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# Economic Trends Update: Reno County

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## ***Foreword***

The Kansas Center for Community Economic Development (KCCED) is a joint center of the Policy Research Institute at the University of Kansas and the Kansas Center for Rural Initiatives at Kansas State University. Its purpose is to enhance economic development efforts by bringing university expertise to rural Kansas.

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# Economic Trends Update: Reno County

## Introduction

The following report is an objective look at several key economic trends occurring in Reno County over the last few decades. The Hutchinson-Reno County area is a community which has seen a declining population and workforce in recent years. Specific data on those and other developments will prove valuable in efforts aimed at boosting Reno County's growth.

This report looks at variables categorized under the following areas:

- population,
- employment,
- earnings and income,
- retail trade,
- agriculture, and
- education.

Throughout the report, Reno County's performance is compared with the performance of the State of Kansas and other Comparative Counties.<sup>1</sup> It is by no means a comprehensive analysis of economic trends facing Reno County but rather an overview of some key economic and demographic variables.

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<sup>1</sup> "Comparative counties" or "Selected counties" used for comparison in this report are Harvey, Lyon, McPherson, and Saline. Occasionally Sedgwick County is added as well.

## POPULATION

In every community population size and economic activity are closely related. The size of population is directly related to employment opportunities within the area, wage differentials between regions, and a community's overall economic and social conditions. Growing communities are more likely to adapt successfully to a changing economic environment than areas with constant or decreasing population. New residents in a community mean additional consumers, taxpayers, and suppliers of labor. Without population growth, communities face problems of a tightening labor market, lack of new customers for businesses, a shrinking tax base, and an overall decline in economic activity. Generally, areas of population growth are also areas of economic growth, whereas areas of population loss suffered previous economic decline and restructuring.

Characteristics of the region's population are regarded as indicators of economic conditions and economic potential of this region. Past and projected population changes indicate economic trends in the community and can be compared to other counties, as well as the statewide and national averages.

Another characteristic of the economic potential of the region is migration of the population. Migration is linked to job opportunities and demand as well as wage differentials between regions. Counties with low rates of job creation and low wages will face higher worker mobility due to the lack of opportunity, or a "pull" phenomenon by urban areas with higher wages, better job opportunities, and a perceived better quality of life. Age and education also determine regional migration. Generally, the population aged 18 to 45 is the most mobile age group. The effect of education on migration is reflected by the movement of well-educated workers toward better job matches for themselves and their spouses and their attempts to raise their income levels by migrating to areas with employment opportunities.

The following section consists of population tables, figures, and maps, which together illustrate population totals, population growth rates, population by age groups, percent net migration, and population rankings.

### Population: Key Findings

- Between 1980 and 1990 Reno County's population decreased by 4 percent, while the growth rate of Kansas was a positive 5 percent and that of the U.S. a positive 10 percent. This decline in population was the first for any decade in Reno County since 1890. And while the declining trend in population reversed in the 1990's, Reno County's population by 2000 was still less than it had been in 1980. (Table 1)
- For most of the 1990's, the county's annual population growth rates were considerably less than those of the state's. (Table 1)

- Reno County has had one of the lowest population growth rates of the comparative counties for three decades. All of the counties saw decreased population growth in the 1980's, but only two saw population losses: Reno (-4 percent) and Lyon (-1 percent.) In the 1990's Reno's population grew at a moderate 3.9 percent. Lyon County grew slightly less at 3.5 percent. The rest had much higher population growth rates, with McPherson and Saline both above 8 percent. (Table 2 and Figure 1a)
- The largest age group segment in Reno County is made up of people in the 25 to 44 year-old range, but the percent of the population in that range is declining slowly over time. About 30 percent of the Reno County population was in the 25 to 44 range in 1990, but only 27 percent of the population was in that range in 2000. The age group which saw the most growth was the 45 to 64 year-old range, which grew from 19.4 percent of the population in 1990 to 23 percent in 2000. This data illustrates the effect of the aging baby-boom population. (Table 3 and 3a and Figure 2)
- Census race data from 2000 can not be directly compared to data from previous years, due to a change in reporting which now allows people to select more than one race. In 2000, 1,172 people in Reno County indicated they belonged to more than one race. Therefore, the 2000 Census data figures for individual races would probably be slightly higher if the old categorization had been used. Nevertheless, the new data is still useful for indicating trends. (Tables 4 and 4a)
- The population of Reno County has become more racially diverse over time, with the Hispanic population growing the most over the last two decades. The Hispanic population of Reno County in 1980 was 2,177 compared to around 3,661 in 2000, an increase of 68 percent. This brought the Hispanic population in 2000 to approximately 5.7 percent of the total. (Tables 4 and 4a)
- Though their numbers have been decreasing over time, non-Hispanic whites still made up the majority of the county's population in 2000, at 89 percent of the total. Blacks made up 2.9 percent of the population in 2000, while the Others category, which includes Native Americans and Asians, stood at approximately 3.8 percent of the total. (Tables 4 and 4a)
- Each decade since the 1970s, Reno County's net migration has fluctuated considerably. Net migration is calculated as the change in population less the difference between births and deaths. A negative net migration indicates that more people have moved out of the county than have moved in. Only in the 1980's did Reno County have a positive net migration. Between 1990 and 1999 Reno County's net migration was slightly negative at -103 people. Net migration in Kansas from 1990 to 1999 was 43,924. It is the first time since the 1970's that the state of Kansas had a positive net migration. (Table 5 and Map 3)

- Reno County dropped from being the fourth most populated county in Kansas in 1940 to the sixth in 1980, and the eighth in 1990. By the year 2000, however, the ranking had rebounded somewhat to seventh. (Table 6)
- In 1990 the ten-year population growth rate in Reno County was 39<sup>th</sup> compared to all other counties in the state. In other words, 38 other counties had populations which grew faster than Reno's from 1980 to 1990 (Map 1.) Between 1990 and 2000 population grew slightly more in Reno County, bringing its growth rate to 35<sup>th</sup> in the state. (Map 2)

**Table 1**  
**Population Totals, Growth Rates, Rank & Share**  
**Reno County and Kansas**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Reno County</u>		<u>Kansas</u>		<u>Reno County Rank in state</u>	<u>Share (%)</u>
	<u>Population Total</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>	<u>Population Total</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>		
<b>1890</b>	27,079		1,428,108		11	1.9
<b>1900</b>	29,027	7.2	1,470,495	3.0	9	2.0
<b>1910</b>	37,853	30.4	1,690,949	15.0	8	2.2
<b>1920</b>	44,423	17.4	1,769,257	4.6	6	2.5
<b>1930</b>	47,785	7.6	1,880,999	6.3	6	2.5
<b>1940</b>	52,165	9.2	1,801,028	-4.3	4	2.9
<b>1950</b>	54,058	3.6	1,905,299	5.8	5	2.8
<b>1960</b>	59,055	9.2	2,178,611	14.3	5	2.7
<b>1970</b>	60,765	2.9	2,249,071	3.2	5	2.7
<b>1980</b>	64,983	6.9	2,364,236	5.1	6	2.7
<b>1990</b>	62,367	-4.0	2,477,588	4.8	8	2.5
<b>1991*</b>	62,276	-0.1	2,495,209	0.7	8	2.5
<b>1992*</b>	62,204	-0.1	2,526,042	1.2	8	2.5
<b>1993*</b>	62,441	0.4	2,547,605	0.9	8	2.5
<b>1994*</b>	62,314	-0.2	2,569,118	0.8	8	2.4
<b>1995*</b>	62,720	0.7	2,586,942	0.7	8	2.4
<b>1996*</b>	62,944	0.4	2,598,266	0.4	8	2.4
<b>1997*</b>	63,006	0.1	2,616,339	0.7	8	2.4
<b>1998*</b>	63,241	0.4	2,638,667	0.9	8	2.4
<b>1999*</b>	63,702	0.7	2,654,052	0.6	8	2.4
<b>2000</b>	64,790	1.7	2,688,418	1.3	7	2.4

\* Estimates

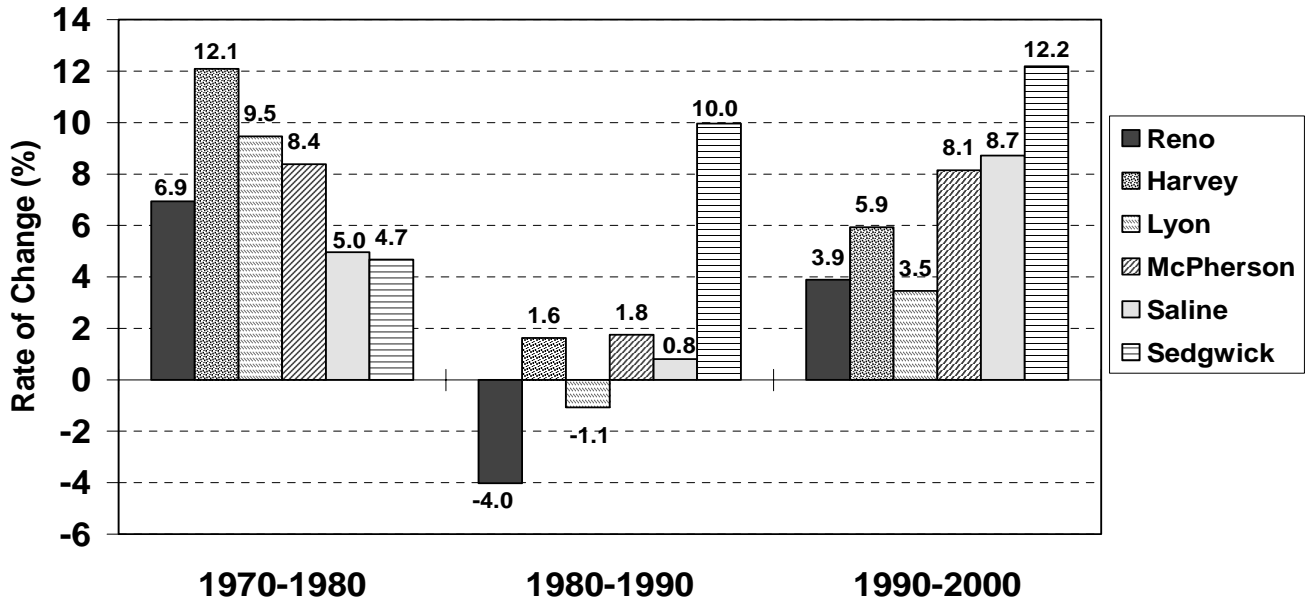
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol..1; "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants; 1980 Census of Population," Vol.1, Chapter A, Part 18; "1990 Census of Population and Housing" Floerchinger, Teresa D.

**Table 2**  
**Population Growth Rates**  
**Reno County, Comparative Counties, Kansas, and United States**  
**1970-2000**

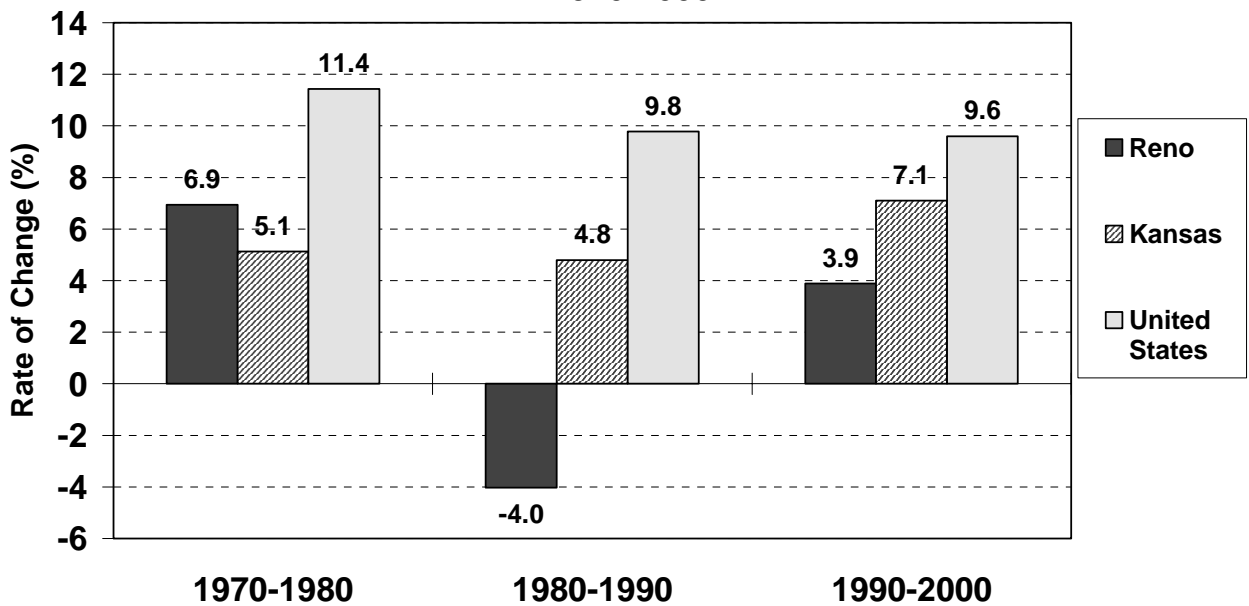
<u>Year</u>	<u>1970-1980</u>	<u>1980-1990</u>	<u>1990-2000</u>
<b>Reno</b>	6.9	-4.0	3.9
<b>Harvey</b>	12.1	1.6	5.9
<b>Lyon</b>	9.5	-1.1	3.5
<b>McPherson</b>	8.4	1.8	8.1
<b>Saline</b>	5.0	0.8	8.7
<b>Sedgwick</b>	4.7	10.0	12.2
<b>Kansas</b>	5.1	4.8	8.5
<b>United States</b>	11.4	9.8	8.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "1980 Census of Population," PC90-1-A; "1990 Decennial Census"; "2000 Decennial Census." Calculations: PRI.

