



**HARRY S TRUMAN
COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**Prepared by the Harry S Truman Coordinating Council staff
and the Harry S Truman CEDS Committee**

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2009 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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SUMMARY

The Harry S. Truman Coordinating Council (HSTCC) region is bestowed with a greatly diverse economy. The region is an activity center of all forms of commercial activity. Farming, manufacturing and services are all represented. Once merely a farming and mining area, the region, especially around the Joplin metropolitan area, is now a center of regional and international commerce. Still though, there are challenges facing economic development efforts, especially since the national economic downturn.

The HSTCC region is currently experiencing a decline in the physical condition of infrastructure in many of the population centers. Water distribution, sewage collection and treatment and road surface and access all are issues which community leaders struggle to handle in order to make their cities more attractive to industrial and commercial development.

Steady population growth over the past few years has brought with it beautiful new subdivisions and neighborhoods. This housing growth, however, has also seen homeownership rates increase in outlying neighborhoods and steadily decrease in urban neighborhoods. This loss in “pride of ownership” has allowed many of these neighborhoods that once thrived to slip into disrepair. Stabilization of these older neighborhoods is important to preserve the appeal and attractiveness of the area to prospective employers and residents.

These are just a few of the issues faced by public officials and economic developers in the HSTCC region. As this document shows, comprehensive efforts need to be undertaken to protect and improve infrastructure, preserve and develop quality housing, and protect the general quality of life in the HSTCC region in order to further the economic well-being of the region.

I. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The membership of the HSTCC is comprised of representatives from the many communities in the four county region, Barton, Jasper, Newton, and McDonald Counties.

The Cities and Villages with membership in the Council and are covered by this CEDS include:

- Barton County and the communities of Lamar and Liberal located in the county;
- Jasper County and the communities of Airport Drive, Alba, Asbury, Carl Junction, Carterville, Carthage, Jasper, Joplin, Neck City, Oronogo, Sarcoxie, and Webb City located in the county;
- McDonald County and the communities of Anderson, Goodman, Lanagan, Noel, and Pineville located in the county; and
- Newton County and the communities of Diamond, Granby, Leawood, Neosho, Newtonia, Seneca, and Wentworth located in the county.

The HSTCC is the primary agency for the Economic Development District. Staff of the organization includes a Community Development Specialist who is the administrator of the economic development program. Staff also works in conjunction with local economic development professionals, primarily Chambers of Commerce staff, on specific economic development projects in the region.

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The HSTCC board is comprised of representatives chosen by election each June. The board will continue to monitor the activities of staff as they work towards the goals and objectives outlined in this document. As economic or social conditions change, the board will direct the staff to pursue those activities that it considers new priorities.

The HSTCC Board is comprised of the following members:

1. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (60%)

| Name | Government | Position |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Steve Lawver | City of Carl Junction | City Administrator |
| Pat Gooch | City of Neck City | Mayor |
| Debora Cornell | City of Cartersville | Court Administrator |
| Jerry Black | Newton County | County Commissioner |
| Craig Jones | City of Neosho | City Planner |
| Gary Roark | City of Seneca | Mayor |
| Bonda Rawlings | Barton County | County Commissioner |
| Lynn Calton | City of Lamar | City Administrator |
| Doris Fast | City of Liberal | City Clerk |
| Sam Gaskill | McDonald County | County Commissioner |
| Paula Chase | City of Goodman | City Clerk |
| Pat Beshears | City of Pineville | City Clerk |

2. NON-GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (40%)

| Name | Company/Enterprise | Position |
|------------------|---|--------------------|
| Jasen Jones | Workforce Investment Board | Executive Director |
| Doris Carlin | Keller Williams Realty | Owner |
| Gib Garrow | Neosho Chamber of Commerce | President |
| Kevin Welch | SWMO Economic Development Alliance | Director |
| Judd Chesnut | Barton County Sheltered Workshop | Director |
| Jeff Hull | Barton County Chamber of Commerce | President |
| Randy Smith | McDonald County R-1 School District | Superintendent |
| Colleen Epperson | Pineville/Jane Area Chamber of Commerce | Director |

II. CEDS COMMITTEE

The CEDS Committee is comprised of the following members:

1. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (46.67%)

| Name | Government | Position |
|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Steve Lawver | City of Carl Junction | City Administrator |
| Pat Gooch | City of Neck City | Mayor |
| Debora Cornell | City of Cartersville | Court Administrator |
| Jerry Black | Newton County | County Commissioner |
| Craig Jones | City of Neosho | City Planner |
| Lynn Calton | City of Lamar | City Administrator |
| Sam Gaskill | McDonald County | County Commissioner |

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2. NON-GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (53.33%)

| Name | Company/Enterprise | Position |
|------------------|---|--------------------|
| Jasen Jones | Workforce Investment Board | Executive Director |
| Doris Carlin | Keller Williams Realty | Owner |
| Gib Garrow | Neosho Chamber of Commerce | President |
| Kevin Welch | SWMO Economic Development Alliance | Director |
| Judd Chesnut | Barton County Sheltered Workshop | Director |
| Jeff Hull | Barton County Chamber of Commerce | President |
| Randy Smith | McDonald County R-1 School District | Superintendent |
| Colleen Epperson | Pineville/Jane Area Chamber of Commerce | Director |

The CEDS committee includes seven (7) officials of member cities and counties, a workforce official, four (4) chambers of commerce officials (including Judd Chestnut), a local women-owned business owner, a workforce official, and a school superintendent. Most of the member communities and counties have shown formal support of the selection of this committee by adopting resolutions stating so. The Committee received input from the general public through the Board of Directors open meetings and HSTCC staff through the development of this document. The CEDS committee meets on a quarterly basis, or as needed, in order to coordinate economic development program activities in the region.

Other key partners and important organizations in the region that the committee and staff work with include state and federal programs, such as the Missouri Department of Economic Development, USDA Rural Development, Missouri DNR, EPA and state and federal elected officials. Most of these partners are also funding sources for area projects including grant and loan programs.

III. THE AREA & ITS ECONOMY

Southwest Missouri has always maintained a diverse economy. This is especially true in the HSTCC region. From the vast fields of Barton County to the business and industry in Joplin to the wooded hills of the Ozarks, the region is a prime example of the diversity witnessed throughout Missouri and the world. The industrial sector of the regional economy continues to evolve from the smokestack industries of the 19th century to high tech manufacturing of the 21st century.

Many new and existing firms are choosing the region to locate their facilities. Yet, as manufacturing methods change and management policies reduce labor pools, there is still a need to protect our current economy and promote future growth. This document will attempt to outline the existing conditions of the region and its economy. It will then outline goals and objectives which business and industry leaders view as a means to further the healthy economy which this region has long been blessed.

Political Geography

The HSTCC region consists of a four county area in the extreme southwest portion of Missouri. The region is composed of the counties of Barton, Jasper, Newton and McDonald. The four counties are arranged in a north to south alignment, forming a linear region. Within these four

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counties lie a number of politically and economically significant communities including the cities of Joplin, Webb City, Carthage, Lamar, and Neosho. The Joplin Metropolitan Statistical Area is composed of Jasper and Newton Counties and is anchored by the City of Joplin, hence the name. Arkansas borders the region on the south and Kansas and Oklahoma on the west. The Missouri County of Vernon borders the region on the north. Cedar, Dade, Lawrence and Barry Counties border the region on the east. Table 1 (located on page 5) outlines the 2000 population of the four counties, along with selected cities, within the HSTCC region.

Within the HSTCC region there are a number of lands owned by the state of Missouri. Most are administered under the authority of the Department of Conservation and serve the purpose of public recreation in the form of public fishing access sites and conservation areas. Their areas are outlined later in the section describing recreational opportunities. There are also two State Park and two state historic sites in the region: Prairie State Park and Big Sugar Creek State Park and Truman Birthplace and Battle of Carthage State Historical Sites. There is also one federally held land within the region, the George Washington Carver National Monument.

