include the Ford Motor Company (7,200 employees), North

Kansas City Hospital (3,551 employees), Oracle Health (2,972 employees), Liberty Hospital (1,775 employees), and Hallmark Cards (1,150 employees). Major employers in Clay County are in the manufacturing, logistics, gaming, and healthcare industries.

### Clay County, Missouri Major Private Employers

Company Name	Business Type	# of Employees
Ford Motor Corporation	Motor Vehicle Manufacturing	7,200
North Kansas City Hospital	Healthcare Services	3,551
Oracle Health	Healthcare Information Systems	2,972
Liberty Hospital	Healthcare Services	1,775
Hallmark Cards	Greeting Cards	1,150
Elms Resort & Spa	Resort Hotel	1,105
FedEx	Delivery Services	960
Union Pacific Railroad	Railroad	920
VMLY&R	Web Design	610
Harrah's North Kansas City Casino & Hotel	Riverboat Gaming	596
Ameristar Casino	Riverboat Gaming	531
Musician's Friend	Music Equipment Distribution Center	385
RR Donnelly	Printing	350
Magna Seating of America	Automotive Seat Manufacturing	280

Source: Clay County EDC.

According to the Missouri Economic Research & Information Center, from 2020 through 2030 the Kansas City MSA is forecast to increase 8.9 percent adding 52,185 new jobs. Occupations anticipated to support the largest gains in employment include leisure and hospitality; transportation and warehousing; computers; healthcare; and business and financial services.

From 2013 through 2022, the Clay County employment base increased 21 percent, adding 18,631 new jobs. Through 2040, job growth in Clay County is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent to 1.7 percent, yielding an estimated 25,747 to 38,108 new jobs.

Given Clay County's location, highway access, and population demographics, leading growth sectors through 2040 are anticipated to include logistics and warehousing, manufacturing, professional and business services, and education and health services.

## Population Growth Trends

Population growth has a direct impact on the demand for housing and retail space. Clay County has benefitted from its location at the urban edge of the Kansas City MSA, adding nearly 117,000 residents from 1980 through 2020. Population growth has accelerated over the past five decades as the metropolitan population continued to grow and expand into the Northland. Population growth in Clay County was particularly strong during the decades of the 2000's and 2010's. The strong population growth led to the need for housing and commercial and industrial space.

Esri Business Analyst estimated the County's 2023 population at 262,586 residents. By 2028, the Clay County population is forecast to increase 3.2 percent, reaching 271,005 residents.

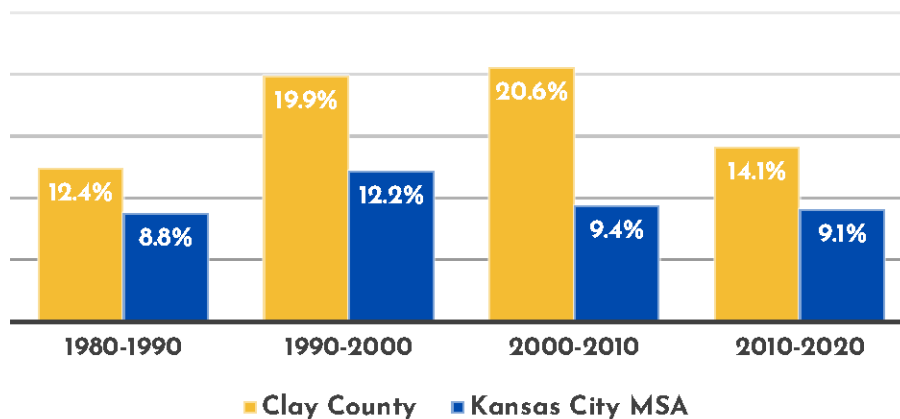
### Clay County Population Growth Trends

Year	Total Population	Total Growth	Growth Rate
1980 Census	136,488	13,166	10.7%
1990 Census	153,411	16,923	12.4%
2000 Census	184,006	30,595	19.9%
2010 Census	221,939	37,933	20.6%
2020 Census	253,335	31,396	14.1%
2023 Estimate	262,586	9,251	3.7%
2028 Forecast	271,005	8,419	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census and Esri.

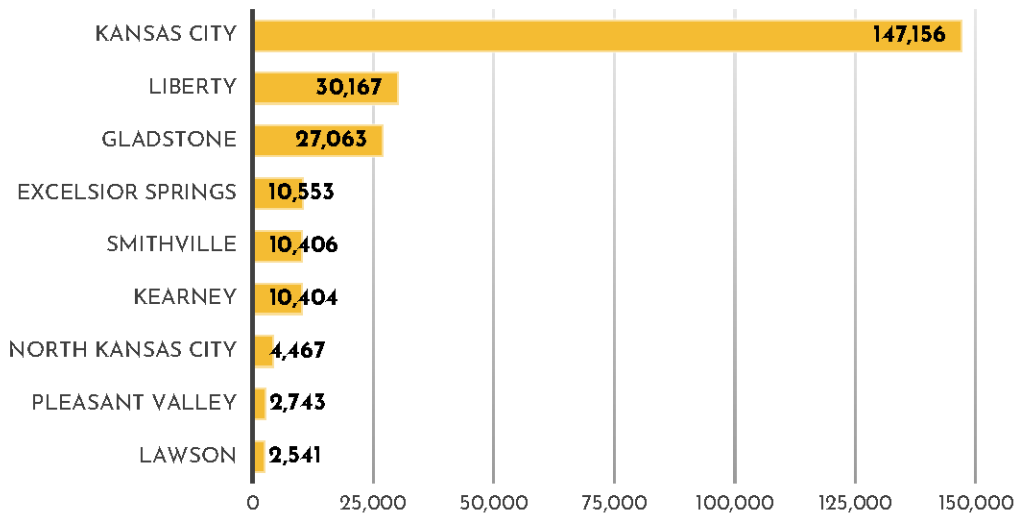
Since the 1980's the Clay County population growth rate has significantly outpaced the Kansas City MSA. Clay County sits in the path of urban expansion and has benefitted from the continued growth of the Kansas City MSA.

### Population Growth Rate Comparison Clay County vs. Kansas City MSA



Clay County consists of 24 incorporated communities and nine unincorporated communities. The largest incorporated communities in Clay County include the northern portion of Kansas City, North Kansas City, Gladstone, Liberty, Excelsior, Kearney, Smithville, Sugar Creek, Pleasant Valley, and Lawson that in 2020 collectively totaled 248,671 residents or 98.2 percent of the County population. The portion of the City of Kansas City and unincorporated communities located north of the Missouri River account for 58.1 percent of Clay County's population. Kansas City's 2020 Census population of 507,971 residents occupies a 4-county region including Clay, Jackson, Platte, and Cass Counties.

## Clay County Population by City, 2020



The table on the following page depicts population growth since 1980 for Clay County’s incorporated communities. From 1980 to 2020, the Clay County population increased by 85.6 percent, adding 116,847 residents. Much of this recent population growth was attributed to the continued urban expansion of the Kansas City MSA. However, the County’s population growth since 1980 has not been shared equally with fourteen small, incorporated communities losing population. The bulk of population growth has occurred within the large cities of Kansas City, Liberty, Kearney, and Smithville.

With a 2020 Census population of 147,156 residents, the portion of Kansas City north of the Missouri River supports the largest population in Clay County. From 1980 to 2020, the northern portion of the City of Kansas City accounted for 71 percent of Clay County’s total population growth, adding 83,019 new residents.

Liberty is the County’s second largest city with an estimated population of 30,167 residents. Since 1980, Liberty has grown 85.6 percent, adding 13,916 new residents. Liberty benefits from direct I-35 access and a growing logistics, warehousing, and manufacturing employment base.

Kearney is a rural community with a population of 10,404 residents. From 1980 to 2020, Kearney grew by 626 percent, adding 8,871 residents. Kearney benefits from direct I-35 access.

Smithville is a rural community of 10,406 residents. From 1980 to 2020, Smithville grew by 456 percent, adding 8,533 residents. Smithville benefits from access via Highway 169.

## Population Growth Trends Clay County Cities; 1980-2020

City	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	Growth 1980-2020	% Change
<b>Clay County</b>	<b>136,488</b>	<b>153,411</b>	<b>184,006</b>	<b>221,939</b>	<b>253,335</b>	<b>116,847</b>	<b>85.61%</b>
Kansas City*	64,137	74,101	90,488	121,761	147,156	83,019	129.44%
Liberty	16,251	20,459	26,232	29,149	30,167	13,916	85.63%
Gladstone	24,990	26,243	26,365	25,450	27,063	2,073	8.30%
Excelsior Springs	10,424	10,354	10,847	11,084	10,553	129	1.24%
Smithville	1,873	2,525	5,514	8,425	10,406	8,533	455.58%
Kearney	1,433	1,790	5,472	8,381	10,404	8,971	626.03%
North Kansas City	4,507	4,130	4,764	4,208	4,467	-40	-0.89%
Sugar Creek	4,305	3,982	3,839	3,345	3,271	-1,034	-24.02%
Pleasant Valley	1,545	2,731	3,321	2,961	2,743	1,198	77.54%
Lawson	1,743	1,836	2,336	2,473	2,541	798	45.78%
Claycomo	1,671	1,668	1,267	1,430	1,343	-328	-19.63%
Glenaire	541	597	553	545	539	-2	-0.37%
Holt	276	311	405	447	471	195	70.65%
Avondale	612	550	529	440	436	-176	-28.76%
Oakview	497	351	386	375	366	-131	-26.36%
Missouri City	343	348	295	267	217	-126	-36.73%
Oakwood	227	212	197	185	198	-29	-12.78%
Oakwood Park	231	213	183	188	189	-42	-18.18%
Birmingham	240	222	214	183	189	-51	-21.25%
Oaks	126	130	136	129	128	2	1.59%
Prathersville	141	130	111	124	121	-20	-14.18%
Mosby	284	194	242	190	101	-183	-64.44%
Randolph	91	60	47	52	57	-34	-37.36%
Excelsior Estates		274	263	147	209	-65	-23.72%

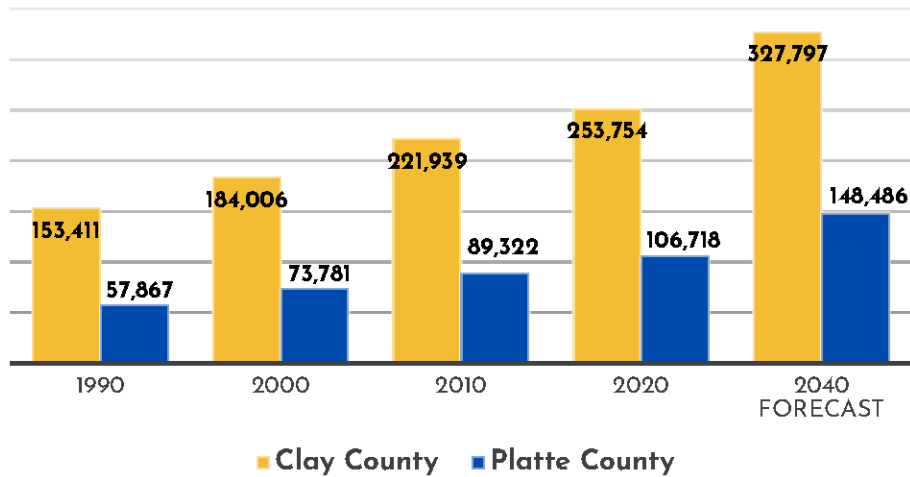
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Notes: \*Population includes City of Kansas City and unincorporated Clay County.

Clay County is located within the Northland region of the Kansas City MSA consisting of the urbanized area north of the Missouri River. The Northland region is comprised of both Clay and Platte counties.

From 1990 to 2020, the Northland population increased by over 70 percent, adding 149,194 residents. During this timeframe Clay County accounted for over two-thirds of the Northland population growth, adding 100,343 residents. The strong population over the past three decades has fueled the construction of single-family homes, apartments, shopping centers, and office buildings.

## Northland Population Growth Trends



The 2020 Census estimated the Northland population at 360,053, accounting for approximately 16 percent of the Kansas City MSA population. The population by county is 253,335 residents in Clay County and 106,718 residents in Platte County.

Esri Business Analyst estimated the Northland population in 2023 at 373,120 residents, including Clay County at 262,586 residents and Platte County at 110,534 residents. The Missouri Economic Research & Information Center forecasts the Northland population at 414,925 residents by 2030.

Long-term population growth within the Northland was estimated based on such factors as recent new home construction and population trends, the availability of undeveloped land, and forecast urban growth in the Kansas City MSA. From 2023 to 2040, the Northland population is forecast to increase by 103,163 residents, reaching a total population of 476,283 residents. Through 2040, the Clay County population is forecast to increase by 24.8 percent, adding 65,211 residents with Platte County increasing by 37,952 residents. Northland's population growth through 2040 will fuel continued development activity for housing, retail, office, and industrial uses.

Under a more optimistic scenario, Clay County's population is forecast to increase at an average annualized rate of 1.5 percent, yielding 75,630 new residents by 2040.

## Household Composition

Household formation and the mix of household types have a direct impact on the composition of retail expenditures and housing needs. According to Esri Business Analyst, as of 2023 an estimated 104,401 households resided in Clay County with an average household size of 2.49 persons. Family households account for 65.4 percent of all households with 35.3 percent of all households having children present. Married couple families account for 51.8 percent of all households, of which 24.0 percent had related children.

Over the past six decades the average household size in the United States has declined steadily, from 3.33 persons in 1960 to 2.52 persons by 2020. This declining household size has played a factor in changing housing needs.

Clay County's average household size of 2.49 persons is supported by the high rate of families and married couples with children. The table on the following page provides a comparison of households by type for Clay County and State of Missouri.

### Clay County Households by Type; 2023

Household Type	Clay County	State of Missouri
Total Households	104,401	2,375,611
Family Households	65.4%	65.3%
Married Couple Households	51.8%	48.4%
With Related Children	24.0%	20.7%
Other Family (No Spouse Present)	15.9%	16.7%
With Children Present	10.8%	11.0%
Householder Living Alone	26.2%	28.3%
All Households with Children	35.3%	31.8%
Average Household Size	2.49	2.44
Average Family Size	3.08	3.00

Source: Esri Business Analyst.

When compared to that of the State of Missouri, Clay County’s household composition possesses above average rates for families with children, married couples with children, and all households with children and a below average population of other family and householder living alone. Clay County’s household composition characteristics suggest a propensity for detached single-family housing and above average retail expenditures for household furnishings, groceries, clothing and accessories, sporting goods, books, and other family-related goods and services.

The table on the following page provides a comparison of household composition among four principal cities in Clay County.



## Clay County's Principal Cities Comparison of Households by Type

Household Type	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
Total Households	104,401	11,515	3,696	3,694	3,824
Family Households	65.4%	71.4%	71.6%	77.4%	76.9%
Married Couple Households	51.8%	56.7%	51.8%	56.8%	56.6%
All Households Children Present	35.3%	37.8%	32.4%	44.0%	39.5%
Householder Living Alone	26.2%	25.9%	24.5%	20.4%	20.3%
65 Years and Older	8.1%	8.6%	9.8%	10.4%	13.2%
Average Household Size	2.49	2.55	2.73	2.74	2.68
Average Family Size	3.08	3.05	3.25	3.14	3.05

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

Liberty is a growing suburban community featuring above average rates of family households, married couple households, households with children, and seniors living alone.

The rural communities of Kearney and Smithville support the highest rates of family households, married couple households, households with children present, and seniors living alone. Both communities have experienced significant population growth since 1980.

Excelsior Springs' population has remained stagnant since 1980. Compared to the other Clay County communities, Excelsior Springs has below average rates for married couple households, households with children present, and householders living alone.

Each city's household composition will have a direct impact on the demand for and type of housing as well as retail goods and services. While the housing need for each city will consist primarily of single-family homes, the household composition for Liberty, Kearney, and Smithville suggests larger homes to accommodate the high rate of children present. These communities will also support an above average need for family-related retail goods and services.

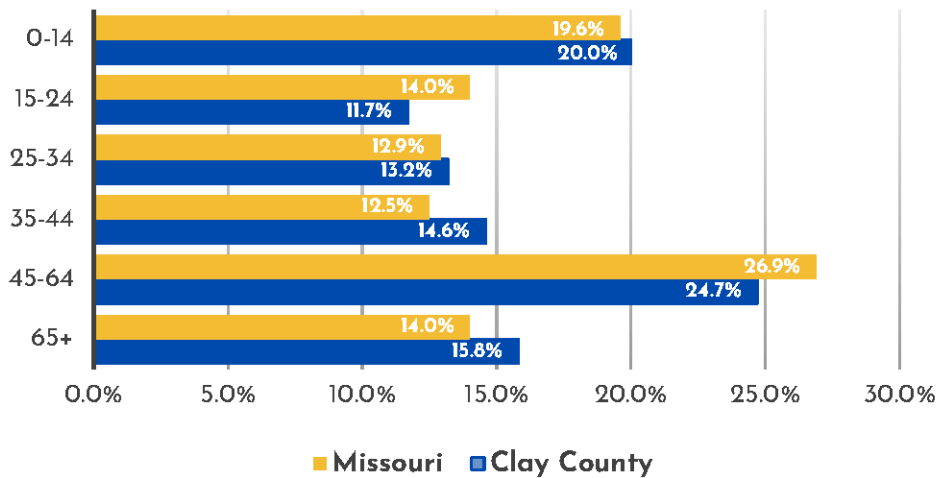
The large senior population living alone in Excelsior Springs, Kearney, and Smithville may drive the need for smaller, maintenance-free housing and senior rental housing.

## Population Age Distribution

Age is an important factor in consumer identity, since consumption patterns, housing needs, and financial situation change significantly throughout an individual's lifetime. Change in the relative proportions of age groups throughout the United States is expected to have an important impact on the retailing and housing industries.

The bar chart below provides a comparison of the Clay County and Missouri population by six primary age groups, including children (0-14 years), adolescent (15-24 years), young adults (25 to 34 years), family/working adults (35-44 years); empty nesters (45-64 years) and elderly (65+ years). Each age group possesses distinctively different consumption and housing needs.

**Population by Age Comparison**



Esri Business Analyst estimates that working adults ages 35 to 44 years (14.6%) and children ages 0 to 14 (20.0%) account for an above average percentage of Clay County's population, indicative of family households with children. Clay County's young adult population ages 25 to 34 years will have an increasing influence on the city's workforce, retail goods and services expenditures, and the housing market.

Children ages 0 to 14 years are not consumers per se, but their presence within a household generates retail expenditures on apparel, accessories, and groceries. This age group accounts for 20.0 percent of the Clay County population which exceeds the statewide average due to the rate of family households and married couples with children present.

The adolescent population ages 15 to 24 is a key demographic for supporting the sales of apparel and accessories, groceries, sporting goods, music, consumer electronics, eating and drinking places, and general merchandise. Adolescents account for 11.7 percent of the Clay County population. By comparison, adolescents account for 14.0 percent of the Missouri population.

Young adults aged 25 to 34 years generally are new to the workforce. These tech savvy young adults are heavy consumers of electronics, apparel and accessories, entertainment, and rental housing. Young adults account for 13.2 percent of the Clay County population which compares to the statewide rate of 12.9 percent. Clay County's young adult population has a significant impact on the local workforce, retail goods and services, and housing market.

The population ages 35 to 44 are in their child raising and principal consumer years, with expenditures favoring hardware, furniture and home furnishings, consumer electronics, department stores, and eating and drinking places. Family/working adults account for 14.6 percent of the Clay County population, compared to 12.5 percent of the statewide population. Clay County's well above average share of family/working adults is consistent with its suburban character that attracts young families with children.

Clay County's population ages 45 to 64 years account for 24.7 percent of the total population, compared to 26.9 percent statewide. People aged 45+ years are generally less consumers of apparel, consumer electronics, furniture, home furnishings, and entertainment than are younger consumers. This empty nester age group provides opportunities for home downsizing, restaurants, entertainment, and travel and will also produce a growing need for healthcare services and continuum care housing facilities.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, per capita retail expenditures by seniors 65+ years old is 18 percent lower than those under the age of 35 years and 41 percent lower than people ages 35 to 64 years. Residents 65+ years of age account for 15.8 percent of the Clay County population, compared to 14.0 percent of the statewide population. The senior population poses a growing market for healthcare, senior rental housing, and downsized housing.

The table below provides a comparison of population age distribution among four principal cities in Clay County. The high percentages of school age children and family/working adults (35-44 years) in each city suggest the need for for-sale, single-family housing. High percentages of empty nesters (55-64 years) in Liberty and Excelsior Springs and seniors (65+ years) in Excelsior Springs and Kearney suggest a growing need for smaller, maintenance-free housing and senior rental housing.