**Figure 1a**  
**Rates of Population Change**  
**Reno and Comparative Counties**  
**1970-2000**



**Figure 1b**  
**Rates of Population Change**  
**Reno County, Kansas, and U.S.**  
**1970-2000**



**Table 3**  
**Population by Selected Age Groups**  
**Reno County, Hutchinson, and Kansas**  
**1990-2000**

	<b>Age:</b>	<b><u>0-4</u></b>	<b><u>5-17</u></b>	<b><u>18-24</u></b>	<b><u>25-44</u></b>	<b><u>45-64</u></b>	<b><u>65 and over</u></b>
<b>Reno</b>	<b>1990</b>	4,339	11,490	5,531	18,773	12,087	10,147
	<b>2000</b>	4,138	11,714	6,027	17,445	14,848	10,618
<b>Hutchinson</b>	<b>1990</b>	2,911	7,172	4,250	12,639	7,631	7,149
	<b>2000</b>	2,852	7,154	4,670	11,964	9,159	7,527
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>1990</b>	189,988	472,267	255,195	776,430	443,877	342,863
	<b>2000</b>	188,708	524,285	275,592	769,204	574,400	356,229

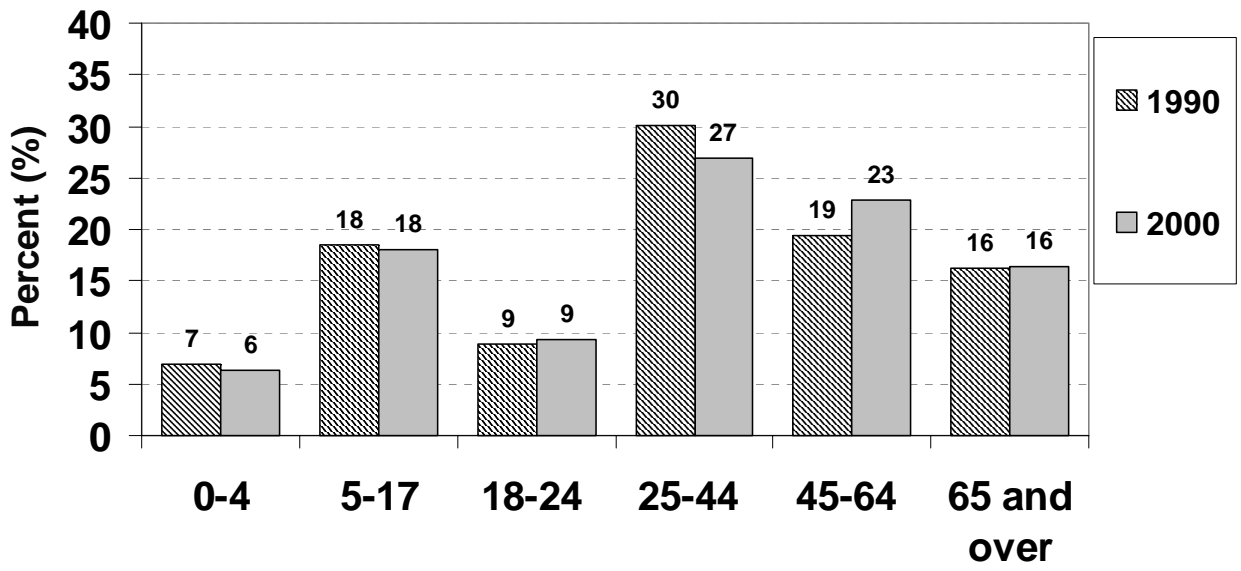
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Table 3a**  
**Population by Selected Age Groups as Percent of Total**  
**Reno County, Hutchinson, and Kansas**  
**1990-2000**

	<b>Age:</b>	<b><u>0-4</u></b>	<b><u>5-17</u></b>	<b><u>18-24</u></b>	<b><u>25-44</u></b>	<b><u>45-64</u></b>	<b><u>65 and over</u></b>
<b>Reno</b>	<b>1990</b>	7.0 %	18.4 %	8.9 %	30.1 %	19.4 %	16.3 %
	<b>2000</b>	6.4	18.1	9.3	26.9	22.9	16.4
<b>Hutchinson</b>	<b>1990</b>	7.0	17.2	10.2	30.3	18.3	17.1
	<b>2000</b>	6.6	16.5	10.8	27.6	21.1	17.4
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>1990</b>	7.7	19.1	10.3	31.3	17.9	13.8
	<b>2000</b>	7.0	19.5	10.3	28.6	21.4	13.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Figure 2**  
**Population by Age Group as Percent of Total Population**  
**Reno County**  
**1990-2000**



**Table 4  
Population by Hispanic Origin  
Reno County and Kansas  
1980-2000**

	Year	Total	White		Total Black	Total Hispanic	Others	2 or More Races
			Total	Hispanic				
Reno	1980	64,983	61,708	n/a	n/a	1,472	2,177	1,803
	1990	62,367	58,697	857	57,840	1,712	2,478	2,065
	2000 *	64,790	59,320	1,523	57,797	1,865	3,661	2,433
Kansas	1980	2,364,236	2,168,221	n/a	n/a	126,127	63,339	69,331
	1990	2,477,588	2,233,897	40,016	2,193,881	143,076	93,670	102,512
	2000 *	2,688,418	2,313,944	79,947	2,233,997	154,198	188,252	163,780

\* 2000 race data is not comparable to previous years due to changes in reporting. See text for more.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Table 4a  
Population by Hispanic Origin as Percent of Total  
Reno County and Kansas  
1980-2000**

	Year	White		Total Black	Total Hispanic	Others	2 or More Races
		Total	Hispanic				
Reno	1980	95.0%	n/a	n/a	2.3%	3.4%	2.8%
	1990	94.1	1.4	92.7	2.7	4.0	3.3
	2000 *	91.6	2.4	89.2	2.9	5.7	3.8
Kansas	1980	91.7%	n/a	n/a	5.3%	2.7%	2.9%
	1990	90.2	1.6	88.5	5.8	3.8	4.1
	2000 *	86.1	3.0	83.1	5.7	7.0	6.1

\* 2000 race data is not comparable to previous years due to changes in reporting. See text for more.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

**Table 5  
Net Migration  
1970-1999**

**Reno County**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Population Change</u>	<u>Births</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Births - Deaths</u>	<u>Net *** Migration</u>	<u>% Net Migration</u>
1970*	60,765	1,710	n/a	n/a	5,085	-3,375	-5.7
1980*	64,983	4,218	n/a	n/a	3,104	1,114	1.8
1990*	62,367	-2,616	9,456	6,247	3,209	-5,825	-9.0
1999**	63,702	1,335	7,436	5,998	1,438	-103	-0.2

**Kansas**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Population Change</u>	<u>Births</u>	<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Births - Deaths</u>	<u>Net *** Migration</u>	<u>% Net Migration</u>
1970*	2,249,071	70,460	409,189	219,067	190,122	-119,662	-5.5
1980*	2,364,236	115,165	355,861	218,713	137,148	-21,983	-1.0
1990*	2,477,588	113,352	397,215	220,466	176,749	-63,397	-2.7
1999**	2,654,052	176,464	348,226	215,686	132,540	43,924	1.8

n/a: not available

\* Decade ending

\*\* Population estimate

\*\*\* Net migration = Population change - (births-deaths)

Source: Population Totals: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Census of Population, 1970: Number of Inhabitants; 1980 Census of Population," Vol.1, Chapter A, Part 18; "1990 Census of Population and Housing;" Population Estimates U.S. Bureau of the Census. Calculations: PRI.

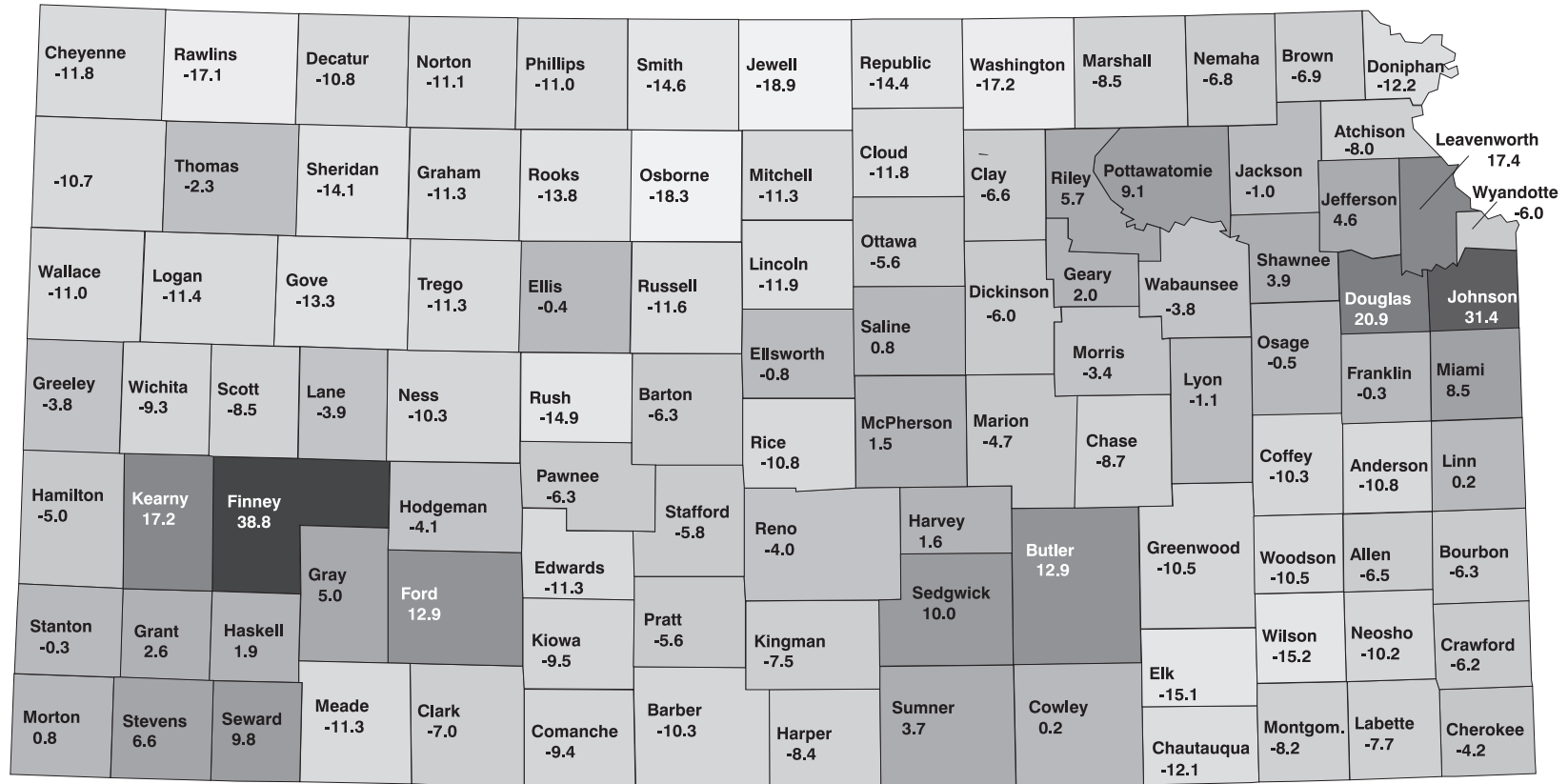
**Table 6**  
**Population of Top Ranking Kansas Counties**  
**(Thousands)**

