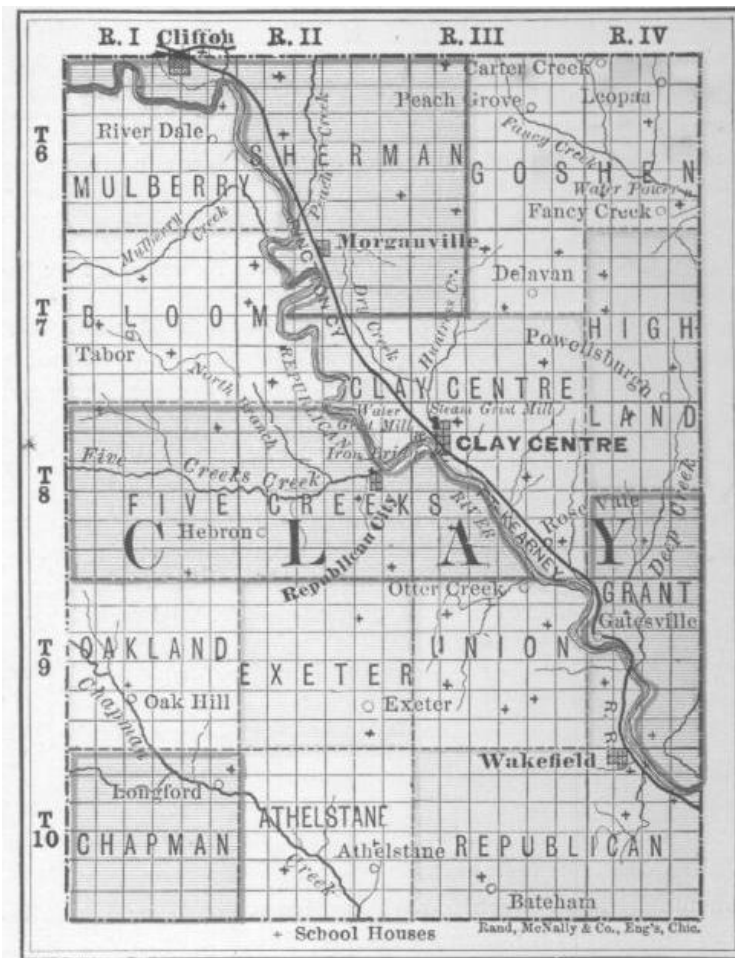


Clay County, Kansas

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

2005-2015 Vision for a Sustainable Future



April 2005

1878 Map of Clay County, Kansas

Phillips & Associates
Community Planning & Development Consultants

Clay County, Kansas

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Adopted by the Board of
County Commission on
March 28, 2005
Resolution No. 2005-07

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This plan funded in part
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Chapter 5 Plan Implementation

Plan Introduction

Adapting to a Changing Rural Landscape

This plan addresses several critical issues facing the county and identifies a framework to guide decisions about where development should take place. The future land use plan outlines the proposed general distribution of various uses of land within the county. It consists of a set of goals, objectives, policies and programs to direct future development to guide decision-makers about future land use.

Clay County's land use is primarily associated with production agriculture, which is the foundation of the local economy. Even the geographic location of many towns in Clay County can be traced to an agriculture beginning. The settlement of much of Kansas was determined by the expansion of railroads and the distance to move agricultural products to market. The intent of the Clay County Future Land Use Plan is not to regulate agricultural land uses, but to support and preserve opportunities for a sustainable farm economy, together with ensuring opportunities for industrial, commercial, and housing components of municipal economies to grow and expand.

While land use planning can promote economic development, the goal is to create a balance between growth and natural resources protection. The heritage of Clay County is based on stewardship of the land. Conservation principles advanced by landowners must ensure that natural resources (land, air, water, energy, and biodiversity) are available for long-term social, economic, and environmental benefits. Preservation of the environment begins with the individual; yet, government and institutions can play a key role in protecting, conserving, and restoring natural resources in the county. Conserving the county's rural areas is integral to the continuation of farming, protection of environmental quality and wildlife habitat, and maintaining a link to Clay County's heritage.

The Board of County Commission and Planning Commission realize that the overall trend of growth/decline within one town is influenced by forces in neighboring towns, and in the county as a whole. To illustrate this point, changes (positive or negative) in population and age/social composition affect the School District, Fire Districts, market demand for housing, goods and services, and county and municipal services. Perhaps the most critical issue facing Clay County is its ability to bring public organizations, local governments, and businesses together and recognize that building relationships and networks is paramount for building strong communities, preserving the counties natural resources, and providing cost-effective public services.

Strong leadership is required for Clay County to enhance its opportunities for economic development and ensure that workers and families are retained and attracted to the county. This includes partnership building with municipalities, communication and outreach between local and county government and state and federal agencies, between the public sector and private sector development community, and with citizens, civic, and environmental groups. For its part in this process of collaborative decision-making, the Clay County Comprehensive Land Use Plan seeks to create a sustainable vision for the future and promote sensible land use.

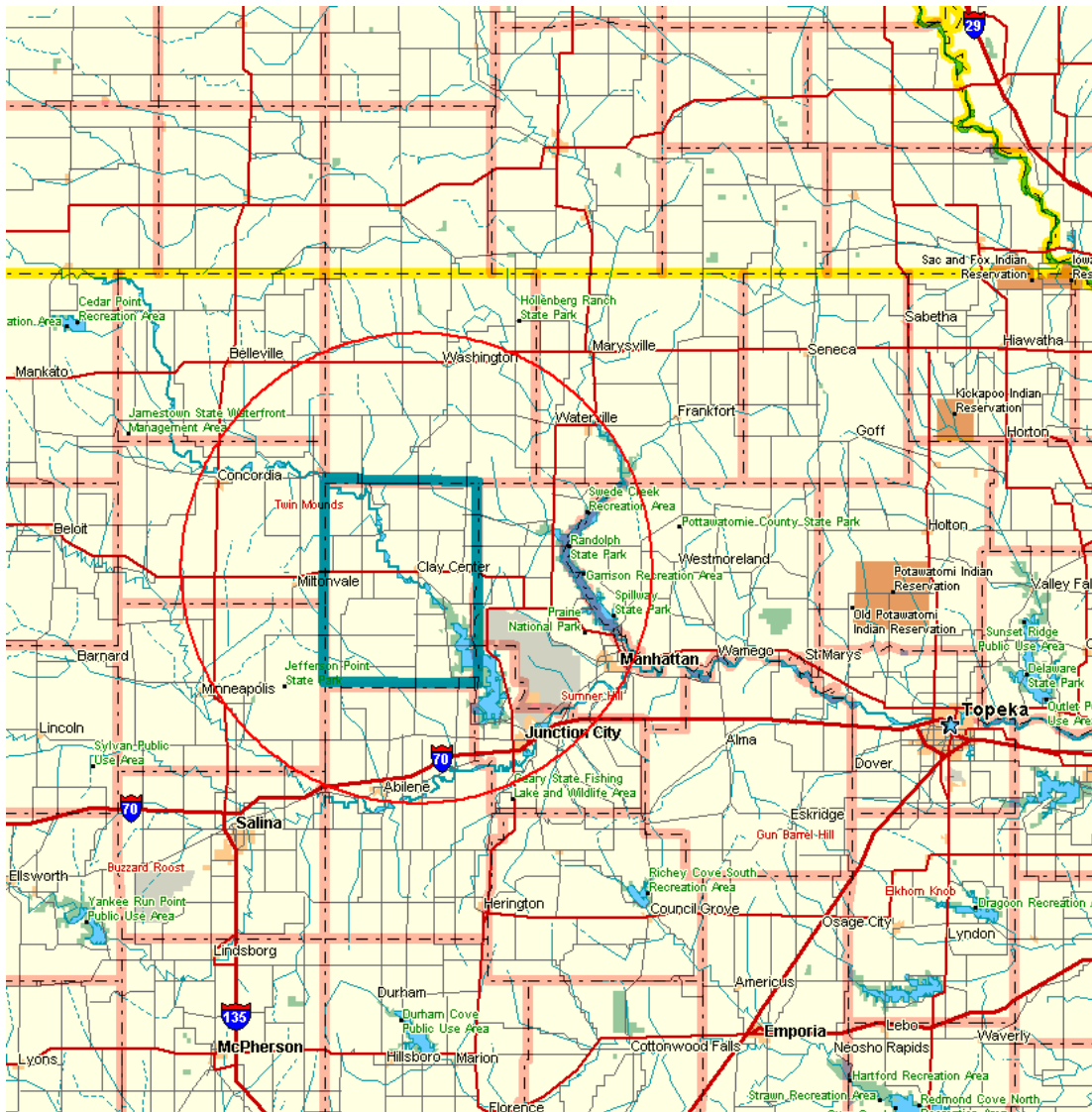
Study Area Boundary

The study area for this plan includes all of the unincorporated property within Clay County. Clay Center is the county seat and principal city in the county. There are eight incorporated towns located in the county: Clay Center, Wakefield, Green, Longford, Morganville, Clifton, Vining, and Oak Hill. The county measures 22 miles wide by 30 miles in length, and encompasses a total of 419, 610 acres.