The majority of the cities maintain their own police force for local public safety. The unincorporated areas of the counties and several of the smaller communities are protected by the respective County Sheriff Departments. The Missouri Highway Patrol Region D provides law enforcement along state highway routes and in support of state mandated public safety initiatives.

| Table 1 - 2008 Population Estimates, HSTCC Region Counties and Selected Places | | | |
|--|---------|----------------------------------|--------|
| HSTCC Region | 208,195 | Joplin (Jasper County) | 49,100 |
| Barton County | 12,531 | Lamar (Barton County Seat) | 4,529 |
| Jasper County | 116,813 | Noel (McDonald County) | 1,587 |
| McDonald County | 22,731 | Neosho (Newton County Seat) | 11,284 |
| Newton County | 56,120 | Oronogo (Jasper County) | 2,130 |
| Anderson (McDonald County) | 1,921 | Pineville (McDonald County Seat) | 866 |
| Carl Junction (Jasper County) | 7,172 | Sarcoxie (Jasper County) | 1,368 |
| Carthage (Jasper County Seat) | 13,699 | Seneca (Newton County) | 2,260 |
| Granby (Newton County) | 2,232 | Webb City (Jasper County) | 11,302 |

Source: U.S. Census 2008 Estimate Data

General Description

The HSTCC region covers an area of approximately 2,400 square miles in the four county area. The boundaries of the region form a rectangle with dimensions of approximately 31 miles east to west and 77 miles north to south. Within the boundaries of the region lie approximately 58 separate communities. These communities vary in population from a mere few dozen to nearly 50,000.

The HSTCC region is centrally located in the United States. The nearest metropolitan area is Springfield, Missouri, 70 miles to east. The Little Rock, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, Wichita, Kansas City and St. Joseph metropolitan areas all lie within a 200 mile radius. St. Louis, Omaha, Dallas and Memphis lie within a 300-mile radius of the region.

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Climate

The climate of the HSTCC region is described as humid continental. The humid continental climate is characterized by warm summers and cold winters with maximum precipitation occurring in the late spring / early summer. Climate conditions are affected by cold air masses moving south from Canada, warm moist air masses from the Gulf of Mexico, and from the dry air masses that travel eastward from the southwest.

Temperatures in the region can vary from below 0 degrees Fahrenheit in the coldest winter months to temperatures in excess of 100 degrees in the summer. Most of the periods of extreme high or low temperatures are of short duration. During a given year, the temperature will reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit approximately fifty days and usually will fall below 0 degrees Fahrenheit for only two or three days. Normally the first freeze of the season will occur in late September and the last freeze occurs in mid-April.

The average annual rainfall for the region is 42 inches. Most of the area's precipitation occurs during the spring, summer and fall, while the winter months are comparatively dry. Summer rainfall is generally in the form of thundershowers, which are of high intensity and of short duration. Winter precipitation is most often in the form of gentle rain, mist, snow or sleet.

The winds in the region vary from gentle breezes to the high velocity of tornado winds. Prevailing winds are from the south-southeast with the average wind speeds of approximately 12 miles per hour. Wind velocities are slightly higher in March and April and lower in July and August. Tornadoes are fairly common and have been observed in every month. Approximately 70 percent of the storms having tornado winds occur during the period of March through June. August is the month of least tornado activity.

Topography

The topography of the HSTCC Region can be subdivided into two principle physiographic types, the Great Plains and Ozark Plateau. The region is a transition point between the two landforms. In terms of subcategories, the Great Plains section of the region is designated as part of the Osage Plains, while the Ozark Plateau area is known as the Springfield Plateau.

All of Barton County and the northern one third of Jasper County are situated on the Osage Plains. This area is typified by slightly undulating prairie land. Elevations in this region generally range from 800-1000 feet above sea level.

The remaining two thirds of Jasper County, as well as Newton and McDonald Counties, are located on the Springfield Plateau. The Springfield Plateau is characterized in the region by level upland areas dissected by stream valleys cut 200-300 feet below the surface of the uplands. In the southern portion of the region, specifically McDonald County, the terrain is increasingly rugged as compared with the northern portion. Elevations in this area range from 1000 feet to 1400 feet above sea level.

Surface Water Systems

The state of Missouri contains three major watersheds - the Mississippi, the Missouri and the Arkansas. The HSTCC Region is located in parts of the latter two watersheds. Within the

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HSTCC Region lie the Osage-Gasconade, Spring and Elk River Basins. The Osage-Gasconade River basin is within the Missouri River watershed while the Spring River and Elk River basins are part of the Arkansas River watershed.

The Osage River rises in east central Kansas and flows in an easterly direction through Kansas and Missouri for a distance of approximately 520 miles to its confluence with the Missouri River, twelve miles downstream from Jefferson City. The official name of the river in Kansas is the Marias de Cygnes. The portion of the basin in the HSTCC Region is gently rolling prairie land. The total drainage area of the Osage River is about 15,200 square miles, of which approximately 70% are in Missouri. The elliptical basin is about 250 miles long, in an east-west direction, and 100 miles wide.

Waters of the Osage River are used for hydroelectric power production, recreation, municipal water supply, wildlife propagation, and for municipal and industrial wastewater disposal. One of the principal tributaries of the Osage River is the Marmaton River. With a drainage basin of about 1,150 square miles, the Marmaton is the principle stream of the Osage system that dominates Barton County.

The Spring River Basin comprises an area of approximately 2,581 square miles, lying mostly in southwest Missouri. The river is a left bank tributary of the Grand River with the confluence in northeastern Oklahoma. The topography of the area is varied. The upper portion of the main stream of the Spring River and Shoal Creek area consists of steeply rolling hills and slopes of as much as 30% while the central to lower portion of the basin is gently rolling with the northern portion primarily prairie. Land use consists primarily of pasture and timber in the upper portion; the central to lower portion is characterized largely by abandoned lead and zinc mining areas; the northern portion is devoted to pasture, hay, and some row crop land along the stream. The Joplin metropolitan area lies in the central portion between the Spring River and Shoal Creek channels.

While the topography is well defined by streams and drainage ways in the upper portion of the main part of Spring River and Shoal Creek, the northern portion of the area is very flat with no well-defined topography. Most slopes are less than 0.5%. The bottomlands vary from very narrow up to one mile wide. The principal tributaries are Center, Turkey and Shoal Creeks, which enter the Spring River just west of the Missouri-Kansas state line. Center Creek, which drains approximately 300 square miles, carries away industrial wastewater from plants that use springs, mines or deep wells for water supplies. The Turkey Creek Drainage area is 48 square miles and is used to dispose of municipal wastewater from the City of Joplin. Shoal Creek drains about 440 square miles in Missouri and is the source of the municipal water supply for the City of Neosho. Shoal Creek is also used for recreation.

The Elk River watershed occupies an area of approximately 850 square miles in the extreme southwestern corner of Missouri and is located largely in the southern half of McDonald County. The basin experienced a total population growth of about 1,000 persons per decade from 1960 to 1990. From 1990 to 2000, the growth increased substantially by approximately 5000 persons. Buffalo and Lost Creek watersheds are also part of the Arkansas drainage basin, located in southern Newton County and throughout McDonald County. Population density, topography and stream characteristics are similar in nature among all of these streams and all flow into the

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Arkansas River. Most communities in this part of the region number less than 1,500 persons. The largest towns are Anderson, Noel, Pineville and Southwest City, all in McDonald County, and Seneca and Neosho in Newton County.

The topography of this watershed is extremely rugged with steeply rolling hills and slopes of 30% or more, well defined by streams. Valleys are generally very narrow. There is a small portion of the northeast and lower central portion of the Elk River basin that is gently rolling, where the soils are deep and used largely for pasture and some timber. The remainder of the area has rocky, Ozark soil types. The streams are characterized by many pools with gravel bottoms and fast moving, clear water.

Geology

Exposed or underlying bedrock in the HSTCC Region is predominantly cherty Mississippian limestone. Also present, but to a lesser extent, are deposits of shale, sandstone, minor coal seams and dolomites of the Pennsylvanian Age. At some time in the past, Pennsylvanian deposits probably covered much of the region. However, most of the Pennsylvanian deposits have been eroded away, leaving the erosion resistant Mississippian limestone.

The most frequent occurrence of the remaining Pennsylvanian deposits is in Barton County. Elsewhere in the region they occur only in isolated patches, usually as channel-line deposits.