Rk	1940	Pop.	Rk	1980	Pop.	Rk	1990	Pop.	Rk	2000	Pop.
1	Wyandotte	145	1	Sedgwick	367	1	Sedgwick	404	1	Sedgwick	453
2	Sedgwick	143	2	Johnson	270	2	Johnson	355	2	Johnson	451
3	Shawnee	91	3	Wyandotte	172	3	Wyandotte	162	3	Shawnee	170
<b>4</b>	<b>Reno</b>	<b>52</b>	4	Shawnee	155	4	Shawnee	161	4	Wyandotte	158
5	Montgomery	49	5	Douglas	68	5	Douglas	82	5	Douglas	100
6	Crawford	45	<b>6</b>	<b>Reno</b>	<b>65</b>	6	Riley	67	6	Leavenworth	69
7	Leavenworth	41	7	Riley	64	7	Leavenworth	64	<b>7</b>	<b>Reno</b>	<b>65</b>
8	Cowley	38	8	Leavenworth	55	<b>8</b>	<b>Reno</b>	<b>62</b>	8	Riley	63
9	Johnson	33	9	Saline	49	9	Butler	51	9	Butler	59
10	Butler	32	10	Butler	45	10	Saline	49	10	Saline	54
11	Labette	30	11	Montgomery	42	11	Montgomery	39	11	Finney	41
12	Cherokee	30	12	Crawford	38	12	Cowley	37	12	Crawford	38
13	Saline	30	13	Cowley	37	13	Crawford	36	13	Cowley	36
14	Lyon	26	14	Lyon	35	14	Lyon	35	14	Montgomery	36
15	Sumner	26	15	Barton	31	15	Finney	33	15	Lyon	36
16	Douglas	25	16	Harvey	31	16	Harvey	31	16	Harvey	33
17	Barton	25	17	Geary	30	17	Geary	30	17	Ford	32
18	McPherson	24	18	McPherson	27	18	Barton	29	18	McPherson	30
19	Dickinson	23	19	Ellis	26	19	Ford	27	19	Miami	28
20	Atchison	22	20	Labette	26	20	McPherson	27	20	Barton	28

\* Population Projection

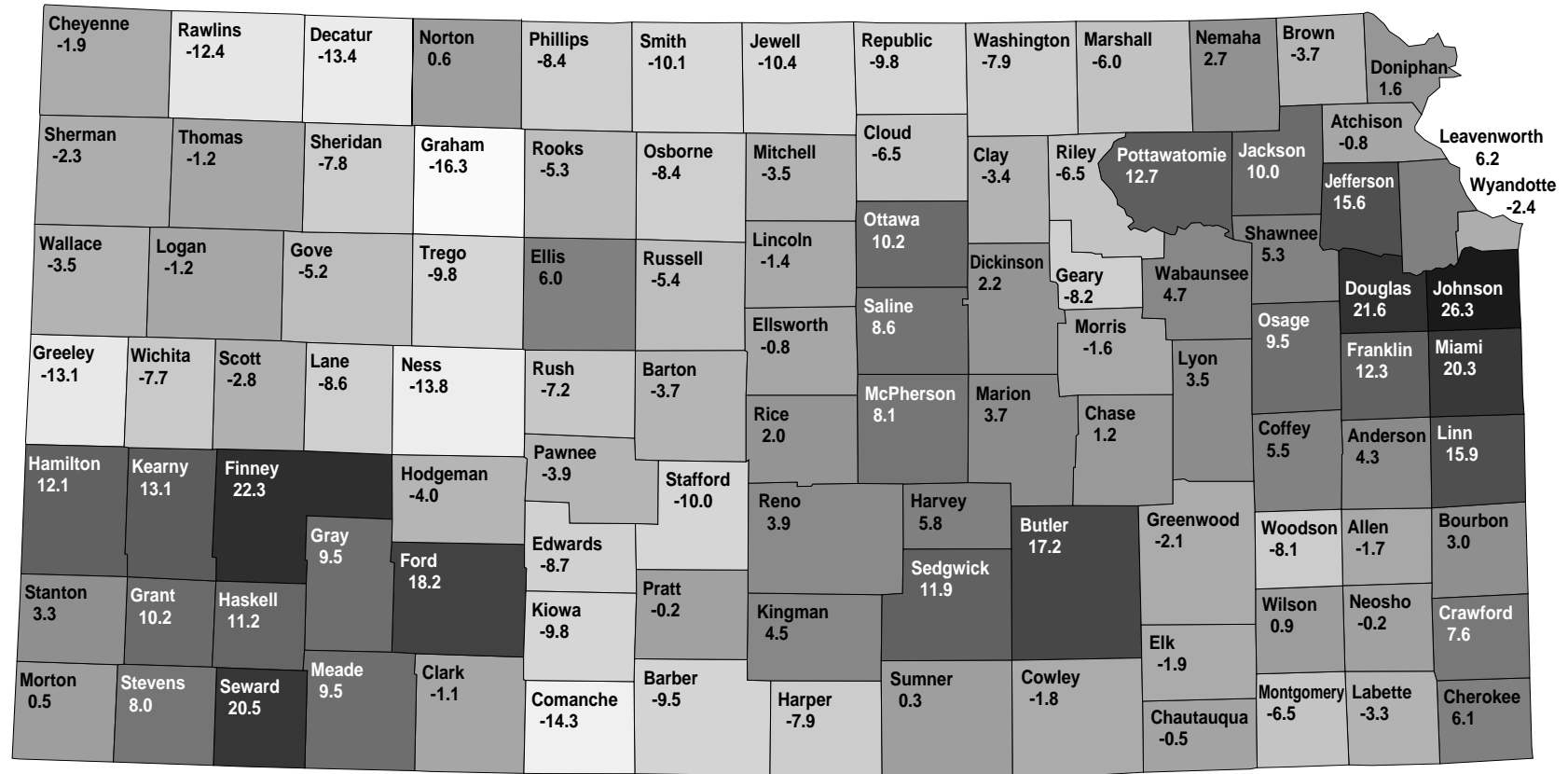
Source: University of Kansas, Policy Research Institute, "Kansas Statistical Abstract," 1992-1993, "Population of Kansas Counties, 1890-1980; U.S. Bureau of the Census, "1990 Census of Population and Housing." Floerchinger, Teresa D., "Kansas Population Projections, 1990-2030," Kansas Division of the Budget, September, 1992. Calculations: PRI.

## Map 1 Percent Population Change: 1980 - 1990



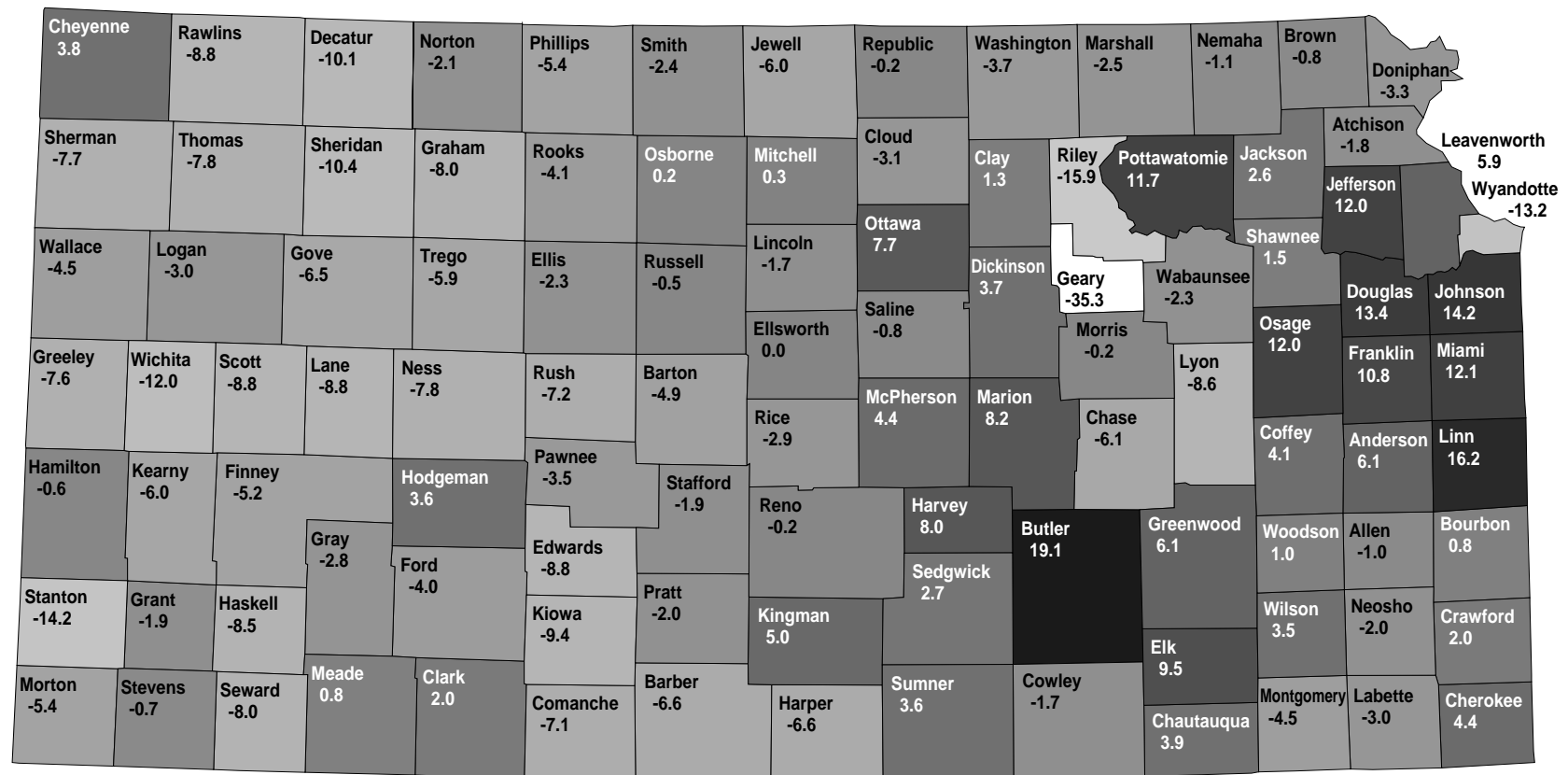
Source: Policy Research Institute, The University of Kansas: data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

## Map 2 Percent Population Change: 1990-2000



Source: Policy Research Institute, The University of Kansas: data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

### Map 3 Percent Net Migration: 1990 - 1999



Source: Policy Research Institute, The University of Kansas: data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

## EMPLOYMENT

Economic vitality of every community is reflected in the employment situation. This section compares the key employment measurements such as labor force size, job creation rate, and unemployment in the Hutchinson-Reno County area with its comparative counties and the state of Kansas.

The number of people who are either working or willing to work determines the size of the labor force. This number is influenced not only by the size of population but also by the perceptions of individuals that suitable job opportunities exist within the community. Diverse healthy economies tend to offer the widest variety of job opportunities and thereby attract a large number of job seekers, which increases the size of the labor force.

The unemployment level reflects the amount of economic activity within an area and how well the local market is able to match the supply and demand for labor.

Job creation rates (net change in average annual employment) reflect the growth in employment levels and the range of employment opportunities. As some jobs are lost in a community due to changing economic circumstances, they may be replaced by new jobs. Net job creation reflects the net gain or net loss in jobs over a given period of time.

Place of work data compared to the place of residence data provide the insight of the employment opportunities within the area.

The following data include tables, maps, and graphs on employment growth rates, number of firms by number of employees, percentage distribution of firms by number of employees, employment levels by industry, labor force participation, unemployment rates, and job growth.