### Clay County's Principal Cities Comparison of Population Age Distribution

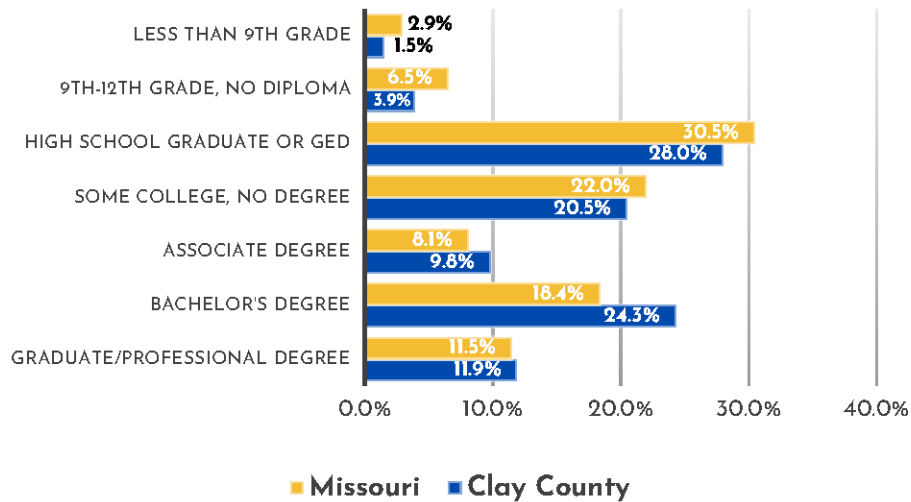
Age Range	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>262,586</b>	<b>30,129</b>	<b>10,595</b>	<b>10,211</b>	<b>10,260</b>
0 - 14	20.0%	21.8%	19.6%	22.5%	19.4%
15 - 24	11.7%	13.1%	15.9%	14.6%	14.3%
25 - 34	13.2%	12.6%	13.4%	10.7%	13.0%
35 - 44	14.6%	13.9%	11.7%	14.5%	14.4%
45 - 54	12.4%	11.0%	10.1%	12.1%	14.5%
55 - 64	12.2%	14.2%	13.8%	11.7%	11.3%
65+	15.8%	13.1%	15.5%	13.8%	14.0%

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels of a market area's labor pool are becoming increasingly important in the ability to attract and retain knowledge-based industries as well as the ability to support above average wages. The bar chart below provides a comparison of educational attainment levels between Clay County and State of Missouri as provided by Esri Business Analyst.

### Educational Attainment Levels



Educational levels have a direct impact on achievable income levels, retail expenditure patterns, housing values, and the demand for commercial space. The demand for retail space increases as income and retail sales levels rise. The type of retail space is also impacted as high-income households support increased demand for higher valued goods and services. The demand for office space improves at higher educational attainment levels as a larger percentage of residents are more likely to be employed in professional service and medical professions.

Clay County's population is well educated with 46.0 percent of all residents ages 25+ attaining an associate degree or better, compared to 38.0 percent for Missouri. Conversely, 33.4 percent of Clay County residents attained a high school diploma or less compared to 39.9 percent of the statewide adult population. Just 5.4 percent of Clay County's adult population has not graduated high school.

Clay County's above average educational attainment levels improve the potential to support above average job growth, income levels, retail expenditures, and housing values and rents.

The table on the following page provides a comparison of educational attainment levels among the four principal cities in Clay County.

## Clay County's Principal Cities Comparison of Educational Attainment Levels

Education Level	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
<b>Population 25 Years and Over</b>	<b>179,275</b>	<b>20,616</b>	<b>6,831</b>	<b>6,417</b>	<b>6,813</b>
Less than 9th Grade	1.5%	1.9%	4.3%	0.8%	1.1%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	3.9%	4.1%	8.9%	2.6%	2.8%
High School Graduate or GED	28.0%	27.4%	44.7%	28.6%	26.9%
Some College, No Degree	20.5%	21.8%	20.7%	24.1%	25.9%
Associate Degree	9.8%	8.0%	4.8%	15.6%	9.2%
Bachelor's Degree	24.3%	25.4%	11.2%	21.5%	21.6%
Graduate/Professional Degree	11.9%	11.5%	5.3%	6.7%	12.6%

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

The residents of Clay County's four principal cities possess high educational attainment levels, but some disparities are evident.

Liberty supports the highest educational attainment levels with 44.9 percent of its residents ages 25 years and older possessing an associate degree or better. Just 6.0 percent of Liberty's adult population has not graduated high school. These high educational attainment levels are consistent with Liberty's well above average income levels and status as a bedroom community with the capability of supporting above average for-sale housing values and residential rents.

Smithville supports the second highest level of educational attainment among Clay County's four principal cities with 43.8 percent of the adult population attaining an associate degree or better and the lowest rate of residents who have not graduated high school.

Kearney's adult population ages 25 years and older is also well educated with 43.4 percent of residents ages 25 years and older attaining a bachelor's degree or better and 12.6 percent of adult residents attaining a graduate or professional degree, the highest rate among Clay County's four principal cities.

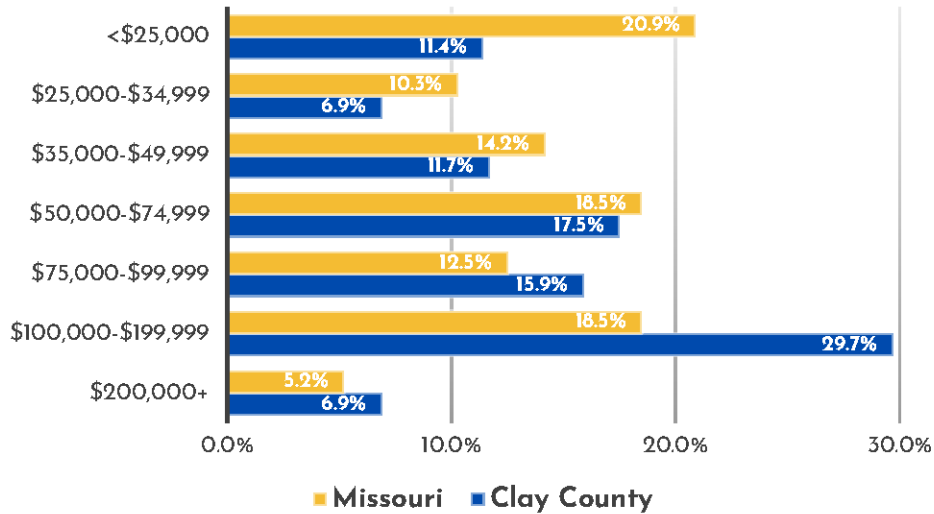
Educational attainment for Excelsior Springs adult population is slightly below the countywide average with 43.8 percent of residents 25 years of age and older possessing an associate degree or better. A reported 13.2 percent of Excelsior Springs' adult population has not graduated high school.

The educational attainment levels suggest that while the Clay County population overall is well educated, the presence of both urban and rural cities provides for a diverse population base. The educational attainment levels can support a wide range of job types and a diverse economy.

## Household Income Distribution

Household income levels have a direct impact on retail expenditures, housing needs, for-sale housing values, and residential rents. A comparison of household income distribution estimates for Clay County and State of Missouri is outlined in the bar chart below.

**Household Income Distribution Comparison**



According to Esri Business Analyst, in 2023 Clay County’s median household income of \$77,819 compares to \$54,596 for Missouri, with a much lower rate of households earning less than \$35,000 and a much greater rate of high-income households earning \$100,000 or more annually. Clay County’s average household income levels can support above average retail sales, housing values, and residential rents.

An estimated 11.4 percent of Clay County households earn less than \$25,000 annually, compared to 20.9 percent statewide. While Clay County possesses a well below average share of households earning less than \$25,000 annually, a need still exists for affordable and income-based rental housing.

An estimated 6.9 percent of Clay County households earn \$25,000 to \$34,999 annually compared to 10.3 percent statewide. These households tend to be perpetual renters with the lowest income households potentially qualifying for some form of housing assistance. The median housing rent in Clay County of \$1,034 per month as reported by the U.S. Census requires an annual household income of approximately \$35,000.

The median housing value in Clay County is \$240,700, compared to \$163,600 statewide. Clay County’s entry-level housing valued at \$100,000 to \$249,999 accounts for 31.2 percent of the total housing stock. Based on standard lending practices, households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999 represent the entry-level, for-sale housing and move-up rental markets. According to the U.S. Census, an estimated 17.5 percent of Clay County households earn \$50,000 to \$74,999, compared to 18.5 percent statewide.

An estimated 15.9 percent of Clay County households earn \$75,000 to \$99,999, compared to 12.5 percent statewide. These households represent potential demand for housing priced from \$300,000 to \$400,000.

High-income households with annual incomes of \$100,000 or more account for 36.6 percent of all Clay County households compared to 23.7 percent for Missouri. These households represent potential demand for housing priced at more than \$400,000 as well as luxury automobiles, retail goods and services, travel, and entertainment.

The table on the following page provides a comparison of household income distribution among the four principal cities in Clay County.

## Clay County's Principal Cities Comparison of Household Income Distribution

Household Income Range	Clay County	City of Liberty	Excelsior Springs	City of Smithville	City of Kearney
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>104,399</b>	<b>11,515</b>	<b>2,647</b>	<b>3,694</b>	<b>3,824</b>
Less than \$25,000	11.4%	10.9%	5.8%	3.0%	4.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.9%	7.8%	8.4%	0.3%	5.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	11.7%	10.0%	10.7%	6.3%	6.5%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17.5%	16.7%	22.6%	19.8%	10.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	15.9%	14.3%	16.1%	17.9%	18.4%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	29.7%	35.7%	32.7%	50.9%	46.3%
\$200,000 +	6.9%	4.6%	3.8%	2.1%	8.7%
Median Household Income	\$77,819	\$81,576	\$68,679	\$103,413	\$103,737
Mean Household Income	\$93,361	\$99,271	\$89,345	\$107,351	\$114,780

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and Esri.

Significant deviations in annual household income and distribution levels exist among Clay County's four principal cities. Each community offers its own "brand" identity highlighted by distinctive demographics, housing stock, lifestyle, and image.

Kearney supports the highest median household income and highest percentage of high-income households earning \$100,000 and more, suggesting the financial capacity to support the highest for-sale housing values and residential rents. Kearney's small percentage of households earning less than \$25,000 suggests a modest need for income-based rental housing.

Smithville also supports an above average median household income and high-income households with the capability of supporting above average for-sale housing values and residential rents. Smithville also maintains an above average rate of households with income of \$50,000 to \$74,999 which generates demand by first-time homebuyers. Just 3.0 percent of Smithville households earn less than \$25,000 annually, suggesting a modest need for income-based rental housing. Liberty's household income distribution is comparable to Clay County as a whole, supporting a strong need for both entry-level and move-up for-sale housing. An estimated 10.9 percent of Liberty households earn less than \$25,000, suggesting a need for income-based rental housing.

Excelsior Springs maintains the lowest household income among the County's four principal cities, with both median and mean annual incomes well below countywide norms. An estimated 22.6 percent of households earn \$50,000 to \$74,999 annually, supporting the need for entry-level, for-sale housing and market-rate rental housing. Nearly one-third of Excelsior Springs households earn \$75,000 to \$99,999, generating the need for move-up for-sale housing and upscale rental housing. Just 5.8 percent of Excelsior Springs households earn less than \$25,000, generating a modest need for income-based rental housing.

To conclude, Clay County supports well above average household income levels, generating a strong need for move-up and upscale for-sale housing and upscale rental housing. The deviations in household income levels among the county's four principal cities create the need for a wide range of for-sale and rental housing products. Liberty and Excelsior Springs maintain the highest rates of households earning less than \$25,000 annually and have the greatest need for affordable and income-based housing. Excelsior Springs and Smithville possess the highest rates of households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999, and thus the greatest need for entry-level for-sale and rental housing. Kearney and Smithville support the highest rates of high-income households earning \$100,000 or more annually, generating the need for move-up for-sale housing and upscale rental housing.

## Economic Development Factors

The bullet points below summarize the strengths and challenges in fostering economic development in Clay County.

### Strengths/Assets

- Clay County benefits from a regional economy centered on the Kansas City MSA. The region supports a diverse economy and is experiencing steady employment and population growth. Clay County is located at the periphery of the Kansas City MSA and benefits from being within the path of urban growth.
- Clay County benefits from access to an extensive highway system and proximity to Kansas City International Airport. Its central location within the Midwest and presence on I-35 makes Clay County ideal for logistics and warehouse operations. A growing number of major corporations are locating logistics facilities along the I-35 corridor.
- Business parks offering shovel-ready sites operate in Clay County, with the largest concentration along the I-35 corridor in Liberty. The 2,525 acres of land at the intersection of I-435 and Highway 152 is designed to support a high-density urban center with the potential to emerge as a major employment hub. The availability of shovel-ready sites provides the opportunity to accommodate companies considering expanding or locating a facility in Clay County.
- Clay and Platte counties that make up the Northland region are the fastest growing counties within the Kansas City MSA.
- Very few labor markets in the Midwest draw from a population of more than 2 million people. The sheer size of the labor market gives Clay County a unique strength.
- Clay County's population is well educated with 94.6 percent of the working age population attaining a high school diploma or higher compared to the national average of 89 percent. Additionally, 24.3 percent of residents possess a bachelor's degree, which is 3.4 percent above the state average.
- While Clay County has experienced rapid population growth, more than 85,100 people drive out of Clay County daily to work creating a pool of potential workers for new and expanding businesses.
- Clay County has 55 percent more people employed in manufacturing than the national average with 13,966 new manufacturing jobs having been created since 2015.
- Clay County's labor force participation rate of 70.1 percent is 6.9 percent higher than the national average.
- Clay County's largest GDP contributor in 2020 was manufacturing at \$2,721,004,000.
- Clay County maintains a high quality of life featuring quality schools and parks, low crime rate, ample shopping and entertainment, good healthcare network, quality jobs, and a wide range of housing options.
- Affordable for-sale housing costs and diverse housing stock within each of the County's four major cities targeting differing housing products and price points. Many active single-family subdivisions in Clay County offer a wide range of for-sale housing products.
- Housing options include conventional suburban communities, smalltown living in several rural communities of various sizes, and country living in unincorporated portions of the county. Each community in Clay County offers its own "brand" identity highlighted by distinctive demographics, housing stock, lifestyle, tourism and recreational amenities, and image.
- The Clay County Economic Development Council promotes economic development and business retention, expansion, and attraction in Clay County and encourages the development of new markets for the products and services produced in Clay County.



## Challenges/Liabilities

- Clay County's low unemployment rate places constraints on the availability of labor.
- Clay County suffers from a "brain drain" whereby over 85,000 residents commute outside of the county to their place of work.
- Traditionally, some communities in Clay County have not been viewed favorably by economic development decision makers because of perceived challenges in permitting costs, land costs, and the attitudes and lack of desire for growth of past elected officials and long-time residents.
- The outlying rural communities in Clay County suffer from significant retail sales leakage.
- Limited inventory of spec industrial and office space available for immediate occupancy.
- Limited employment opportunities within the outlying rural communities.

Clay County possesses ample advantages for attracting businesses, jobs, and development activity. The principal economic development benefit lies within being located at the periphery of a growing regional economy whose assets include a large population; diverse economy, convenient highway, air and rail access; well educated population; and high quality of life. Advantages offered by Clay County in retaining and attracting businesses include a central location within the Midwest, excellent highway system, rural lifestyle, shovel-ready business parks, affordable housing costs, diverse housing stock, and a well-educated population.

Challenges facing future economic development efforts in Clay County include a low unemployment rate that places constraints on the available labor force, high rate of residents commuting to work outside of the county, a no-growth sentiment among many long-time residents, limited inventory of industrial and office space available for immediate occupancy, and stiff competition from other cities within the Kansas City MSA.

## Conclusions

A community's demographic and employment trends have a significant impact on the local housing, commercial, and industrial markets. Urban growth in Clay County is influenced by an excellent transportation network and location at the urban fringe of the Kansas City MSA. As the Kansas City region continues to grow Clay County is anticipated to support population and job growth leading to the need for additional for-sale and rental housing as well as commercial and industrial space, and increased demands for municipal and transportation services.

There are many factors that contribute to Clay County's past and future growth including a high quality of life highlighted by good schools, low crime, and ample recreational amenities; availability of land and infrastructure; interstate and highway network; diverse housing stock; growing employment base; and proximity to the Kansas City CBD.

Clay County's four principal cities each maintain distinctive demographic and economic characteristics which should assist in promoting future employment and population growth.

From 2013 through 2022, the Clay County employment base increased 21 percent, adding 18,631 new jobs. Clay County supports a diverse economy supporting above average concentrations of employment in construction; manufacturing; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; professional and business services; education and health services; and leisure and hospitality.

Given Clay County's location, highway access, and population demographics, leading growth employment sectors through 2040 are anticipated to include logistics and warehousing, manufacturing, professional and business services, and education and health services.

Clay County has benefitted from its location at the urban edge of the Kansas City MSA, adding nearly 117,000 residents from 1980 through 2020.

By 2040, Clay County is forecast to add approximately 65,000 to 75,000 residents and 20,000 to 31,000 jobs, generating the need for new housing, retail goods and services, eating and drinking establishments, and commercial and industrial space.

Clay County's large Millennial population creates demand for rental housing, apparel and accessories, home electronics, entertainment, and eating and drinking establishments.

Compared to the State of Kansas, Clay County's household composition possesses above average rates for both of families with children, married couples with children, and all households with children and a below average population of other family and householder living alone.

Clay County's high educational attainment levels bode well for attracting employers and supporting above average income levels, retail expenditures, and housing values and rents.

The presence in Clay County of both urban and rural cities provides for a diverse population base. The educational attainment levels can support a wide range of job types and a diverse economy.

Household income levels in Clay County suggest a future need for a wide variety of for-sale and rental housing products, including affordable, entry level, and move up housing.

Clay County supports well above average household income levels, generating a strong need for move-up and upscale for-sale housing and upscale rental housing. The deviations in household income levels among the county's four principal cities create the need for a wide range of for-sale and rental housing products. Liberty and Excelsior Springs maintain the highest rates of households earning less than \$25,000 annually and have the greatest need for affordable and income-based housing. Excelsior Springs and Smithville possess the highest rates of households earning \$50,000 to \$74,999, and thus the greatest need for entry-level for-sale and rental housing. Kearney and Smithville support the highest rates of high-income households earning \$100,000 or more annually, generating the need for move-up for-sale housing and upscale rental housing.

Clay County possesses ample advantages for attracting businesses, jobs, and development activity. The principal economic development benefit lies within being located at the periphery of a growing regional economy whose assets include a large population; diverse economy, convenient highway, air and rail access; well educated population; and high quality of life. Advantages offered by Clay County in retaining and attracting businesses include a central location within the Midwest, excellent highway system, rural lifestyle, shovel-ready business parks, affordable housing costs, diverse housing stock, and a well-educated population.

Challenges facing future economic development efforts in Clay County include a low unemployment rate that places constraints on the available labor force, high rate of residents commuting to work outside of the county, a no-growth sentiment among many long-time residents, limited inventory of industrial and office space available for immediate occupancy, and stiff competition from other cities within the Kansas City MSA.