Regional Context

Figure 1.1 maps the location of Clay County to surrounding cities and counties in north central Kansas. A 30-mile radius illustrates the commuter towns within a 25 minute drive, which includes Manhattan, Junction City, Abilene, Minneapolis, and Concordia.

Figure 1.1
Regional Map



Plan Preparation Process

The plan preparation process allowed for an exchange of ideas and information between county and municipal officials, landowners, and state and federal agencies involved in managing land resources. A public workshop was held to understand what people value most about Clay County, what they see as major county planning issues, and what their vision for the future of the county is. The outcome of this public workshop helped the Clay County Planning Commission identify county planning strategies and prepare a county-wide future land use plan.

The following is timeline of events and activities involved in preparing the plan document

December, 2003	City and consultant sign agreement to prepare the plan.
January, 2004	Project initiation meeting with County Commission and Planning Commission members
May, 2004	Presentation of Interim Report to the County Commission and Planning Commission members
July, 2004	Public participation workshop to define county-wide vision statement, planning goals, and strategies
September, 2004	Planning Commission work session to discuss future land use policies
November, 2004	Planning Commission work session to discuss future land use plan
January 18, 2005	Planning Commission work session to discuss final draft of plan Planning Commission public hearing to consider adoption of the plan County Commission adoption of comprehensive plan

Public Participation

An important element of this plan is the use of a public workshop to allow local officials and concerned citizens an opportunity to identify a vision for their future. A public workshop was held on July 31, 2004. This involvement contributes to an informed citizenry and lays a foundation for the plan by developing community goals and priorities. The workshop accomplished the following tasks:

- Identify a shared vision for the future of Clay County
- Discuss what is worthy of protecting in Clay County
- Discuss what needs to be created in Clay County
- Discuss what needs to be changed in Clay County
- Identify key land use issues facing Clay County

2005 – 2015 Plan Goals

**Goal 1
Preservation of Rural Character &
Farmland**

Preserve the rural character of the unincorporated areas of the county and promote the conservation of farmland for the production of food and other agricultural products.

**Goal 2
Rural Residential Development**

Allow rural residential development in areas of the county appropriate for rural subdivisions or individual parcels on designated minimum lot size.

**Goal 3
Compact Town Growth & Rural Growth**

Support the communities of Clay County in their efforts to attract new households and businesses.

**Goal 4
Wind Power**

Support the development of wind as an alternative source of energy in appropriate locations after careful evaluation based on the impact on public safety, public services and infrastructure, soil erosion and water quality, natural and biological resources, noise, cultural and archaeological resources, construction impact, and visual impact assessment.

**Goal 5
Extra-Territorial Zoning**

Support allowing the Cities of Wakefield and Clay Center extra-territorial zoning and subdivision authority through adoption of an inter-local agreement.

**Goal 5
Development Potential of
Milford Lake**

Support opportunities to bring visitors to Milford Lake through recreation, eco-tourism, as well as attracting new housing construction for homeowners wanting to locate in the southeastern portion of Clay County.

**Goal 6
Outfitter Businesses**

Support the development of outfitter businesses within the County.

**Goal 7
Manufactured Housing**

Support manufactured housing and residential design manufactured housing as acceptable forms of affordable housing in Clay County.

**Goal 8
Preservation of Historic
Structures & Places**

Support the preservation of Federal, State, and locally significant historic and culturally important structures, landmarks, and sites in Clay County.

**Goal 9
Protection & Restoration of
Riparian and Wetland Areas**

Encourage the protection and restoration of riparian and wetland areas within Clay County.

Future Land Use Plan & Policies

Planning for Sustainability

Clay County is not expected to experience *extensive* or *widespread* development from people moving into or businesses relocating to the county. This assessment is not intended to be grim but instead a forthright outlook. Nor is this a negative critique of the county or opportunities for economic development. Quite simply, if national demographic and business trends of the past 25 years continue, many non-metropolitan counties are expected to struggle against global economic forces. This is particularly true for agricultural-based local economies, such as Clay County.

Does this mean Clay County has a bleak future? The answer is no. Most of the demographic indicators point to modest change over the next 30 years. One growth variable that can play a role in Clay County is the movement of soldiers to Fort Riley. The relocation of elements of the 1st Division, support and training troops, and eventually civilian contractor's personnel will potentially benefit Clay Center and Wakefield. Due to the rapidly changing needs of the U.S. military, it is difficult to gauge the economic impacts from the influx of personnel. This plan should be reviewed yearly to make the necessary adjustment to land use policies as events unfold over the next 5 – 10 years.

Based on the scenario derived from the past 20 years, Clay County is reaching a state of equilibrium where *significant* changes in population, settlement and land use patterns are not expected in the foreseeable future. By no means does this suggest county or community changes will not occur. New businesses will emerge, people will continue to build new homes, but it also means dealing with vacant retail/industrial businesses, an aging housing stock, and a growing number of people in retirement years. What it also means is that Clay County's local governments and businesses should focus on sustaining and supporting its existing economic base and local communities, as well as attracting new jobs and businesses.

One of the key county land use planning issues is to strike a balance between three primary rural revitalization issues: 1) continued prosperity for the farm economy, 2) protection of natural resources (water, soil, wildlife, flora,) and 3) desire of non-farm households to build homes on small tracts in the county. In the past few decades, several counties in Kansas located adjacent to or near a large city have addressed the issue of "rural sprawl". Generally, rural sprawl is defined as non-farm households locating in rural subdivisions or scattered along county roads. Clay County has not faced extensive rural residential home construction, although there are instances of rural housing locating near Clay Center. The dilemma confronting county government is understanding when rural home construction shifts from being a viewed as a benefit to a burden. The leadership of Clay County does not want to encourage rural sprawl and create fiscal burdens for taxpayers to provide county services to homeowners demanding improved roads, increased law enforcement coverage, or snow removal. The fundamental task for county planners is to find an acceptable way to protect farm operations from encroachment by urban dwellers seeking a rural lifestyle, while at the same time avoiding undue fiscal constraints on the county budget from excessive rural sprawl.

Preservation of Rural Character & Farmland

Protecting agricultural operations in Clay County from encroachment by incompatible land uses is a concern of the Planning Commission. Protecting the rural character and farming activities of the county from encroachment by nonagricultural uses or impeded from practicing standard farming operations is essential. The comprehensive plan, and enforcement through county zoning, ensures that substantial portions of the county are protected from incompatible land uses. Preservation of farmland for the production of food and other agricultural products is also supported by the State of Kansas. The Kansas Legislature has declared Kansas a “Right-to-Farm” state [see K.S.A. 2-3201]. This legislation limits nuisance suits and injunctions on agricultural activity to conserve and protect farmland.

Another central land use issue of the Planning Commission focuses on how to accommodate limited, non-farm housing in the county. The Planning Commission is interested in allowing homeowners to construct houses in unincorporated areas of the county, subject to specific site selection criteria, and at the same time not creating unreasonable increases in the demand for government services or burdens on people involved in agricultural production in the county. The general thinking is that it would be acceptable to permit non-farm households to build a residence in nearly any location in the county, but only allow rural housing subdivision according to criteria based on access to highways, proximity to paved county roads, availability of water, closeness to recreation facilities, and impact on natural resources.