### Employment: Key Findings

- Between 1990 and 2000 the average annual employment in Reno County (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis data by place of work) increased from 29.9 thousand employees in 1990 to 30.9 thousand in 2000. Most of the increase was seen in the first five years of the decade, with a 4.1 percent growth from 1990 to 1995 and a 0.8 decrease 1995 to 2000 (Table 7). During both periods, the average annual employment growth in Reno County was lower than the state growth rate. (Table 7 and Figure 3)
- In the decade of the 1990's Reno County's employment growth was one of the most sluggish among the comparative counties and the state of Kansas. In the first half of the decade Reno County's employment grew at a rate of 4.1 percent, compared to 4.9 percent for the state and rates over 8 percent for Lyon, McPherson, and Saline

counties. In the second half of the decade Reno's employment level fell 0.8 percent. The employment growth rate for the state for that same period was 6.3 percent. (Table 7, Figures 3 and 3a)

- The number of firms located in Reno County increased 3.9 percent between 1988 and 1998, compared to a 12.6 percent increase for the state of Kansas over the same time period (Table 8).
- The percentage distribution patterns of firms by the number of employees are very similar in Reno County and the entire state of Kansas. The majority of firms are small companies with less than 20 employees and between 1988 and 1998 their number decreased from 88 percent to 86 percent in Reno County and from 88.4 percent to 86.5 percent in the entire state of Kansas. The percentage of the medium-sized companies with up to one hundred employees increased from around 10 percent to around 11 percent in both Reno County and the state of Kansas. Both Reno County and the state of Kansas have a small percentage of companies with more than one hundred employees, and their share has been increasing slightly (Tables 8 and 8a). The data indicates the importance of small businesses to the local economy.
- Total employment for Reno County grew from 36,309 in 1993 to 39,966 in 1998, which represents a growth rate of 10 percent, compared with 13.5 percent growth rate for the state of Kansas during the same period of time (Table 9).
- From 1993 to 1998, farm employment decreased by 3.1 percent in Reno County and fell by 1.0 percent in Kansas. Mining had the largest decline in employment in Reno County, losing 342 jobs since 1993 to end up at 417 jobs remaining in 1998, a decrease of 45 percent. (Table 9)
- Major categories that saw increased employment between 1993 and 1998 included the Services sector which employed 11,012 people in 1998. That was a 19 percent increase from the number of Service employees in 1993. The Construction sector saw the fastest growth, increasing 35 percent from 1993 to 2,237 jobs in 1998. The two other major employer groups that grew in the Reno County economy were the Retail Trade sector with 8,233 jobs in 1998 and the Government sector with 5,509 jobs in 1998. (Table 9 and Figure 4).
- In 1998, Services was the largest employment category in Reno County with a 27.6 percent share of total employment. In five years since 1993 it increased its share by 2.1 percent, the largest increase of any other sector. The second largest sector of the economy was the Retail Trade sector with a 20.6 percent share in 1998, followed by the Manufacturing sector with 15.4 percent and the Government sector with nearly 14 percent. (Table 9a)
- Recent wage and salary employment estimates based on the place of work data show that employment of all industries in Reno County has decreased 0.6 percent

from 1998 to 1999. Employment estimates for the state of Kansas show a 1.3 percent increase from 1998 to 1999 (Table 9b).

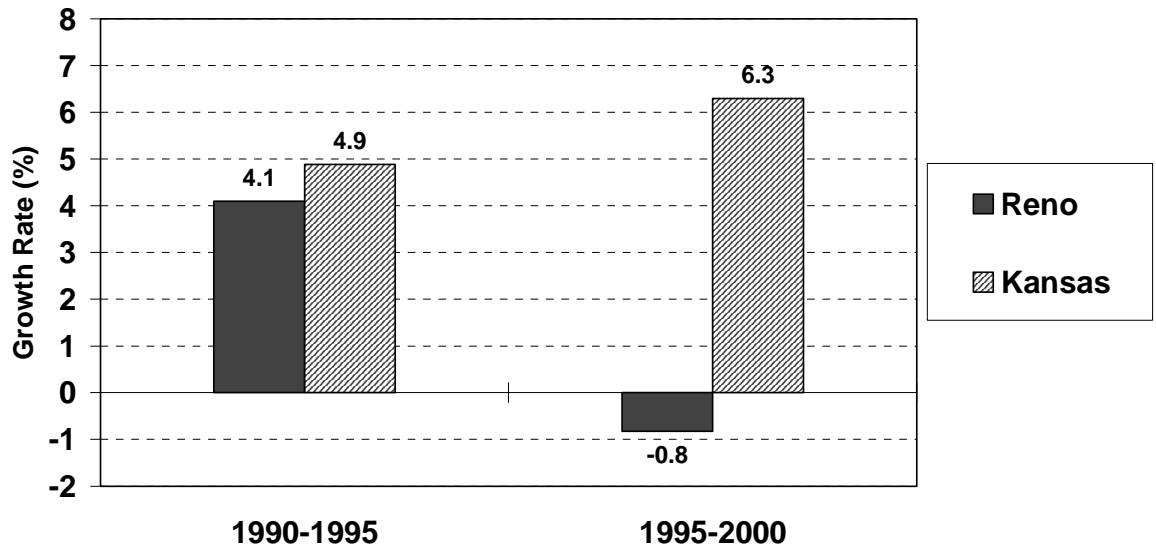
- Place of residence data for Reno County indicates a 1.6 percent annual increase in employment between 1998 and 1999 (these figures are from the Kansas Department of Human Resources, and as the name suggests, are based on the place of residence of individuals rather than their place of work). At the same time the civilian labor force increased only by 0.6 percent, leading to a 23.9 percent decrease in unemployment. (Table 8b).
- Comparing place of residence data and place of work data can indicate commuting trends. Table 9b shows that the number of jobs (place of work data) in Reno County in 1999 was 2,643 less than the number of people employed in Reno County in 1999 (place of residence data.) This means that 2,643 people, or 8 percent of the number of employed people in Reno County, commuted to a job outside of the county.
- The unemployment rate in Reno County decreased from 3.9 percent in 1998 to 3 percent in 1999. The rate remains quite respectable compared to the selected counties. (Table 9b and Map 5)
- In the state of Kansas total employment (place of residence data) increased by 2 percent between 1998 and 1999. A much smaller increase in the civilian labor force resulted in a 20.4 percent decrease in the number of unemployed (Table 9b)
- The labor force participation rate is the percentage of population aged 16 and over that is in the labor force. The labor force participation rate in 1990 for Reno County was 62.6 percent (Map 4). This participation rate was somewhat lower than Kansas' rate of 65.4 percent and the U.S. rate of 64.4 percent (1990 U.S. Census.)

**Table 7**  
**Employment Growth Rates**  
**Reno County, Comparative Counties, Kansas, and United States**  
**Place of Residence Data**  
**1990-2000**

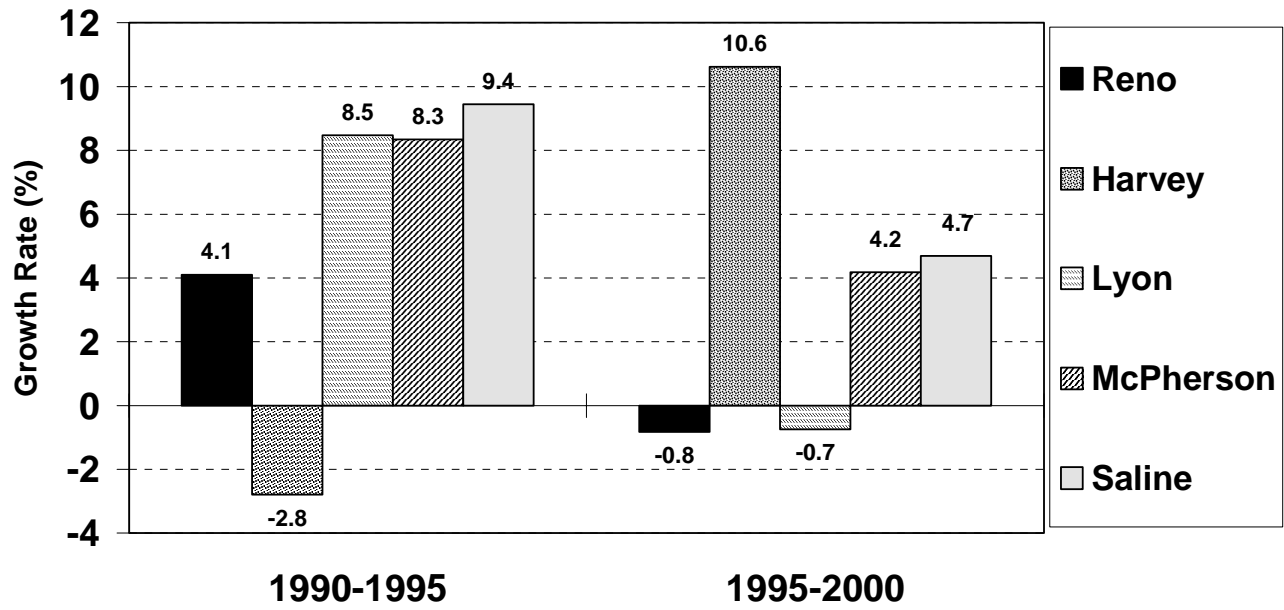
	<u>Average Annual Employment</u>			<u>% Employment Growth</u>	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1990-1995</u>	<u>1995-2000</u>
<b>Reno</b>	29,979	31,207	30,950	4.1 %	-0.8 %
<b>Harvey</b>	15,651	15,214	16,829	-2.8	10.6
<b>Lyon</b>	17,422	18,898	18,758	8.5	-0.7
<b>McPherson</b>	13,994	15,162	15,795	8.3	4.2
<b>Saline</b>	25,928	28,376	29,707	9.4	4.7
<b>Kansas</b>	1,219,000	1,278,500	1,359,000	4.9	6.3

Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources.

**Figure 3**  
**Employment Growth Rates**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1990-2000**



**Figure 3a**  
**Employment Growth Rates**  
**Reno and Comparative Counties**  
**1990-2000**



**Table 8**  
**Number of Firms, by Number of Employees**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1988-1998**

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Reno</u>			<u>Kansas</u>		
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>1 -- 19</b>	1,477	1,499	1.5 %	58,081	64,030	10.2 %
<b>20 -- 99</b>	163	199	22.1	6,604	8,401	27.2
<b>100 -- 499</b>	36	43	19.4	958	1,441	50.4
<b>500+</b>	2	3	50.0	93	147	58.1
<b>Total</b>	1,678	1,744	3.9	65,736	74,019	12.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns," 1988 and 1998; Policy Research Institute.

**Table 8a**  
**Percentage Distribution of Firms, by Number of Employees**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1988-1998**

<u>Employees</u>	<u>Reno</u>		<u>Kansas</u>	
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1998</u>
<b>0 - 19</b>	88.0 %	86.0 %	88.4 %	86.5 %
<b>20 - 99</b>	9.7	11.4	10.0	11.3
<b>100 - 499</b>	2.1	2.5	1.5	1.9
<b>500+</b>	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2