Mississippian age limestone outcrops are dispersed over the entire region. Two of the most frequent limestone outcrops are the Burlington-Keokuk and Warsaw formations. They are predominantly composed of a gray, course-grained limestone, with varying amounts of chert.

Groundwater

In the Jasper and Newton County area there are three aquifers that are greatly affected by seasonal variations in precipitation and by the proximity to streams. In the southern portion of Newton County a large volume of the stream flow is supplied by springs and there is an intimate relationship between groundwater flow from the Mississippian aquifer and surface flow.

There have been declines in water levels in areas that have been pumped. Recent studies show that these declines appear to be substantial and are becoming a concern. A regional water resource coalition has been formed to address these issues. In areas such as Joplin and Neosho, where pumping is at its greatest, draw downs have been noticeable. Within the past five years, municipal wells at the City of Oronogo showed a substantial reduction in the static water level. Declines of this magnitude were not expected, even though the area is pumped. If pumping rates exceed discharge rate, the piezometric surface becomes lower. It is difficult to estimate the amount of recharge that the area receives, for it does not coincide with the hydrological boundaries of the aquifer, and the static water levels in the deep aquifer have begun to rise since the mines closed and were allowed to fill with water. It appears that while the area is far from being fully developed in terms of the amount of water that is physically available, there is a need to lower the depth of wells in the region.

The quality of water from the deep aquifer is good for most uses. Except for portions of northern Jasper County, water quality should not greatly restrict availability. Locally there may

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be pollution in the deep aquifer and it is very important that wells are constructed properly to avoid degradation of this valuable source.

Some wells in the deep aquifer in the northern portion of Jasper County have been found to have “bad” water at depth. The total dissolved solid content has shown increases in this area and many shallow wells have a poor water quality. Several new wells have been drilled in this area and, in coming years, this problem should be better defined.

The yield of individual wells may be one of the major factors involved in determining the amount of water that is available to the region. Users such as small industries, small municipalities, trailer courts, and farms will find the deep aquifer a valuable source because of its good quality. However, as greater amounts of water are needed the costs will increase because any one well is limited in its capabilities.

A decision concerning the means of obtaining water must be made by the industry or municipality involved. Where the expected use is over two or three million gallons per day, the economics involved would dictate the utilization of another source, if one were available. This trend may be seen where cities such as Joplin, which uses over 12 million gallons per day, obtains its water from Shoal Creek. It seems reasonable to assume that future trends will be toward management of surface streams. At any rate, an assessment of the total amount of water resources should take into account the distribution of users and types of use. The deep aquifer can sustain many times its present use where individual needs are not over a few hundred gallons per minutes. However, if this increased usage is by a large municipality having needs of several thousand gallons per minute, the user is faced with either meeting the cost of developing several wells or finding another source of water.

Natural Resources

In the HSTCC Region there are several types of mineral resources available for exploitation. Included are coal, zinc, lead, tripoli, asphaltic sandstone, marble sand, gravel and crushed stone.

Coal deposits in the Pennsylvanian formations are found in Barton County. These deposits are near the surface, allowing for strip mining operations. The mineral resource tripoli is a fine grained, porous, siliceous rock found in only a few locations on the globe. One of the most productive tripoli mining operations is located near Seneca, in Newton County.

Zinc and lead resources were key to the early development of the region. However, by 1957 mining operations ceased in the area. There is a considerable amount of zinc and lead still in the region but they exist in small deposits, eliminating economically feasible mining operations.

Several types of limestone in the region have been quarried. Utilized as either dimension stone or crushed road stone, aggregate lime concrete, aggregate and lime. The Warsaw limestone unit is quarried extensively near Carthage. When polished this type of dimension stone is known as “Carthage Marble”.

The principle resource that is found in the HSTCC region, other than minerals, is timber. Extensive areas within McDonald County and portions of Newton County are forested. Forests

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in the HSTCC Region are deciduous, abundant in oak and hickory. Timber as a resource is not currently being utilized to the extent expected primarily due to forested areas being somewhat difficult to cut because of rugged terrain. Some logging does occur but only in limited areas. Most cutting is related to personal use for home heating.

Environmental Issues

A number of conditions exist in the HSTCC region, which restrict development. The majority of these issues exist in the Joplin metropolitan area while other situations exist in Newton and McDonald counties. The most visible environmental issue is the vast expanse of lead mine waste, the Duenweg – Oronogo Mining Belt, an area along the northern boundaries of the Joplin area. Intense lead mining in this area in the early to mid 1900's have left large areas around the cities of Carl Junction, Carterville, Joplin, Oronogo and Webb City contaminated with mine waste, or chat. These chat piles range in size and area from small piles covering a few square feet to large dune formation covering numerous square mile areas. In addition, a July 2004 Environmental Protection Agency Fact Sheet stated that approximately 2,600 residential yards in the Duenweg-Oronogo mining belt site were contaminated above acceptable levels by lead as a result of smelting and mining operations.

The mine waste issue and other environmental concerns were addressed through the completion of an environmental master plan sponsored by the Environmental Task Force of Jasper and Newton Counties. The environmental task force contracted with the Forrester Group, Inc., an environmental management and consulting firm based in Springfield, Missouri, to develop an Environmental Master Plan and provide recommendations for the development of institutional controls to assist in regulation of the area in 2003. The environmental task force has also worked closely with representatives of local communities, environmental advocates and the US Environmental Protection Agency in gaining additional funding through Brownfield legislation.

Anticipated reuse of the former mining area mostly includes commercial or industrial development. While residential development through remediation is possible, it is not a viable alternative. There is also a transportation project recently completed in the region that also helped address this contamination. The Range line Bypass, a highway project funded through US Department of Transportation, Missouri Department of Transportation, Jasper County and City of Joplin, traverses a large area of the chat field, utilizing a great deal of the chat as base rock for the highway.

Environmental concerns in Newton County involve TCE contamination in the water. Industrial operations, which have taken place at industrial facilities near Joplin and Neosho, have resulted in a high level of contamination within the water supply in Newton County.

Environmental issues in McDonald County are limited to non-point source pollution and a few poultry processing plants, which currently operate in Noel and Southwest City. A recent concern was directed towards the Simmons poultry processing plant in Southwest City. The plant was under investigation by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and has been ordered to increase treatment methods due to the release of untreated wastewater into the Cave Springs Branch in June 1996. To date all problems with the Simmons plant has been resolved and operations have resumed.

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Other environmental issues in the HSTCC region are fairly nonexistent. Air quality is adequate or is not an issue. Floodplains in the area are mostly undeveloped. The only exception is the Spring River basin at Carthage, which contains industrial development. Hazardous waste contamination is strictly limited to the lead and TCE contamination discussed earlier.

Infrastructure and Services

There is a wide assortment of services provided to residents of the HSTCC region. These services include municipal water and sewer service, public and private utility service, police and fire protection, community and economic development organizations and public social service providers.

Municipal Water and Sewer Service

Due to the wide variety in size and budget of the communities within the HSTCC region the community facilities provided within these communities also varies widely. In terms of water and sanitary sewer systems the facilities are diverse. They range from simple systems in cities such as Purcell and Fairview to the complex systems of Joplin and Carthage. Most of the communities in the region use wells as the source of water and use water towers as the storage facility. Water treatment facilities are found in only the largest cities in the region. Sewage collection and treatment is accomplished through sanitary sewer lines and, in most communities, sewage lagoons. A number of the smaller cities in the region do not have such facilities. Residents use septic tanks to treat sewage. Joplin and Neosho are the only cities in the region to utilize mechanical treatment plants as a means of treating wastewater. Table 2 contains wastewater statistics within the HSTCC region.

| Table 2 .Wastewater Districts Statistics | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---|------------|
| Water District | Area of Service | Types of Facilities | Facilities |
| Jasper County | | | |
| Carl Junction | Carl Junction, Airport Drive | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Joplin | Joplin, Duenweg, | Oxidation Ditch, Sand Filtration lagoon and Mechanical) | 1 |
| Center Creek 201 Board | Webb City, Oronogo, Carterville | Sand Filtration (Mechanical) | 1 |
| Carthage | Carthage | Sand Filtration w/ Lime Softening (Mechanical) | 1 |
| Sarcoxie | Sarcoxie | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Asbury | Asbury | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Alba | Alba | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Jasper | Jasper | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Newton County | | | |
| Diamond | Diamond | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Fairview | Fairview | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Seneca | Seneca | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Granby | Granby | Sand Filtration (Mechanical) | 1 |
| Neosho | Neosho | Sand Filtration (Mechanical) | 1 |
| Joplin | Joplin, Duenweg | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon), Sand Filtration | 1 |
| McDonald County | | | |
| Pineville | Pineville | Oxidation Ditch (Lagoon) | 1 |
| Goodman | Goodman | Orbital Oxidation Ditch | 1 |
| Barton County | | | |
| Lamar | Lamar | Lagoon with Constructed Wetlands | 1 |
| Golden City | Golden City | Mechanical Plant | 1 |
| Liberal | Liberal | Lagoon | |
| Mindenmines | Mindenmines | Lagoon | |

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Utility Services

Electric service in the HSTCC region is provided by three entities. Empire District Electric provides service to the Joplin metropolitan area, including Jasper County and northern Newton County. New-Mac Electric provides service to the remaining area of Newton County and McDonald County. The Barton County Rural Electric Cooperative serves Barton County.