## MARKET ANALYSIS

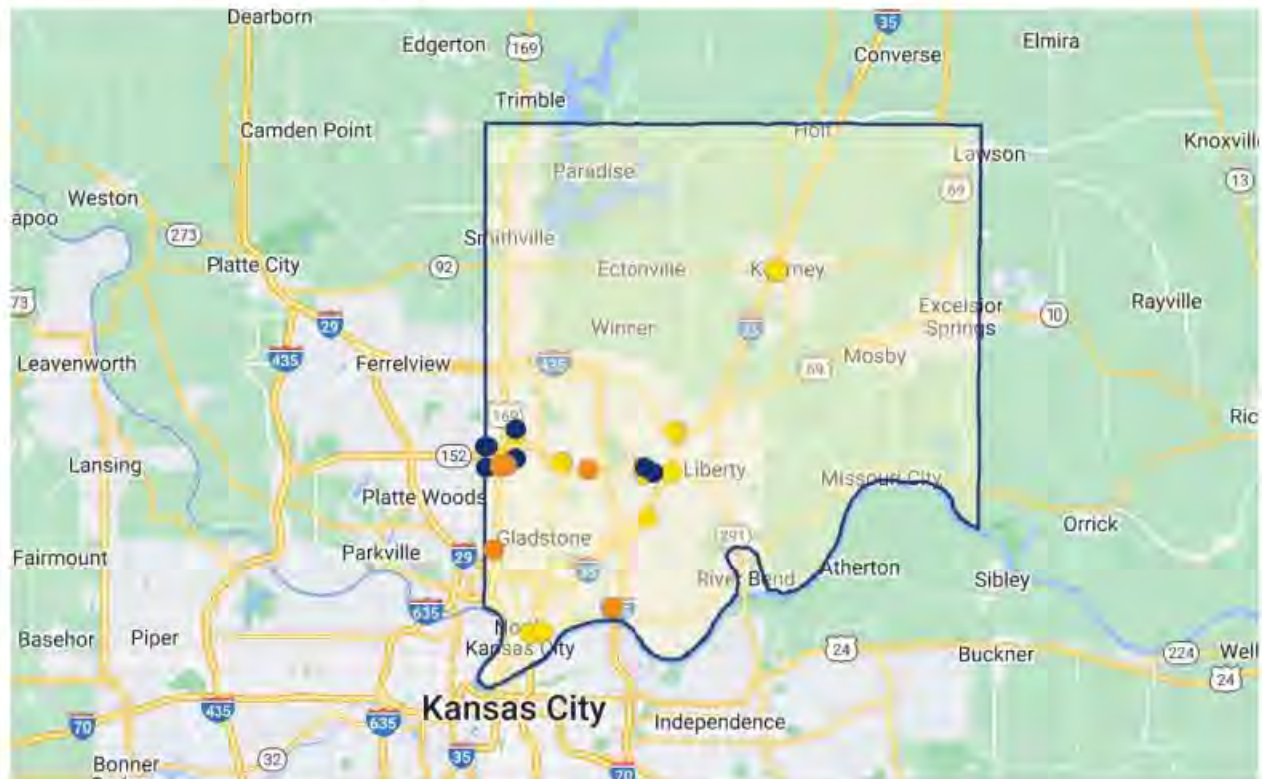
The Market Analysis portion of the study evaluated directly competitive retail, professional office, industrial, and housing market trends impacting Clay County. The market trends for each prospective land use were evaluated and the long-term need for additional commercial space, industrial space, and housing units was forecast to quantify the level of future real estate development in Clay County.

### Retail Market Analysis

The Retail Market Analysis portion of the report evaluates directly competitive retail market trends impacting Clay County and forecasts future demand for commercial space.

### Competitive Retail Market Trends

The *Kansas City Retail Submarket Report* published by CoStar provides historic retail market trends for Clay County. The Clay County submarket boundaries are depicted below.



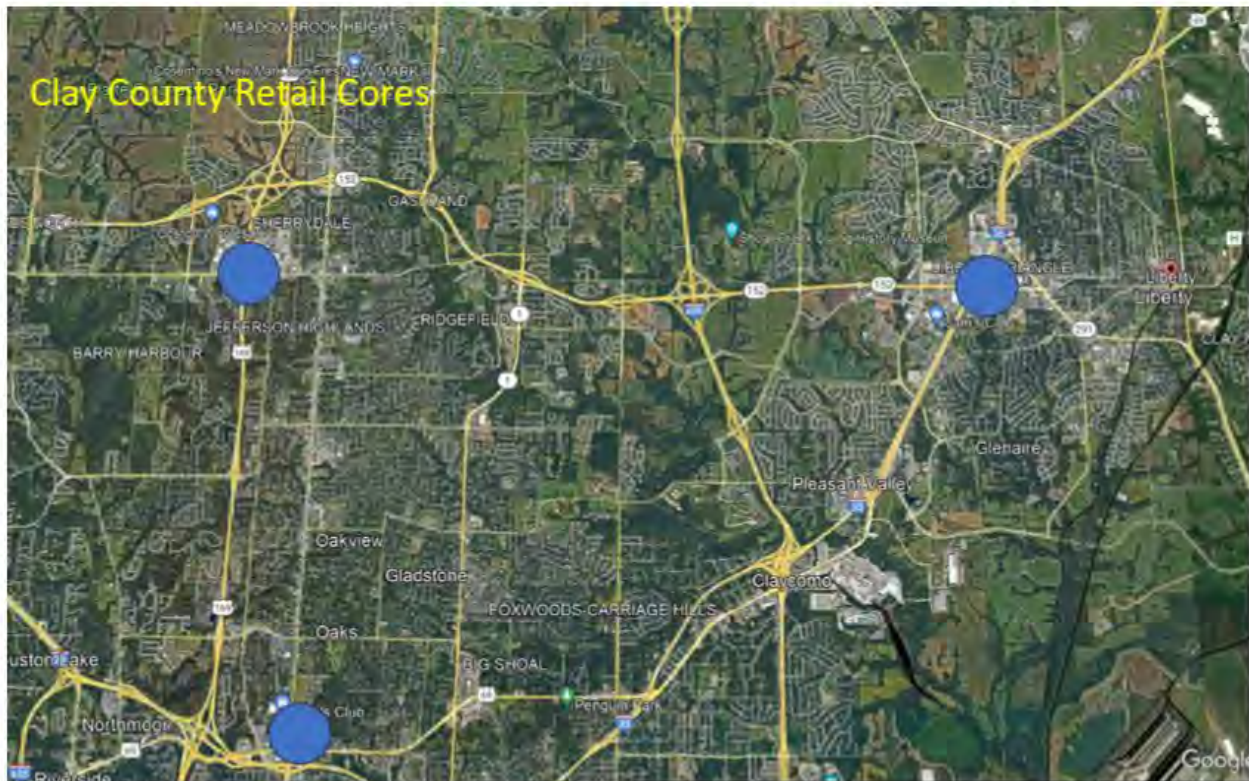
By the second quarter 2023 the inventory of retail space in the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket totaled 13.8 million square feet, or 10.3 percent of the Kansas City MSA total. General retail and neighborhood center space accounted for 6.83 million square feet and 5.6 million square feet, respectively. The principal concentrations of retail space are located at Interstate 35 and Highway 152, Highway 152 and Barry Road, and Highway 169 and Oak Street Trafficway.

An older, established retail core exists at the southern portion of Clay County at the intersection of U.S. High 169 (Vivian Road), consisting of 806,000 square feet of commercial space occupied by such retailers as Home Depot, Lowe's, Sam's Club, Office Depot, Price Chopper.

The commercial core surrounding the former Metro North Mall at Highway 152 and Barry Road supports a current inventory of 1.08 million square feet of retail space currently operating at a vacancy rate of just 0.5 percent. Opened in 1976, the 1.3 million square foot Metro North Mall closed in 2014. Redevelopment plans for the 106-acre site, renamed Metro North Crossing, call for 650,000 square feet of retail space, 85,000 square feet of office space, a hotel, and 300 luxury apartments units. The only remaining portion of the former mall is a Macy's store. Recent development activity includes T-Shotz and the 249-unit Metro North Crossing Apartments with 30,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space. T-Shotz is a three-story golf and entertainment complex featuring 66 climate-controlled hitting bays, driving range, restaurant, and event space.

Existing retail within the 487-acre Twin Creeks project at Highway 152 and Platte Purchase Drive just northwest of Highway 152 and Barry Road retail core includes a 127,000 square foot Costco and 423,867 square foot shopping center anchored by Target, Kohl's, and Petco. Three shopping centers totaling 366,500 square feet are proposed for the Twin Creeks development.

The intersection of Interstate 35 and Highway 152 includes both Liberty and Kansas City supports traditional freeway interchange retail uses such as big-box retailers, junior anchors, restaurants, banks, and strip centers. This newer retail destination totals 2.89 million square feet of retail space operating at a vacancy rate of just 0.5 percent. Major retailers on the east side of I-35 in Liberty include Lowe's, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ross Dress for Less, HyVee, Academy Sports, HomeGoods, Hobby Lobby, Petco, and B&B Theatres. Retailers west of I-35 in Kansas City include Sam's Club, JC Penney, Walmart, Target, Kohl's, TJ Maxx, Home Depot, and Petsmart.



As of the second quarter 2023, the Clay County submarket was operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 2.1 percent, led by power centers at 0.3 percent and neighborhood centers at 1.8 percent. Through the first half 2023, the Clay County submarket supported net absorption of 40,327 square feet of retail space. By the second quarter 2023, a total of 87,060 square feet retail space was under construction within Clay County. Fourteen retail projects totaling 374,388 square feet are planned for future construction, most of which are in the Twin Creeks and Metro North Crossing developments.

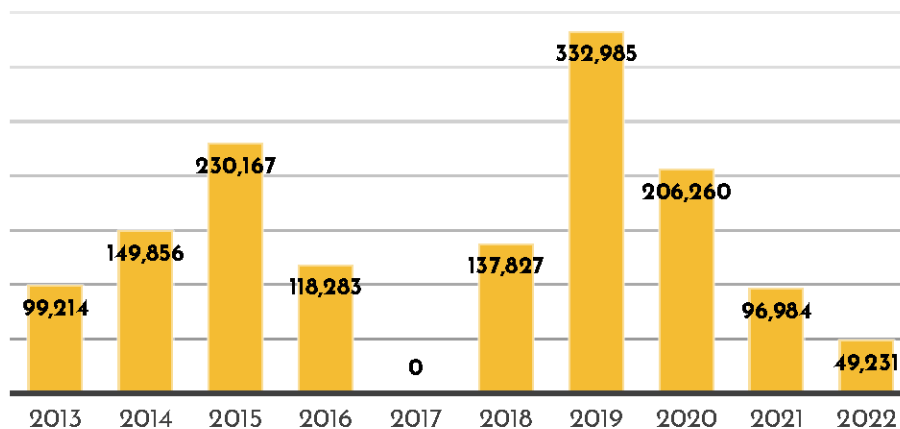
### Clay County Submarket Retail Market Conditions; 2023 Q2

Center Type	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption 2023 YTD	Space U/C
Power Center	606,650	0.3%	\$20.93	0	0
Neighborhood Center	5,607,495	1.8%	\$17.77	44,624	0
Strip Center	764,435	4.6%	\$16.88	6,227	0
General Retail	6,863,270	2.1%	\$15.56	-10,524	87,060
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,841,850</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>\$16.76</b>	<b>40,327</b>	<b>87,060</b>

Source: CoStar.

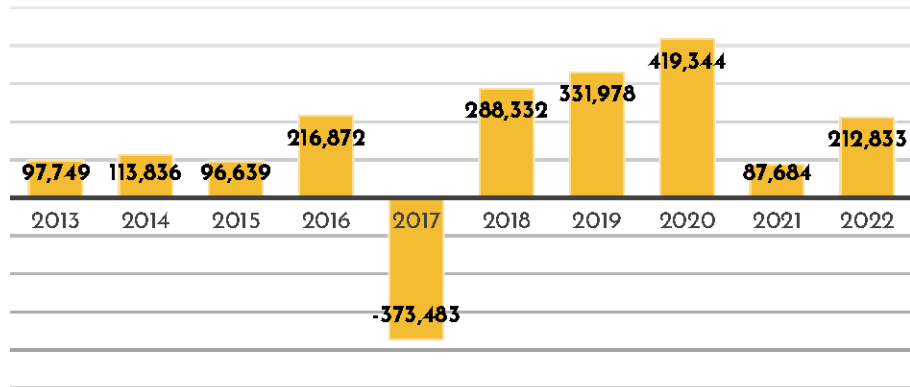
From 2013 to 2022, Costar reported 1.42 million square feet of retail space was constructed in the Clay County submarket. Retail construction peaked from 2018 to 2020 with the completion of 667,072 square feet of space. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the retail industry, new construction activity declined each year to just 49,231 square feet in 2022. Year-to-date 2023, just 15,192 square feet of new retail space has been constructed in the Clay County submarket.

### Clay County Retail Submarket Trends in New Space Inventory (Sq. Ft.)



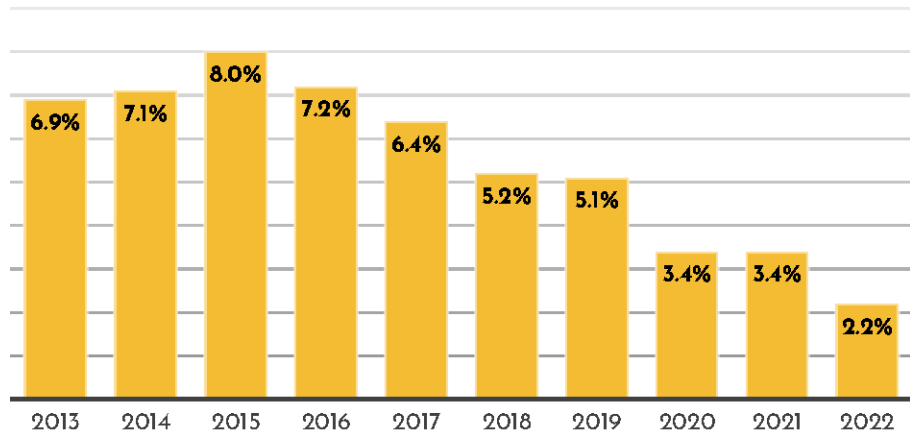
From 2013 through 2022, Costar reported 1.49 million square feet of retail space was absorbed in the Clay County submarket. In response to a spike in new construction, retail space absorption peaked from 2018 through 2020 with net occupancy of 1.04 million square feet of space. Given the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the retail industry, during 2021 net absorption of retail space declined to 87,684 square feet of space. Tenant demand rebounded throughout 2022 with net absorption totaling 212,833 square feet of retail space.

### Clay County Retail Submarket Trends in Net Space Absorption (Sq. Ft.)



With net space absorption outpacing new construction over the past decade, the overall retail vacancy rate for the Clay County submarket declined steadily from a high of 8.0 percent in 2015 to a healthy 2.2 percent for 2022. Through the first half of 2023 market conditions continued to tighten, reaching an overall vacancy rate of 2.1 percent, equating to just 285,828 square feet of vacant space available for immediate occupancy. This modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location in Clay County.

### Clay County Retail Submarket Vacancy Rate Trends



To conclude, the Clay County submarket supports a large inventory of retail space with principal concentrations along the I-35 and Highway 152 corridors. Over the past decade the Clay County retail market responded to strong population growth with heightened new retail construction activity and tenant demand. While the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the level of new construction, continued tenant demand has produced a steady decline in the overall vacancy rate to just 2.1 percent by mid-2023. Continued population growth in Clay County will produce future retailer demand and development opportunities.

## Highway 152 Corridor

To provide a more macro perspective of the competitive retail market the CoStar database was searched for existing shopping centers and retail buildings along the Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County from Platte Purchase Drive east to Interstate 35. Bank branches, convenience stores, automotive, and fast food and sit-down restaurants were not included in the retail survey.

### Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County Retail Market Trends; 2013 - 2023 Q2

Year	Inventory Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Absorption Sq. Ft.	Average Rent
2013	2,948,958	6.2%	146,645	\$15.62
2014	2,948,958	10.0%	-111,374	\$15.41
2015	3,057,745	9.2%	124,263	\$17.25
2016	3,147,576	8.9%	89,665	\$20.04
2017	3,452,998	7.1%	340,466	\$17.25
2018	3,481,943	5.9%	70,431	\$25.56
2019	3,758,651	3.8%	336,385	\$26.15
2020	3,839,308	1.9%	150,094	\$20.27
2021	3,850,540	2.5%	-8,980	\$19.87
2022	3,864,998	1.1%	67,609	\$22.15
2023Q2	3,864,998	0.6%	19,800	\$22.60

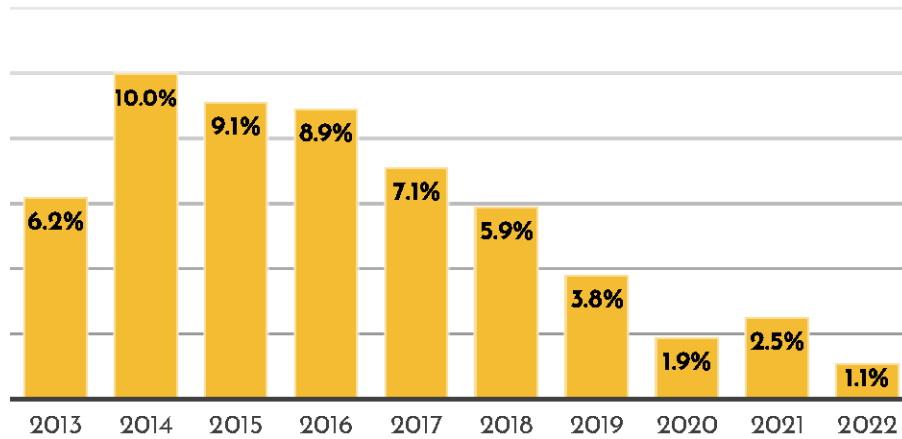
Source: CoStar.

Two principal concentrations of retail development are present along the Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County, including the intersections at Interstate 35 and Highway 169. The Highway 152 Corridor retail market supports approximately 3.86 million square feet of retail space and now serves as Clay County's principal shopping, dining, and entertainment destination. Major retailers operating stores in the Highway 152 Corridor include Macy's, JC Penney, Costco, Walmart, Sam's Club, Target, Kohl's, Home Depot, Lowe's, Best Buy, HomeGoods, and Academy Sports.

Since 2013, 916,040 square feet of retail space was constructed within the Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County, peaking from 2017 and 2020 with 611,075 square feet. Over the same decade net absorption totaled 1,225,002 square feet of retail space, yielding the downward trend in vacancies. Net retail absorption peaked in 2017 and 2019, coinciding with the peak in new retail construction.

As of the fourth quarter 2020, the Highway 152 Corridor retail market was operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 1.9 percent, compared to 5.8 percent for the entire Kansas City MSA retail market. The vacancy rate for the Highway 152 Corridor retail market peaked at a high of 10.0 percent in 2014. Since that time, the market has gradually improved, reaching a low of 1.1 percent in 2022. Through the first half of 2023 market conditions continued to tighten yielding a vacancy rate of just 0.6 percent. With just 21,878 square feet of retail space currently vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location in the Highway 152 Corridor.

## Highway 152 Corridor Retail Vacancy Rate Trends



The urban core at the intersection of Highways 152 and 169 is currently going through a transformation with the former Metro North Mall being redeveloped into Main Street Village concept featuring shops, restaurants, offices, and outdoor gathering places now referred to as Metro North Crossing. Coupled with the actively developing Twin Creeks master planned community, over 1.0 million square feet of future retail uses are planned. This urban core houses 1.08 million square feet of retail space.

The urban hub at Interstate 35 and Highway 152 is a primary shopping destination for Clay County supporting 2.89 million square feet of retail space operating at a vacancy rate of 0.5 percent. Big-box retailers operating stores in this retail destination include JC Penney, Sam's Club, Walmart, Target, Kohl's, Home Depot, Lowe's, Dick's Sporting Goods, Academy Sports, and HomeGoods.

### Trade Area Capture

Information about a community's retail trade area can help assess the ability of local merchants to attract and capture the retail business of local residents. The trade area capture ("TAC") is an estimate of the number of people who shop in the local area during a certain period. TAC assumes that residents will buy goods at the same rate as the state average, and that the only force that causes a variation in spending patterns is income. The formula for calculating TAC is:

$$\text{TAC} = \frac{\text{Community's Actual Retail Sales}}{\text{State Per Capita Sales} \times \text{Community's Per Capita Income} / \text{State Per Capita Income}}$$

If the TAC estimate is larger than the community's population, it suggests: 1) the community is attracting customers outside its boundaries or 2) residents of the community are spending more than the state average. If the estimate is smaller than the community's population: 1) the community is losing its customers to other regions for retail purchases or 2) residents of the community are spending less than the state average. Esri Business Analyst estimated Clay County's 2023 population at 262,586 residents and per capita income of \$40,005. The Missouri Department of Revenue reported calendar year 2022 taxable retail sales for Clay County of \$4,291,042,988, equating to per capita sales of \$16,341.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the 2022 population for Missouri at 6,177,957 residents and per capita income of \$33,770. Based on calendar year 2022 taxable retail sales of \$97,412,044,799 for the State of Missouri as reported by the Missouri Department of Revenue the state's per capita retail sales are \$15,768.

$$\text{Trade Area Capture} = \frac{\$4,291,042,988}{\$15,768 \times (\$40,005 / \$33,770)} = 229,722 \text{ Residents}$$

Clay County's resident population of 262,586 and estimated TAC of 229,722 residents illustrates the county is suffering from retail leakage with residents traveling outside of the county to satisfy some shopping needs.



## Retail Pull Factor

Pull factors ("PF") measure a community's ability to attract shoppers, residents, and non-residents alike, to make retail purchases within the community. A pull factor is a measure of the strength of a community's retail trade, based on a comparison of local spending in relation to that of a wider geographic area (e.g., the state), with a measure of 1.0 representing a perfect balance. A pull factor greater than 1.0 indicates that the community is pulling in retail sales from beyond its boundaries and the balance of trade is favorable. Alternatively, a pull factor less than 1.0 indicates that the community is not capturing local shoppers and is experiencing retail sales leakage. Pull factors are calculated by dividing the TAC by the community's population.