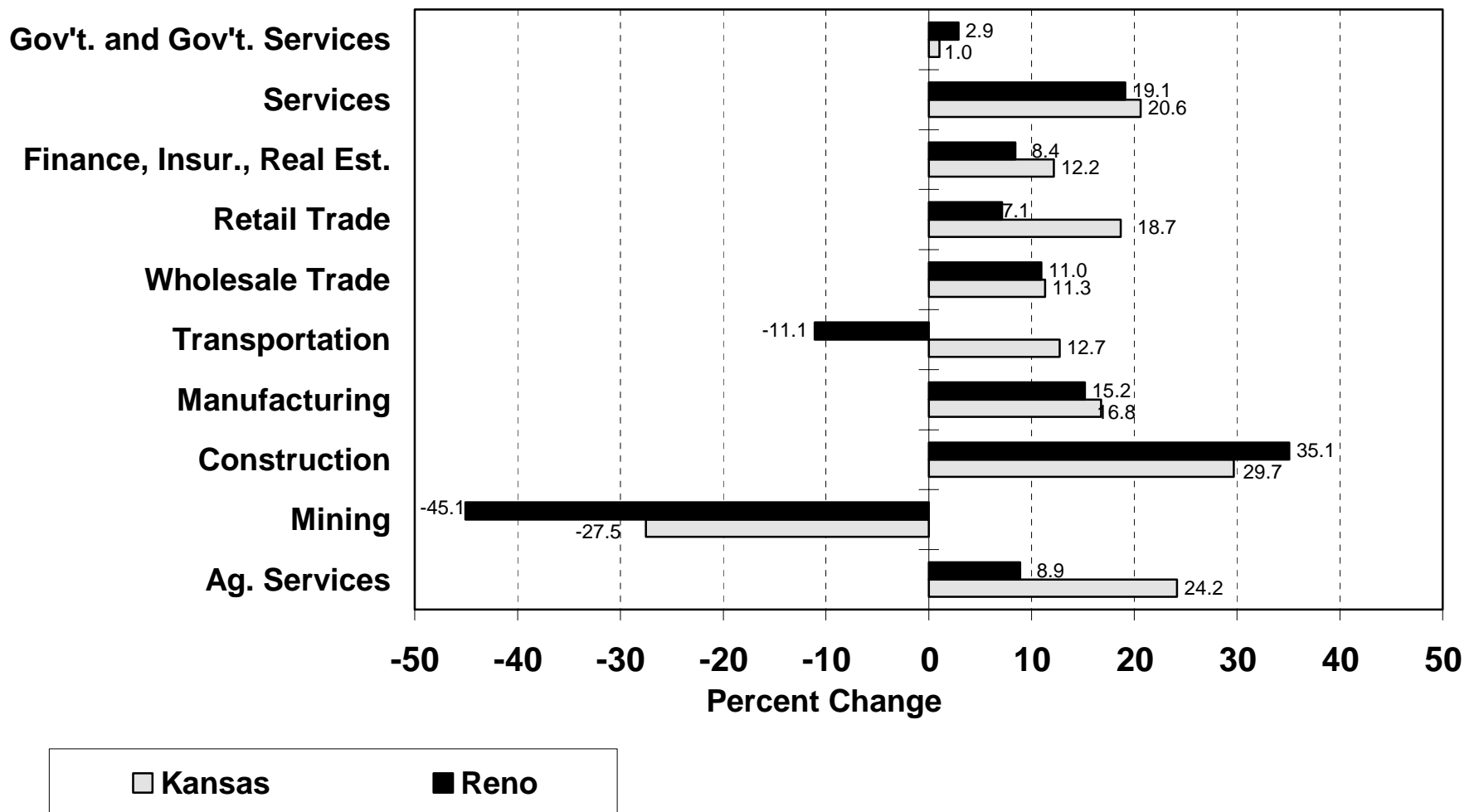
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns," 1988 and 1998; Policy Research Institute. Due to numbers being rounded up, percentages may not equal 100%.

**Table 9**  
**Employment Levels by Industry**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**Place of Work Data**  
**1993-1998**

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Reno</u>				<u>Kansas</u>			
	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
<b>Ag. Services</b>	326	355	29	8.9 %	17,039	21,159	4,120	24.2 %
<b>Mining</b>	759	417	-342	-45.1	28,274	20,491	-7,783	-27.5
<b>Construction</b>	1,656	2,237	581	35.1	69,834	90,576	20,742	29.7
<b>Manufacturing</b>	5,331	6,141	810	15.2	187,914	219,402	31,488	16.8
<b>Transportation</b>	1,227	1,091	-136	-11.1	75,247	84,832	9,585	12.7
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	1,397	1,550	153	11.0	74,037	82,421	8,384	11.3
<b>Retail Trade</b>	7,685	8,233	548	7.1	251,571	298,627	47,056	18.7
<b>Finance, Insur., Real Est.</b>	1,683	1,825	142	8.4	95,702	107,350	11,648	12.2
<b>Services</b>	9,244	11,012	1,768	19.1	387,242	467,121	79,879	20.6
<b>Gov't. and Gov't. Services</b>	5,354	5,509	155	2.9	268,035	270,802	2,767	1.0
<b>Subtotal -- Non-Farm</b>	34,662	38,370	3,708	10.7	1,454,895	1,662,781	207,886	14.3
<b>Farm Employment</b>	1,647	1,596	-51	-3.1	81,070	80,231	-839	-1.0
<b>Total Employment</b>	36,309	39,966	3,657	10.1	1,535,965	1,743,012	207,047	13.5

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (REIS).

**Figure 4**  
**Percent Change in Employment by Industry**  
**1993-1998**



**Table 9a**  
**Employment Percent Share by Industry**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**Place of Work Data**  
**1993-1998**

<u>Industry</u>	<u>Reno</u>			<u>Kansas</u>		
	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Change</u>
<b>Ag. Services</b>	0.9	0.9	0.0 %	1.1	1.2	0.1 %
<b>Mining</b>	2.1	1.0	-1.0	1.8	1.2	-0.7
<b>Construction</b>	4.6	5.6	1.0	4.5	5.2	0.6
<b>Manufacturing</b>	14.7	15.4	0.7	12.2	12.6	0.4
<b>Transportation</b>	3.4	2.7	-0.6	4.9	4.9	0.0
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	3.8	3.9	0.0	4.8	4.7	-0.1
<b>Retail Trade</b>	21.2	20.6	-0.6	16.4	17.1	0.8
<b>Finance, Insur., Real Est.</b>	4.6	4.6	-0.1	6.2	6.2	-0.1
<b>Services</b>	25.5	27.6	2.1	25.2	26.8	1.6
<b>Gov't. and Gov't. Services</b>	14.7	13.8	-1.0	17.5	15.5	-1.9
<b>Subtotal -- Non-Farm</b>	95.5	96.0	0.5	94.7	95.4	0.7
<b>Farm Employment</b>	4.5	4.0	-0.5	5.3	4.6	-0.7

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (REIS).

**Table 9b  
Labor Market Summary  
1998-1999**

	Reno County			Kansas
	1998 Average	1999 Average	% Change 1998-99	% Change 1998-99
<b><u>Place of Residence Data</u></b>				
Civilian labor force	33,114	33,321	0.6	1.1
Employment	31,814	32,332	1.6	2.0
Unemployment	1,300	989	-23.9	-20.4
Unemployment rate	3.9	3.0	-23.1	-21.1
<b><u>Place of Work Data</u></b>				
<b><u>Wage and Salary Employment</u></b>				
All industries	29,874	29,689	-0.6	1.3
Goods producing industries	7,837	7,606	-2.9	0.2
Construction and mining	1,659	1,726	4.0	4.1
Manufacturing	5,939	5,635	-5.1	-1.2
Service producing industries	22,032	22,080	0.2	1.6
Transportation & Public utilities	753	771	2.4	7.4
Wholesale & Retail Trade	8,039	8,060	0.3	0.9
Finance, Insurance, & Real estate	907	904	-0.3	1.1
Services	7,274	7,236	-0.5	1.2
Government	5,059	5,109	1.0	1.4

Source: Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services. Developed in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

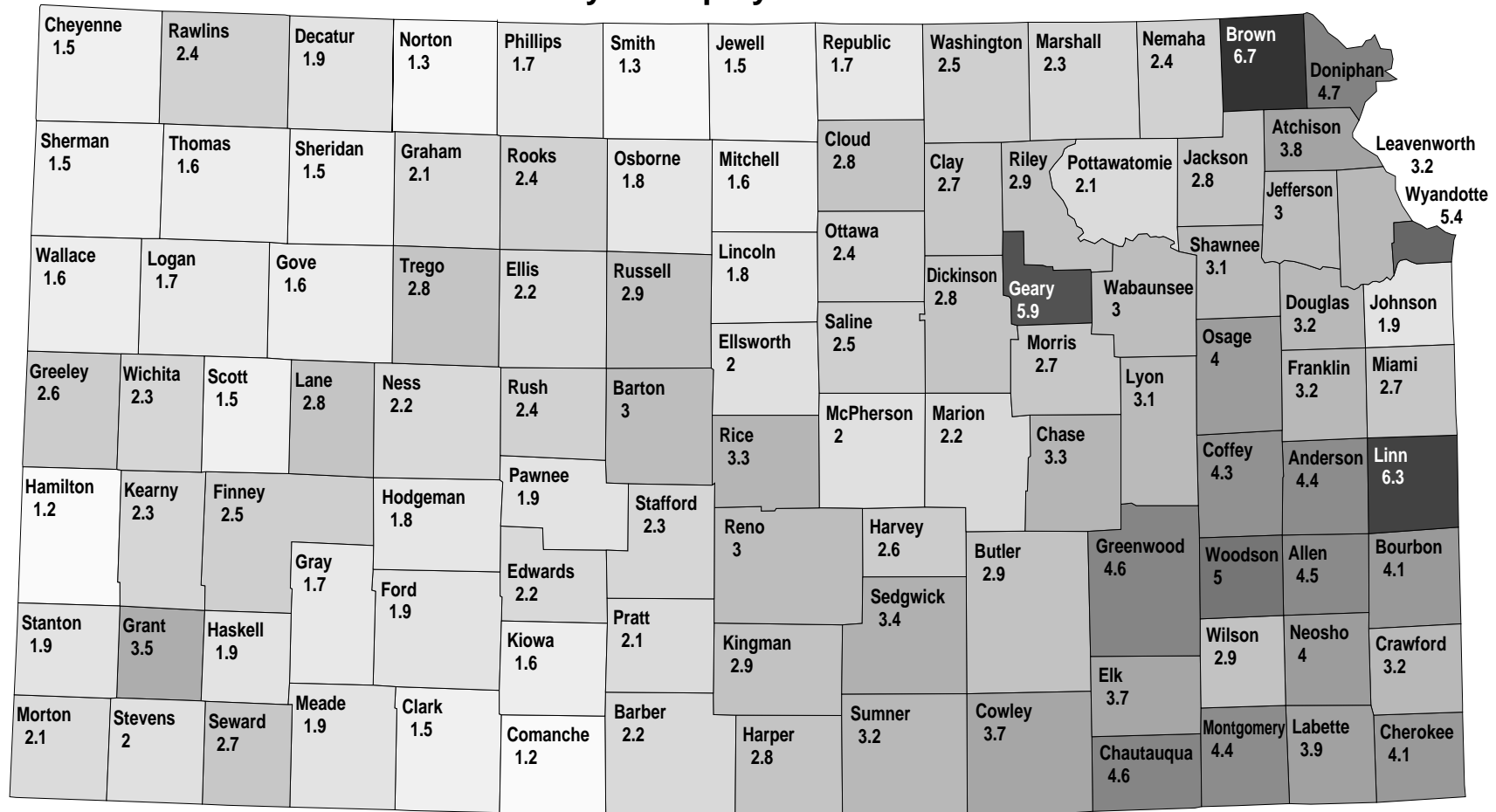
### Map 4 Labor Force Participation: 1990



Source: 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census.

**Kansas: 65.4%**

**Map 5  
County Unemployment Rates: 1999**



*Note:* Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.

Source: Policy Research Institute, The University of Kansas, "Kansas Statistical Abstract, 2000" using data from Kansas Labor Force Estimates Annual Average, 1999. Kansas Department of Human Resources, Labor Market Information Services, developed in cooperation with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Earnings and Income

The economic base of the community is determined by the income of the community's residents. Higher average wages may indicate a greater number of jobs in high growth, high performance businesses. Low wage growth may indicate a higher concentration of stable, declining industries.

This report looks at two major components of earnings and income: average wage per job and per capita personal income. Average wage per job reflects the productivity of local labor and the performance of local businesses. Per capita personal income indicates the relative wealth of the area compared to the state. As the productivity of business and industry increases, personal per capita income also rises. Decreasing or stable rates may be the result of mature or declining industry.