While these entities are able to provide adequate service to residents and most businesses, there are needs relating to industrial development. Electrical capacity is not adequate for the expansion of some companies. While there are plans for expanded capabilities by Empire District Electric, for example, political and administrative challenges are delaying the planned expansions.

Natural gas service is also provided through various entities. Missouri Gas Energy provides service to the Joplin metropolitan area. Some communities also have municipal gas franchises and many rural residents have private LPG tanks. Like electric service, gas service is adequate for residential development but there should be expanded service, either by Missouri Gas Energy or municipal franchises, to meet the need for industrial development in rural areas and communities.

Solid Waste Management

Solid waste disposal in the HSTCC region is also provided in a number of different methods. There are a number of privately owned trash services which operate in the region along with a number of cities which provide trash pickup to their residents. There is only one solid waste disposal site in the HSTCC region, the BFI landfill north of Lamar. Also, there is a transfer station located in Joplin. It is owned and operated by USA Waste Company.

Transportation

The transportation systems in the HSTCC region include highway, air and rail. Major highways in the region include Interstate 44, US 71 and US 60. Interstate 44 intersects the region in an east-west direction along the southern edge of the Joplin metropolitan area in its route from St. Louis to Oklahoma City. US 71, a north - south route between Kansas City and Shreveport, is the major highway route in the region. It is the major route in western Missouri and provides the HSTCC region with thousands of leisure and business travelers each day. According to the Joplin Metropolitan Area Long Range Transportation Plan 2005 Update, "The Joplin metropolitan area is well situated to attract and serve significant freight movements at a regional, statewide, national, and even international level between Mexico and Canada, due to the importance of the I-44 and US 71 corridors in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)." US 60 is also a major route east - west route through the region. It cuts through Newton County, passing by Neosho in its route between Louisville, Kentucky and central Oklahoma.

Other highway linkages in the HSTCC region include Hwy 59 (south to northwest Arkansas), Hwy 76 (east to Cassville and Branson), Hwy 96 (east to Lawrence County), Hwy 126 (west to Pittsburg, KS and east to Dade County), and Hwy 160 (east to Stockton Lake and Springfield). Highway 43 starts at the Arkansas boarder and runs north through the entire HSTCC region, ending at Highway 54 in Vernon County west of Nevada.

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Joplin Regional Airport, owned and operated by the City of Joplin, is the major airport in the HSTCC region. It provides non-stop service to the international hubs of Kansas City. Joplin Regional Airport utilizes two 6,500 foot and one 3,600 foot runways. A new terminal and tower were also recently built with the assistance of federal funding. The two Joplin Airport Industrial Parks house many locally owned, regional and national manufacturing industries. General aviation services are also available at the Neosho and Lamar municipal airports.

Rail service in the HSTCC region is provided by the Burlington Northern - Santé Fe (BNSF), Kansas City Southern (KCS), and Missouri Northern Arkansas Railroads (MNA). The BNSF lines travel east - west from the Springfield Regional Rail yard west to destinations in Kansas and Oklahoma. BNSF lines intersect the HSTCC region in Barton County, passing Lamar, and Newton County, passing Neosho. BNSF connects to regions throughout the country including Chicago, Texas, California and the Pacific Northwest. A north - south route is provided by KCS, running from as far north as Kansas City to Dallas. This route extends into Arkansas and Louisiana, passing through Carl Junction, Joplin, Neosho, Anderson, Lanagan and southwest City before entering Arkansas. The KCS recently worked with the City of Joplin in expanding side rail capacity in north Joplin. The only switching operation on KCS lines occurs in Neosho. The Missouri and Northern Arkansas Railroad (MNA) is a regional provider which serves the southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas area. The railroad also provides local access and switching operations in Joplin and Jasper County. MNA also has a line which heads north out of Carthage, which goes through Jasper and Lamar.

Educational Facilities

The HSTCC region is composed of 15 public school districts. The number of schools within each district varies with the size and number of communities within the district. All school districts in the HSTCC region only have one high school and a varying number of primary schools. The largest district in the region is the Joplin R-VIII with approximately 7,300 students enrolled in 13 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 1 high school, 1 education center and 1 technical school. Joplin R-VIII has a student to teacher ratio of 21 to 1. Most other school districts in the region utilize from one to five elementary schools and one high school. Each district may or may not utilize a junior/middle school. Enrollment ranges from 300 students in Golden City to 3,300 in Carthage. There also exist a number of private schools throughout the region.

Missouri Southern State University (MSSU), located in Joplin, is a public 4-year college. It is a liberal arts school that offers Master's, Bachelor's and Associate's degrees. MSSU is divided into four schools - Arts and Science, Business Administration, Education and Technology. The university also offers a special program in international study with emphasis on international business. Total student enrollment for 2005-2006 is 5,473.

Crowder College, located in Neosho, is another post-secondary school in the region. It is a two-year college that offers Associates in Arts and Associates in Science degrees in a number of topics. One-year specialization certificates in a wide variety of technical topics are also offered. Crowder's Alternative Energy program has achieved worldwide recognition for innovation in solar powered vehicle designs as well as solar home designs. Crowder also boasts of being one of the fastest growing state-assisted colleges in Missouri. Enrollment has increased by 65% since 2000, with a fall of 2006 enrollment of over 2,900 students.

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Other educational facilities in the region include Franklin Technology Center, Ozarks Christian College and Messenger College. Franklin Technology Center is a vocational - technical school which is operated by the Joplin R-VIII school district. Franklin Technology Center is open to students of all ages and offers programs in Allied Health and Trade and Technical. Adult education and continuing education courses are also offered. Ozarks Christian College and Messenger College, both located in Joplin, are Christian colleges that emphasize theological studies.

An arising education need is better availability of facilities and faculty for the rising Hispanic population. While many of the public schools are adequately addressing this need, many are not. Expanded services in English as a Second Language should be addressed on both a K-12 and adult education level.

Hospitals and Medical Services

There are several hospitals located within the HSTCC service area. Freeman Hospital and St. John's regional Medical Center are located in Joplin. There is also McCune-Brooks Hospital in Carthage and Barton County Memorial Hospital in Lamar.

Freeman Hospitals and Health Systems consist of three campuses, Freeman West and Freeman east in Joplin and Freeman Neosho in Neosho. The Freeman system comprises 389 beds and over 3,200 employees. Construction of a new six-story tower was completed in 2008 on the Freeman West campus. Freeman Health System is a community-owned, not-for-profit, locally governed organization. Services provided through the Freeman Hospital system include emergency services, birthing center, neonatal intensive care, pediatrics, laboratories, cancer services, radiology and nuclear medicine, surgery, arthritis services, home care services, rehabilitation services, behavioral health services and woman health services.

St. John's Regional Medical Center provides a wide variety of services, from obstetrics to emergency medicine to hospice care. Areas of specialization include heart care, sports medicine, cancer services and surgery. St. Johns employees over 250 physicians and dentists, 2,200 skilled employees, and assisting with these services are over 650 community volunteers. St. Johns is part of a national nonprofit health corporation based in Denver, Colorado called Catholic Health Initiatives. They are the second largest Catholic health system in the United States.