Dividing the trade area capture of 229,722 residents by Clay County's population of 262,586 yields a pull factor of 0.875, indicating that the County's retail sales capture represents just 87.5 percent of the statewide average. Clay County, despite supporting a large inventory of retail space, is still suffering from significant retail sales leakage into the balance of the Kansas City MSA.

Clay County's long-standing retail sales leakage is a symptom of its presence at the urban fringe, rapid population growth, and proximity to larger and more diverse retail destinations in the Kansas City MSA.

## Forecast Retail Space Demand

As of the second quarter 2023, Clay County's 13.8 million square feet of retail space was operating at a below market equilibrium vacancy rate of 1.8 percent, indicating a market capable of supporting additional inventory of space. This section of the study provides conservative and optimistic retail space demand estimates from 2023 to 2040 for Clay County.

Supportable retail sales are a function of consumer population and income levels. A trade area's total income is calculated by multiplying the total trade area population by the per capita personal income. Purchasing power, or total sales potential of the trade area, is then quantified by applying average retail expenditures as a percentage of total income.

Esri Business Analyst estimated the 2023 population for Clay County at 262,586 residents with a per capita income of \$40,005, yielding total personal income of approximately \$10.5 billion. Based on the *U.S. Census Bureau Annual Retail Trade Survey* and Clay County's per capita income and retail sales levels, retail goods and services sales equate to a spending rate equivalent to approximately 40 percent of total personal income. The County's current retail pull factor is 0.875.

By 2040, Clay County's population is conservatively forecast to increase by 65,211 residents. A more optimistic scenario has the County's population increasing by 75,630 residents by 2040. For this analysis, per capita income and average retail sales per square foot remained constant. The variable will be Clay County's achievable retail pull factor.

Under the conservative scenario the County's pull factor remains at 0.875 throughout the projection period. By 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth of 65,211 new residents is estimated to generate new retail goods and services sales of \$913 million, supporting 3.38 million square feet of new retail space.

The optimistic scenario assumes the County's population growth of 75,630 new residents by 2040 will lead to accelerated retail development and a market equilibrium retail pull factor of 1.00. By 2040, Clay County is forecast to capture new retail goods and services sales of \$1.2 billion and 4.48 million square feet of new retail space.

Retail space demand projections for Clay County through 2040 are depicted in the table below.

### Retail Space Demand Projections; 2023 - 2040 Clay County, Missouri

Retail Sales Formula	Conservative Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
Residential Population Growth	65,211	75,630
Per Capita Income	\$40,005	\$40,005
Total Gross Personal Income	\$2,608,766,055	\$3,025,578,150
% Income Spent on Retail Goods and Services	0.40	0.40
Supportable Goods and Services by County Residents	\$1,043,506,422	\$1,210,231,260
Clay County Pull Factor	0.875	1.00
Total Supportable Retail Goods & Services Sales	\$913,068,119	\$1,210,231,260
Average Retail Sales Per Sq. Ft.	\$270	\$270
<b>Supportable Retail Space (Sq. Ft.)</b>	<b>3,381,734</b>	<b>4,482,338</b>

Source: Canyon Research Southwest, Inc.; November 2023.

Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 20 percent to 23 percent, the forecast retail space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 338 to 388 acres of commercial land under the conservative scenario and 447 acres to 515 acres under the optimistic scenario.

### Conclusions

Clay County maintains an inventory of 13.8 million square feet of retail space, with general retail and neighborhood centers accounting for the bulk of space. The principal concentrations of retail space are located at Interstate 35 and Highway 152, Highway 152 and Barry Road, and Highway 169 and Oak Street Trafficway. The larger rural communities of Kearney and Smithville support modest retail markets given their small populations and proximity to established shopping destinations in the Northland.

Over the past decade the Clay County retail market responded to strong population growth with heightened new retail construction activity and tenant demand. While the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the level of new construction, continued tenant demand has produced a steady decline in the overall vacancy rate to just 2.1 percent by mid-2023. This modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location in Clay County.

The Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County from Platte Purchase Drive east to Interstate 35 represents Clay County's newest shopping, dining, and entertainment destination. Two principal concentrations of retail development are present along the Highway 152 Corridor in Clay County, including the intersections at Interstate 35 and Highway 169. The Highway 152 Corridor retail market supports approximately 3.86 million square feet of retail space currently operating at a vacancy rate of just 0.6 percent. Like the overall Clay County submarket, the modest inventory of vacant space poses a barrier for retail businesses seeking to expand or open a new location within the Highway 152 Corridor.

Clay County, despite supporting strong population growth and a large inventory of retail space, is still suffering from significant retail sales leakage into the balance of the Kansas City MSA. The County's pull factor of 0.875 indicates that retail sales are being captured at a rate of just 87.5 percent of the statewide average.

Continued population growth in Clay County will produce future retailer demand and development opportunities. From 2023 to 2040 population growth in Clay County is forecast to generate the need for approximately 3.38 million to 4.48 million square feet of additional retail space.

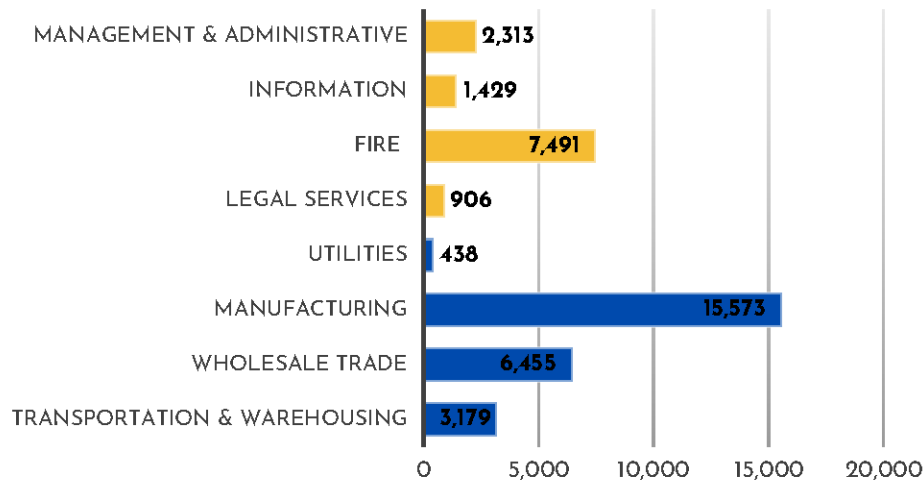
## Employment Market Analysis

This section of the study evaluates directly competitive employment-related market conditions impacting Clay County by identifying office and industrial market trends and forecasting long-term office and industrial space demand. The goal is to identify future opportunities for Clay County to support additional employment-related development.

### Employment-Related Business Mix

Industrial-related employment is defined as the manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities sectors while office-related employment includes the management and administrative, legal services, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) sector. In the bar chart below industrial-related sectors are outlined in “yellow” with office-related sectors in “orange.”

#### Clay County Office and Industrial Sector Jobs



According to Esri Business Analyst, office-related employment in Clay County consists of 12,139 jobs in the management and administrative, legal services, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors, accounting for 10.3 percent of total employment. By comparison, office-related jobs account for 21.0 percent of employment in Missouri. At an average space requirement of 200 to 225 square feet per employee, current employment levels can support 2.43 million to 2.73 million square feet of occupied professional office space.

Industrial-related employment in Clay County totals 25,645 jobs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities sectors, or 21.8 percent of total employment. By comparison, industrial-related jobs account for 29.0 percent of employment in Missouri. At an average space requirement of 900 to 1,000 square feet per employee, current employment levels can support approximately 23.1 million to 25.65 million square feet of occupied industrial space.

Continued job growth in Clay County will generate the need for additional professional office space and industrial space.

## Clay County Office Market Trends

According to the Kansas City Office Submarket Report published by CoStar, the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket includes all of Clay County. Office buildings are segmented into three categories based on quality and amenities provided. These building categories include Class A, B, and C, each of which is defined below.

### **Class A Buildings**

Class A office properties represent the newest and highest quality buildings in the market. Class A buildings possess high-quality building infrastructure, are well located, have good access, and are professionally managed. As a result of this, they attract the highest quality tenants and command the highest rents.

### **Class B Buildings**

Class B buildings are a little older, but still have good quality management and tenants. Oftentimes, value-added investors target these buildings as investments since well-located Class B buildings can be returned to Class A status through renovations such as facade and common area improvements. Class B buildings are not functionally obsolete and are well maintained.

### **Class C Buildings**

Class C is the lowest classification of office building. These are older buildings located in less desirable areas and are often in need of extensive renovation. Architecturally, these buildings are the least desirable, and building infrastructure and technology is outdated. As a result, Class C buildings have the lowest rental rates, take the longest time to lease, and are often targeted as re-development opportunities.

According to CoStar, the Interstate 35 Corridor maintains 8.4 million square feet of office space, or 6.5 percent of the Kansas City MSA office market inventory. By the second quarter 2023, the Interstate 35 Corridor was operating at a healthy overall vacancy rate of 5.2 percent, and an average rent of \$19.53 per square foot. By comparison, by the second quarter 2023, the 126.7 million square feet of office space in the Kansas City MSA was operating at a vacancy rate of 11.7 percent and an average rent of \$21.82 per square foot.

Class A properties account for the smallest inventory of space in the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket totaling 1.02 million square feet, or a 12.1 percent share. Class A space is 96.5 percent occupied at an average rent of \$26.80 per square foot. Most of the Class A office space is located within the Briarcliff master planned development. Class B office properties possess the largest inventory of space totaling 4.36 million square feet of space operating at a 94.2 percent occupancy and an average rental rate of \$19.93 per square foot. Class C office properties total nearly 3.0 million square feet of space, operating at an overall occupancy of 95.2 percent and an average rent of \$16.49 per square foot.

As of the second quarter 2023, no office space was under construction in the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket. Two office buildings totaling 120,000 square feet of space are planned for future construction.

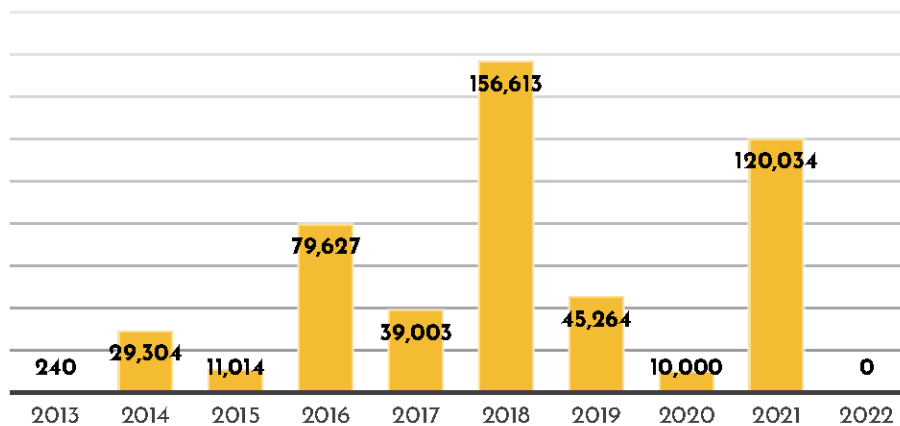
### Interstate 35 Corridor Submarket Office Market Conditions; 2023 Q2

Building Type	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption 2023 YTD	Space U/C
Class A	1,016,594	3.5%	\$26.80	1,200	0
Class B	4,356,609	5.8%	\$19.93	34,187	0
Class C	2,995,949	4.8%	\$16.49	17,800	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,369,152</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>\$19.53</b>	<b>53,187</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: CoStar.

From 2013 to 2022, Costar reported 491,099 square feet of office space was constructed in the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket. New construction peaked from 2016 to 2019 with the completion of 320,507 square feet of new office space. The COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on new office construction with just 136,034 built from 2020 through mid-2023.

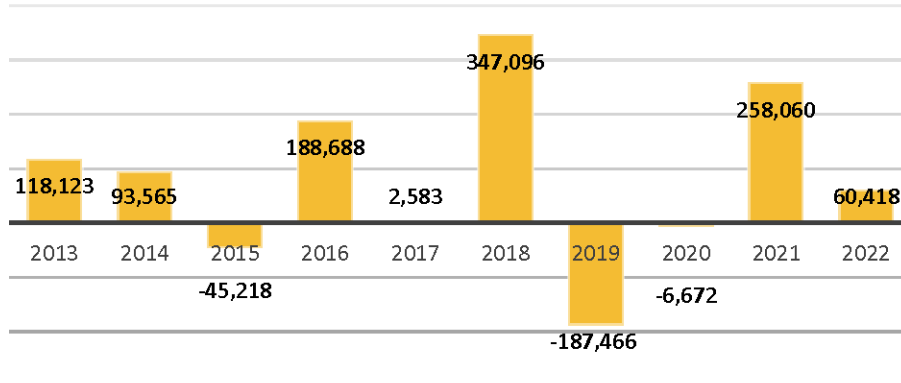
### I-35 Corridor Office Submarket Trends in New Space Inventory (Sq. Ft.)



From 2013 to 2022, Costar reported net office space absorption in the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket totaling 829,177 square feet of space. Office space absorption peaked from 2016 to 2018 with net occupancy of 538,367 square feet of space. Negative office space absorption was reported in 2019 and 2020, due in part to the negative impact of the pandemic on the tenant demand for space. In response to an improving economy net absorption rebounded during 2021 and 2022 with 318,478 square feet of space. Net office space absorption continued into the first half of 2023, totaling 53,187 square feet of net occupied space.

The bar chart below illustrates annual net office space absorption from 2013 through 2022 within the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket.

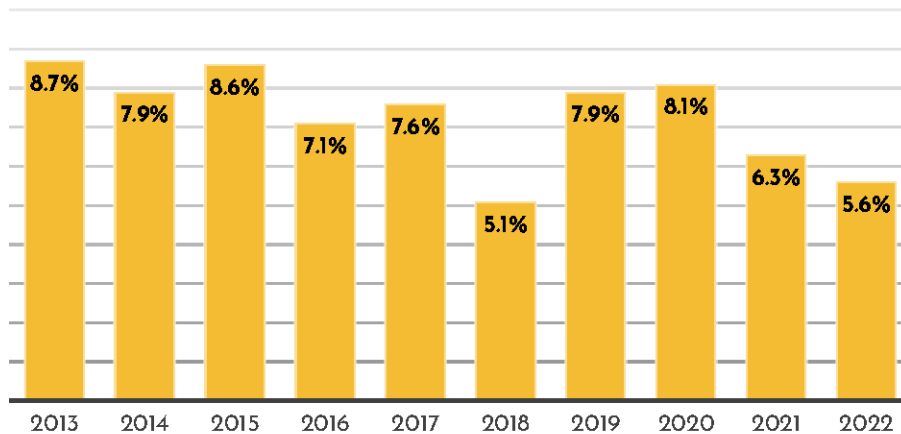
### I-35 Corridor Office Submarket Trends in Net Space Absorption (Sq. Ft.)



Since 2013, with net absorption outpacing new supply, the overall office vacancy rate for the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket followed a downward trend from a high of 8.7 percent in 2013 to a low of 5.1 percent in 2018. By year-end 2020, the vacancy rate climbed to 8.1 percent with net absorption of -194,158 square feet of space and new inventory of 56,264 square feet during 2019 and 2020.

In response to the completion of 120,034 square feet of new office space and net absorption of 258,060 square feet of space, by year-end 2021 the overall vacancy rate declined to a healthy 6.3 percent. With no new additions to supply and net absorption of 60,418 square feet of space, the overall vacancy rate declined to 5.6 percent by year-end 2022. Through the first half of 2023, market conditions continued to improve with the vacancy rate declining further to 5.2 percent.

### I-35 Corridor Office Submarket Vacancy Rate Trends



Briarcliff, a 400-acre mixed-use project located at U.S. Highway 169 and Missouri 9 Highway is the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket’s premier office location. Briarcliff serves as an alternative office location to downtown Kansas City, Missouri by offering quality Class “A” space, an accessible suburban location, and a prestigious business address. Existing office space within this upscale, mixed-use development totals 566,859 square feet and is currently operating at an overall occupancy rate of 84.2 percent. Four office sites remain available for future development, designed for up to 342,000 square feet of building area.

The former Metro North Mall site at Highway 169 and Barry Road is being redeveloped and designed with a walkable Main Street Village concept featuring shops, restaurants, offices, and outdoor gathering places. The Metro North Crossing redevelopment plan calls for 85,000 square feet of office space.

To conclude, the Interstate 35 Corridor submarket maintains 8.4 million square feet of professional office space. Of all the Kansas City MSA suburban office submarkets only College Boulevard, South Johnson County, and Northeast Johnson County possess larger inventories of office space. While the COVID-19 pandemic slightly impacted the office market through the modest contraction of occupied space, the market has rebounded, and operating conditions remain healthy.

Continued employment and population growth along the Interstate 35 Corridor should assist in increasing the need for professional services and occupied office space. Future concentrations of office development in Clay County include the Briarcliff master planned project and the intersections of I-435 and Highway 152 and Highway 169 and Barry Road.

## **Clay County Industrial Market Trends**

According to the *Kansas City Industrial Market Report* published by CoStar, Clay County includes both the Liberty and Northeast Clay County submarkets. The text to follow provides historical operating trends for both submarkets.

### **Liberty Industrial Submarket**

The Liberty submarket includes portions of Liberty and extends into Kansas City west to U.S. Highway 169 and east to Missouri City. The Liberty submarket boundaries are illustrated below.



According to Costar, as of the second quarter 2023, the Liberty submarket maintained 6.73 million square feet of industrial space. Consistent with the Kansas City MSA market, logistics and warehouse space accounts for the largest share of industrial space totaling 5.69 million square feet. Specialized industrial space totals 902,759 square feet of space with flex space amounting to just 135,982. The predominance of logistics and warehouse space stems from the presence of Interstate 35 which is a major north-south transportation corridor throughout the Midwest.

As of the second quarter 2023, the Liberty submarket was operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 3.0 percent which is slightly lower than the Kansas City MSA average of 4.4 percent. The inventory of specialized industrial and flex space is fully occupied. Despite the construction of 1.24 million square feet of logistics and warehouse space since 2021, the total inventory of 5.69 million square feet of space is operating at a vacancy rate of just 3.6 percent. During the first half of 2023, 1.01 million square feet of industrial space was absorbed into the Liberty submarket, all of which was logistics and warehouse space.

Recently completed industrial buildings in Liberty include the 167,578 square foot Heartland Cold Storage Logistics Center, 181,321 square foot Heartland Meadows Commerce Center, and the 847,309 square foot Hallmark expansion. New industrial construction has focused on distribution and fulfillment centers by

companies such as Hallmark, Amazon, and Walgreens with the preferred location near Interstate 35 offering convenient interchange access.

The table on the following page summarizes industrial market conditions by product type for the Liberty submarket as of the second quarter 2023.

### Liberty Industrial Submarket Market Conditions; 2023 Q2

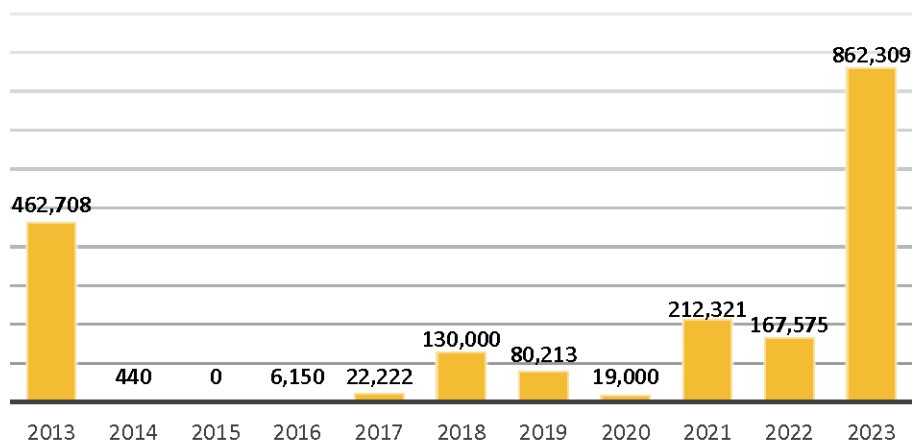
Building Type	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption 2023 YTD	Space U/C
Logistics / Warehouse	5,693,932	3.6%	\$5.79	1,013,557	1,015,899
Specialized Industrial	902,759	0.0%	\$9.05	0	0
Flex	135,982	0.0%	\$12.37	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,732,673</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>\$6.44</b>	<b>1,013,557</b>	<b>1,015,899</b>

Source: CoStar.