County officials recognize that people employed in Geary, Riley, or Dickinson County seeking a rural lifestyle may choose Clay County for its ease of commute and access to recreational amenities offered at Milford Lake. There are also Clay County households that may seek to build a home on rural acreage.

Rural housing can occur in several development patterns. The two most common patterns include scattered housing on large tracts of land and rural subdivisions or clustered development on three to ten acre lots. The term scattered large-lot housing is defined as housing randomly located throughout the county on individual tracts or parcels on varying sizes. A typical scattered housing pattern is sometimes characterized as a ribbon of 5 or 10-acre tracts sold along county roads near a paved state highway. Another example can include houses on smaller tracts or lots but located in developments that are situated so that a half-mile or more of farmland separates one development from another. In other words, the number of dwelling units per mile is extremely low with a scattered housing pattern.

A scattered housing pattern in a rural county can have public policy and fiscal implications.

- Research shows that a scattered housing pattern costs as much as 24 percent more to provide services to and maintain than they yield in taxes.
- While county government collects more property taxes from a residential home than a cultivated field or pasture, it is also a situation where a household requires more government services (law enforcement, fire, road maintenance, school bus service, etc.).
- Residential housing built in rural areas may be disruptive to farming operations.
- There can be a loss of productive land for home sites and streets.
- The continued development of scattered housing can lead to a loss of rural character as more housing is built and open fields are divided into tracts or parcels for homes.
- In certain instances people moving into the county from an urbanized area want increased government services. In turn, this puts pressure on elected officials to balance increased demand for public services with trying to limit tax increases.

Encouraging rural housing to locate in rural subdivisions is the other common development pattern. In some respects, promoting rural subdivisions is the opposite of scattered rural housing because the subdivision offers a way to organize housing based on good land use practices. Instead of a landowner selling eight tracts with each home having individual driveways connecting to a county road, the landowner prepares a subdivision plat and sells individual tracts centered around an interior road (similar to Prairie Meadows subdivision). Obviously, development of a rural subdivision requires a landowner that is willing to act as a subdivider and make a long-term commitment to selling lots.

Goal Statement

Preserve the rural character of the unincorporated areas of the county and promote the conservation of farmland for the production of food and other agricultural products

Objectives

1. Limit the loss of highly productive agricultural land to non-farm development. Highly productive includes both grass and crop lands.
2. Support the viability of agriculture as a business and way of life.
3. Protect areas with prime agricultural soils.
4. Regulate urban commercial and industrial development through zoning.
5. Minimize the impact of non-farm development on farm operations.
6. Protect highly productive agricultural soils from rural housing development.
7. Encourage rural housing to occur in areas that can best support development due to infrastructure availability and capacity as well as other public services.
8. Encourage rural housing to occur in areas with limited opportunities for farming, such as poor soil conditions, wooded areas, or areas not optimal for agriculture. The general intent is to encourage housing to locate in places with slight or moderate site constraints, as opposed to building in a cultivated field or pasture.
9. Discourage rural housing from locating near intensive animal feeding operations, utility transmission stations, and other land uses that may create a nuisance.

Policies and Programs

1. Support the use of quarter-quarter based agricultural zoning to limit the number of non-farm houses to two, five-acre minimum sell-offs per quarter-quarter
2. Modify the zoning regulations to allow for farm based businesses and micro enterprises that would permit compatible occupations and support agricultural/resource based operations. Farm based businesses must remain an ancillary use, secondary to the farming operation, and should not interfere with adjacent farms or create a nuisance for nearby residents.
3. Allow development of bed-and-breakfasts and related tourist/recreation activities on working farms or former farmsteads.
4. Modify the zoning regulations to include an agricultural nuisance disclaimer statement in any agricultural zoning district. This would provide fair warning to those who may desire to purchase a home in an agricultural zone indicating Clay County is a right-to-farm county.

5. Develop objective methods for evaluating the impact of development proposals on highly productive agricultural lands. For example, investigate the use of the LESA Land Evaluation and Site Assessment system for crop and grass lands.
6. Modify the zoning regulations to permit agriculture-related support businesses (both commercial and industrial) in the county, subject to conditional review and approval. The market being served or the character of the use must be distinctly non-urban in nature (i.e., agricultural commodities, plant nurseries, etc.). The sites for these proposed uses should be designed to meet the following conditions:
 - 6.1 Assurance that the roads providing access to the site is capable of handling additional traffic without causing congestion or undue deterioration. Sites should be located with access to hard surfaced or major county roadways. Development should be discouraged on seldom used roads that have poor surface or drainage conditions, on minimum maintenance roads, and on roads that have frequent curves and/or excessive slope.
 - 6.2 Vehicular turning movements onto the site shall not cause a significant reduction in road capacity or represent a traffic safety hazard.
 - 6.3 A source of potable water is available in sufficient quantity to meet usage requirements. The county staff shall coordinate development review and approval with the affected rural water district.
 - 6.4 A sewage disposal system is available that can safely treat the anticipated quantity and type of wastewater without causing groundwater or surface water pollution.
 - 6.5 The Planning Commission may require a drainage study of the area by a licensed engineer.
 - 6.6 The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses.
 - 6.7 The site is designed to conserve unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, floodplains, and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.
 - 6.8 The proposed location does not restrict existing agricultural operations or remove significant amounts of prime agricultural land, as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, from production.

Criteria for Rural Housing & Subdivisions

An important principle of the Planning Commission is the need to develop site selection criteria for rural housing and subdivisions. Subdivision refers to the division of a lot, tract or parcel of land into two or more parts for the purpose, whether immediate or future, for sale of building residential structures. The premise of this principle is to ensure that when a non-farm house or subdivision is constructed that the following planning issues are evaluated: 1) impact on demand for county infrastructure or services, 2) impact on adjacent or nearby farming operations and residents, 3) impact on environmental resources such as, prime farmland, wetlands, riparian areas, and floodplain.

Policies and Programs

1. Investigate requiring each non-farm sell-off permitted in a quarter-quarter to submit a “certificate of survey” prior to issuance of a building permit.
2. Residential subdivisions, or non-farm housing exceeding the permitted two dwelling units per quarter-quarter, shall be allowed only through rezoning and subdivision plat approval.

3. Rezoning requests for rural residential may be allowed in county or town fringe area if all of the following conditions are met:
 - 3.1 Roads providing access to the site are capable of handling the additional traffic without causing congestion or undue deterioration. The county staff shall coordinate development review in the town fringe with the bordering city to evaluate local plans for future road improvements.
 - 3.2 Vehicular turning movements onto the site will not cause a significant reduction in road capacity or represent a traffic safety hazard.
 - 3.3 A source of potable water is available in sufficient quantity to meet usage requirements. The county staff shall coordinate development review and approval with the affected rural water district and/or bordering city.
 - 3.4 A sewage disposal system is available that can safely treat the anticipated quantity and type of wastewater without causing groundwater or surface water pollution. The county staff shall coordinate development review in the town fringe with the bordering city to evaluate local plans for extension of sewer systems.
 - 3.5 Storm water runoff does not increase flooding hazards to human life or property. The county staff shall coordinate development review in the town fringe with the bordering city and the city engineer to determine if anticipated changes in runoff justify a drainage study to manage stormwater runoff.
 - 3.6 The proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses.
 - 3.7 When a preliminary plat is required the site must be designed to conserve unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, floodplains, and wetlands, by setting them aside from development. The Planning Commission should encourage cluster housing or subdivision conservation design to increase net density to offset conserving natural site amenities.
4. The Planning Commission shall require buffers and/or open space between agricultural uses and residential developments to minimize the negative impacts of one use on the other.
5. When a subdivision development is proposed on prime agricultural lands, the Planning Commission should either reject the proposal or encourage the clustering of dwellings to preserve a significant portion of the land for continuing agricultural uses.
6. It is recommended that residential subdivisions contiguous to a city be connected to municipal water and sewer service unless there is an inability to serve, seek annexation, and required to meet the subdivision regulations of the bordering city.
7. Clay County is intent on balancing the demand for rural housing and subdivisions with the efficient provision of public facilities and services. In reviewing rezoning requests and subdivision plats, the Planning Commission shall determine the impact on schools, police and fire protection, and county road maintenance. If it can be demonstrated that a proposed rezoning or subdividing of land overloads public services and requires an increase in government budgets or services, the application may be amended or denied, or proportional off-site road improvements may be required.
8. Discourage development that is located within the path of potential flood waters arising from the catastrophic breach of a watershed structure, flood control or recreation lake.
9. Residential subdivisions may be approved if all of the following conditions are met:
 - 9.1 A detailed site/development plan is prepared when a subdivision is proposed to be located on watershed structures.