### Earnings and Income: Key Findings

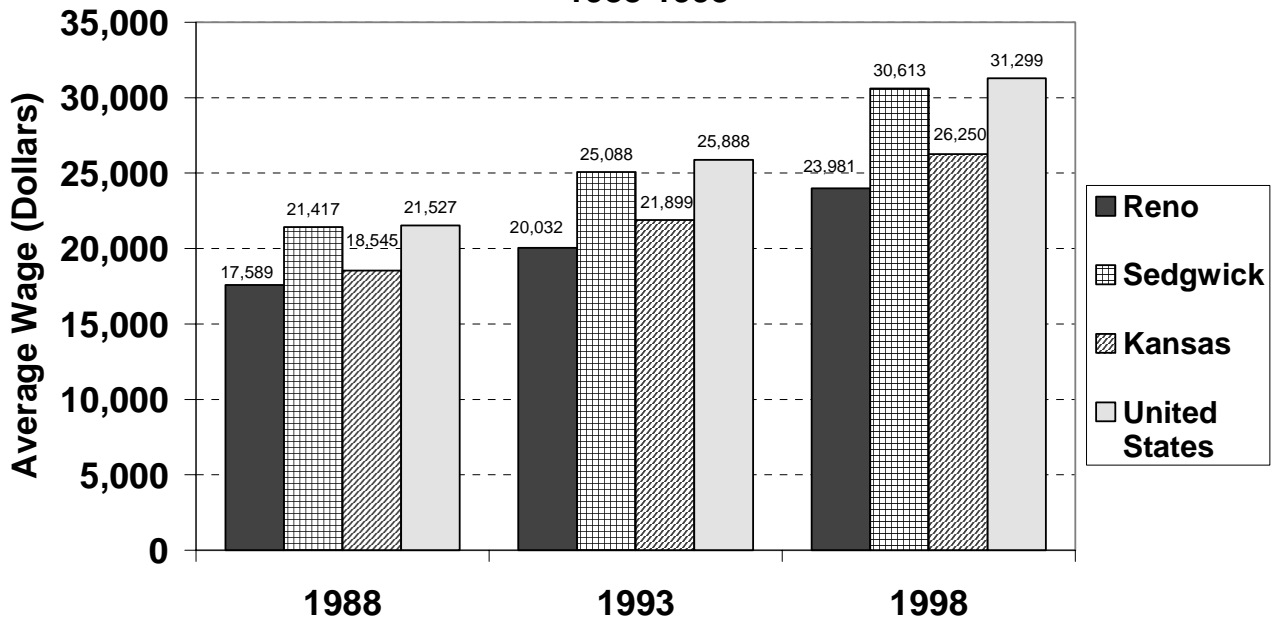
- In 1998 the average wage per job in Reno County was \$23,981. That was \$2,269 less than the average wage for the state of Kansas and \$7,318 less than the national average (Table 10, Figure 5).
- In 1998, Reno County's average wage per job was higher (though only slightly) than any of the comparative counties. However, Reno's average wage was over six thousand dollars less than what it was in Sedgwick county in 1998. This difference poses a challenge for Reno County in maintaining its workforce. (Table 10, Figure 5 and 5a)
- Between 1988 and 1993 the average wage per job in Reno County increased 13.9 percent and between 1993 and 1998 it increased 19.7 percent. These are slightly lower increases than the statewide and national results, but fare relatively well against those in the comparative counties. (Table 10)
- Per capita personal income in Reno County in 1999 grew slower than the state's rate, and at \$23,888 was still behind the state's average of \$26,705 per year (Table 11). Historical data show that per capita income in Reno County has always been lower than the state average. (Figure 5b)
- Per capita personal income for Reno County was lower in 1999 than all of the comparative counties except for Lyon. Saline County had the highest per capita income at \$28,624. (Map 6)

**Table 10**  
**Average Wage Per Job**  
**Reno County, Comparative Counties, Kansas and U.S.**  
**1988-1998**

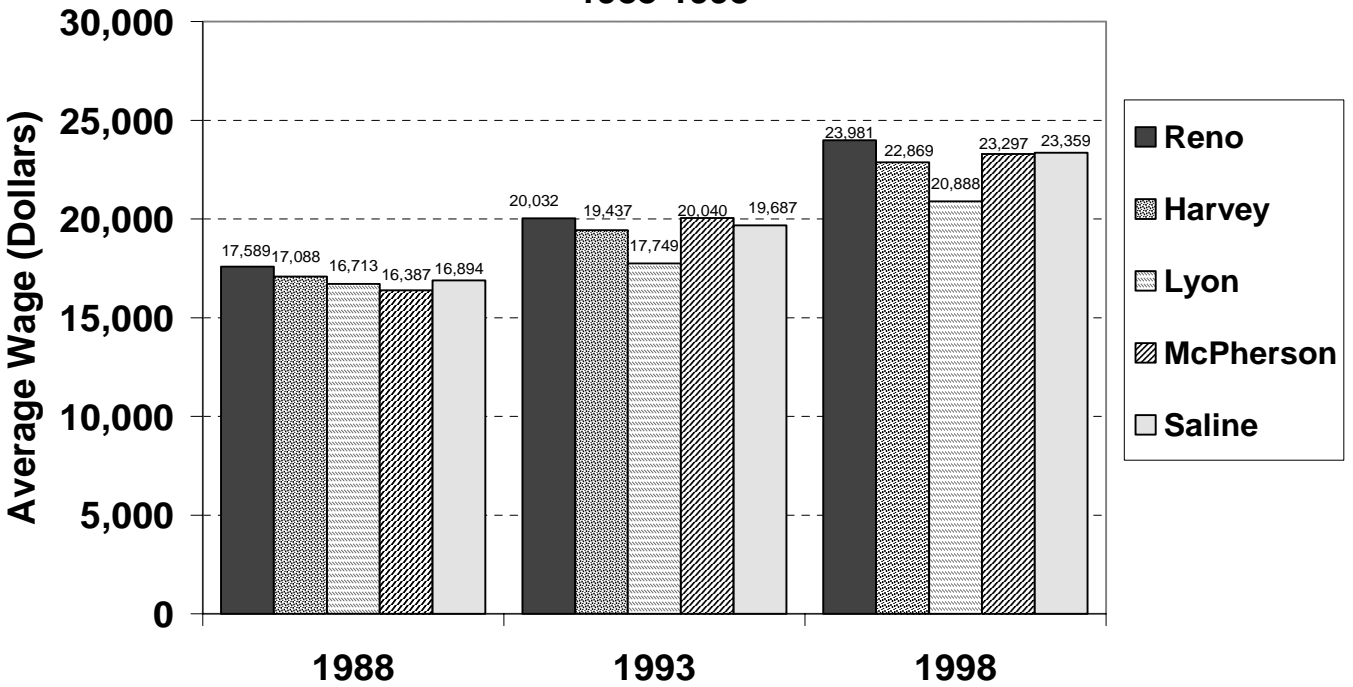
	<u>Average Wage per Job (Dollars)</u>			<u>% Growth</u>	
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>88-93</u>	<u>93-98</u>
<b>Reno</b>	17,589	20,032	23,981	13.9	19.7
<b>Harvey</b>	17,088	19,437	22,869	13.7	17.7
<b>Lyon</b>	16,713	17,749	20,888	6.2	17.7
<b>McPherson</b>	16,387	20,040	23,297	22.3	16.3
<b>Saline</b>	16,894	19,687	23,359	16.5	18.7
<b>Sedgwick</b>	21,417	25,088	30,613	17.1	22.0
<b>Kansas</b>	18,545	21,899	26,250	18.1	19.9
<b>United States</b>	21,527	25,888	31,299	20.3	20.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (1969-1998), Regional Economic Profile, Table CA30.