Three industrial buildings totaling 1,015,899 square feet are currently under construction in the Liberty submarket. This is a continuation of a current construction boom in the submarket, which has seen 1.24 million square feet of space delivered over the past 2.5 years. The Opus Group is under construction on two warehouse buildings within the 152-acre Liberty Heartland Logistics Center located on Shepard Road 1-mile north of the existing Hallmark Distribution Center. Building B is designed for 572,000 square feet with Building C totaling 240,000 square feet. A 203,899 square foot warehouse is under construction at 4700 North Arlington Avenue.

Costar reported that from 2013 through the second quarter of 2023, 1.96 million square feet of new industrial space was constructed in the Liberty submarket, including 1.47 million square feet of logistics and warehouse space, 462,708 of specialized industrial space, and 25,422 square feet of flex space and The boom in the construction of logistics and warehouse space commenced in 2021 and was in response to an acceleration in e-commerce prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Liberty Industrial Submarket Trends in New Space Inventory (Sq. Ft.)

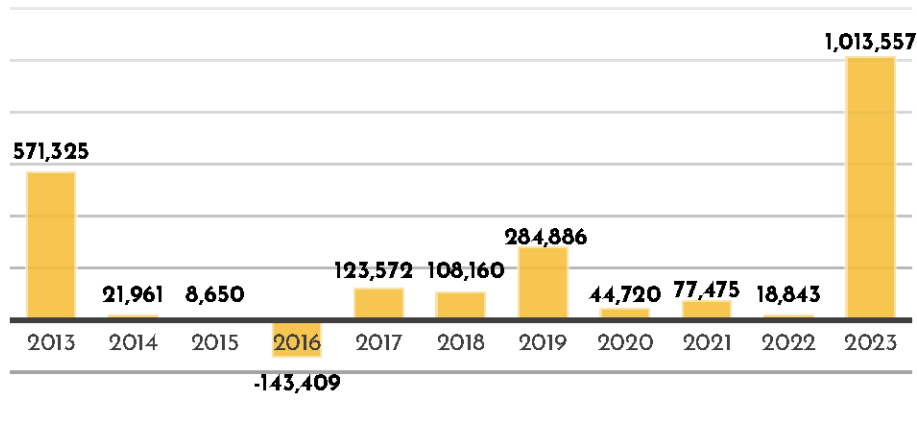


From 2013 through the second quarter of 2023, Costar reported 2.13 million square feet of industrial space was absorbed in the Liberty submarket. After peaking in 2013 at 571,325 square feet of space, annual net space absorption remained modest through 2022. Prompted by an upturn in new construction activity, the net absorption of industrial space totaled 1.01 million square feet during the first half of 2023.



With 812,000 square feet currently under construction, much of which to end users or build-to-suits, net industrial absorption will escalate as these projects are completed. Net absorption for the remainder of 2023 is forecast at an additional 1.1 million square feet of industrial space. The recent upturn in new construction and tenant demand validates the Liberty submarket's status as a desirable logistics center.

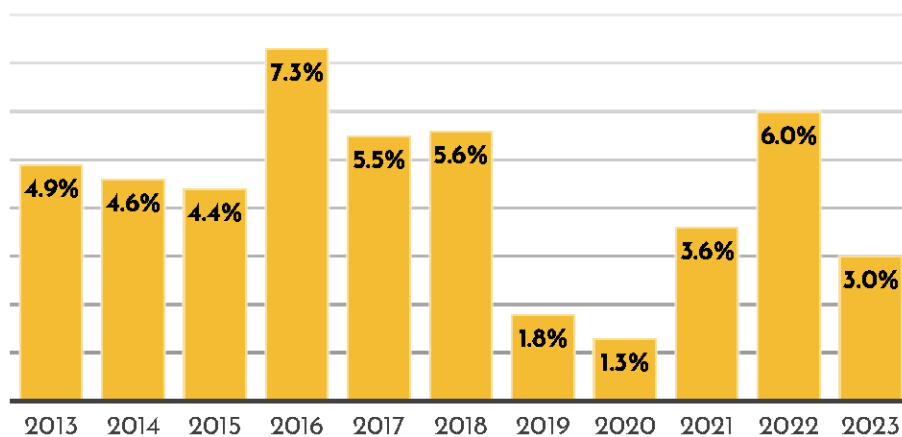
### Liberty Industrial Submarket Trends in Space Absorption (Sq. Ft.)



From 2013 through the second quarter of 2023, except for 2016, the Liberty industrial submarket operated at a vacancy rate below market equilibrium ranging from a low of 1.3 percent in 2020 to a high of 5.6 percent in 2018. With the completion of 398,896 square feet of industrial space from 2020 to 2022, the overall vacancy rate peaked at 6.0 percent by year-end 2022. With the addition of 862,309 square feet of industrial space and net absorption of 1.01 million square feet during the first half of 2023, the overall vacancy rate improved to 3.0 percent.

As the industrial space currently under construction reaches the market, the overall vacancy rate is expected to continue to rise until the inventory is successfully leased and occupied. The long-term market prospects for the Liberty submarket are strong given the ample availability of developable land offering excellent access to Interstate 35.

### Liberty Industrial Submarket Annual Vacancy Rate Trends



To conclude, given the recent upward trend in e-commerce, Kansas City's central location in the Midwest, and Liberty's abundance of developable industrial land offer convenient Interstate 35 access, the Liberty industrial submarket is booming, adding 1.24 million square feet of new space since the start of 2021 with an additional

1.01 million square feet now under construction. Recently built logistics facilities have attracted such prominent companies as Hallmark Cards, Amazon, and Walgreens.

**Northeast Clay County Industrial Submarket**

According to the *Kansas City Industrial Submarket Report* published by CoStar, the Northeast Clay County submarket includes the northern portion of the county. The Northeast Clay County submarket boundaries are illustrated below.



By the second quarter 2023 the Northeast Clay County submarket supported 2.23 million square feet of industrial space consisting of 793,487 square feet of logistics and warehouse space, 13,639 square feet of flex space, and 1.42 million square feet of specialized industrial space.

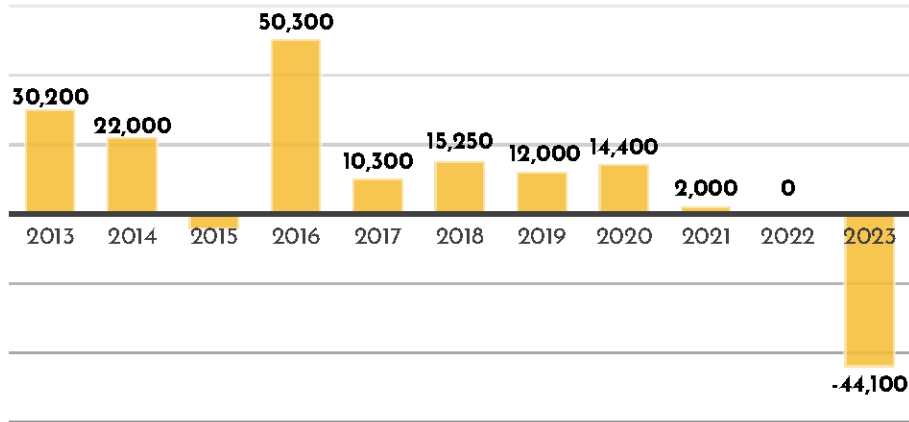
**Northeast Clay County Submarket  
Industrial Market Conditions; 2023 Q2**

Property Class	Building Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Average Rent	Absorption YTD 2023	Space U/C
Warehouse	793,487	3.4%	\$7.18	-27,300	0
Specialized Industrial	1,423,812	1.2%	\$6.78	-16,800	0
Flex	13,639	0.0%	\$12.28	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,230,938</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>\$6.95</b>	<b>-44,100</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: CoStar.

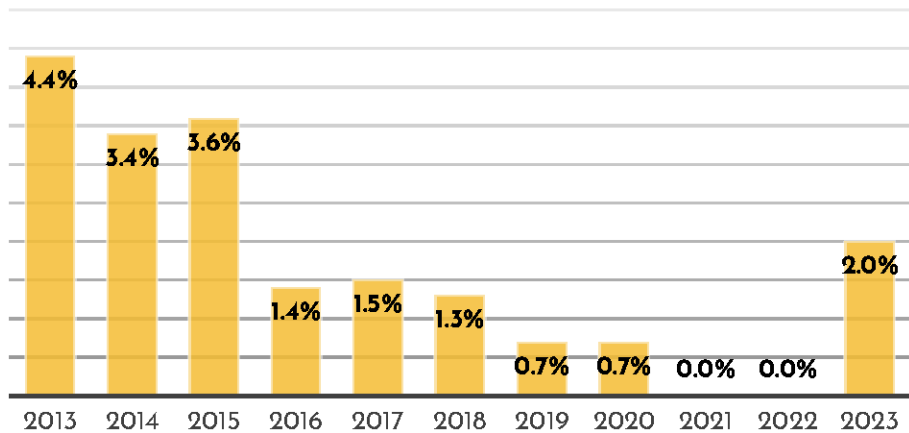
Since 2013, the Northeast Clay County submarket has absorbed 108,030 square feet of industrial space with new supply limited to just 38,850 square feet. At the close of the second quarter 2023, no new industrial space was under construction within the Northeast Clay County submarket. With just 44,100 square feet of vacant industrial space available for immediate occupancy places a significant constraint on the ability of the Northeast Clay County submarket to attract industrial-based businesses.

### Northeast Clay County Industrial Submarket Trends in Space Absorption (Sq. Ft.)



Given these supply and demand trends, the Northeast Clay County submarket’s overall vacancy rate dropped from a high of 4.4 percent at year-end 2013 to 0.0 percent for both 2021 and 2022. In response to negative absorption of 44,100 square feet of industrial space throughout the first half of 2023, the vacancy rate increased to 2.0 percent at the close of the second quarter 2023.

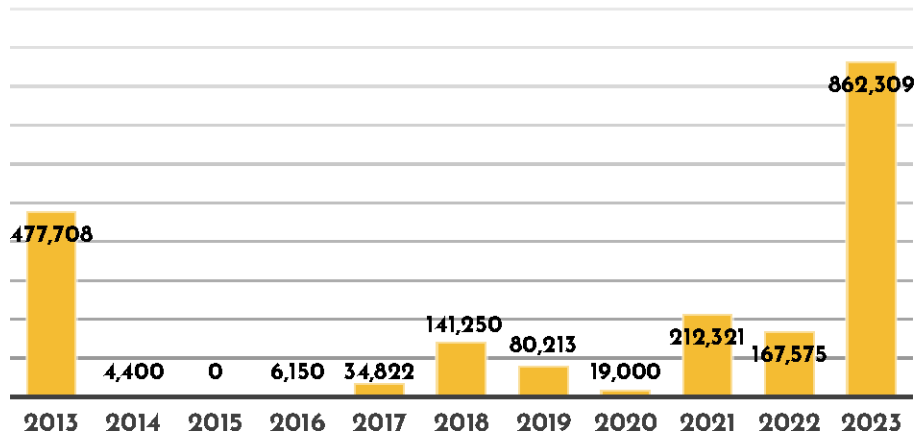
### Northeast Clay County Industrial Submarket Annual Vacancy Rate Trends



With low vacancies and escalating rents, near-term development opportunities exist in Clay County for flex office/industrial and warehouse space. According to Costar, as of the second quarter 2019 no industrial space was under construction or proposed for development in Clay County.

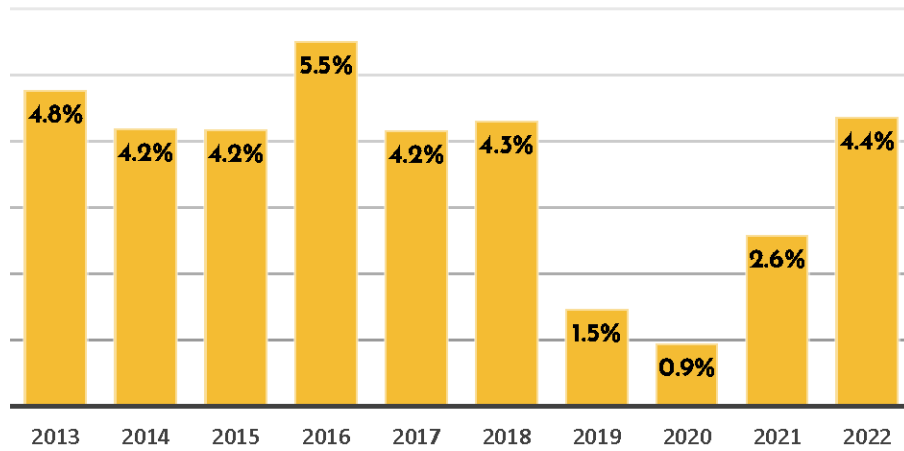
The Liberty and Northeast Clay County submarkets, which collectively make up all of Clay County, total 8.96 million square feet of industrial space. The I-35 Corridor in Liberty serves as the principal concentration of industrial space with a large inventory of land improved with streets and infrastructure available for future development. Given the presence of I-35 and Kansas City’s central location within the Midwest, Clay County is evolving into a major logistics and warehouse center. From 2013 through the second quarter 2023, over 2.0 million square feet of industrial space has been constructed in Clay County. A construction boom is under way in Clay County with over 1.24 million square feet of industrial space constructed since 2021 with over 1.01 million square feet now under construction. Major companies such as Hallmark, Amazon, and Walgreens have recently opened facilities in Clay County.

### Clay County Industrial Market Annual Trends in New Space Supply



From 2013 through 2022, the Clay County industrial market operated at a below market equilibrium vacancy rate with annualized rates ranging from a low of 0.9 percent in 2020 to a high of 5.5 percent in 2016. With a current vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent, Clay County is posed to support additional near-term new additions to supply.

### Clay County Industrial Market Vacancy Rate Trends



## Forecast Space Demand

Professional office and industrial space demand projections for Clay County through the year 2040 provide an understanding of future market conditions directly impacting the feasibility of new employment-related development supportable within Clay County.

### Professional Office Space

By year-end 2022, Clay County supported 8.35 million square feet of office space operating at a vacancy rate of 5.6 percent. The demand for professional office space is closely correlated with expansion in office space using employment sectors. Future demand for professional office space was forecast utilizing an occupational employment-driven model. This model was designed using the variables of increased employment in categories of economic activity typically associated with demand for office space and average space requirements per employee. A share of regional demand is assigned to the submarket (and specific project) based on location, competition, access, project scale, etc.

From 2013 to 2022, Costar reported 491,099 square feet of office space was constructed in Clay County and a net 829,177 square feet of space was absorbed. The Montage Liberty development on I-35 in Liberty has the potential to significantly influence Clay County's office market as 790,614 square feet of office, tech, and commercial space is planned taking advantage of the highway frontage and access. The 2,525 acres surrounding the intersection of I-435 and Highway 152 also has the potential to support a large concentration of professional office space over the next twenty years.

According to Esri Business Analyst, office-related employment in Clay County consists of 12,139 jobs in the management and administrative, legal services, information, and finance, insurance, and real estate sectors, accounting for 10.3 percent of total employment. By comparison, office-related jobs account for 21.0 percent of employment in Missouri.

From 2013 through 2022, the Clay County employment base increased 21 percent, adding 18,631 new jobs. Through 2040, job growth in Clay County is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent to 1.7 percent, yielding an estimated 25,747 to 38,108 new jobs.

Through 2040, the share of office-related employment in Clay County is anticipated to escalate as the need for professional and financial services increases. Office-related employment is forecast to account for 15 percent of total job growth, yielding 3,860 to 4,700 new jobs.

Office space demand created by the future growth in office-related employment was forecast by applying standard job creation ratios published by NAIOP of 1.0 job per 200 to 225 square feet of office space that accounts for both owner-occupied and speculative office space. From 2023 through 2040, office-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for 772,000 to 1.29 million square feet of owner-occupied and speculative office space.

### Forecast Professional Office Space Demand Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

	Moderate Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
<b>Clay County, MO</b>		
Office-Related Employment Growth	3,860	5,715
Net Office Space Demand (Sq. Ft.)	772,000	1,285,875
Average Annual Office Space Demand (Sq. Ft.)	42,889	71,438

At year-end 2022, Clay County's 8.35 million square feet of office space was operating at a vacancy rate of 5.6 percent with 468,299 square feet of unoccupied space. Accounting for the current inventory of vacant office space in Clay County and a market equilibrium vacancy rate of 7.0 percent, through 2040 Clay County is estimated to support the need for 955,292 to 1.5 million square feet of new office space.

Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 25 percent to 30 percent, the forecast office space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 73 to 88 acres of commercial land under the conservative scenario and 115 acres to 139 acres under the optimistic scenario.

## Supportable New Office Space Estimates Clay County, Missouri; 2023 - 2040

	Conservative Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
<b>Supportable New Office Space Need</b>		
Inventory of Occupied Office Space 2022 Q4	7,884,853	7,884,853
Forecast Office Space Demand 2023-2040	772,000	1,285,875
Total Occupied Office Space Inventory 2040	8,656,853	9,170,728
Market Equilibrium Office Space Need	9,308,444	9,860,998
Less: Existing Inventory of Office Space 2022 Q4	-8,353,152	-8,353,152
Supportable New Office Space 2023-2040	955,292	1,507,846
<b>Supportable Development Acres</b>		
25% FAR	87.7	138.5
30% FAR	73.1	115.4

Source: Canyon Research Southwest, Inc.; November 2023.

### Industrial Space

By the fourth quarter 2022, Clay County supported 8.1 million square feet of industrial space operating at a vacancy rate of 4.4 percent. Since 2013, Costar reported 1.27 million square feet of industrial space was absorbed in Clay County.

The demand for industrial space is a function of employment, investment, and technology. The U.S. Department of Labor defines industrial employment as jobs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation and warehousing industries.

Industrial-related employment in Clay County totals 25,645 jobs in the manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, and utilities sectors, or 21.8 percent of total employment. By comparison, industrial-related jobs account for 29.0 percent of employment in Missouri.

Through 2040, job growth in Clay County is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent to 1.7 percent, yielding an estimated 25,747 to 38,108 new jobs. Industrial employment in Clay County is forecast to increase due to the presence of Interstate 35 and a large inventory of developable land, accounting for 24 percent of total job growth, adding an estimated 6,180 to 9,145 jobs.

Space needs created by the future growth in industrial employment was forecast by applying standard job creation ratios for warehouse and light manufacturing space. Typical warehouses operate at 1.0 employee per 1,500 to 3,000 square feet of building area, e-commerce warehouses at 1,000 to 2,000 square feet per 1.0 employee, and light manufacturing at 800 to 1,200 square feet per 1.0 employee. Given the predominance of warehouse and logistics space in Clay County a ratio of 1.0 employee per 1,250 square feet of space was applied.

## Industrial Space Demand Forecasts Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

	Moderate Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
<b>Clay County, KS</b>		
Industrial-Based Employment Growth	6,180	9,145
Industrial Space Demand (Sq. Ft.)	7,725,000	11,431,250
Average Annual Industrial Space Demand (Sq. Ft.)	429,167	635,069

From 2023 through 2040, industrial-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for 7.73 million to 11.4 million square feet of both owner-occupied and speculative industrial space.

At year-end 2022, Clay County's 8.1 million square feet of industrial space was operating at a vacancy rate of 4.4 percent with 353,823 square feet of unoccupied space. Accounting for the current inventory of vacant industrial space and a market equilibrium vacancy rate of 7.0 percent, through 2040, Clay County is estimated to support 8.56 million to 12.57 million square feet of new industrial space.

Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 35 percent to 40 percent, the forecast industrial space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 493 to 563 acres of industrial land under the conservative scenario and 721 acres to 824 acres under the optimistic scenario.

## Supportable New Industrial Space Estimates Clay County, Missouri; 2022 - 2040

	Conservative Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
<b>Supportable New Industrial Space Need</b>		
Inventory of Occupied Industrial Space 2022 Q4	7,791,579	7,791,579
Forecast Industrial Space Demand 2023-2040	7,725,000	11,431,250
Total Occupied Industrial Space Inventory 2040	15,516,579	19,222,829
Market Equilibrium Industrial Space Need (7% Vacancy)	16,684,494	20,669,709
Less: Existing Inventory of Industrial Space 2022 Q4	-8,101,302	-8,101,302
Supportable New Industrial Space 2023-2040	8,583,192	12,568,407
<b>Supportable Development Acres</b>		
35% FAR	563	824
40% FAR	493	721

Source: Canyon Research Southwest, Inc.; November 2023.

## Conclusions

The existing inventory of office space in Clay County totals 8.35 million square feet, operating at a healthy vacancy rate of 5.2 percent. From 2013 to 2022, 491,099 square feet of office space was constructed in Clay County and net office space absorption totaled 829,177 square feet of space.

As of the second quarter 2023, no office space was under construction in Clay County. Two office buildings totaling 120,000 square feet of space are planned for future construction.