McCune-Brooks Hospital in Carthage has 350 skilled employees, and 31 active physicians on staff. The hospital recently built a new modern building at the intersection of HH Highway and Highway 171 on the southern edge of Carthage that also opened in 2008. The hospital provides a variety of services, including surgery, geriatric mental health, sports medicine, intensive care, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, and emergency services.

Barton County Memorial Hospital provides services to residents of Lamar and Barton County. Services provided by the hospital include general medical care, surgery and emergency services. The hospital is licensed for a capacity of 50 beds. It employs 149 persons, with 6 active doctors. The hospital also utilizes consulting physicians in a number of fields.

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Other medical services in the HSTCC region vary with the place in question. Many of the doctors in the region are located around activity centers, Joplin, Neosho, Carthage and Lamar. There are some medical offices located in the rural areas of the region but are few and far between. The one area that is in need of medical services is McDonald County. There is no hospital and few doctors' offices in the county.

Recreation

There are two state parks in the region. Prairie State Park, near Liberal, is mostly a day use area that provides educational opportunities concerning prairie wildlife. Three campsites are provided with preference towards group camping. Big Sugar Creek State Park in McDonald County is currently under development. Day use facilities were recently completed, with campgrounds and other features being developed in the future.

Other state owned recreation areas included a number of conservation areas and fishing access points. The largest of these areas are the Bushwacker Conservation Area near Bronough and Shawnee Trail Conservation Area near Mindenmines, which provides fishing and hunting opportunities. They are approximately 4,300 and 3,600 acres in size, including approximately 20 lakes and ponds. There are also a number of smaller areas in Barton County, along with the Municipal Lake in Lamar. Jasper County has fishing access points in Carthage, Carl Junction and Joplin along the Spring River, Center Creek and Shoal Creek, respectively.

As one moves south, toward the Ozarks, there are additional opportunities in Newton and McDonald County. Newton County has Camp Crowder Conservation Area, 1,500 acres, and Diamond Grove Natural Area. McDonald County has Buffalo Hills Natural Area and Huckleberry Ridge Conservation Area, 2,500 acres. Department of Conservation properties in the HSTCC region are listed in Table 3.

| Table 3 - Missouri Department of Conservation Lands in HSTCC Region | | | |
|---|---------|---|---------|
| Barton County | | Jasper County | |
| Area Name | Acreage | Area Name | Acreage |
| Bethel Prairie CA | 260 | Carl Junction Access | 3 |
| Buffalow Wallow Prairie CA | 1017 | Kellog (Carthage) City Lake | 25 |
| Bushwacker Lake CA | 4337 | La Russell Access | 1 |
| Clear Creek Conservation Area | 762 | Stones Corner Access | 9 |
| Comstock Prairie CA | 320 | Wah-Sha-She Prairie CA | 160 |
| Davis Memorial State Forest | 85 | | |
| Dogwood CA | 160 | | |
| Drywood CA | 100 | | |
| Lamar Access | 30 | | |
| Mo-No-I Prairie CA | 302 | | |
| Mon-Shon Prairie CA | 80 | | |
| Pa Sole Prairie CA | 240 | | |
| Pawhusker Prairie CA | 77 | | |
| Redwing Prairie CA | 160 | | |
| Risch CA | 162 | | |
| Shawnee Trail CA | 3635 | | |
| Treaty Line Prairie CA | 168 | | |
| McDonald County | | Newton County | |
| Area Name | Acreage | Area Name | Acreage |
| Buffalo Hills Natural Area | 486 | Allen Bridge Access | 15 |
| Cowshed Access | 41 | Cherry Corner Access | 4 |
| Deep Ford Access | 42 | Diamond Grove Prairie Conservation Area | 611 |
| Flag Springs CA | 3955 | Fort Crowder Conservation Area | 2362 |
| Huckleberry Ridge CA | 2106 | Goodman Towersite | 40 |

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| | | | |
|-------------------|----|--------------------------------|----|
| Lanagan Towersite | 57 | Joplin Towersite | 10 |
| Mt. Shira Access | 26 | Helen Keller Access | 11 |
| Powell Towersite | 80 | Neosho Towersite | 79 |
| Town Hole Access | 2 | Smack Out Access | 1 |
| | | Tipton Ford Access | 90 |
| | | Walter Woods Conservation Area | 28 |
| | | Wildcat Access | 1 |
| | | Wildcat Glade Natural Area | 27 |

McDonald County also is home to approximately 12 private camp grounds and canoe outfitters. Most of these outfits are located on the Banks of the Elk River from Pineville downstream to Noel. This area is heavy with canoeists and fishermen through the spring and summer. There also exist a few private campgrounds along Shoal creek in Joplin, and Spring River in Purcell. Located in Newton County, George Washington Carver National Monument contains 210 acres including the birthplace and childhood home of George Washington Carver.

Other recreation opportunities exist in the region, many of which are centered in the Joplin area. The urbanized area has the park systems of Joplin, Webb City and Carl Junction. In recent years there has been an interest in walking and bicycling trails throughout the region. This is both a means of transportation and recreation. There are two off-road facilities located in the Joplin/Webb City area, known as Frisco Greenway Trail and King Jack Park Trail. The Joplin area is connected to the Rails to Trails network. This corridor type utilizes abandoned rail corridors for walking and bicycle trails. There are also a number of golf courses in the metropolitan area, including Shifferdecker, Loma Linda, Briarbrook, Twin Hills and Range line Golf Courses. There also exist a variety of other recreational opportunities scattered throughout the metro area.

Outside of the metro area, recreational opportunities are sparse. Each of the smaller communities typically has a park and at least one private recreational opportunity. Neosho and Lamar have larger park systems and more opportunities.

Land Use

The land use pattern that exists within the HSTCC region represents a system which, in the overall scheme, is dominated by the urban versus rural classifications. The many cities and communities within the region are separated by many miles of sparsely populated agricultural or undeveloped land. The largest urbanized area is within Jasper County and consists of Joplin, Webb City, Cartersville and Carl Junction. A small portion of the Joplin metropolitan area extends into northern Newton County. This area contains a number of village communities, most of which contain less than 500 persons. Other notable urban areas within the region include Carthage, also in Jasper County, Lamar (Barton County) and Neosho (Newton County).

In terms of land use within the specific communities, there is a wide disparity in the variety of land use that correlates with the size of the community. The larger communities contain a larger variety of land uses. Joplin, Carthage, Lamar, and Neosho contain many of the industrial and institutional uses within the region. Smaller communities such as Purcell or Liberal contain mostly residential uses and a few commercial uses. While this pattern of land use can be expected, and in some cases is preferred as a means of protecting small town character, although it leaves many residents of the region with few services within a reasonable distance from their homes.

Industrial Parks and Plant Locations

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In the HSTCC region there exist a number of industrial parks and numerous more industrial sites dispersed throughout the region. The largest and most significant is the Crowder area in Neosho. Formerly a military base and defense product testing ground, this area was annexed by the City of Neosho in the 1960's and converted into an industrial park. The Crowder area is home to a variety of firms such as La-Z-Boy, Sabreliner and PraxAir. Nearly 3,000 persons are employed in the Crowder area. The Joplin / Webb City Industrial Park is home to approximately 15 firms including Cliffstar Corporation, Eagle-Picher Industries, Love Box Company and Noradex Incorporated. It is located in north Joplin just east of Range line Road. Carthage Underground is a 2,000,000 square foot temperature controlled underground storage facility. It is home to a number of firms including CARMAR Incorporated. The underground complex is located north of the Carthage city limits on North Francis Street. The Lamar Industrial Park, located in the southern section of the community, is home to a shell building that formerly housed the now closed O'Sullivan Industries. Other firms are also located in the park.

Industrial sites outside of industrial parks are scattered throughout the HSTCC region. Table 4 outlines some of the major plant locations in the region.

| Company | City | County |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|
| American Family Homes | Anderson | McDonald |
| Leggett and Platt | Carthage | Jasper |
| Golden Business Forms | Golden City | Barton |
| Granby Manufacturing Co. | Granby | Newton |
| Tamko Asphalt Products | Joplin | Jasper |
| FAG Bearings | Joplin | Jasper |
| Hudson Foods | Noel | McDonald |
| Justin Boot (Chippewa Shoe) | Sarcoxie | Newton |
| Simmons Industries | Southwest City | McDonald |

Population and Composition

The 2000 Census of Population reported that the HSTCC region was comprised of 191,544 persons. Table 5 displays the distribution of population and population density throughout the region by county. Also included is the population and density of the county seats and the largest metropolitan area, the City of Joplin.