**Figure 5**  
**Average Wage per Job**  
**Reno County, Kansas and United States**  
**1988-1998**



**Figure 5a**  
**Average Wage per Job**  
**Reno and Comparative Counties**  
**1988-1998**

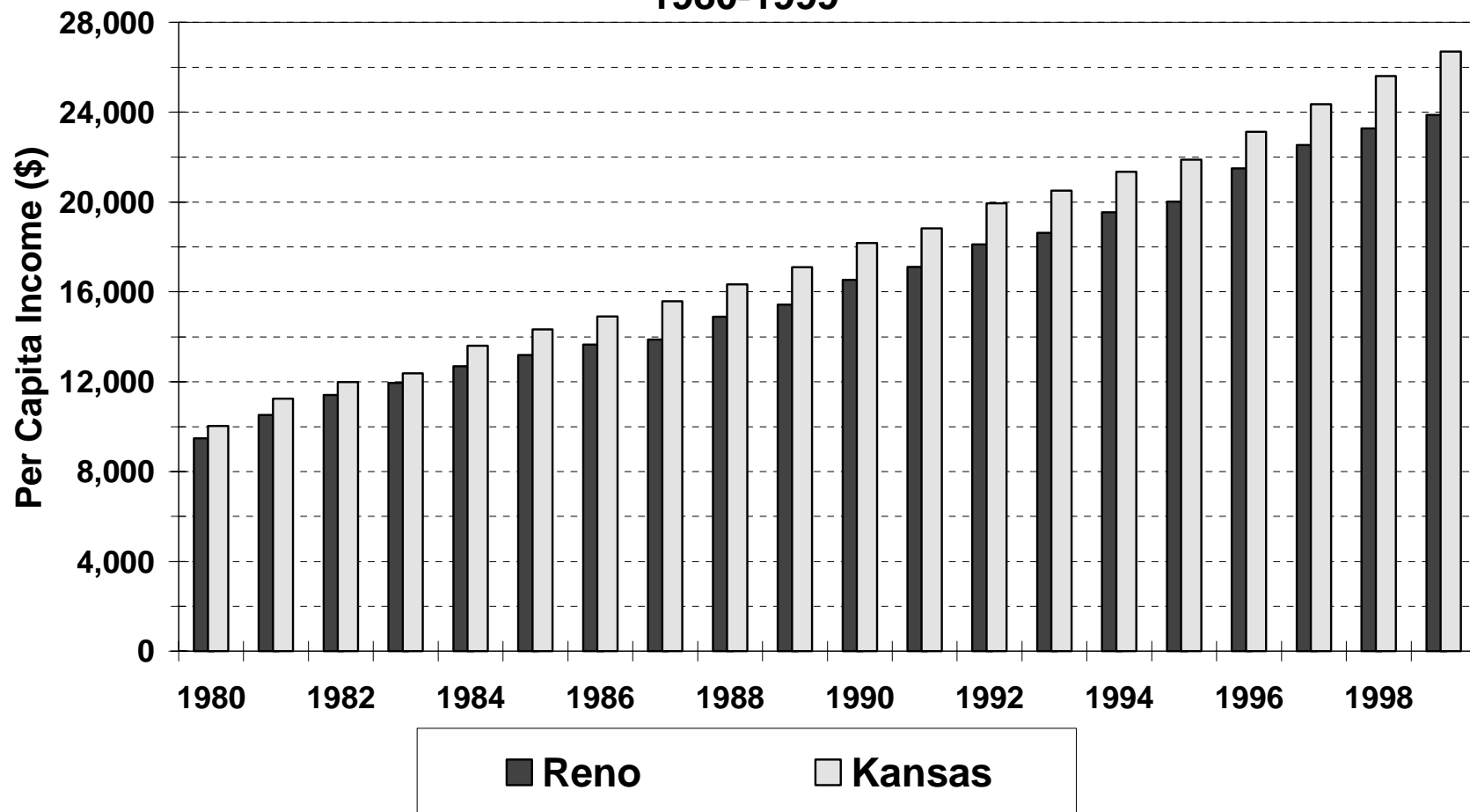


**Table 11**  
**Per Capita Personal Income**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1980-1999**

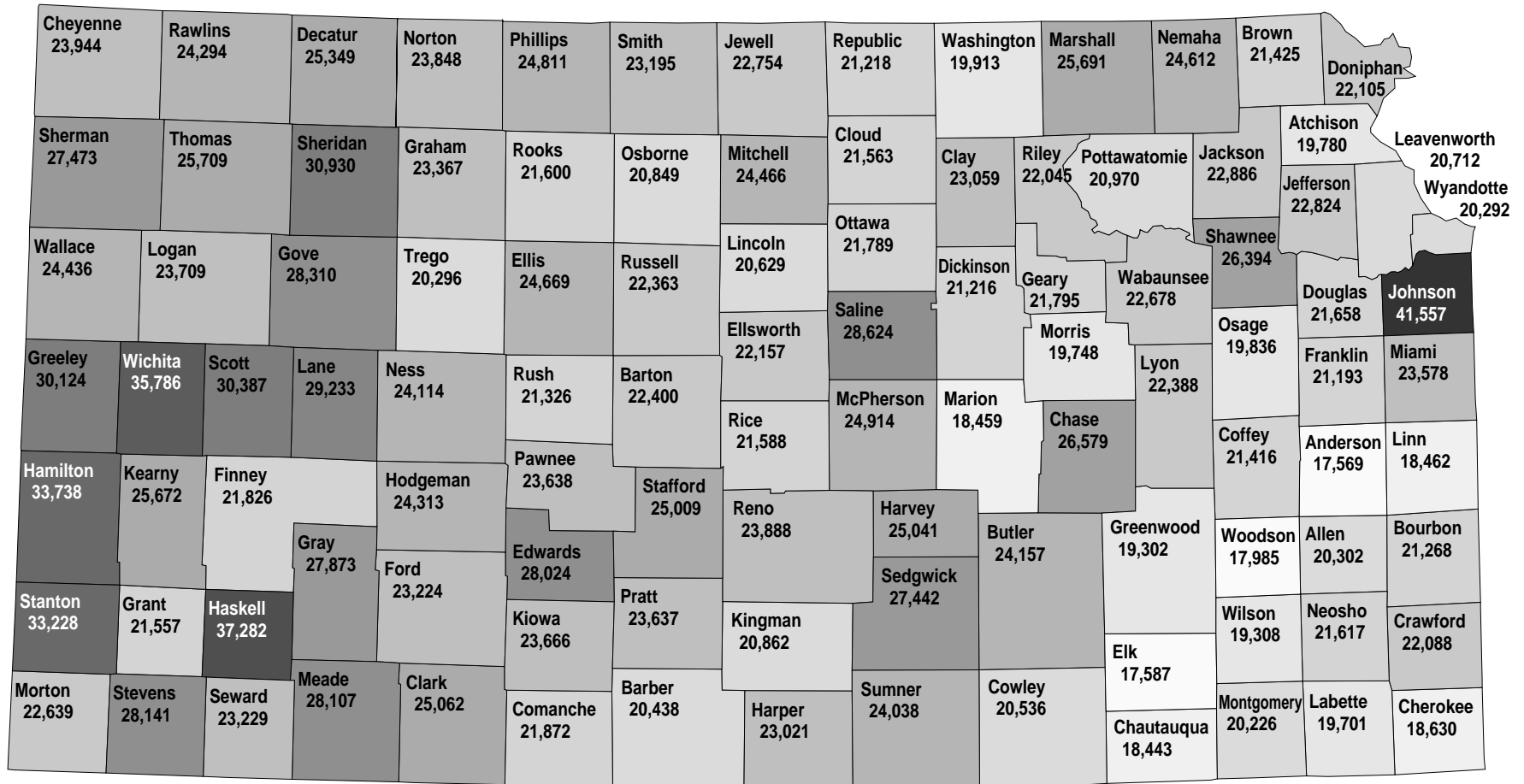
	<u>Income (\$)</u>		<u>Growth Rates</u>	
	<u>Reno</u>	<u>Kansas</u>	<u>Reno</u>	<u>Kansas</u>
<b>1980</b>	9,473	10,038		
<b>1981</b>	10,526	11,248	11.1 %	12.1 %
<b>1982</b>	11,418	11,989	8.5	6.6
<b>1983</b>	11,953	12,373	4.7	3.2
<b>1984</b>	12,682	13,602	0.0	9.9
<b>1985</b>	13,187	14,330	4.0	5.4
<b>1986</b>	13,652	14,904	3.5	4.0
<b>1987</b>	13,873	15,583	1.6	4.6
<b>1988</b>	14,901	16,331	7.4	4.8
<b>1989</b>	15,438	17,093	3.6	4.7
<b>1990</b>	16,535	18,182	7.1	6.4
<b>1991</b>	17,115	18,832	3.5	3.6
<b>1992</b>	18,125	19,955	5.9	6.0
<b>1993</b>	18,636	20,510	2.8	2.8
<b>1994</b>	19,542	21,352	4.9	4.1
<b>1995</b>	20,024	21,889	2.5	2.5
<b>1996</b>	21,495	23,121	7.3	5.6
<b>1997</b>	22,548	24,358	4.9	5.4
<b>1998</b>	23,281	25,606	3.3	5.1
<b>1999</b>	23,888	26,705	2.6	4.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System (1969-1999), County Summary, Table CA13.

**Figure 5b**  
**Per Capita Personal Income**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1980-1999**



## Map 6 Per Capita Personal Income: 1999



Source: Policy Research Institute, The University of Kansas, using data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Table CA5, May 2000.

## RETAIL

Retail trade is an important part of a community's business environment as well as source of revenues for the local governments. Retail trade is affected by a number of factors; for example, past decisions by investors, business managers, taxpayers, and policy makers contribute to a business climate, which either promotes or inhibits the productivity of local businesses and therefore affects decisions about growth and expansion. Other contributing factors include the level of competition, the availability of suppliers and supporting industries, the cost of labor, and taxation and regulation within the community. Some types of establishments will thrive in an environment in which other firms cannot operate profitably.

The following section contains a table and a figure, outlining the retail sales growth rates.

### Retail: Key Findings

- Taxable retail sales in Reno County stood at \$612 million dollars in 1999, the latest year for which data is available. For the most part retail sales grew steadily but slowly in Reno county for the decade. The growth rate from 1990 to 1999 for Reno county was 39 percent, compared to 57 percent for the state. (Table 12)
- For most of the 1990's the taxable retail sales growth rates in Reno County have been less than those seen statewide. An unusual exception occurred in 1994 when Reno County's retail sales increased 10 percent compared to a 7.9 percent increase for the state of Kansas. Nevertheless, Figure 6 shows that the trend has been for Reno County to lag behind the state. (Table 12 and Figure 6)
- Reno County's trade pull factor in 2000 was 1.06, which means it 'pulled in' more retail activity than it lost to other counties. Of the comparative counties, Harvey, Lyon and McPherson all lost some retail trade to other areas. Saline County had a rather high trade pull factor in 2000 of 1.40. (Map 7)

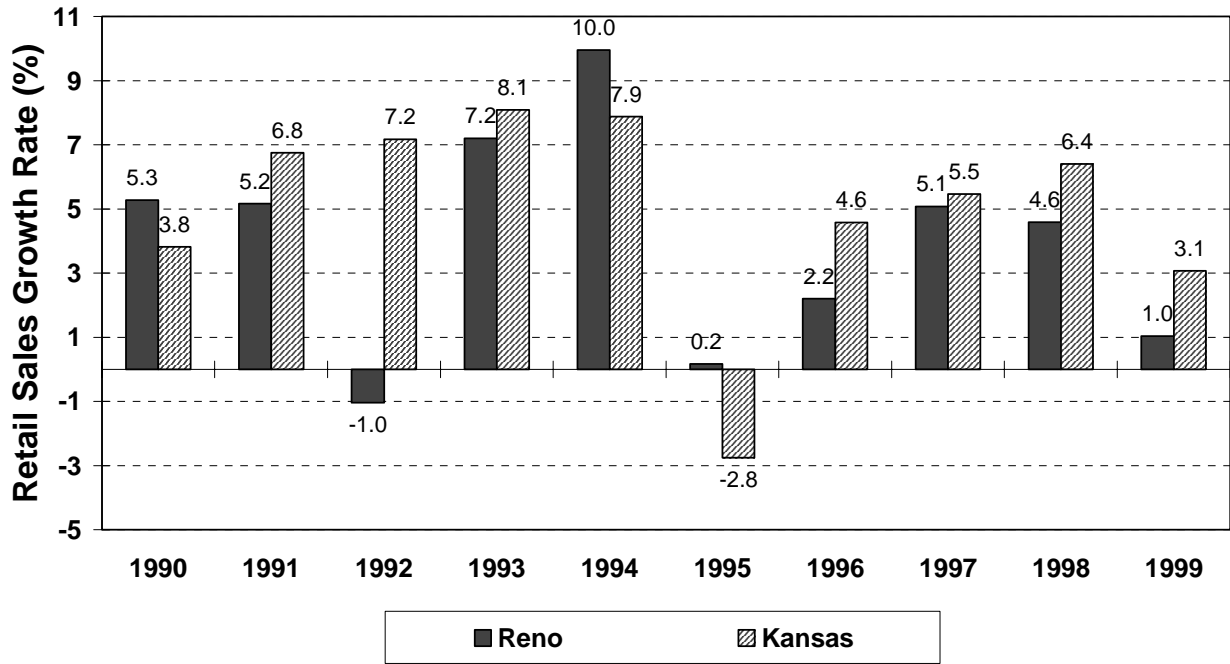
**Table 12**  
**Taxable Retail Sales and Growth Rates**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1989-1999**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Reno</b>		<b>Kansas</b>	
	<b>Nominal Sales (\$Millions)</b>	<b>Growth Rate (%)</b>	<b>Nominal Sales (\$Millions)</b>	<b>Growth Rate (%)</b>
<b>1989</b>	417.1		18,034.4	
<b>1990</b>	439.1	5.3 %	18,723.3	3.8 %
<b>1991</b>	461.8	5.2	19,988.0	6.8
<b>1992</b>	457.0	-1.0	21,421.3	7.2
<b>1993</b>	489.9	7.2	23,154.4	8.1
<b>1994</b>	538.7	10.0	24,979.0	7.9
<b>1995</b>	539.6	0.2	24,289.1	-2.8
<b>1996</b>	551.5	2.2	25,401.5	4.6
<b>1997</b>	579.5	5.1	26,788.9	5.5
<b>1998</b>	606.1	4.6	28,505.9	6.4
<b>1999</b>	612.4	1.0	29,380.6	3.1

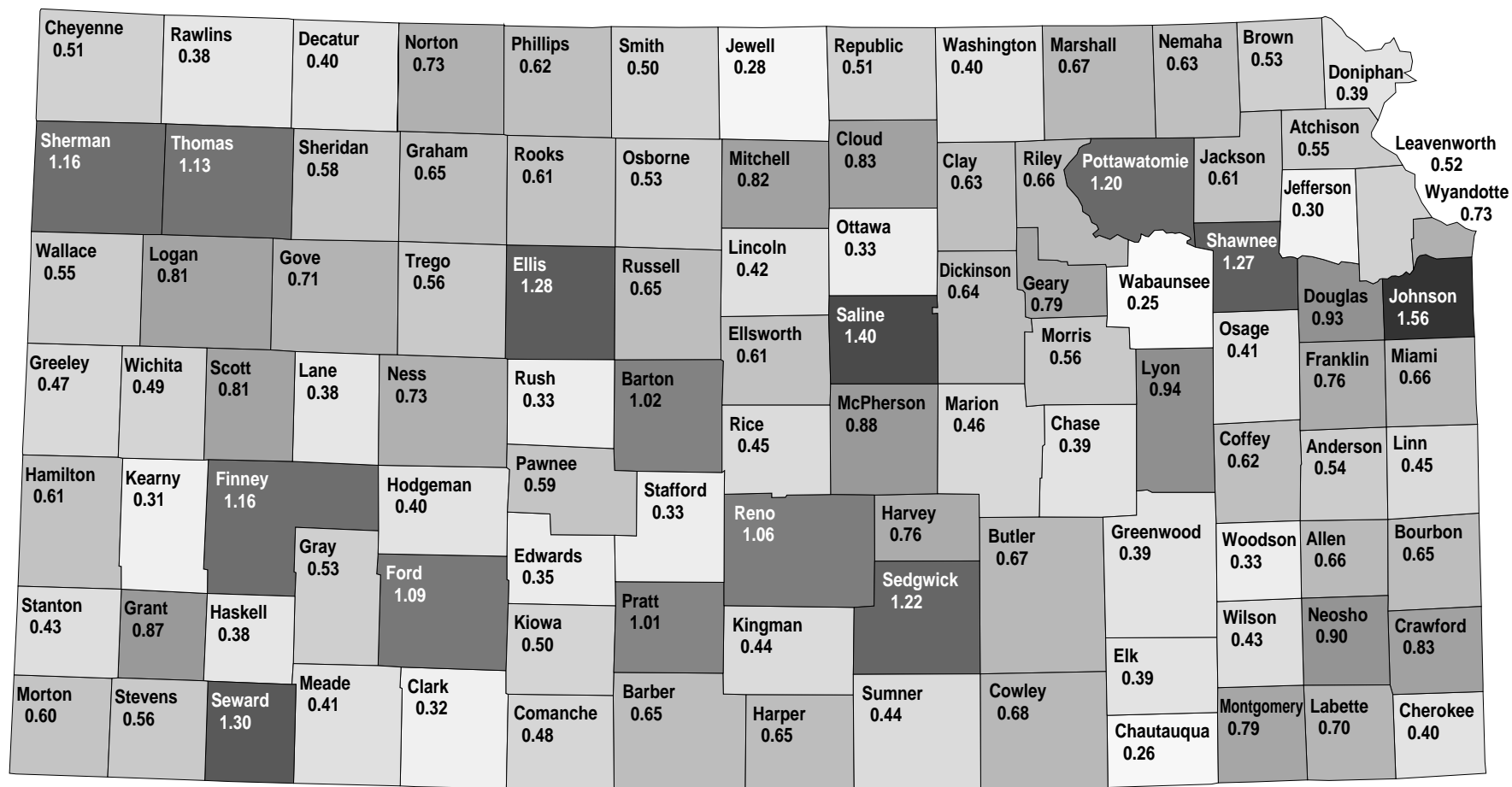
Note: Data from 1994 to 1999 are not comparable to 1987-1993 data.