- 9.2 Roads providing access to the subdivision are capable of handling additional traffic without causing congestion, excessive dust, or undue deterioration. Vehicular turning movements onto the site must not cause a significant reduction in road capacity or represent a traffic safety hazard.
- 9.3 A source of potable water must be available in sufficient quantity to meet usage requirements. The County shall coordinate development review and approval with the affected rural water district.
- Where a public water system is not available, the individual residential tract size shall not be less than 5 acres, unless a clustering of dwelling units occurs.
 - Development proposals shall be accompanied by certification of adequate water availability.
 - All water supply provisions, whether private or public, shall meet the standards of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.
- 9.4 A sewage disposal system must be provided that can safely treat the anticipated quantity and type of wastewater without causing groundwater or surface water pollution.
- Where surface lagoons provide the primary means of sewerage disposal, the developer shall be encouraged to utilize project size systems rather than individual cells to each lot or tract.
 - All surface disposal lagoons shall be located, designed, and screened to preserve a high visual quality.
 - All sewage systems shall be designed to meet Kansas Department of Health and Environment standards for collection and disposal of sanitary waste.
- 9.5 The Planning Commission may require a drainage study of the area by a licensed engineer.
- 9.6 The proposed development must be compatible with adjacent uses. Residential development within one-half to one-mile of confined animal feeding operations, wind generation systems, large scale dehydrator and grain storage, and similar intensive facilities should be rejected.
- 9.7 The preliminary plat shall be designed to conserve unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, floodplains, and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.
- 9.8 The overall design of the subdivision must avoid a "ribbon" of lots along the county right-of-way and prohibit drives facing public roads.

Compact Town Growth & Rural Growth

The most desirable location for rural growth and new development is to direct it within or near Clay Center or the other towns in Clay County that have public water and waste water treatment systems. These are the places in the county with existing infrastructure and public facilities capable of efficiently accommodating new growth. The City of Clay Center is an obvious place to encourage people and businesses to locate in Clay County. This is because it is the largest city in the county and contains a wide-range of public services, sizeable retail, professional, and service base, along with a variety of

housing opportunities. The smaller towns in Clay County have their own opportunities for micro-business entrepreneurs and households seeking rural-town lifestyle.

Goal Statement:

Support the cities of Clay County in their efforts to attract new households and businesses.

Policies and Programs:

1. Encourage infill development within the cities on vacant or underdeveloped parcels.
2. Encourage new residential subdivisions connected to municipal utilities to be contiguous to existing corporate boundaries and be annexed.
3. Oppose commercial and industrial development that proposes to locate on the fringe of cities without connecting to municipal utilities and annexation.
4. Coordinate the review and approval of residential subdivision plats in the unincorporated fringe areas between the county and affected city.
5. Ensure that new rural residential subdivisions or homes on individual parcels in an agriculture zone in the town fringe have direct access to a paved county road or highway.

Wind Power

Parts of Clay County are rated Class 3 based on the Kansas Wind Resource Map making it suitable for wind power facilities considering locating in the County. A Class 3 designation means wind speeds range between 14.3–15.7 mph. The highest ranking in Kansas is Class 5 with wind speeds of 16.8-17.9 mph. There is also a transmission line crossing the county, which is a critical factor in locating a wind energy facility. The Planning Commission believes it is appropriate to address this topic in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. In general, the county planners view wind power as a renewable source of energy that should be allowed to develop, subject to siting and permitting requirements adopted by the county.

Goal Statement

Support the development of wind as an alternative source of energy in appropriate locations that have been carefully evaluated based on the impact on public safety, public services and infrastructure, soil erosion and water quality, natural and biological resources, noise, cultural and archaeological resources, construction impact, and visual impact assessment.

Policies and Programs

1. Investigate modifying the zoning codes to allow wind power generating facilities subject to a conditional use permit within the agricultural zoning districts.
2. Adopt siting guidelines for wind power projects in Clay County that are incorporated by reference as part of the county zoning regulations.
3. Investigate requiring that each new wind energy project must complete an environmental resource survey to be submitted as part of the project's zoning application.
4. Investigate how to permit individual wind generators for homeowners.

Downzoning of Property

The Planning Commission recommends that an updated current zoning map be prepared for the county, based on a complete review of past rezoning cases and accurate mapping based on published legal descriptions. Completion of a new zoning map should reveal numerous parcels that reflect outdated or inappropriate residential, commercial or industrial zoning. An updated zoning map will allow the Planning Commission to evaluate each of the parcels that have been rezoned and determine if the zoning classification remains suitable and represents sound land use planning. Downzoning results in a change in the zoning classification of land to a classification permitting development that is less intensive or dense.

Goal Statement

Evaluate each parcel in the County that has been rezoned and determine if the zoning classification remains suitable and represents sound land use planning.

Policies and Programs:

1. Prepare a new zoning map based on a complete review of past rezoning cases and accurate mapping based on published legal descriptions.
2. Adopt a new zoning map pursuant to K.S.A. 12-753 concurrently when the Planning Commission adopts updated zoning and subdivision regulations.

Extra-Territorial Zoning

The Planning Commission supports allowing the Cities of Clay Center and Wakefield extra-territorial zoning and subdivision authority.

Goal Statement

Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and communication between Clay County and the City of Clay Center by granting extra-territorial land use guidance authority through an Interlocal Agreement.

Policies and Programs

1. Adopt an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Clay Center (any other such as Wakefield) granting extra-territorial zoning and subdivision authority. The following provisions should be evaluated as part of the Interlocal Agreement:
 - 1.1 Ensure that one or two Clay County Planning Commissioners reside in the extra-territorial area and that one or both are members of the Clay Center Planning Commission.
 - 1.2 Ensure all rezoning applications, special or conditional use permit applications, and preliminary plats within the extra-territorial area are submitted to the Clay County staff and Planning Commission for their review and comments prior to official action by the Clay Center Planning Commission and City Council.
 - 1.3 Ensure that the review comments offered by the Clay County staff and Planning Commission become part of the official criteria for consideration by the Clay Center Planning Commission and City Council. This action is intended for the county

comments to be given due consideration by the City before making an official decision.

- 1.4 Ensure that all final plats in the extra-territorial area are submitted to the Board of County Commission for review and acceptance of any public rights-of-way or easements.
- 1.5 Ensure the Clay Center zoning regulations are amended to reflect zoning issues and subdivision standards for a rural environment. Ensure the Clay County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners has the opportunity to recommend changes and modifications to the municipal zoning code.

Development Potential of Milford Lake

Milford Lake reservoir is an economic and environmental asset of Clay County offering recreation and tourism development opportunities. The Planning Commission supports development opportunities that will strengthen the economic vitality of the County and promotes bringing visitors to Milford Lake. Particular interest lies in working with State and Federal officials to identify ways to attract visitors to the 2,300 acre Milford Lake Wetlands. This may create new opportunities to attract people to view wildlife in a natural habitat.

In addition, the county planners support the development of recreational housing or residential subdivisions for homeowners seeking a location near Milford Lake and willing to commute to employment in Junction City or Manhattan. The vision for this area is to not promote widespread and extensive rural housing on scattered lots. The intent is to recognize the value of the area to attract homeowners, because of Milford Lake and convenient highway access. Yet, at the same time, the Planning Commission envisions housing that is consistent with the rural nature of the area. To accomplish these objectives, the Planning Commission envisions a land use pattern based on limited non-farm housing within planned clusters or housing nodes near paved roads, as opposed to rural sprawl spreading across the landscape.

Goal Statement

Support opportunities to bring visitors to Milford Lake through recreation, eco-tourism, as well as attracting new housing construction for homeowners wanting to locate in the southeastern portion of Clay County.