In terms of population density the 2000 census report shows that the counties of the HSTCC region vary in density from approximately 21 to 163 persons per square mile. The overall population density of the region is approximately 80 persons per square mile.

| | All Persons | Land Area (sq. mile) | Persons per Sq. Mile |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Barton County | 12,541 | 594.30 | 21.1 |
| City of Lamar | 4,425 | 3.83 | 1,154.5 |
| Jasper County | 104,686 | 639.80 | 163.6 |
| City of Carthage | 12,668 | 9.54 | 1,328.2 |
| City of Joplin | 45,504 | 31.42 | 1,448.4 |
| McDonald County | 21,681 | 539.50 | 40.0 |
| City of Pineville | 768 | 0.70 | 1,094.0 |
| Newton County | 52,636 | 626.50 | 84.0 |

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| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| City of Neosho | 10,505 | 14.93 | 703.6 |
| HSTCC Region | 191,544 | 2,400.10 | 79.8 |
| Missouri | 5,595,211 | 69,704.31 | 81.2 |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Racial / Ethnic Composition

The 2000 Census reported that overall racial composition in the HSTCC region is composed of 96.9% white, 0.3% black, 0.8% American Indian, 0.3% Asian and 0.2% classified themselves as other. Table 6 displays the racial breakdown of the region by county. The City of Joplin is included due to its stature as the major urban area in the region. Also, for reasons of comparison, the figures for the State of Missouri are included.

| | Total Pop. | % White | % Black | % Am. Indian | % Asian | % Other |
|----------------|------------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Barton Co. | 12,541 | 96.9 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Jasper Co. | 104,686 | 92.6 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 1.7 |
| McDonald Co. | 21,681 | 89.7 | 0.2 | 2.9 | 0.1 | 3.8 |
| Newton Co. | 52,636 | 93.3 | 0.6 | 2.2 | 0.6 | 1.4 |
| City of Joplin | 45,504 | | | | | |
| Missouri | 5,595,211 | 84.9 | 11.2 | 0.4 | 1.1 | 0.9 |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Currently, the fastest growing minority population in the region, and in the Nation, is the Hispanic population. Table 7 shows the 2000 figures regarding persons of Hispanic origin by county in the HSTCC region.

| | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|
| Barton County | 0.9 |
| Jasper County | 3.5 |
| McDonald County | 9.4 |
| Newton County | 2.2 |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Population Projections

The U.S. Census Bureau produces county estimates on populations. The U.S. Census starts with a base population, from either Census 2000 or revised population estimate for the most recent year. Then they add or subtract the demographic components of population change calculated for the time period. The U.S. Census adds the estimated number of births and subtracts the estimated number of deaths for a desired time period. They then account for net migration, which is calculated using several components including: net internal migration, net foreign-born international migration, net movement to/from Puerto Rico, net Armed Forces movement, the change in group-quarters population, and native emigration from the United States. The U.S. Census produces separate population estimates for populations under age 65 and age 65 and older, because different sources of data are used to measure the internal migration of these two populations. For more information on how these calculations are produced visit the U.S. Census Bureau web page at www.census.gov.

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Table 9 contains the U.S. Census population estimates for the state of Missouri and the four counties in the HSTCC region. The U.S. Census estimate that the population within the four counties of the HSTCC Region will increase by 5573 people by July 2003. However, the population figure cannot be verified until a proper count is conducted.

| Geographic Area | Population estimates | | | | April 1, 2000 | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| | July 1, 2003 | July 1, 2002 | July 1, 2001 | July 1, 2000 | Estimates base | Census |
| Missouri | 5,704,484 | 5,669,544 | 5,636,220 | 5,605,995 | 5,596,683 | 5,595,211 |
| Barton County | 12,999 | 12,870 | 12,696 | 12,551 | 12,541 | 12,541 |
| Jasper County | 108,112 | 106,849 | 105,811 | 104,964 | 104,686 | 104,686 |
| McDonald County | 21,973 | 21,685 | 21,690 | 21,671 | 21,681 | 21,681 |
| Newton County | 54,033 | 53,162 | 52,786 | 52,738 | 52,636 | 52,636 |
| HSTCC Region | 197,117 | 194,566 | 192,983 | 191,924 | 191,544 | 191,544 |

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau

Income and Poverty Status

Income characteristics of the HSTCC region show that the income varies widely between the urban and rural areas. Table 11 displays the median household income and per capita income of the HSTCC region. Median income of the City of Joplin and the state are also provided for means of comparison. According to the “Missouri Economic Research and Information Center”, the regional average wage was \$582 per week in the 3rd quarter of 2008.

One can see from Table 11 that while there is little, if no, difference in the income figures between the urban places and rural counties in the HSTCC region there is a significant disparity between the incomes in the HSTCC region versus those of the state.

| | Median Household Income | Per Capita Income |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Barton County | 29,275 | 22,197* |
| Jasper County | 31,323 | 25,967* |
| McDonald County | 27,010 | 22,656* |
| Newton County | 35,041 | 27,896* |
| HSTCC Region | 30,662 | 15,223 |
| Joplin | 30,555 | 17,738 |
| Missouri | 37,934 | 19,936 |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data *2006 Data

Table 12 below displays the poverty status of persons in the HSTCC region again compared with the City of Joplin and the State of Missouri. It can be seen through Table 12 that the poverty levels in most of the HSTCC region are somewhat higher than the overall state figures. Newton County is the only county in the HSTCC region with poverty level lower than the State. Newton County has an individual poverty level of 11.6% (State 11.7%), and a family poverty level of 8.1% (State 8.6%). McDonald County leads the region in poverty with 20.7% of individuals and 15.6% of families below the poverty level.

| | % of Individuals below poverty level | % of Families below poverty level |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | |

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| | | |
|-----------------|------|------|
| Barton County | 13.0 | 11.0 |
| Jasper County | 14.5 | 10.4 |
| McDonald County | 20.7 | 15.6 |
| Newton County | 11.6 | 8.1 |
| Joplin | 14.8 | 10.5 |
| Missouri | 11.7 | 8.6 |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Education

Table 14 displays the educational attainment of persons 25 years and older in the HSTCC region and Missouri. An examination at the educational attainment of persons within the HSTCC Region shows that, on the average, approximately 72% of persons above 25 years old have a high school diploma. The county with the highest percentage of adults with less than a high school diploma is McDonald County (30.6%) while Barton County leads the region in percentage of high school graduates (43%). In terms of persons above 25 years of age with a bachelor degree or higher, Jasper County is the leader with 16.5 %, while Newton County is a close second with 16.2%.

| | Barton County | Jasper County | McDonald County | Newton County | Missouri |
|---|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Persons 25 years and over | 8,070 | 66,206 | 13,418 | 34,211 | 3,634,906 |
| Less than 9 th grade | 668 (8.2%) | 4,142 (6.3%) | 1,498 (11.2%) | 1,998 (5.8%) | 237,618 (6.5%) |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 1,163 (14.4%) | 9,419 (14.2%) | 2,608 (19.4%) | 4,929 (14.4%) | 441,477 (12.1%) |
| High School Graduate (includes equivalency) | 3,474 (43%) | 23,454 (35.4%) | 5,167 (38.5%) | 11,738 (34.3%) | 1,189,670 (32.7%) |
| Some College, no degree | 1,596 (19.8%) | 15,422 (23.3%) | 2,576 (19.2%) | 7,793 (22.8%) | 796,999 (22%) |
| Associate Degree | 315 (3.9%) | 2,857 (4.3%) | 627 (4.7%) | 2,229 (6.5%) | 184,666 (5.1%) |
| Bachelor Degree | 544 (6.7%) | 7,448 (11.2%) | 675 (5.0%) | 3,577 (10.5%) | 507,892 (14%) |
| Graduate or Professional Degree | 310 (3.9%) | 3,464 (5.3%) | 267 (2%) | 1,947 (5.7%) | 276,584 (7.6%) |