Source: Kansas Department of Revenue, State Sales Tax Collections by County Classification. Calculations, 1987-1993, CEDBR, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita State University; 1994-1999, PRI, University of Kansas.

**Figure 6**  
**Taxable Retail Sales Growth Rates**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1990-1999**



## Map 7 County Trade Pull Factors: 2000



Note: County Trade Pull Factor (CTPF) = County per capita sales tax collections divided by Kansas per capita sales tax collections. Population data used to compute per capita sales includes institutionalized population.

Source: "County Trade Pull Factors Annual Report for Fiscal Years 1999 and 2000," by David Darling and Sharon Combes, K-State Research and Extension, Department of Agricultural Economics.

## **AGRICULTURE**

While the economic well-being of Reno County is not currently too dependent on the strength of this industry sector, it is interesting to look at the level of activity in agriculture and examine how the character of this industry is changing in the County.

The agriculture section contains two tables on the total value of field crops and the total value of livestock and poultry.

### **Agriculture: Key Findings**

- Nearly every county as well as the state as a whole saw a sharp drop in the value of field crops in 1998. In Reno County, after having risen steadily for three years, the value of field crops fell nearly 38 percent in 1998, to \$59.3 million. That value was less than what it was for the county in 1996. However, compared to the selected counties, Reno County has consistently had the highest value of field crops, which indicates the relative importance of farming in the county. (Table 13)
- The total value of livestock and poultry in Reno County has fallen about 14 percent from 1995 to 1998. Once again, though, at a value of \$40.3 million in 1998, Reno County's livestock and poultry is worth nearly \$7 million more than the highest value among the comparative counties. (Table 14)

**Table 13**  
**Total Value of Field Crops**  
**Reno County, Comparative Counties, and Kansas**  
**1995-1998**

	<b>Total Value of Crops (\$Millions)</b>				<b>Percent Change</b>			
	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>95-96</b>	<b>96-97</b>	<b>97-98</b>	<b>95-98</b>
<b>Reno</b>	60.0	87.8	95.4	59.3	46.3 %	8.6 %	-37.8 %	-1.2 %
<b>Harvey</b>	44.1	55.2	61.3	36.4	25.3	11.1	-40.6	-17.4
<b>Lyon</b>	23.6	34.9	32.1	23.4	47.9	-8.0	-27.0	-0.7
<b>McPherson</b>	57.9	77.2	84.6	53.6	33.3	9.6	-36.6	-7.4
<b>Saline</b>	26.2	38.5	48.4	39.6	47.2	25.6	-18.3	51.1
<b>Kansas</b>	3,525.9	4,154.6	4,474.9	3,594.3	17.8	7.7	-19.7	1.9

Values do not include any government program payments.  
Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, "Kansas Farm Facts"; Kansas County Profile Report, KCCED, The University of Kansas; Calculations: KCCED; National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2000

**Table 14**  
**Total Value of Livestock and Poultry**  
**Reno County, Comparative Counties, and Kansas**  
**1995-1998**

	<b>Total Value of Livestock and Poultry (\$Millions)</b>				<b>Percent Change</b>			
	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>95-96</b>	<b>96-97</b>	<b>97-98</b>	<b>95-98</b>
<b>Reno</b>	46.9	41.3	37.3	40.3	-12.0 %	-9.8 %	8.2 %	-14.1 %
<b>Harvey</b>	18.5	18.6	19.9	16.8	0.6	6.9	-15.7	-9.2
<b>Lyon</b>	38.1	37.8	38.2	33.5	-0.6	1.0	-12.4	-12.1
<b>McPherson</b>	29.6	32.1	29.8	27.3	8.4	-7.3	-8.4	-7.8
<b>Saline</b>	15.7	17.4	18.2	13.9	10.9	4.8	-24.0	-11.6
<b>Kansas</b>	2,678.1	2,629.0	2,806.4	2,670.4	-1.8	6.8	-4.8	-0.3

Values do not include any government program payments.  
Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, "Kansas Farm Facts"; Kansas County Profile Report, KCCED, The University of Kansas; Calculations: KCCED; National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2000

## EDUCATION

The educational level of residents is likely to influence the well being of the whole community. Communities able to provide a higher skilled workforce are more likely to benefit from new developing industries. Residents who have a good educational background will be more employable and able to command higher salaries. Employers will benefit as well because they will most likely experience lower turnover and training costs. On the other hand, individuals with lower education levels have a harder time finding jobs that can supply a living wage and may be more likely to use social services.

### Education: Key Findings

- Reno County is the home of one institution of higher learning, Hutchinson Community College. HCC is a two year college, and its presence may perhaps be why the number of people in Reno County with an associate's degree was slightly higher than that in the state as a whole: 7.3 percent compared to 5.5 percent. These figures are from 1990, the last year for which data is currently available. (Table 15)
- Ten and half percent of Reno County's over-25 population had a Bachelor's degree in 1990, which was less than the 14.2 percent state average for Kansas. (Table 15)
- The number of persons without a high-school diploma was 14.5 percent in Reno County in 1990, which was higher than the state rate of 11 percent. Reno County also had fewer people with graduate degrees than the state. (Table 15)
- The number of high school drop-outs as a percent of high school graduates was almost 21 percent in 1998 in Reno County. This rate was about 17 percent in 1990, but rose steadily through the mid 1990's. Only in the past few years has it seen declines. (Table 16)

**Table 15**  
**Educational Attainment of Persons over 25**  
**As a Percentage of the Population of Persons over 25**  
**Reno County and Kansas, 1990**

	<u>Completed Less Than 9th Grade</u>	<u>9-12th Grade No Diploma</u>	<u>High School Diploma</u>	<u>Some College</u>	<u>Associate Degree</u>	<u>Bachelor's Degree</u>	<u>Graduate Degree</u>	<u>Pop. Over 25</u>
<b>Reno</b>	3,358	5,935	13,109	9,615	2,990	4,307	1,837	40,981
<b>Kansas</b>	120,951	172,321	514,177	342,964	85,146	221,016	109,361	1,561,417

***As a Percent of Population of Persons over 25:***

<b>Reno</b>	8.2%	14.5%	32.0%	23.5%	7.3%	10.5%	4.5%
<b>Kansas</b>	7.7%	11.0%	32.9%	22.0%	5.5%	14.2%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

**Table 16**  
**High School Graduates and Drop-Outs**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1990-1999**

	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
<b>Reno</b>										
<b>Grads</b>	644	621	605	602	622	601	597	651	629	618
<b>Drops</b>	109	129	138	180	158	183	166	137	130	n/a
<b>Kansas</b>										
<b>Grads</b>	25,367	24,414	24,129	24,720	25,319	26,125	25,786	26,648	27,856	28,543
<b>Drops</b>	4,995	5,738	5,651	6,490	6,698	6,422	6,420	6,042	5,802	n/a
 <i>High school drop-outs as percent of graduates</i>										
<b>Reno</b>	16.9%	20.8%	22.8%	29.9%	25.4%	30.4%	27.8%	21.0%	20.7%	
<b>Kansas</b>	19.7%	23.5%	23.4%	26.3%	26.5%	24.6%	24.9%	22.7%	20.8%	

n/a: Data not available

Grads: High school graduates, year ending:

Drops: High school dropouts, year ending:

Source: Kansas State Department of Education

## VITAL STATISTICS AND HEALTH

### Key Findings

- Reno County only has one hospital. As of 1998, the last year for which data is available, the hospital had 163 beds. (Table 17)
- Reno County had 9 adult care homes in 1998. Combined, these facilities had a total of 884 beds. While the number of adult care homes and beds has been increasing in Reno County, they have been decreasing state-wide. This may reflect the fact that the population aged 65 and over has been increasing in Reno County over the last decade but decreasing slightly in the state overall. (Table 18)
- There were 96 practicing M.D. physicians in Reno County in 1999, which gave a ratio of 1.5 physicians per 1,000 people in the county. In the same year Kansas had a slightly higher ratio of 1.7. Historically, the state has always had a slightly higher ratio than Reno County. The number of M.D. physicians in Reno County increased 30 percent from 1990 to 1999, compared to a 39 percent increase for the state. The differences in these rates of increase are in keeping with the faster growing population of the state than Reno County. (Table 19)

**Table 17**  
**Hospitals and Beds**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1988-1998**

	Percent Change					
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>88-93</u>	<u>93-98</u>	<u>88-98</u>
<b>Reno</b>						
<b>Hospitals</b>	1	1	1	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
<b>Hospital Beds</b>	142	172	163	21.1	-5.2	14.8
<b>Kansas</b>						
<b>Hospitals</b>	161	154	143	-4.3	-7.1	-11.2
<b>Hospital Beds</b>	15,039	15,167	12,978	0.9	-14.4	-13.7

Source: American Hospital Association Guide to the Health Care Field, Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

**Table 18**  
**Adult Care Homes and Beds**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1988-1998**

	Percent Change					
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>88-93</u>	<u>93-98</u>	<u>88-98</u>
<b>Reno</b>						
<b>Adult Care Homes</b>	8	9	9	12.5 %	0.0 %	12.5 %
<b>Number of Beds</b>	703	871	884	23.9	1.5	25.7
<b>Kansas</b>						
<b>Adult Care Homes</b>	364	377	338	3.6	-10.3	-7.1
<b>Number of Beds</b>	27,953	28,912	26,224	3.4	-9.3	-6.2

Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

**Table 19**  
**M.D. Physicians**  
**Reno County and Kansas**  
**1985-1999**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Reno County</u>		<u>Kansas</u>	
	<u>M.D. Physicians</u>	<u>Per 1000 People</u>	<u>M.D. Physicians</u>	<u>Per 1000 People</u>
1985	74	1.2	3,199	1.3
1986	76	1.2	3,161	1.3
1987	77	1.2	3,183	1.3
1988	78	1.2	3,255	1.3
1989	79	1.3	3,212	1.3
1990	74	1.2	3,310	1.3
1991	70	1.1	3,226	1.3
1992	70	1.1	3,281	1.3
1993	75	1.2	3,432	1.3
1994	75	1.2	3,526	1.4
1995	79	1.3	3,872	1.5
1996	81	1.3	3,729	1.4
1997	89	1.4	4,264	1.6
1998	93	1.5	4,607	1.7
1999	96	1.5	4,607	1.7

Source: Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

## CONCLUSION

Economic data is an important tool of the community economic development process because it gives community members a better view of the current facts and trends in different areas of economic and demographic performance of the community. However, numbers alone are not enough. The data must be analyzed and interpreted, taking into account the intuition of those within the community as to what the trends really mean. In other words, economic data serve as the foundation for analysis which concludes: 1) what is happening in the community relative to other regions over time, and 2) what potential impacts or consequences can be inferred from the data. The data in this report suggest the following interpretation:

Reno County is an area with a slowly declining population and employment. Nevertheless, the number of unemployed people in the county is still relatively low. These are not necessarily contradictory observations. If the unemployment rate were high, it would indicate a high demand for workers. Such a demand could act to draw people into the county, fueling population growth. As it is, no such demand exists, and while it can not be said that low unemployment is causing population declines, it certainly does nothing to alter it.

The adult population of Reno County is slightly less educated than the state average. The one educational area in which Reno County seems to be above average is with people holding associate's degrees or technical training. This may indicate the type of jobs which could be beneficial to foster and encourage.

The average wage per job in Reno County is lower than the state average, and about the same level as wages in other rural counties. The relatively low wage can be partly linked to the relatively low educational attainment in the county. It is also consistent with the fact that the two largest sectors in the Reno County economy are Services and Retail Trade, both of which offer rather modest wages.

Reno County has several factors which make it a desirable place to live. It is near a major metropolitan area (Wichita) yet it still offers a small town feel. It is home to a community college. Unemployment is relatively low and employment levels seem to be stable. Wages are not as low as they might be. The retail activity indicates the city is active and not stagnant. The Hutchinson-Reno County area is one that possesses a good foundation from which to foster growth.