Policies and Programs

1. Work with local and state economic development agencies, along with the Corps of Engineers, to promote and market Milford Lake recreation facilities, and the wetland preserve to attract eco-tourism, hunting, and fishing.
2. Support the development of new homes in the vicinity of Milford Lake and the City of Wakefield.
3. Encourage rural housing subdivisions to locate within a half-mile of Highways 15 and 82, or a hard-surfaced county road.

4. Support the development of seasonal housing opportunities for hunters and tourist, (i.e., bed and breakfast operations, lodges, second homes for households).
5. Coordinate with Milford Lake officials to improve public access to Milford Lake facilities.

Outfitter Business in the County

The Planning Commission supports the development of outfitter businesses within the County. These businesses are operated to bring hunters or fishermen into the area (i.e., quail, pheasant, dove, water fowl, and deer). These outfitters can raise animals for release or guide hunters on private property.

Goal Statement

Support the development of outfitter businesses within the County.

Policies and Programs

1. Investigate allowing outfitter businesses as a conditional use in the agricultural zoning district.

Manufactured & Mobile Homes

The Planning Commission supports manufactured housing as an important form of affordable housing in Clay County. The planning principles supported by the Planning Commission are: 1.) support residentially-designed manufactured homes that meet the criteria established by the Kansas Planning and Zoning Enabling Statutes as an acceptable alternative to site built homes; 2.) manufactured homes should be encouraged to locate in a manufactured home park, and 3.) manufactured homes built prior to 1976 should be prohibited from locating in the county except on farms.

Goal Statement

Support both manufactured housing and residential design manufactured housing as acceptable form of affordable housing in Clay County.

Objectives

1. Allow manufactured homes in the agricultural districts, provided the occupant is involved in a valid agricultural pursuit.
2. Encourage residential design, non-farm manufactured homes to locate within or near a city, if practical, where city services can be extended to the site.
3. Require manufactured housing that does not meet residential design standards to locate in a manufactured home park with contemporary standards for storm shelters, paved roads, minimum acreage requirement, and adequate on-site parking per lot, subject to exceptions authorized by the state enabling legislation.

Policies and Programs

1. Amend the zoning regulations to include a “Manufactured Home Park District” with contemporary standards for storm shelters, paved roads, minimum acreage requirement, open space/recreation and adequate on-site parking per lot.
2. Ensure the zoning regulations have design standards for “residentially-designed manufactured homes” pursuant with K.S.A. 12-763.
3. Ensure that manufactured home parks provide screening from nearby residential uses or provide a buffer from agricultural operations.

Preservation of Historic Structures & Places

Clay County contains many historic buildings, landmarks, and sites (Mugler Lodge Site). Many of the buildings reflect the agricultural heritage of the county through farmsteads, barns, cemeteries, or local landmarks. These properties reveal a rural lifestyle that is slowly vanishing. The Planning Commission desires to encourage abandoned farmsteads to be purchased and renovated or adapted for reuse with minimum interference from land use regulations. The loss of historic buildings does not occur because of rapid rural growth and new development, but because of disrepair or abandonment. The simple fact exists that market conditions and population shifts in rural counties make it difficult to prevent the degradation of some locally important historic buildings and their settings. Even with these challenges facing property owners of farmsteads and historic structures, public, non-profit, and private efforts need strengthening to preserve the rural lifestyle and heritage of Clay County.

Goal Statement

Support the preservation of Federal, State, and locally significant historic and culturally important structures, landmarks, and sites in Clay County.

Policies and Programs

1. Support the work of local historic groups in Clay County to prepare a “Historic and Cultural Sites Inventory”.
2. Support opportunities for selling farmsteads as cultural artifacts to new homeowners or the second-home market.
3. Investigate how heritage tourism could play a role in Clay County and work in partnership with the history of Fort Riley and the settling of Kansas.
4. Investigate the creation of Clay County Revitalization Plan to rebate property taxes back to owners who have made improvements to historic properties. The rebate is determined by the increase in property taxes as a result of the improvements. See K.S.A. 12-17, 118.

Protection & Restoration of Riparian & Wetlands

Protection of water quality is an important goal of the Planning Commission. The Commission recognizes the value of protecting riparian and wetland areas along the Republican River and the tributary creeks flowing into the Republican River and ultimately Milford Lake reservoir. County

planners endorse the work of the Federal and State officials in working with private landowners to implement “best management practices” to improve water quality or promote sustainable use of water.

Goal Statement

Encourage the protection and restoration of riparian and wetland areas within Clay County.

Objectives

1. Provide safe and healthy recreational river resources for present and future generations.
2. Re-establish a healthy and diverse ecosystem within the Kansas/Lower Republican Basin and Smoky Hill-Saline Basin.
3. Provide watershed and surface water protection to ensure improved water quality for downstream public water resources.
4. Support stream bank stabilization programs along the Republican River.

Policies and Programs

1. Ensure that county subdivision regulations impose minimum lot size requirements for the purpose of preventing contamination of water resources.
2. Ensure that county subdivision regulations contain design standards that provide variable width riparian buffer and setback requirements. The intent is to establish a naturally vegetated buffer system along all perennial streams that contain critical environmental features such as the 100-year floodplain, steep slopes and wetlands.
3. Work with State of Kansas, municipal government, and rural water district officials to identify critical watershed protection areas or wellhead protection areas.
4. Investigate how Clay County can support voluntary wetland and riparian protection or restoration efforts through such techniques private donations or conservation easement.
5. Evaluate street standards in rural subdivisions regarding design standards for drainage swales that can provide stormwater quality treatment.

Mineral Resources

Clay County possesses several mineral resources including sand and gravel from pits along the Republican River and limestone in the southeastern part of the county [Source: Soil Survey of Clay County, Kansas]. The Planning Commission recognizes the economic value of mineral resources to landowners and the extraction industry, but also respects the need to protect the interests and safety of nearby landowners and land uses.

Goal Statement

Balance mineral extraction with the need to protect the interests and safety of nearby landowners and nearby land uses.

Objectives

1. Ensure that mining operations do not negatively affect the quality of life of the nearby neighborhood or landowners/homeowners.

2. Ensure that existing infrastructure (i.e. roads) can accommodate the increased demand.
3. Ensure that mining operations implement “best management practices” to protect the natural environment (water, air, wildlife, and habitat).

Policies and Programs

1. Ensure the county zoning regulations establish a conditional use permit procedure in the agricultural zoning district for mineral extraction uses.
2. Ensure the county zoning regulations include specific requirements for proper ongoing management addressing dust control, traffic, road maintenance, water quality /stormwater runoff, post-extraction restoration.

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County Planning Issues and Trends

Demographics, Conditions & Trends

Terminology: Projections, Trends & Forecast

Population projection and forecasting is a critical task for county planning. Reasonably accurate projections of a county's population and age composition are essential for programming resources and estimating the future needs of the county. Population projections, usually ranging from 10 – 25 years into the future, are prepared for local governments by various state agencies, school districts, and public water services districts. Some of the key features of this section are:

1. A population "projection" is based on data collected from a county's past. It is another way of saying: "Your past is a good indicator of your future." Since the U.S. Census is released every 10 years, it is common to use the population counts available from the years 1950 or 1960 to 2000. The projection is accomplished by a simple statistical model that averages the rate of gain or loss by drawing a straight line into the future. Population "trends" can be used to modify projections. For instance, if the 50 year trend shows that the rate of loss from 1940 – 1950 and from 1950 – 1960 far exceeds the rate of loss from 1970 – 2000, then the trend would indicate that the rate of projected loss from 2000 to 2030 should be based on the last 30 years of data rather than the last 50 years. A population forecast is a model. It is based in part on trends and projections. However, the researcher may include different assumptions to modify gains and losses in the future. As an example, the data might indicate that the county gained a small number of persons in 1980, 1990 and 2000. Further study, however, may indicate that the average number of children born in the county each year is decreasing, the average age of women at the time of first childbirth is increasing, and that fewer families with young children are moving into the county. The researcher may conclude that if these trends continue, the slow rate of population increase will be erased by the end of the coming decade.
2. Often, the best way to analyze population in small towns or rural counties is to adopt a regional view. Unless the county is an "anomaly," such as one based on high levels of tourism, recreation, natural resource exaction, or retirement, the region (rather than the local area) will offer the best clues to future activity. In Clay County's case, the regional context is both rural, small town and small city. As a result, the only meaningful method of forecast must be based on the performance of the economic area as a whole.