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Labor Force Characteristics

Table 15 displays the labor force distribution in the HSTCC region along with the unemployment figures for each county. The labor force in the HSTCC region comprises 100,494 persons, of these persons, 92,849 were employed in March 2009. This computes to an overall unemployment rate in the HSTCC region of 5.3%.

| | Labor Force Size | Employed Persons | Unemployed Persons | Unemployment Rate |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Barton County | 5,123 | 4,572 | 551 | 10.8% |
| Jasper County | 56,496 | 52,152 | 4,344 | 7.7% |
| McDonald County | 11,234 | 10,503 | 731 | 6.5% |
| Newton County | 27,641 | 25,622 | 2,019 | 7.3% |
| HSTCC Region | 100,494 | 92,849 | 7,645 | 7.6% |

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Source: 2002 Current Employment Statistics, Missouri Department of Economic Development

Employment

Table 17 displays the industry of employment and percentage of persons in the HSTCC region 16 years and older in the civilian workforce. An examination of the employment patterns in the HSTCC region shows that the industries that account for the largest percentage of workers are manufacturing (25.5%), retail trade (12.9) and educational, health and social services (16.3%). Combined, these three categories account for 54.7% of employed persons 16 years and older. Manufacturing is the strongest sector and employs the highest percentages of people in the civilian workforce (Jasper 19.0%, Barton 29.3, McDonald 26.7%, and Newton 24.4%) in each county.

| | Jasper County* | | Barton County** | | McDonald County** | | Newton County** | | HSTCC Region** | |
|---|----------------|------|-----------------|------|-------------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|------|
| | | % | | % | | % | | % | | % |
| Total Employed | 52,535 | | 5,882 | | 9,757 | | 24,915 | | 89,600 | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining | 903 | 1.7 | 498 | 8.5 | 987 | 10.1 | 774 | 3.1 | 3,125 | 5.9 |
| Construction | 3,572 | 6.8 | 438 | 7.4 | 874 | 9.0 | 1,756 | 7.0 | 6,033 | 7.4 |
| Manufacturing | 10,002 | 19.0 | 1,721 | 29.3 | 2,608 | 26.7 | 6,086 | 24.4 | 21,053 | 25.5 |
| Wholesale trade | 1,571 | 3.0 | 176 | 3.0 | 344 | 3.5 | 713 | 2.9 | 2,646 | 3.1 |
| Retail trade | 7,411 | 14.1 | 548 | 9.3 | 1,557 | 16 | 3,193 | 12.8 | 11,917 | 12.9 |
| Transportation, warehousing, & utilities | 3,542 | 6.7 | 297 | 5.0 | 452 | 4.6 | 1,728 | 6.9 | 5,784 | 5.8 |
| Information | 1,023 | 2.0 | 58 | 1.0 | 103 | 1.1 | 409 | 1.6 | 1,546 | 1.4 |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, & rental & leasing | 1,892 | 3.6 | 208 | 3.5 | 289 | 3.0 | 859 | 3.4 | 3,480 | 3.6 |
| Professional, scientific, management administrative, & waste services | 2,925 | 5.6 | 172 | 2.9 | 326 | 3.3 | 1,086 | 4.4 | 4,005 | 3.9 |
| Educational, health, & social service | 10,474 | 19.9 | 911 | 15.5 | 1,060 | 10.9 | 4,737 | 19 | 16,385 | 16.3 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food services | 4,788 | 9.1 | 348 | 5.9 | 459 | 4.7 | 1,612 | 6.5 | 6,371 | 6.3 |
| Other services (except public administration) | 2,958 | 5.6 | 307 | 5.2 | 424 | 4.3 | 1,270 | 5.1 | 4,807 | 5.1 |
| Public administration | 1,478 | 2.8 | 200 | 3.0 | 274 | 2.8 | 692 | 2.8 | 2,448 | 2.8 |

Source: U.S. Census Data *2005 – 2007 **2000

Economy

As noted in previous discussion, the economy of the HSTCC region is varied and diverse. All sectors of employment are represented and it is an ever-changing atmosphere. Farming has continued to play a major role in the economy of the region and will continue to do so well into

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the future. The importance of farming and ranching is evident in the amount of land space devoted to these pursuits.

The major employers in the region include the manufacturing, service and transportation industries. Many of the firms with the highest employment capabilities are located in the Joplin area, although there are a number located in the rural areas. Table 18 contains some of the major employers in the HSTCC region, also included are the number of employed and location of the industry.

| Table 18 - Major Employers in the HSTCC Region | | |
|--|------------|---------------|
| Name | Employment | Location |
| Freeman Health System | 3,224 | Joplin |
| Conway Truck load | 2,677 | Joplin |
| St. John's Regional Medical Center | 2,655 | Joplin |
| Leggett & Platt | 2,400 | Carthage |
| Joplin R-8 School District | 1,200 | Joplin |
| EaglePicher Technologies, LLC | 1,000 | Joplin/Seneca |
| Wal-Mart, Inc. of Joplin | 970 | Joplin |
| TAMKO Roofing Products, Inc. | 760 | Joplin |
| Empire District Electric Company | 663 | Joplin |
| Missouri Southern State University | 625 | Joplin |
| Sitton Motor Lines | 600 | Joplin |
| Crossland Construction | 535 | Columbus |
| Mo Department of Transportation | 475 | Joplin |
| General Mills Bakeries & Food | 471 | Joplin |
| Tri State Motor Transit co | 451 | Joplin |
| Jasper Products | 400 | Joplin |
| LaBarge Inc., Electronics Division | 395 | Joplin |
| FAG Bearing Corporation | 393 | Joplin |
| City of Joplin | 393 | Joplin |
| Cardinal Scale/ Detecto Company | 375 | Webb City |
| Able Manufacturing & Assembly | 375 | Joplin |
| Americold Logistics | 367 | Carthage |
| St. Johns Medical Group | 320 | Joplin |
| H.E. Williams | 307 | Carthage |
| Ozark Center | 304 | Joplin |
| Economic Security Corporation | 290 | Joplin |
| Southwest Missouri Bank | 235 | Joplin |
| Aegis Communications | 226 | Joplin |
| Names & Numbers | 210 | |
| Joplin Workshops | 208 | Joplin |
| Modine Manufacturing | 200 | Joplin |
| Rock Tenn | 190 | Joplin |

Source: <http://www.joplincc.com>

The economy of the HSTCC region has much strength and is self-sufficient to some degree. Joplin is the main center of commerce for the tri-state region, including Southeast Kansas and

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Northeast Oklahoma. A majority of the resident's purchasing power is captured in the region, primarily in Joplin, due to the large retail sector of its economy.

Other economic sectors that are strong and/or growing include transportation, health care, and communications. Given its location at Highway 71 (the future I-49 corridor connecting Louisiana to Canada) and I-44, the Joplin Metro Area is a major hub for the trucking industry. The two primary hospitals in the region, Freeman and St. Johns, are a substantial employment base and have experienced significant growth and expansion in recent years. One of the sectors to emerge from the "New Economy" that has substantially benefitted the region is communications. New employers from outside the region, including System Services and Technology, Aegis Communications, and AT&T, have located here partly due to the available and affordable workforce and our low cost of living. The affordable workforce is also an opportunity for the area to attract other "New Economy" sectors such as technology. Onshore Technology, a new business to the area that began operations in late 2008, sees this opportunity in Joplin and plans to substantially expand its operations by hiring under employed workers and training them in new technologies. The region is also home to a Fortune 500 company, Leggett and Platt, who is also one of the largest employers in the region.

With all of our economic strengths, innate weaknesses and/or threats to the region's economy also exist. There is a dependent relationship on areas outside the region. The financial resources of the region are somewhat limited. While there are few financial institutions in the rural areas of the region, there is an overabundance of banks in Joplin. Many of the banks in Joplin are branches of institutions in Kansas City, St. Louis or Springfield. The rural cities are home to mostly locally owned banks. Overall there are approximately 20 individual financial institutions operating in the HSTCC region. While the affordable workforce is in many ways a strength of the region, these lower paying wages are also a weakness as they depress the purchasing power of the area workforce, holding back our economy relative to other regions.