From 2023 through 2040, office-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for 955,292 to 1.5 million square feet of both owner-occupied and speculative office space. Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 25 percent to 30 percent, the forecast office space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 73 to 88 acres of commercial land under the conservative scenario and 115 acres to 139 acres under the optimistic scenario.

By the second quarter 2023 the Clay County industrial market supported 8.96 million square feet of space operating at an overall vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent. The I-35 Corridor in Liberty serves as the principal concentration of industrial space with a large inventory of land improved with streets and infrastructure available for future development.

Given the presence of I-35 and Kansas City's central location within the Midwest, Clay County is evolving into a major logistics and warehouse center. Since 2021, over 1.24 million square feet of industrial space has been constructed in Clay County with over 1.01 million square feet now under construction. Major companies such as Hallmark, Amazon, and Walgreens have recently opened facilities in Clay County. With a vacancy rate of just 2.8 percent, Clay County is poised to support additional near-term new additions to supply.

From 2023 through 2040, industrial-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 8.6 million to 12.6 million square feet of owner-occupied and speculative industrial space.

Based on an average floor-area-ratio of 35 percent to 40 percent, the forecast industrial space need through 2040 would absorb an estimated 493 to 563 acres of industrial land under the conservative scenario and 721 acres to 824 acres under the optimistic scenario.



## Residential Housing Market Analysis

This section of the report evaluates Clay County's single-family and apartment markets with the goal of identifying current and future opportunities to support new housing stock.

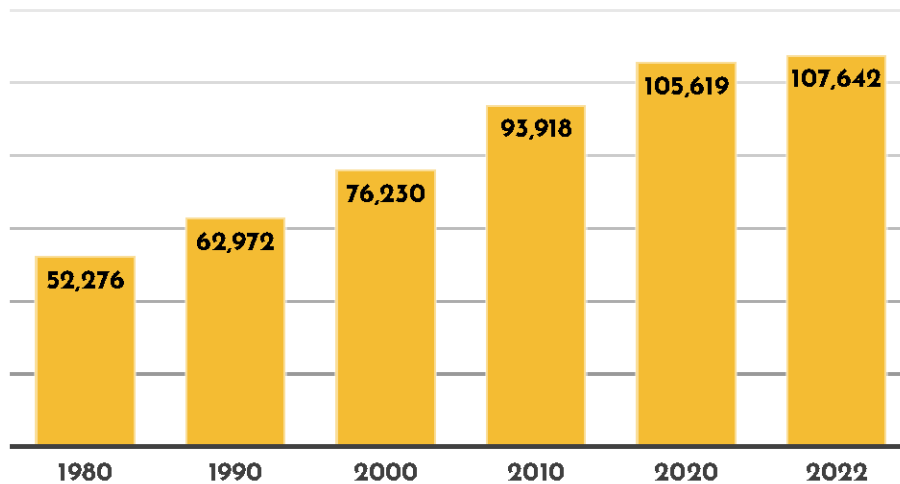
### Housing Stock Characteristics

To identify Clay County's existing housing stock characteristics this section of the study addresses the total inventory of dwelling units, occupancies, age, and mix of housing types as well as trends in new housing construction activity.

### Housing Inventory Trends

The 1980 Census reported the Clay County housing stock at 52,276 dwelling units. By the 2020 Census Clay County's housing stock more than doubled to 105,619 dwelling units. Housing stock growth was the strongest from 2000 to 2010 with the addition of 17,688 housing units. From 2020 through 2022, the Clay County housing stock increased by 2,023 dwelling units.

### Clay County Housing Stock Growth



The table on the following page depicts the growth in housing units from 1990 through 2020 within Clay County's largest cities. During this period, the housing stock of Clay County's largest cities increased by 87.4 percent. By 2020, Clay County's largest cities accounted for 89.5 percent of the countywide housing stock, or 94,531 dwelling units.

With a 2020 Census population of 147,156 residents, the northern portion of Kansas City maintains the largest share of population in Clay County, supporting 55,557 housing units. Since 2000, Kansas City's housing stock in Clay County grew by 32,440 dwelling units, or 140.3 percent. From 1990 to 2020, Kansas City accounted for over three-quarters of Clay County's new housing stock. New home construction is very active in the northern portion of Kansas City with residential and population growth expected to continue a northerly growth pattern.

Liberty is the County's second largest city with a 2020 Census population of 30,167 residents. Since 1990, Liberty's housing stock increased by 3,860 dwelling units, or 50.5 percent. Liberty is experiencing an industrial construction boom and is expected to continue to support strong future new home construction and population growth.

Gladstone is Clay County's third largest city with a 2020 Census population of 27,063 residents. Since 1990, Gladstone's housing stock increased by 1,445 dwelling units, or 13.0 percent. Gladstone is a landlocked community so new home construction is expected to remain modest.

North Kansas City is also a landlocked community and the housing stock increased by just 451 dwelling units since 1990.

Kearney and Smithville are in the northern portion of Clay County and are the most impacted rural communities by continued population and urban expansion of the Kansas City MSA. Since 1990, the housing

stock increased by 3,086 dwelling units in Kearney and 2,818 dwelling units in Smithville. Both communities are posed to experience continued new home construction and population growth.

### Housing Stock Growth Trends Clay County Cities; 1990-2020

City	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	Growth 1990-2020	% Change 1990-2020
<b>Clay County</b>	<b>63,000</b>	<b>76,230</b>	<b>93,918</b>	<b>105,619</b>	<b>42,619</b>	<b>67.6%</b>
Kansas City (Clay County)	23,117	34,935	47,891	55,557	32,440	140.3%
North Kansas City	2,616	2,779	2,565	3,067	451	17.2%
Gladstone	11,076	11,919	12,148	12,521	1,445	13.0%
Liberty	7,645	9,973	11,284	11,505	3,860	50.5%
Excelsior Springs	4,229	4,350	4,771	4,223	-6	-0.1%
Kearney	738	1,995	3,120	3,824	3,086	418.2%
Smithville	1,016	2,220	3,280	3,834	2,818	277.4%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>50,437</b>	<b>68,171</b>	<b>85,059</b>	<b>94,531</b>		
<b>% of County Total</b>	<b>80.1%</b>	<b>89.4%</b>	<b>90.6%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

### Housing Stock Mix

Clay County's housing stock mix is influenced by both its suburban and rural character whereby single-family dwellings are the predominant housing type. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, detached single-family housing accounts for 68.8 percent of Clay County's housing stock, just below the statewide rate of 70.0 percent.

Multi-family housing accounts for 24.6 percent of Clay County's housing stock compared to 20.9 percent for Missouri. Clay County's multi-family housing stock features a smaller share of buildings with 2 to 9 dwelling units and a larger share of buildings with ten or more dwelling units. Buildings with 2 to 9 dwelling units account for 9.8 percent of Clay County's housing stock, compared to 11.5 percent for Missouri. Properties with 10 to 19 dwelling units account for 6.9 percent of Clay County's multi-family housing stock, totaling 7,458 dwelling units. Large-scale multi-family properties with 20 or more dwelling units account for 7.9 percent of the Clay County housing stock, exceeding the statewide rate of 5.9 percent.

### Clay County, Missouri Housing Stock by Type; 2022

Units in Structure	# of Units	% of Total	Missouri %
1-Unit, Detached	74,020	68.8%	70.0%
1-Unit, Attached	5,452	5.1%	3.7%
2 Units	1,196	1.1%	3.2%
3 or 4 Units	3,482	3.2%	4.7%
5 to 9 Units	5,872	5.5%	3.6%
10 to 19 Units	7,458	6.9%	3.6%
20+ Units	8,460	7.9%	5.9%
Mobile Home	1,702	1.6%	5.3%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0	0.0%	0.2%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>107,642</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The table below depicts the housing stock composition for the Clay County cities of Liberty, Kearney, Smithville, and Excelsior Springs.

### Housing Stock Composition Clay County Cities; 2021

Units in Structure	Clay County				Excelsior Springs
	Clay County	Liberty	Kearney	Smithville	Excelsior Springs
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>106,652</b>	<b>11,578</b>	<b>4,121</b>	<b>3,834</b>	<b>4,223</b>
1-Unit, Detached	69.2%	73.7%	79.0%	80.5%	75.8%
1-Unit, Attached	5.2%	5.1%	3.0%	8.9%	1.8%
2 Units	2.5%	2.2%	4.5%	1.7%	1.1%
3-4 Units	3.2%	2.3%	5.9%	7.2%	3.7%
5-9 Units	5.1%	3.2%	2.2%	1.5%	4.5%
10-19 Units	5.8%	4.8%	2.9%	0.0%	3.2%
20+ Units	7.4%	4.7%	1.5%	0.0%	7.4%
Mobile Home or Other	1.5%	4.1%	0.9%	0.1%	1.1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Liberty is the largest city and supports the most diverse housing stock. Detached single-family homes account for 69.2 of Liberty’s housing stock compared to 70.7 percent countywide. Multi-family housing with two or more dwelling units per structure account for 17.2 percent of Liberty’s housing stock compared to 24.0 percent countywide.

Kearney possesses the highest share of detached single-family homes at 81.6 percent of the total housing stock. Multi-family housing with three or more dwelling units per structure accounts for 10.1 percent of Kearney’s total housing stock, equal to the countywide average.

Smithville has emerged as a bedroom community with detached single-family homes accounting for 80.5 percent of the total housing stock and multi-family housing with two to nine dwelling units per structure accounting for 10.4 percent, compared to 10.8 percent for Clay County. No multi-family structures with ten or more dwelling units are present in Smithville.

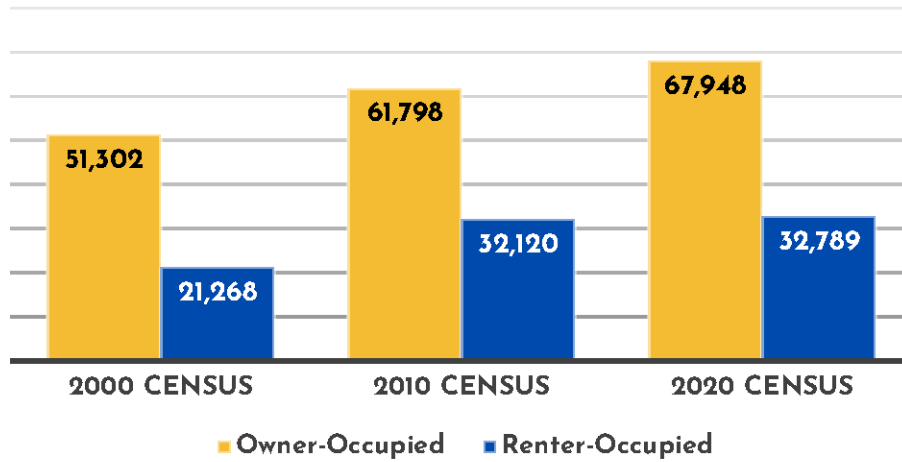
Excelsior Springs’ housing composition includes 75.8 percent detached single-family homes, 1.8 percent attached single-family homes, 1.1 percent duplexes, and 8.2 percent multi-family with 3 to 9 dwelling units per structure. Multi-family structures with ten or more dwelling units account for 10.6 percent of Excelsior Springs’ housing stock which is the largest share among the four cities in Clay County.

**Housing Tenure Trends**

The 2000 Census reported that 72,570 housing units were occupied in Clay County, including 51,302 owner-occupied units and 21,268 renter-occupied units. The housing tenure mix included 70.7 percent owner-occupied and 29.3 percent renter-occupied housing units.

The share of owner-occupied housing units in Clay County increased from 65.8 percent in 2010 to 67.5 percent by 2020. From 2000 to 2020, the inventory of occupied owner-occupied housing in Clay County increased by 32.4 percent, or 16,646 dwelling units while renter-occupied housing increased by 54.2 percent, or 11,521 dwelling units.

## Clay County, Missouri Housing Tenure Trends

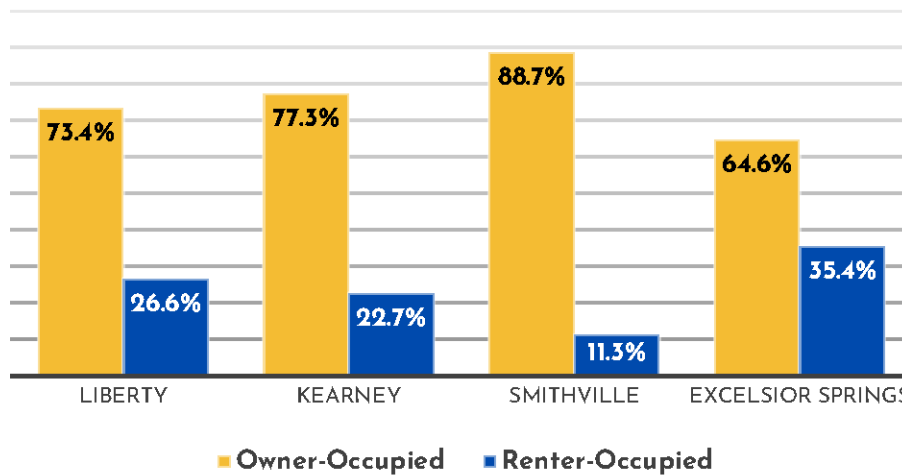


From 2000 through 2020, the housing tenure for Clay County increased by 16,646 owner-occupied housing units and 11,521 renter-occupied housing units. During the 20-year timeframe the percentage distribution declined for owner-occupied housing units from 70.7 percent in 2000 to 67.5 percent in 2020 and increased from 29.3 percent in 2000 to 32.5 percent in 2020 for renter-occupied housing units.

By 2022, owner-occupied housing accounted for 68.2 percent of Clay County's occupied housing stock with renter-occupied at 31.8 percent. By comparison, the statewide housing tenure averages 67.6 percent owner-occupied and 32.4 percent renter-occupied housing units.

The graphic below depicts the owner-occupied versus renter-occupied housing mix for the Clay County cities of Liberty, Kearney, Smithville, and Excelsior Springs.

## Clay County Cities Housing Tenure, 2021



Smithville supports the highest rate of owner-occupied housing, due largely to the fact that of the four cities it has the smallest percentage of multi-family housing with no buildings occupying ten dwelling units or more. Owner-occupied housing in Smithville accounts for 88.7 percent of all occupied dwelling units with renter-occupied accounting for just 11.3 percent. The predominance of owner-occupied housing may be attributed to the high rate of for-sale single-family home construction over the past two decades.

Excelsior Springs maintains the highest level of renter-occupied housing, accounting for 35.4 percent of the total occupied housing stock. Owner-occupied housing accounts for just 64.6 percent of all occupied housing units.

Liberty supports the most diverse housing stock with owner-occupied housing units accounting for 73.4 percent of all occupied housing units and renter-occupied housing at 26.6 percent.

Kearney supports a well above average rate of homeownership accounting for 77.3 percent of the total occupied housing stock and renter-occupied accounting for the remaining 22.7 percent. Kearney has experienced considerable for-sale new home construction in recent years.

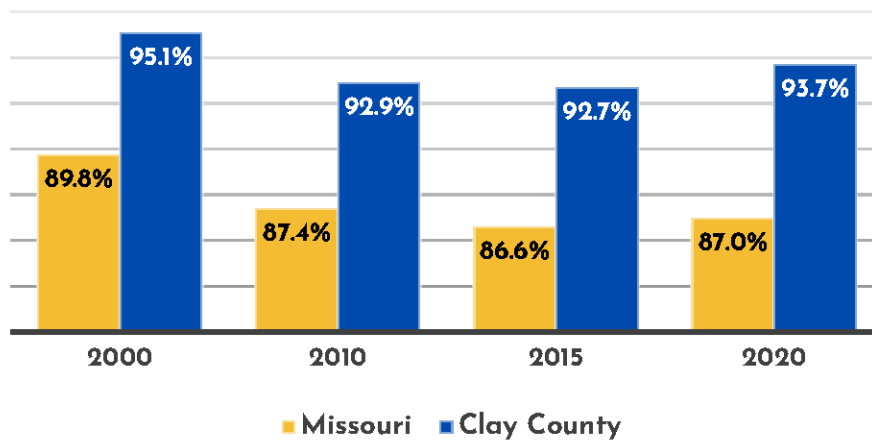
### Housing Occupancy Trends

The U.S. Census reported the overall occupancy rate for existing housing in Clay County decreased from 95.1 percent in 2000 to 92.9 percent by 2010. The downward trend in the occupancy rate may have been the result of the lingering housing crisis and a boom in new housing construction.

According to the *American Community Survey* published by the U.S. Census Bureau, Clay County's housing occupancy rate declined slightly from 2010 to 2015 to 92.7 percent. During 2015, the statewide housing occupancy rate was 86.6 percent. Over the ensuing five years Clay County's housing occupancy rate improved, reaching 93.7 percent by 2020.

By 2022, Clay County's housing stock operated at an occupancy rate of 95.1 percent compared to 89.2 percent statewide.

### Housing Occupancy Rate Comparison



Over the past 20 years, housing occupancy rates for Clay County significantly outpaced the statewide average. During 2000, Clay County's housing occupancy rate of 95.1 percent compared favorably against that of 89.2 percent for Missouri, a 5.9 percentage point spread. By 2020, Clay County's housing occupancy rate of 93.7 percent outpacing the statewide average of 87.0 percent, equating to a 6.7 percentage point differential.

## Age of Housing Stock

The table on the following page compares the age of Clay County's housing stock with that of the State of Missouri as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Clay County's housing stock is newer than the statewide inventory with 32.5 percent of the existing inventory built since 2000 and just 14.6 percent built prior to 1960. By comparison, 22.3 percent of the state's housing stock was built since 2000 with 27.3 percent built prior to 1960. Clay County's newer housing stock can be attributed to the population boom since 1990.

### Clay County, Missouri Housing Stock by Year Built

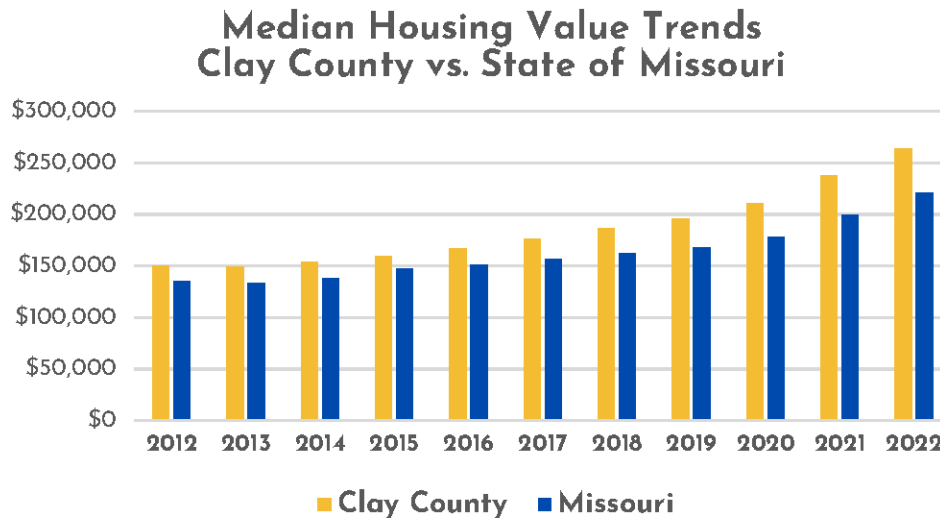
Year Structure Built	# of Units	% of Total	% of Missouri
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>106,652</b>		<b>2,807,632</b>
Built 2020 or Later	1,577	1.5%	0.6%
Built 2010 to 2019	12,623	11.8%	8.3%
Built 2000 to 2009	20,444	19.2%	13.4%
Built 1990 to 1999	16,638	15.6%	12.6%
Built 1980 to 1989	12,367	11.6%	11.8%
Built 1970 to 1979	13,161	12.3%	14.7%
Built 1960 to 1969	14,246	13.4%	11.2%
Built 1950 to 1959	9,336	8.8%	9.6%
Built 1940 to 1949	2,918	2.7%	4.5%
Built 1939 or Earlier	3,342	3.1%	13.2%

Source: U.S. Census.

## Housing Values

According to the *American Community Survey*, during 2012 Clay County's median housing value of \$150,000 exceeded the statewide median of \$135,000. Stemming from the national housing bust and Great Recession, the median housing value for both Clay County and the State of Missouri declined steadily from 2010 through 2013. Since 2014, the median housing value has rebounded in Clay County and statewide. From 2014 to 2022, the median home value in Clay County rose by 71.6 percent compared to a 44.1 percent increase for Missouri. By 2022, Clay County's median home value of \$264,100 exceeded the statewide median value of \$221,200.

The bar chart below provides a comparison of median housing values for Clay County and the State of Missouri from 2012 to 2022.