Population and economic change flow to opportunity. Opportunity can take several forms: Amities, education, regional trade centers, affordable housing, and life styles, to mention only a few. However, population cannot shift to areas that are characterized has having few jobs, poor resources, lacking essential services, or an inadequate supply of suitable housing for sale or rent. This presents a difficult task for the researcher since we must assume that the county will not "develop in place" and must wait for other, faster growing areas, to make job, housing, and service investments in the local area. The possibility of outside investments, especially jobs creation, is not an unreasonable assumption. Clearly several communities in the north central Kansas, such as Minneapolis, Clay Center, Concordia and Belleville are influenced by investments from nearby Riley, Marshall and Geary Counties.

The population forecasts for Clay, Cloud, Republic and Ottawa Counties, and comparison cities contained in this analysis are based on the factors discussed above. A great deal of emphasis is

placed on Clay County's and Clay Center's location near heavily traveled transportation routes between the I-70 and Highway 36 Corridors and Highways 81 and 77.

Kansas Overview

Compared to the United States as a whole, Kansas can be characterized as a low to low-average growth performer for the past 50 years. Currently, Kansas ranks as the nation's 32nd most populous state and is 33rd in the rate of growth. The state contains slightly more than 1 percent of the nation's population and this ratio is not expected to change significantly within the next 30 years. Final (adjusted) population totals by the Census Bureau in 2001 show an 8.5 percent growth rate from 1990 to 2000 for Kansas; this is about the same rate for Nebraska and North Dakota. Although the rate of gain exceeds the 1980 - 1990 state change, it is still less than the national average of 13.2 percent.

Generally speaking, this middling performance is due to high rates of out-migration to other states, declining small towns, the loss of basic industries and services, and the changing nature of local economies. In terms of migration, Kansas lost 7,792 persons from 1995 to 2000 and approximately 16,000 for the decade 1990 - 2000. The greatest outflow of population from Kansas is to Missouri; 58,785 persons moved from Kansas to Missouri from 1995 to 2000. Conversely, 56,622 Missourians migrated to Kansas during the same period for a net loss of 2,163 persons. During this same time period, 57 of the 105 Kansas counties reported a net loss in population and 65 counties will lose population between 2000 and 2010. In terms of declining communities, 350 Kansas communities either declined in size or their population remained essentially the same from 1990 to 2000.

On the bright side, Kansas does have a number of consistent population and economic performers among its towns and counties. Nationwide, small town and rural growth is related to six key factors:

- Tourism
- Retirement destinations
- Scenic amenities
- Rural industry/higher educational institutions
- Metropolitan influence
- Transportation links

Of these six factors, three are influential in Kansas. Rural industry and higher education are the single most important source of support for the economies and population base of non-metropolitan small towns and small cities. Location on a key highway route is also critical. Metropolitan overspill, on the other hand, is the major growth generator for a majority of the stable or growing communities in this state. The Kansas City Metropolitan Area (MA), which is by far the principal growth generator in Kansas, and the nation's 24th largest urban area, ranks 120th out of 276 MA's in growth rate. Wichita is the 74th largest urban area and ranks 77 of 276 MS's in growth rate.

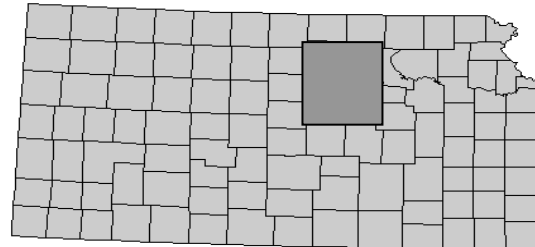
The economic sectors, and thus population change, in north central and northwest Kansas are based on three pillars: Production agriculture, rural manufacturing, and service economies that include health care, education, retail/wholesale commodities, public services and government. At this point, the future of north central Kansas is tied to manufacturing output, agricultural commodities and prices, growth in wage or hourly salaries from services, and profits from sales. Metropolitan influence, tourism, environmental amenities, and retirement destinations do not play a role in the future of the region.

The population forecasts for Clay, Cloud, Republic and Ottawa Counties, and comparison cities contained in this analysis are based on the factors discussed above.

Regional Context

The eastern part of the north central portion of Kansas includes Clay, Republic, Ottawa, Washington and Cloud counties. Together, they form a bridge between the I-70 and the Highway 36 Corridors. Cloud County anchors the population center for the region and consequently forms the core of a C.E.A. (Component Economic Area) that provides jobs, education, health care, and many services for surrounding counties. The historic wealth of the region is based on a diverse set of rural industries, railroads, cattle, production agriculture and manufactures, some of which have been in decline for many decades. From the late 1930s to the early 1960s a significant economy developed around tourism, transportation and services generated along three major highway corridors: Highways 24, 81 and 36. Two of these corridors, Highways 36 and 24 provided the major east – west transportation links in the Great Plains and the United States as a whole. In 2004, the core of the entire north central region of Kansas is built on about 100 key manufactures and fabricators, telecommunications, and services. In Clay County, for instance, more than 45 percent of the labor force is engaged in management, government, profession and services while only 1.9 percent of the employed population is engaged in traditional farming. Manufacturing employs 12.3 percent of the labor force.

North Central Kansas East Component Economic Area



Central Kansas Comparative Area

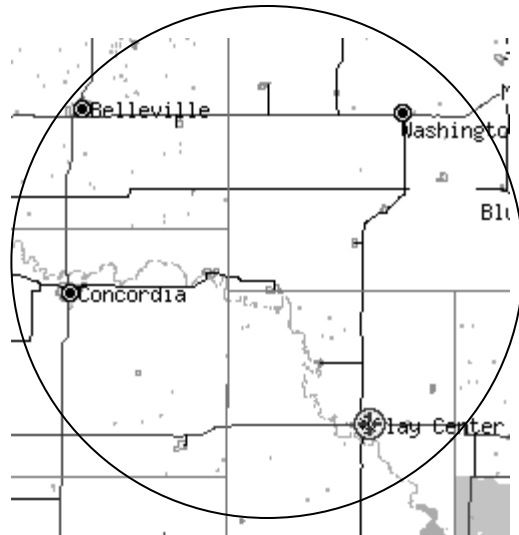


Table 4.1 contains population data for each county in the CEA for 1970 to 2000. The population change from 1970 to 2000 is shown in column six. In terms of growth and decline, the area is best divided into two categories: the two counties that lost 10 percent or less of their population over the 30 year period (Clay and Ottawa), and the three counties that lost more than 10 percent of their population base over the same time frame (Republic, Cloud and Washington). The first group of counties apparently reached their “tipping point” around 1970 and is now in marginal decline or near stability. A “tipping point” gives a rough idea of when the rate of increase or decrease begins to slow and approach a balancing or sustainable point. Figure 4.1 would seem to demonstrate that the rate of decline in both counties began to balance somewhere around 1970.

Table 4.1 contains population data for each county in the CEA for 1970 to 2000. The population change from 1970 to 2000 is shown in column six. In terms of growth and decline, the area is best divided into two categories: the two counties that lost 10 percent or less of their population over the 30 year period (Clay and Ottawa), and the three counties that lost more than 10 percent of their population base over the same time frame (Republic, Cloud and Washington). The first group of counties apparently reached their “tipping point” around 1970 and is now in marginal decline or near stability.

Table 4.1
Growth & Decline of Component Economic Area Counties, 1970 - 2000

County	1970 Population	1980 Population	1990 Population	2000 Population	1980 – 2000 Percent Change
Clay	9,890	9,802	9,158	8,822	-10.0%
Ottawa	6,183	5,971	5,634	6,163	3.2%
Washington	9,249	8,543	7,073	6,483	-24.1%
Republic	8,498	7,569	6,482	5,838	-22.0%
Cloud	13,466	12,494	11,023	10,268	-17.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 PC80-1-A18, 1990 CPH-L-79, 2000 DP-1.