The residents of the region are hesitant to approve tax increases to service debt incurred with bond issuances. While some worthwhile projects have received voter approval, such as the new high school at Carl Junction and improvements to the Joplin school system, the voters have rejected several projects for local school districts. Each of the communities in the HSTCC region remains committed to continued development of the area but continue to face economic problems and voter skepticism. As a result, the Coordinating Council will continue to assist the communities in the region in pursuit of alternative financing methods for much needed development projects.

IV. GOALS & STRATEGIES

VISION STATEMENT

The HSTCC will support and promote economic development through quality housing, industrial development and expansion, and infrastructure development in order to provide an atmosphere conducive to the prosperity of the people of our region.

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GOALS

The HSTCC has been responding to our memberships needs for over 14 years. Our budget decisions are directed at fulfilling their needs. These need are substantially addressed by our economic development goals, developed by the full HSTCC board (which includes the CEDS committee), and can be summarized into three primary categories, including:

GOAL #1: QUALITY HOUSING

First, in our local growth areas, we must respond to the need for quality housing for employers. Much of this effort by HSTCC is directed at rehabilitation of housing stock and development of affordable housing. Our past and current projects in Carl Junction, Carterville, Oronogo, Neosho, Seneca and surrounding areas will eventually affect over 150 houses and for the additional 25 houses that were damaged in a devastating tornado that occurred in May of 2003.

GOAL #2: INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT & EXPANSION

Our second effort to engage with our communities in economic development is our support of the Southwest Missouri Economic Development Association. This regional group is made up of Cities and Counties that are active in promoting industrial development and expansion in the HSTCC region. This region includes Barton County, Jasper County, Newton County and McDonald County. Even though most areas in are experiencing positive growth this organization is proactive in soliciting new businesses to Southwest Missouri. The director of this organization is Kevin Welch, and one of his main functions is to organize local professionals to go to trade shows and conventions to bring interested developers and industries to look at Southwest Missouri.

GOAL #3: INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The third important goal is to provide infrastructure development for our cities and counties. This includes sewer systems, water systems, streets, bridges, roads and industrial parks. All of these items must be built and maintained to create the positive development atmosphere that is needed in this competitive arena.

Our members also provide the basis for contact of existing local industry and businesses. This helps stabilize the employment and expand jobs for our region.

Of course resources for these activities must be organized and applied to specific projects. Our HSTCC staff makes applications for available grants and loans from our active partners; The Community Development Block Grant Program, the United States Department of Agriculture/Rural Development Program, Missouri Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Administration, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The staff also must organize city and county resources to provide local input and resources to many of these programs.

Another important function of HSTCC Staff is to provide contact with the various philanthropic organizations to solicit their help with local projects.

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STRATEGIES

The following specific strategies are intended to be primarily multifunctional in achieving the previously mentioned goals for proving successful economic development in Southwest Missouri.

- ✓ Identify and prioritize local economic development needs.
- ✓ Provide communities assistance by writing appropriate grants.
- ✓ Maintain highly skilled staff to provide project management and administration of grants through government programs.
- ✓ Promote business incubator projects to assist local entrepreneurs in starting successful new businesses.
- ✓ Establish support for industrial development organizations, chambers of commerce, financial institutions so they may attract new industries and expand existing industries.
- ✓ Promote government programs, both state and federal, that stimulate economic growth and development.
- ✓ Encourage local counties and cities to evaluate sewer/water systems frequently.
- ✓ Ensure the opportunity for sewer and water facilities for all citizens possible.
- ✓ Promote opportunities for all levels of jobs within the region and encourage training for displaced and under skilled labor.
- ✓ Encourage local industries to expand their operations.
- ✓ Explore national and international markets for the region's manufactured products.
- ✓ Collect data that promotes the region for new business and industry.
- ✓ Match local capabilities with outside needs to attract new business and industry.
- ✓ Remain highly competitive in economic development efforts.

The first four strategies have been identified as the highest priorities for the region and are what the CEDS committee will focus on over the next three years.

V. ACTION PLAN FOR SUPPORTING GOALS & STRATEGIES

The Southwest Missouri Economic Development Alliance has been established for about 5 years. Originally, this cooperative organization was to help provide visibility for Southwest Missouri to those industries and businesses that would be expanding or relocating. The Director, Kevin Welch established contact with and attended several national and international conferences and trade shows. His work has successfully brought industries into the area to investigate local potential.

The SMEDA has been supported by Harry S Truman Coordinating Council and this relationship has allowed local development and cooperation for the region. Many of the Goals listed above have been addressed because of the involvement of local governments, the SMEDA and HSTCC.

HSTCC has been able to provide our members with Missouri Economic Development Department, Community Development Block Grant funds for many development needs. Currently projects include, water and wastewater improvements or new systems; over 100 homes that are being upgraded to meet livability standards and replenish deteriorating housing stock; transportation planning through the Missouri Department of Transportation; and Solid Waste support for local governments and recycling industry.

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In cooperation with the Job Service Offices the HSTCC has been able to assure that local industries are served by programs that provide job training and education for local laborers.

The future will provide ongoing challenges. Our core activity will be strong in the above areas and it will be our mission to expand these programs to keep building local capacity.

Specifically HSTCC will take steps to create local community workshops and retreats to help them define the community needs. Also, HSTCC will compile information that helps direct communities to resources available from the State and Federal agencies.

It is important to continue to develop a close working relationship with state and federal agencies that have been good partners in the past. These include the DED CDBG Program, USDA/RD programs, MoDOT/TAC planning and transportation implementation programs, EPA Superfund and Lead Cleanup programs, DNR water and wastewater programs and environmental cleanup program.

One important relationship that must be developed is with the Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. Past budgets have crippled this agency and allowed for no growth in its programming or in its outreach to State and Regional organizations. Although there is some current speculation that new budget opportunities are being considered by Congress we will have to wait and see what new capabilities may be available.

Current activity that is very important to Joplin, our local growth center, is the establishment of an Incubator for Small Business Development. HSTCC has fully supported this activity and if successful it will be a model for other communities to help establish new enterprises that may facilitate the creation of new jobs and growth.

HSTCC will continue to participate in the Missouri Association of Councils of Governments. This organization provides solid interaction between the 18 councils in the State of Missouri. Allowing for the transfer of best practices and cooperative work on vital legislation that affects economic and community development in Missouri helps all of our councils bring needed resources to meet local needs.

VI. SELF EVALUATION

The HSTCC will submit an annual CEDS review and update to determine the successfulness of the strategy. The CEDS committee will appoint a review sub-committee of itself to work with HSTCC staff in the review process who will solicit input from area ED agencies, the private sector, and general public. A number of economic indicators will be considered to measure progress. Factors that will be considered include:

- ✓ Number of sub-standard housing units improved;
- ✓ Rate of increase in owner-occupied housing;
- ✓ Number of new jobs created;
- ✓ Increase in Federal and State investments in the region;
- ✓ Increase in private investment;
- ✓ Increase in city and county revenue and tax base; and

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- ✓ Increase in usage of District technical assistance.

During evaluation the most current economic development data will be considered in determining if this strategy is on track or if adjustments need to be made to the CEDS.

VII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The proposed district has an estimated population of over 208,000 people and has sufficient resources through the numerous local governments, Chambers of Commerce, business community and educational institutions to foster economic development. This CEDS contains specific programming administered by HSTCC staff, such as grant funded projects, that will promote intra-district cooperation, self-help, and public investment. It has been approved by the State of Missouri's Office of Administration. It identifies problems and conditions underlying economic distress in the district. It also promotes community and economic development by working with MoDOT, EPA and other government entities on various transportation, environmental and developmental planning in the region. The HSTCC is a non-profit organization and has included in its application for Investment Assistance a resolution passed by (or a letter signed by) an authorized representative of each county in the region acknowledging that they are acting in cooperation with the HSTCC and CEDS Committee as required under 301.2. All of the counties have submitted a letter of resolution to support the economic activities of the district. The CEDS meets the requirements of 302.4 concerning public information. With the aforementioned factors adequately addressed, the HSTCC organization respectfully requests the designation as an Economic Development District.