The Clay County for-sale housing market caters to a wide range of buyers including first-time, move-up, and upscale homebuyers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, just 14.1 percent of the homes in Clay County are valued under \$150,000, compared to 29.5 percent statewide. Meanwhile, 68.7 percent of Clay County's housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000, compared to 55.4 percent statewide.

### Housing Value Comparison; 2022 Clay County vs. State of Missouri

Price Range	Clay County	State of Missouri
Less than \$50,000	3.8%	7.3%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	2.5%	9.8%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7.8%	12.4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	17.1%	15.3%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	31.2%	24.0%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	27.6%	21.6%
\$500,000+	9.9%	9.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The table below depicts the housing value distribution and median value for the Clay County cities of Liberty, Kearney, Smithville, and Excelsior Springs.

### Housing Value Distribution by Clay County Cities; 2021

Value Range	Clay County	Liberty	Kearney	Smithville	Excelsior Springs
<b>Owner-Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>66,178</b>	<b>8,026</b>	<b>2,957</b>	<b>3,275</b>	<b>2,389</b>
Less than \$50,000	3.6%	3.5%	4.7%	3.7%	8.3%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	5.8%	3.8%	0.7%	1.4%	12.3%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.5%	17.3%	10.6%	8.8%	31.2%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	21.4%	23.1%	23.9%	26.5%	20.1%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	28.0%	31.7%	40.6%	43.5%	23.3%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	17.6%	18.4%	17.5%	14.4%	4.2%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	3.6%	2.1%	1.3%	1.6%	0.6%
\$1,000,000 or More	0.6%	0.1%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Median Value</b>	<b>\$199,600</b>	<b>\$206,800</b>	<b>\$219,400</b>	<b>\$217,800</b>	<b>\$147,200</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Excelsior Springs represents the most affordable housing market with a median value for owner-occupied housing of \$147,200 which compares to \$199,600 countywide. Over half of the owner-occupied housing stock is valued from \$100,000 to \$199,999 with just 4.8 percent valued at \$300,000 or more.

Kearney ranks as the most expensive housing market supporting a median value of \$219,400. In recent years Kearney has experienced strong new home construction that has resulted in escalating median housing values. Just 5.1 percent of owner-occupied housing in Kearney is valued at less than \$100,000 while 70.0 percent is valued at \$150,000 to \$299,999.

Of Clay County's four principal cities, Liberty has supported the highest level of new home construction since 1990 with the housing stock increasing by 3,860 dwelling units. The median housing value in Liberty of \$206,800 with just 7.3 percent of owner-occupied housing stock valued at less than \$100,000 while 54.8 percent is valued at \$150,000 to \$299,999 and 20.6 percent valued at \$300,000 or more (highest rate among the four Clay County cities). In terms of value, Liberty maintains the most diverse owner-occupied housing stock among the four cities surveyed in Clay County.

Smithville has also experienced significant new home construction over the past 30 years and now supports the second highest median housing value of \$217,800. A reported 70 percent of Smithville's housing stock is valued from \$150,000 to \$299,999, with 16.0 percent valued at \$300,000 or more.

### Occupancy by Housing Type

Homeowners in Clay County are more likely to occupy detached single-family housing while renters are more apt to occupy attached multi-family housing. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, during 2021 owner-occupied housing in Clay County accounted for 67.5 percent of the entire occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 32.5 percent. By comparison, owner-occupied housing accounts for 66.8 percent of Missouri's total occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 33.2 percent. Clay County's peripheral suburban location, predominance of families with children, and above average median household income may contribute to the high rate of homeownership.

For 2022, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, of Clay County's total housing stock of 107,642 dwelling units, an estimated 102,352 dwelling units were occupied, including 69,848 owner-occupied housing units and 32,504 renter-occupied housing units. Detached single-family homes accounted for 93.1 percent of all occupied owner-occupied housing units. Meanwhile, renters were much less likely to occupy detached single-family homes accounting for just 21.2 percent of all occupied rental units.



Multi-family properties with ten or more units are the most popular attached housing product for renters, accounting for 31.8 percent of all occupied dwelling units. Properties with two units account for 1.9 percent of all renter-occupied units. Properties with 3 or 4 dwelling units account for 8.7 percent of all renter-occupied units, while structures with 5 to 9 units account for 17.1 percent of all renter-occupied units. Properties with ten or more units account for 42.8 percent of all renter-occupied housing. Attached, one-unit properties account for 6.7 percent of all renter-occupied housing.

### Clay County Occupied Housing Stock by Type - 2022 Owner-Occupied vs. Renter-Occupied Housing

Housing Type	Total	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>102,352</b>	<b>69,848</b>	<b>32,504</b>
<b>Units in Structure</b>			
1-Unit, Detached	70.3%	93.1%	21.2%
1-Unit, Attached	5.3%	4.7%	6.7%
2 Units	0.8%	0.4%	1.9%
3 or 4 Units	2.8%	0.1%	8.7%
5 to 9 Units	5.4%	0.0%	17.1%
10 or More Units	13.6%	0.1%	42.8%
Mobile Home and other Types of Housing	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

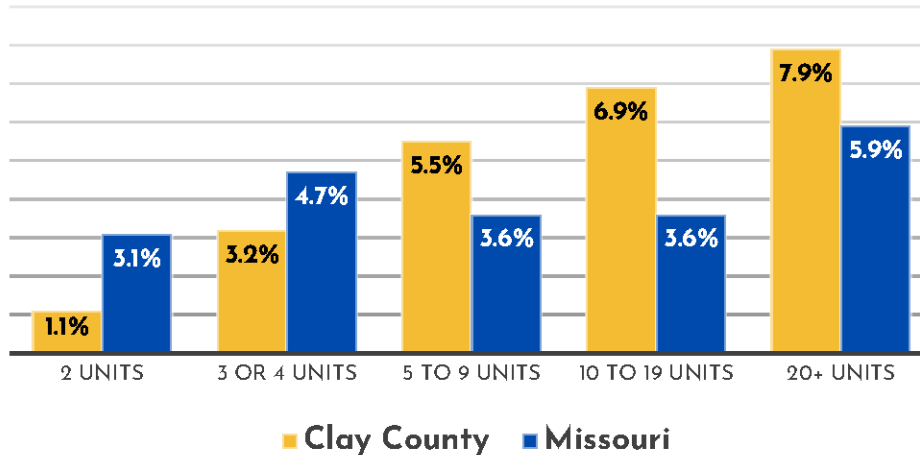
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

## Clay County Apartment Market

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2022, Clay County's multi-family housing stock totaled 26,468 dwelling units, or 24.6 percent of the county's total housing stock. By comparison, multi-family housing accounts for 20.9 percent of the statewide inventory.

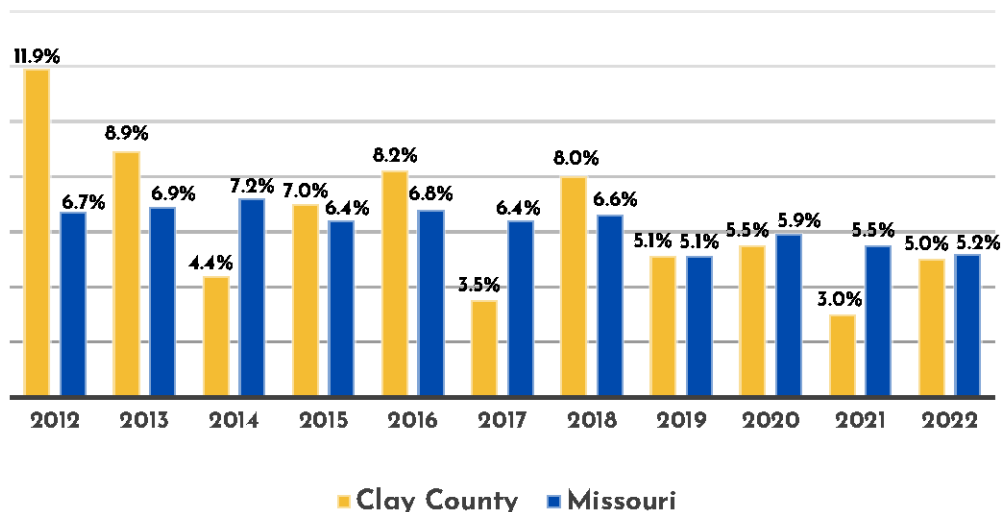
Properties with 20+ units account for Clay County's largest share of multi-family housing at 7.9 percent of the housing stock, compared to 5.9 percent statewide. Properties consisting of 10 to 19 dwelling units account for 6.9 percent of Clay County's total housing stock, compared to 3.6 percent statewide.

### Comparison of Multi-Family Housing Stock Clay County vs. State of Missouri, 2022



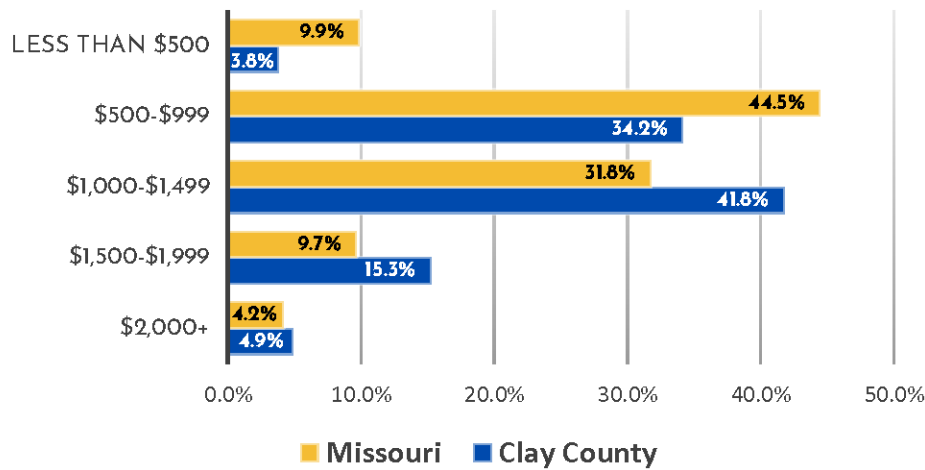
According to the *American Community Survey*, for most of the time from 2012 through 2016 Clay County's rental housing market operated at a vacancy rate above that for Missouri. From a high of 11.9 percent in 2012, Clay County's rental housing vacancy rate steadily declined to a well below market equilibrium rate of 4.4 percent by 2014. Since 2019, Clay County's rental housing has operated at a vacancy rate well below market equilibrium, suggesting near-term new rental housing is supportable.

### Comparison of Multi-Family Vacancy Rates Clay County vs. State of Missouri



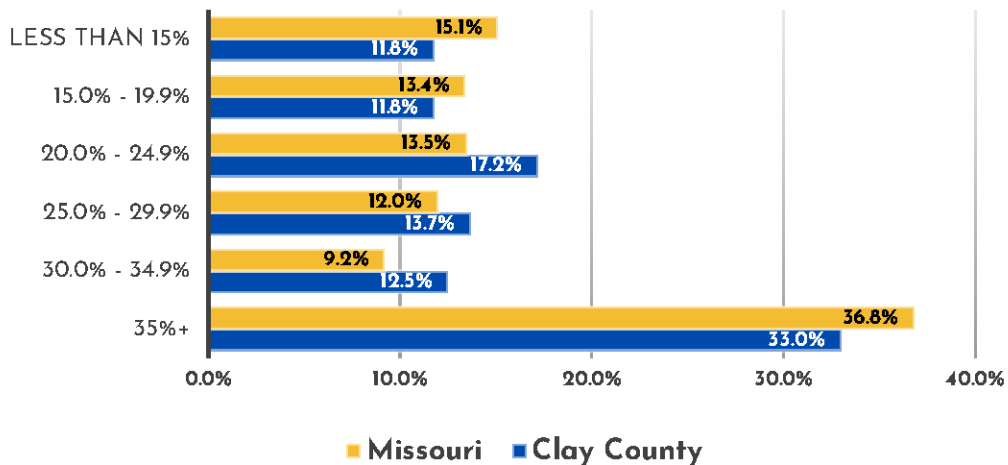
Compared to statewide norms, Clay County's rental housing market supports a below average inventory of low-priced rentals and an above average supply of high-priced rentals. According to the *American Community Survey*, during 2022 just 3.8 percent of Clay County's rental stock support rents of less than \$500 per month, compared to 9.9 percent statewide. A reported 34.2 percent of Clay County's rental stock support rents of \$500 to \$999 per month, compared to 44.5 percent statewide. Housing units renting for \$1,000 to \$1,499 per month account for 41.8 percent of Clay County's rental market with 20.2 percent of the housing stock renting for excess of \$1,500 per month. Clay County's higher housing rents stem from a new housing stock commanding above market rents.

### Monthly Housing Rent Comparison; 2022



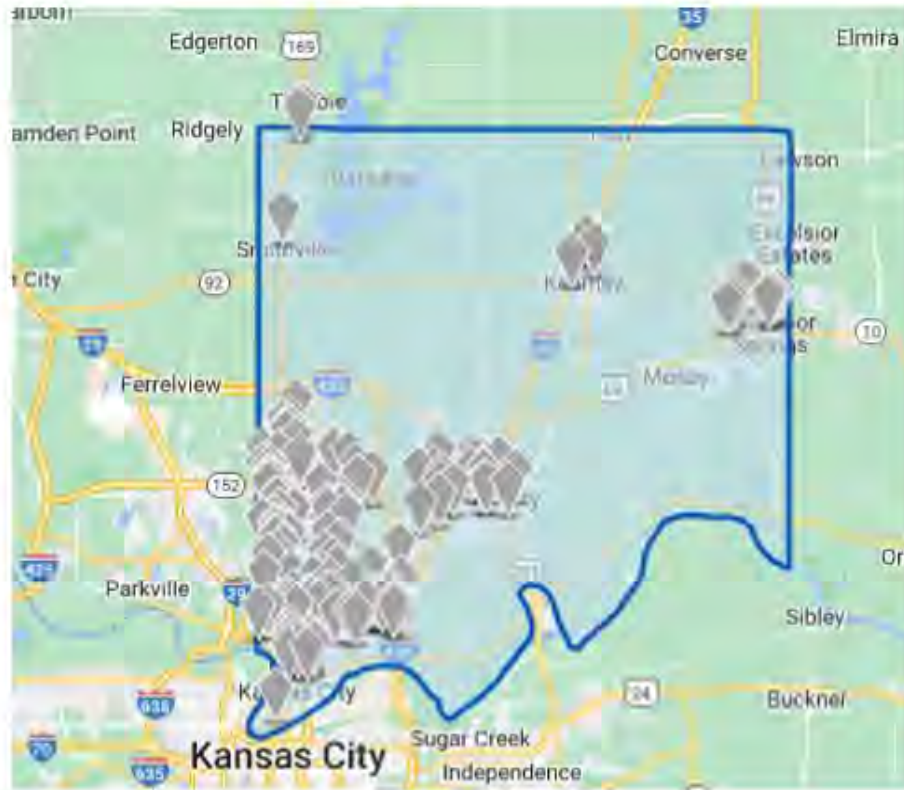
Housing stress occurs when the cost of housing (either as rent or as a mortgage) is high relative to household income. A household spending 30 percent or more of its income on housing can be considered under housing stress. The gross rent for 45.5 percent of renter households in Clay County accounts for 30 percent or more of total income compared to 46.0 percent statewide, suggesting a slightly below average need for affordable and income-based rental housing.

### Gross Rent as a % of Household Income Clay County vs. State of Missouri; 2022



## Large-Scale Apartment Properties

Market-rate apartment properties with 25 or more rental units in Clay County, Missouri were identified by conducting a search on CoStar. According to CoStar, Clay County has 140 large-scale apartment properties totaling 21,038 rental units. As depicted in the graphic below, large-scale apartment properties are concentrated in the Highway 169 corridor, Highway 152 corridor, and Interstate 35 corridor in Kansas City and in Liberty.



The table on the following page summarizes annual operating trends since 2010 for the large-scale apartment properties in Clay County. Since 2010, 13 large-scale apartment properties have been built in Clay County totaling 4,580 rental units, peaking from 2014 to 2017 with the completion of 2,624 apartment units. New construction has also been strong since 2019 with the completion of eleven properties totaling 1,629 rental units. Since 2010, net absorption has totaled 4,687 apartment units. With demand outpacing new supply, the overall vacancy rate has declined from 7.3 percent in 2010 to 5.6 percent in 2022 and through the first half of 2023. The overall vacancy rate has operated well below market equilibrium since 2018. Given the high rate of new inventory and predominance of Class A properties, the average monthly rent has increased 47.9 percent since 2010 to \$1,118 by mid-2023.

## Clay County Large-Scale Apartment Market Trends

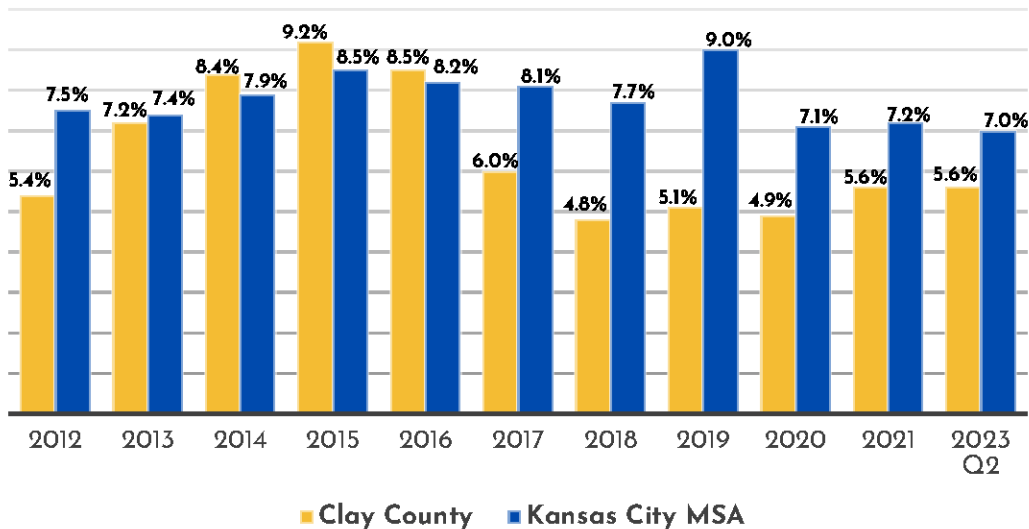
Year	# of Properties	# of Units	New Supply	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate	Net Absorption	Average Rent/Mo.
2010	117	16,785	327	1,226	7.3%	386	\$756
2011	117	16,785	0	984	5.9%	242	\$763
2012	117	16,785	0	932	5.6%	52	\$779
2013	117	16,785	0	900	5.4%	32	\$801
2014	118	17,175	390	1,239	7.2%	51	\$817
2015	122	17,970	795	1,502	8.4%	532	\$844
2016	126	18,719	749	1,729	9.2%	522	\$867
2017	129	19,409	690	1,644	8.5%	775	\$871
2018	129	19,409	0	1,158	6.0%	486	\$892
2019	131	19,708	299	945	4.8%	512	\$920
2020	133	20,008	300	1,020	5.1%	225	\$951
2021	135	20,375	367	998	4.9%	389	\$1,020
2022	139	20,830	455	1,173	5.6%	280	\$1,083
2023 Q2	140	21,038	208	1,178	5.6%	203	\$1,118

Source: CoStar.

As illustrated by the bar chart on the following page, throughout most of the past decade Clay County's apartment market vacancy rate has significantly outperformed the Kansas City MSA. From an average vacancy rate of 5.4 percent in 2012, the Clay County large-scale apartment market improved to a low of 4.8 percent by 2018. Despite the addition of 1,629 apartment units since 2019, the vacancy rate has remained healthy and well below the Kansas City MSA rate through year-end 2022.

By the second quarter 2023, just 1,178 apartments were vacant and available for lease in Clay County yielding a healthy vacancy rate of 5.6 percent. By comparison, the Kansas City MSA apartment market is operating at an average vacancy rate of 7.0 percent.