Washington, Republic and Cloud form the second group of counties. Cloud County’s rate of decline is serious and ongoing; the rate of decline for Republic and Washington is persistent and extreme: Both counties are in the top five percent of persistent decline counties. The rate of change for the first group – Clay and Ottawa, is shown in Figure 4.1. After an initial period of growth and formation; both Clay and Ottawa Counties begin to decline in 1920. The greatest rate of loss occurs between 1930 and 1950. By 1970, the rate of loss is minimal and both counties enter a period of relative stability.

Figure 4.1
Clay and Ottawa County Population Rate of Change, 1890 - 2000

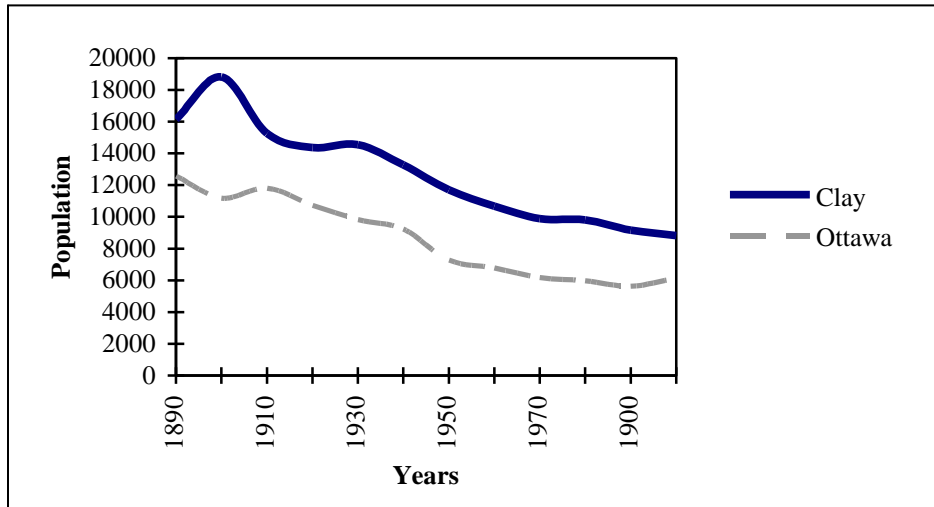


Figure 4-2 shows the rate of change for Republic, Washington & Cloud Counties. Cloud County posts a cumulative population loss of 47 percent since the turn of the century; Republic County’s total loss is 69 percent while Washington County has the greatest loss with 72 percent. Washington County appears to be approaching its limit of population loss to sustain a viable government and economy. Republic and Cloud Counties appear to be losing about 800 – 900 persons per decade. If either county is to achieve population stability, it must occur within the next 30 years before the drop below a minimum sustainable level.

Figure 4.2
Washington, Republic, & Cloud County Population Rate of Change, 1890 - 2000

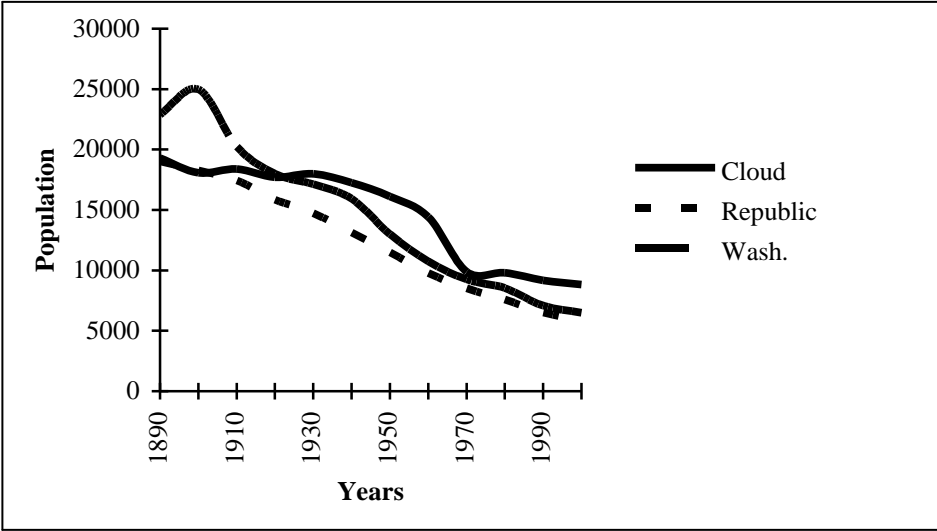


Table 4-2 is a comparison of the five year migration rate from 1995 to 2000. Using this data, Clay County has the highest rate of loss among the five counties from persons moving out of the county. The data show that 1,364 persons moved to Clay County from 1995 – 2000: From this total, 815 moved to Clay County from another area in Kansas and 549 moved from a different state. During this same time period, 1,801 persons moved from Clay County: 1,165 moved to another county in Kansas and 636 to a different state. The net result is that Clay County lost 437 persons due to personal or household moves.

Table 4.2
Comparative Migration of Component Economic Area Counties 1995 – 2001

County	Total In	Same State	Diff. State	Total Out	Same State	Diff. State	Net Migration
Clay	1364	815	549	1801	1165	636	-437
Ottawa	1348	1096	252	1259	946	313	89
Washington	884	581	303	1116	850	266	-232
Republic	898	542	356	1255	900	355	-357
Cloud	1753	1273	480	1744	1257	487	9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Five year Net Migration Rates for States and Sub Areas, 1995-2000.

Total county population loss and gain is not expected to stabilize in the east portion of north central Kansas until about 2040-2050. At that point, the “baby boomer” age bulge that began soon after the Second World War will have passed through the cycle of birth, migration, and death. The population of the five counties used for comparison is 37,574 in 2000. The 10 year measured decrease from 1990 to 2000 for these five counties as a whole is 13 percent. If this rate of decline continues, the population of the region will decrease to about 25,000 persons by 2040 before a degree of stability is reached. This rate of decrease is highly dependent on three key factors.

- The critical trade area communities, such as Clay Center, Belleville, Washington and Minneapolis must retain jobs and a desirable housing base if they are to “anchor” the population of the region.
- The net rate of migration must decrease from these counties so that the birth rate can help stabilize loss from persons and households moving to other locations.
- County and local government officials must develop their own version of “smart decline.” The core of this practice should be based on the assumption that services critical to the quality of life, efforts in economic development, and revitalization tasks are the most important measures to consider over the next 30-40 years.

Local Context

Table 4.3 contains historic population data for the City of Clay Center, Clay Center Township, and Clay County. The population data for Clay Center from 1900 to 1970 to 1950 does not follow a classic rural, small Kansas town trend. Typically, there is initial growth and development for decades 1900 – 1930 and then slow, steady decline since the Great Depression, or at the very latest after 1950. The benchmark year for Clay Center City is 1980 when it experienced its first true population loss. This is followed by another loss of -6.6 percent from 1980 to 1990. The population high in Clay Center City was 4,963 persons in 1970. During the past 30 years the population decreased by 431 persons: This represents a loss of about 8.6 percent.

Table 4.3
Selected Historical Population Counts, 1890-2000

Year	Clay Center - City		Clay Center Township		Clay County	
	Population	%Change	Population	%Change	Population	%Change
1890					16,146	-
1900	3,069	-			15,833	-1.9%
1910	3,438	12%			15,251	-3.7%
1920	3,715	8.1%			14,365	-9.3%
1930	4,386	18.1%			14,556	1.3%
1940	4,518	3.0%			13,281	-8.8%
1950	4,528	0.2%			11,697	-11.9%
1960	4,613	1.9%			10,675	-8.7%
1970	4,963	7.6%	386		9,890	-7.4%
1980	4,948	0.5%	393	1.8%	9,802	-0.9%
1990	4,613	-6.6%	398	1.3%	9,158	-6.6%
2000	4,532	-2.0%	401	1.0%	8,822	-3.7%

Source: Phillips & Associates, compiled from U.S. Census Bureau and Kansas Statistical Abstracts, 1890 – 2000. Table DP-1, U.S. Census Bureau.