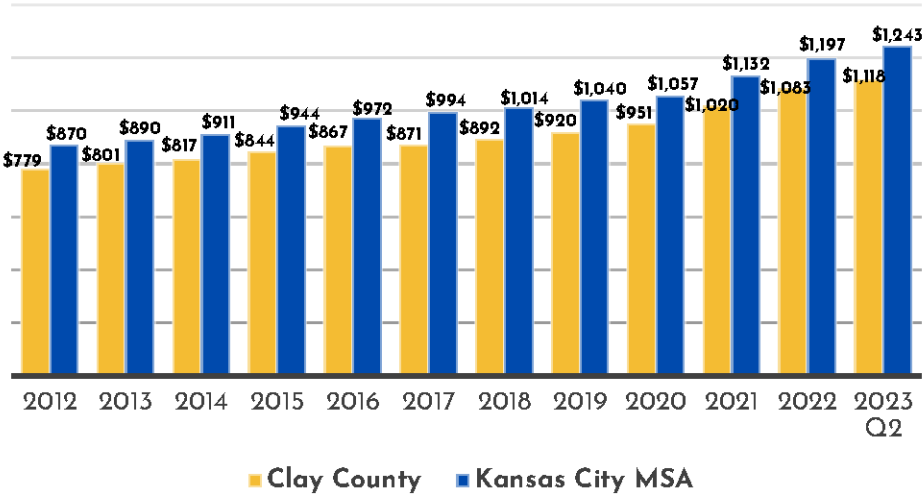
### Apartment Market Vacancy Rate Comparison Clay County vs. Kansas City MSA



Since the average apartment rent in Clay County increased by 43.5 percent, reaching \$1,118 per month by the second quarter 2023. The average rent in the Kansas City MSA is \$1,234 per month.

Clay County’s average monthly apartment rent rose from \$779 in 2010 to \$1,118 by the second quarter 2022. Despite this large increase, since 2012, Clay County’s average monthly apartment rent lagged the Kansas City MSA average. The bar chart below illustrates an annual comparison of the average monthly rent of Clay County versus the Kansas City MSA since 2012.

### Monthly Apartment Rent Comparison Clay County vs. Kansas City MSA



The age of Liberty’s rental housing and healthy occupancy rates provide the opportunity for the near-term addition of new market-rate apartments. Six apartment properties totaling 1,116 rental units are currently under construction in Clay County. Another two apartment properties are planned for construction totaling 393 rental units. This level of near-term additions to supply is not anticipated to adversely impact the operating results of Clay County’s large-scale apartment market.

### Forecast Housing Demand

Residential housing demand estimates for Clay County through the year 2040 were forecast based on anticipated demographic and economic trends for the community. Key input to the model includes historical patterns in annual residential building permit activity and projected population and household growth, average household formation rates, households by income levels, and population by age.

Esri Business Analyst provided demographic characteristics and historic population growth trends for Clay County. Housing characteristics for Clay County were provided by the *American Community Survey*. Population growth projections for Clay County were generated by Canyon Research Southwest based on historic growth patterns, continued urban growth within the fringe of the Kansas City MSA, existing infrastructure, and employment growth in Clay County.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, during 2021 Clay County’s housing stock totaled 106,652 residential dwelling units. The existing housing units were operating at an overall occupancy rate of 94.5 percent. The occupied housing stock included 67,948 owner-occupied units (67.5%) and 32,789 renter-occupied units (32.5%). A total of 5,915 vacant housing units were reported.

Esri Business Analyst estimated Clay County’s 2023 population at 262,586 residents with an average household size of 2.49 persons. By 2040, Clay County is forecast to add 65,211 to 75,630 new residents.

Supportable residential housing absorption through 2040 will be a function of resident population growth and latent demand while income levels and age composition will dictate the type and mix of housing product.

## Housing Need from Population Growth

Net population and household growth are the largest single drivers of the need for new housing units. From 2023 through 2040, the Clay County population is forecast to increase by 65,211 to 75,630 new residents. During 2023, Clay County's average household size is 2.49 persons. Clay County's forecast population growth through 2040 is estimated to yield an estimated 26,190 to 30,375 new households and occupied housing units.

## Latent Housing Demand

Another housing needs component considers the number of units a market requires to offer balanced market conditions. Vacant housing units are necessary to accommodate the turnover of the housing stock as people move for family, work-related, or financial reasons. Latent demand occurs when the inventory of available housing is severely constrained.

A housing market operating at equilibrium generally supports a 92 percent to 95 percent occupancy rate. Healthy markets require 5 percent to 8 percent of the housing stock to be available to allow for inner-market mobility and encourage competitive housing prices and rental rates. Markets with vacancy rates below a healthy rate often suffer from escalating home values and rents, minimal tenant turnover, residents being forced into housing situations that do not meet their housing needs, and the inability of nonresidents to enter the market. The *American Community Survey 2021* of Clay County's housing stock of 106,652 dwelling units a total of 5,915 housing units were vacant, equating to an overall occupancy rate of 94.5 percent. By 2040, the forecast population growth for Clay County would result in a total housing stock of 132,842 to 137,027 dwelling units.

At market equilibrium occupancy rate of 92 percent, by 2040 Clay County's inventory of vacant and unoccupied housing stock would total 10,154 to 10,489 dwelling units. Given the 2021 inventory of 5,915 vacant housing units in Clay County, latent housing demand through 2040 is estimated at 4,239 to 4,574 dwelling units.

## Total Housing Demand

From 2023 through 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth and latent demand will create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new housing units.

Liberty's current mix of occupied housing units is 74.6 percent owner-occupied and 25.4 percent renter occupied. In growing suburban communities, for-sale, single-family housing is the dominant form of new residential construction. As a suburban community matures and employment growth intensifies, development of large-scale apartments becomes more viable. Through 2040, multi-family housing is expected to account for a larger share of new residential construction in Liberty, driven in large part by escalating employment opportunities.

Clay County's mix of future housing demand is best determined by evaluating the county's population demographics with that of the various housing life-cycle stages. Emphasis is placed on age, education, and income.

Entry-level householders are generally single or couples without children in their early 20's and often prefer to rent basic, inexpensive apartments. Residents 15 to 24 years of age account for 11.7 percent of the Clay County population with those 25 to 34 years of age accounting for 13.2 percent, both of which exceed the statewide norms. Individuals with high school degrees or less are more likely to be renters than homeowners. An estimated 33.4 percent of Clay County residents are high school graduates or less.

An estimated 18.3 percent of Clay County households earn less than \$35,000 annually with 11.4 percent of households earning less than \$25,000. These households tend to be perpetual renters with the lowest income households potentially qualifying for some form of housing assistance.

First-time homebuyers and move-up renters are usually married or cohabitating couples in their mid-20's or 30's, some with children, but most are without children. These individuals prefer to purchase modest-priced single-family homes or rent more upscale apartments. An estimated 13.2 percent of Clay County residents are 25 to 34 years of age with 46.0 percent of residents attaining an associate degree or higher. An estimated 11.7 percent of households earn \$35,000 to \$49,999 annually and 17.5 percent of households earn \$50,000 to \$74,999 annually.

## Forecast Residential Housing Need Clay County, Missouri; 2023-2040

	Conservative Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
Existing Housing Stock	106,652	106,652
Less: Vacant Housing Units	-5,915	-5,915
Occupied Housing Units	100,737	100,737
<b>Population Growth Housing Demand</b>		
Population Growth 2023-2040	65,211	75,630
Average Household Size	2.49	2.49
New Occupied Housing Units	26,190	30,375
<b>Latent Housing Demand</b>		
Occupied Housing Units 2021	100,737	100,737
Plus: Population Growth Housing Demand	26,190	30,375
Occupied Housing Units 2040	126,927	131,112
Market Equilibrium Vacant Units (8.0%)	10,154	10,489
Less: Vacant Housing Units 2021	-5,915	-5,915
Estimated Latent Housing Demand	4,239	4,574
<b>Total Housing Unit Need 2023-2040</b>	<b>30,429</b>	<b>34,949</b>

Move-up homebuyers are typically in their late 30's to 40's, married with children. There is a total of 35.3 percent of all households in Clay County with children present. An estimated 14.6 percent of Clay County residents are 35 to 44 years of age with 24.3 percent of residents attaining a bachelor's degree and 11.9 percent of residents possessing a graduate or professional degree. An estimated 15.9 percent of households earn \$75,000 to \$99,999 annually and 36.6 percent of households earn \$100,000 or more annually.

Clay County's population demographics provide a strong market for entry-level, move-up, and upscale for-sale housing as well as market-rate and income-based rental housing. Given the city's population age composition, household income levels, and existing and under construction housing stock, from 2023 through 2040 the housing demand is estimated to be segmented 70 percent owner-occupied and 30 percent renter occupied. Therefore, by 2040 the mix of new occupied housing is estimated at 21,300 to 24,465 homeownership units and 9,129 to 10,484 rental units.

The table on the following page summarizes the forecast housing mix by homeownership and rental units and by product type.

Assuming average residential densities of 3.5 to 4.0 dwelling units per acre for single-family and 15 to 18 dwelling units per acre for multi-family, through 2040 Clay County is estimated support the development of 6,067 to 6,958 acres of residential land under the conservative scenario and 6,971 to 7,995 acres of residential land under the optimistic scenario.



## Forecast Housing Demand by Product Type Clay County, Missouri; 2023-2040

	2021 Estimate		2040 Forecast		
	# of Units	% of Total	% of Total	Conservative Scenario	Optimistic Scenario
<b>Forecast Housing Demand</b>					
Total Housing Units	106,652			30,429	34,949
Occupied Housing Units	100,737				
Owner-Occupied	67,948	67.5%	70.0%	21,300	24,465
Renter Occupied	32,789	32.5%	30.0%	9,129	10,484
<b>Housing Demand by Type</b>					
Single-Family Detached	73,780	69.2%	72.0%	21,900	25,163
Single-Family Attached	5,587	5.2%	2.0%	608	699
2 to 9 Units	11,637	10.9%	6.0%	1,826	2,097
10+ Units	14,015	13.1%	20.0%	6,085	6,990

Source: U.S. Census and Canyon Research Southwest, Inc.

In summary, through 2040, Clay County is forecast to experience continued urban pressures, producing steady population growth and the need for additional housing. From 2023 through 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth and latent demand are anticipated to create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new housing units. Detached single-family homes are anticipated to remain the dominant new housing product with move-up for-sale housing playing an increasing role. The trend in multi-family rental housing is anticipated to transition from small multi-family structures in favor of large-scale apartment properties.

### Conclusions

Clay County is located at the urban edge of the Kansas City MSA and has experienced steady growth over the past 40 years. Given its location, Clay County possesses a mix of suburban and rural communities. Since 1980, Clay County's housing stock has more than doubled and now totals 107,638 housing units.

Detached single-family housing accounts for 69.2 percent of Clay County's housing stock, exceeding the statewide rate of 70.7 percent. Multi-family housing accounts for 24.0 percent of Clay County's housing stock compared to 20.0 percent for Missouri.

Clay County's housing stock is newer than the statewide inventory with 32.5 percent of the existing inventory built since 2000 and just 14.6 percent built prior to 1960. By comparison, 22.3 percent of the state's housing stock was built since 2000 with 27.3 percent built prior to 1960. Clay County's newer housing stock can be attributed to the population boom since 1990.

Owner-occupied housing in Clay County accounts for 67.5 percent of the entire occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 32.5 percent. By comparison, owner-occupied housing accounts for 66.8 percent of Missouri's total occupied housing stock with renter-occupied accounting for 33.2 percent.

Since 2010, the median housing value in Clay County has outpaced the statewide norm. By 2021, Clay County's median home value of \$237,600 exceeded the statewide median value of \$199,600.

The Clay County for-sale housing market caters to a wide range of buyers including first-time, move-up, and upscale homebuyers. Just 19.7 percent of the homes in Clay County are valued under \$150,000, compared to 34.2 percent statewide. A reported 61.0 percent of Clay County's housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000, compared to 49.4 percent statewide.

Since 2000, Clay County's housing stock has operated at an annualized vacancy rate exceeding that of the statewide average. By 2021, Clay County's housing stock operated at an occupancy rate of 94.5 percent, compared to 87.0 percent statewide.

Compared to statewide norms, Clay County's rental housing market supports a below average inventory of low-priced rentals and an above average supply of high-priced rentals.

Since 2019, Clay County's rental housing has operated at a vacancy rate well below market equilibrium, suggesting near-term new rental housing is supportable.

Housing stress occurs when the cost of housing (either as rent or as a mortgage) is high relative to household income. A household spending 30 percent or more of its income on housing can be considered under housing stress. The gross rent for 44.5 percent of renter households in Clay County accounts for 30 percent or more of total income compared to 44.8 percent statewide, suggesting a slightly below average need for affordable and income-based rental housing.

Through 2040, Clay County is forecast to experience continued urban pressures, producing steady population growth and the need for additional housing. From 2023 through 2040, Clay County's forecast population growth and latent demand are anticipated to create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new occupied housing units. Detached single-family homes are anticipated to remain the dominant new housing product with more expensive move-up for-sale housing playing an increasing role. The trend in multi-family rental housing is anticipated to favor large-scale apartment properties as employment growth accelerates in Clay County.

## STUDY CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of the *Economic and Market Analysis* was to evaluate the impact of demographic, economic, and real estate market trends on future urban development patterns in Clay County, Missouri.

Based on the study findings potential urban growth opportunities for Clay County through 2040 are identified, including:

- Forecast reasonably achievable demand through 2040 in Clay County for new retail, office, and industrial space as well as residential housing by product type; and
- Identify prospective future land use and development patterns for Clay County given the location and character of existing urban areas, physical characteristics, transportation network, and market demand.

### Forecast Commercial, Industrial and Residential Demand

Retail, office and industrial space and residential housing unit demand was forecast for Clay County, Missouri through the year 2040. Market forces driving future demand for commercial space and housing include the growth in employment, population, and income along with trends in average space per employee, household size, and household composition.

By 2040, Clay County’s population is forecast to increase by 65,211 to 75,130 new residents. This increased population is forecast to generate additional retail sales capable of supporting approximately 3.38 million to 4.48 million square feet of new retail space by 2040.

From 2023 through 2040, office-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 955,000 to 1.5 million square feet of professional office space.

By 2040, industrial-related job growth in Clay County is projected to support the need for approximately 8.6 million to 12.6 million square feet of industrial space.

From 2023 through 2040, Clay County’s forecast population growth and latent need will create the need for an estimated 30,429 to 34,949 new housing units. The mix of future housing need was determined by evaluating Clay County’s population demographics with that of the various housing life-cycle stages. Emphasis is placed on age, education, and income.

Detached single-family homes are anticipated to remain the dominant new housing product with move-up for-sale housing playing an increasing role. The trend in multi-family rental housing is anticipated to transition from small multi-family structures in favor of large-scale apartment properties. The study estimated housing need through 2040 at 22,508 to 25,862 detached and attached single-family homes and 7,911 to 9,087 multi-family dwelling units.

### Forecast Retail, Office, Industrial and Residential Demand Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

Land Use	Growth (2023-2040)		Net Gain	
	Population	Jobs	Conservative	Optimistic
Retail	65,211 - 75,630		3,382,000 SF	4,482,000 SF
Office		3,860 - 5,715	955,000 SF	1,508,000 SF
Industrial		6,180 - 9,145	8,583,000 SF	12,568,000 SF
Housing	65,211 - 75,630		30,429 DUs	34,949 DUs
Single Family			22,508 DUs	25,862 DUs
Multi-Family			7,911 DUs	9,087 DUs

As illustrated, Clay County is forecast to experience considerable urban growth through 2040 with most of the retail, office, and industrial growth expected to occur with existing incorporated areas. Much of the urban development within the unincorporated areas of Clay County will consist of single-family housing.

Assuming an average floor-area-ratio ("FAR") of 0.2 to 0.4 for the retail, office and industrial space and average residential densities of 3.5 to 4.0 dwelling units per acre for single-family and 15 to 18 dwelling units per acre for multi-family, through 2040 Clay County is estimated support the development of 6,970 to 7,997 acres of land under the conservative scenario and 8,254 to 9,473 acres of land under the optimistic scenario.

### Forecast Land Area Absorption in Acres Clay County, Missouri; 2023 to 2040

Land Use	Net Acres	
	Conservative	Optimistic
Retail	338 - 388	447 - 515
Office	73 - 88	115 - 139
Industrial	493 - 563	721 - 824
Housing		
Single Family	5,627 - 6,431	6,466 - 7,389
Multi-Family	440 - 527	505 - 606
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>6,970 - 7,997</b>	<b>8,254 - 9,473</b>

### Future Land Use Patterns

Clay County's large land area, natural resources, and transportation system afford the opportunity to create a blend of urban and rural environments that provides the template for Clay County and its principal population and economic centers to adapt to future trends in land use, economics, demographics, and transportation. The goal is to establish a land use plan that allows for continued urban growth and establishes a seamless transition from the County's existing urban areas into adjacent unincorporated lands and growing rural communities. Future urban growth should be sustainable featuring the optimal mix of complimentary land uses, transportation network, infrastructure, economic activity, housing, and land use flexibility. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening the urban centers and retaining the rural character of outlying lands. Open space and a trail network would assist in retaining the unincorporated areas rural character and protect natural resources.

To accommodate future development within Clay County urban growth boundaries should be established surrounding the county's largest cities that extend outside the existing urban land uses and municipal boundaries with emphasis placed on areas where infrastructure currently exists or is planned for expansion. Additional infrastructure investment within the urban growth areas will be required to accommodate future urban growth.

Most of the land designated for residential use within the urban growth areas should consist of low to medium density single-family housing closest to the existing urban boundaries. Higher-density housing is suitable adjacent to or in proximity to existing employment centers, retail cores, and multi-family housing. Residential growth corridors include Interstate 35, Interstate 435, and Missouri Highway 291. The balance of the County's unincorporated land located outside of the urban growth boundaries is best suited for a mix of large lot rural residential and agricultural uses.

Over the next 20 years detached single-family homes will remain the dominant new housing product in Clay County with most of the development activity occurring closest to the existing urban boundaries. Multi-family will assume a larger share of new construction prompted by growing employment opportunities and changing population demographics.

In recent years urban growth within Clay County has largely been influenced by the continued expansion of the Kansas City MSA and presence of several highways and freeways. Through 2040, urban development and population growth is expected to continue in Clay County, favoring the southern portion of the county. Principal urban growth corridors over the next 20 years include: 1) Interstate 35, 2) Highway 152, 3) Interstate 435, and 4) Highway 169.

Through 2040, the Clay County communities of Kansas City, Liberty, Kearney, and Smithville are forecast to capture the bulk of future population, employment, and urban growth. The unincorporated areas closest to these cities will also continue to support new home construction and population growth. The northern portions of the County are expected to remain primarily rural and agricultural.

Since 1980, Kansas City has accommodated Clay County's largest share of population growth and urban development activity. Development has progressed in a northerly direction and is now extended as far north as Cookingham Drive/Highway 291. Over the next decade urban expansion consisting primarily of detached single-family subdivisions will continue within the Cookingham Drive/Highway 291 corridor before progressing northward towards Interstate 435. Commercial and multi-family residential development is best suited at the Interstate 435 interchanges at Highway 169, Woodland Avenue, and Cookingham Drive. Metro North Crossing and Twin Creeks projects at the intersection of Highways 152 and 169 and the 2,525 acres surrounding the intersection of Interstate 435 and Highway 152 will also serve as principal locations for future commercial and multi-family residential development.

Over the past 40 years the City of Liberty has been the second fastest growing community in Clay County. Given the availability of land and infrastructure, freeway and highway access, and a growing employment base, through 2040 Liberty will experience continued urban pressures. Urban expansion in Liberty will favor the northern and southern portions of the city. Principal growth areas will include the South Liberty Parkway corridor and the northern edge of the city adjacent to Interstate 35 and U.S. Highway 69. The Interstate 35 and South Liberty Parkway corridors will continue to evolve into Liberty's principal employment centers.

Infrastructure has been constructed in Liberty along the South Liberty Parkway from Interstate 35 east to Missouri Route 291, creating approximately 1,000 acres of developable land. Appropriate future development of the South Liberty Parkway corridor would include a mix of employment, retail, and high-density residential uses. Mixed-use development would create a vibrant employment corridor suitable for a mix of businesses.

The area in the vicinity of Interstate 35 and U.S. Highway 69 in Liberty supports a large inventory of vacant land suitable for a mix of land uses. The 1,073 acres of land on the north side of the interchange is planned for the Montage Liberty master planned community designed for a mix of residential, retail, office, tech, industrial, and hotel uses. Montage Liberty will have a significant impact on the velocity of housing, retail, and employment-related development in Liberty through 2040. Land on the south side of U.S. Highway 69 is suitable for industrial and medical office uses with land east of Route B suitable for residential use.

Over the past 30 years population growth has accelerated in the City of Smithville. Connected to the Kansas City MSA by Highway 169, over the next 20 years Smithville will capitalize on the continued northerly expansion of Clay County. Single-family housing will account for most of the future urban development activity in Smithville, expanding outside of the current incorporated city limits. The Highway 169 corridor between Kansas City and Smithville is poised to capture increased urban development activity.

The City of Kearney has also supported accelerated population growth over the past 30 years. Direct access to Interstate 35 will provide the opportunity to support continued population and urban growth over the next 20 years. Single-family housing will account for most of the future urban development activity in Kearney, expanding outside of the current incorporated city limits. The Interstate 35 corridor between Liberty and Kearney will experience increased urban development with the potential to expand the industrial development boom currently underway in Liberty.