Normally, the population of a rural township is included as a part of the population of the largest town within the township. The reason for this is that the town and township form a community and a small component economic area. The population history of Clay Center Township runs counter to the normal expectation of rural decline. Usually the township population decreases at a faster rate than the rural town. In this particular case, the population of Clay Center Township is stable with marginal increase. Presuming that there are no new farms being created, a stable township population indicates scattered, non-farm growth within 1 -5 miles of the host community.

Figure 4.3
Clay Center City Population Rate of Change 1930 – 2000

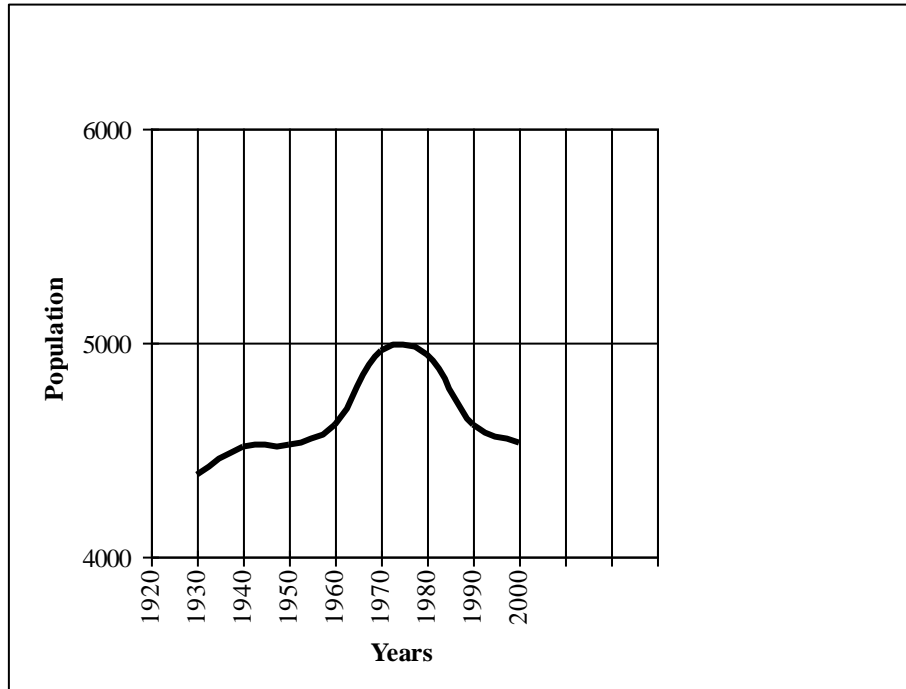
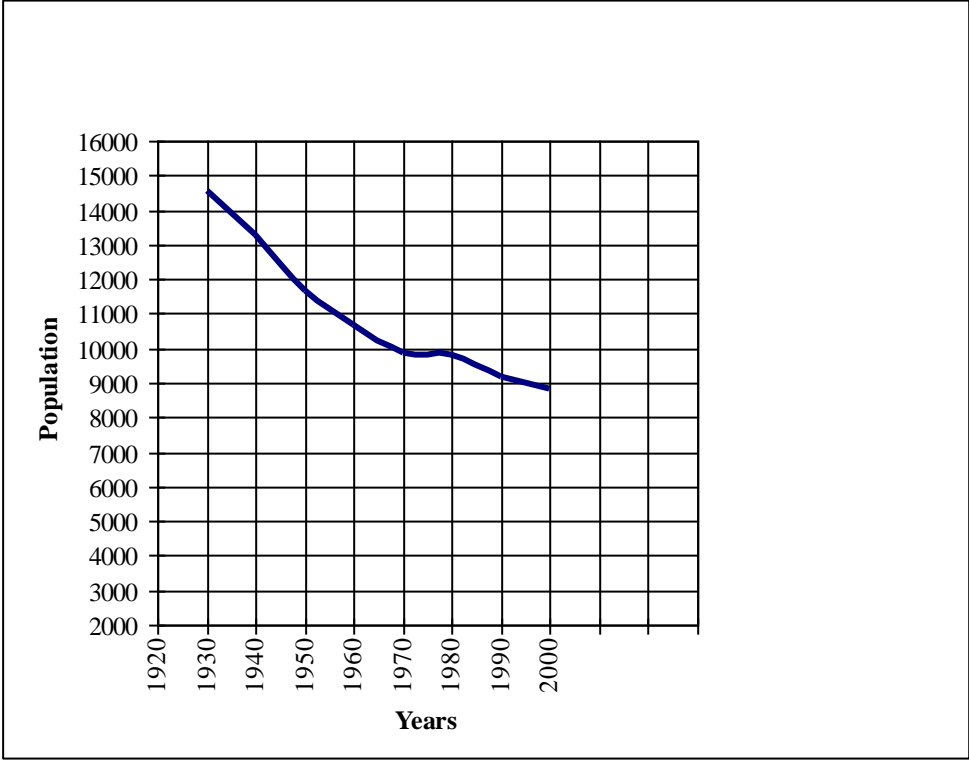


Table 2.3 examines the growth trend of Clay County over the 20th Century. This data is shown in Figure 2.4. Historically, Clay County lost nearly one half of its population from the historic high of 16,146 persons in 1890 to the current low of 8,822 in 2000. For a general view, Clay County was able to sustain its population base from 1920 to 1940 until a high rate of migration occurred in the 1950s and 1960s. It is significant that the rate of decrease (population loss) does not appear to be increasing and has now slowed to about 3.5 percent. This correlates nicely with the marginal rate of population decrease in Clay Center City.

The population trend for Clay County can be explained by five key factors.

- Population is flowing from Clay County to Clay Center City and then migrating outward to other locations in Kansas. This process results in a loss of about 800 persons per 10 year period.
- The rate of live births countywide is not sufficient to make up for the net loss due to individual and family moves and to deaths. The average yearly live birth rate for the county is 92 children and the average yearly death rate is 107 persons.
- Population in central Kansas is shifting to interstate highway locations.
- The population of Clay County is aging rapidly and at the same time, youth outmigrate for education and job opportunities.
- Clay County has limited economic opportunities in bordering counties with the exception of Riley and Geary Counties.

Figure 4.4
Population Rate of Change 1930-2000, Clay County, Kansas



Comparative Regional Development

Table 4.4 contains regional population data for communities in the general vicinity. The largest is Concordia in Cloud County and the smallest is Wakefield in Clay County. There are a number of similarities between these comparative communities. With the exception of Wakefield, government and related administrative activities is an important component of their economies because each contains the county seat. All the communities in Table 4.4, with the possible exception of Wakefield, provide vital goods and services to their surrounding rural areas located within 10-25 miles driving distance.

As a group, the communities used for comparison in this study are not retaining population; Wakefield and Minneapolis are exceptions. Also, if the 1990 to 2000 trend is any indication, Clay Center has either arrived or will soon arrive at population stability. Belleville appears to have a steady outflow of population and may be in danger of losing its viability over the next 20 – 30 years. Concordia is more than twice the size of all of the other communities listed in Table 4.4, with the exception of Clay Center. It is strategically located on Highway 81, provides medical and educational services to a large surrounding area, and has a younger and more vital population than many small towns in Kansas. Yet, it is losing population at the rate of about 400 persons per decade even though the out-migration is balanced by in-migration. Part of this may be due to the method the Census Bureau used to count college students in 2000, and part is probably due to a plummeting birth rate in the region.

Table 4.4

Growth Characteristics of Area Communities Compared to Clay Center City and County, 1980-2000

Place	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1960-2000
Clay Center	4,613	4,963	4,948	4,613	4,564	-1.1%
Wakefield	603	583	803	900	838	39.0%
Concordia	7,022	7,221	6,847	6,167	5,714	-18.6%
Washington	1,506	1,584	1,488	1,304	1,223	-18.8%
Belleville	2,940	3,060	2,805	2,517	2,239	-23.8%
Minneapolis	2,024	1,971	2,075	1,983	2,046	10.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, Characteristics of the Population, Counties and County Units, 1990 @ 2000.

The data would suggest that Wakefield/Republican Township and Clay Center/Clay Center Township, the major players in population generation in Clay County, are more strategically located than their comparative county seats. The Clay Center City economy is more dependent on and tied to the Junction City – Fort Riley – Manhattan area than it is with its counterparts to the west and north.

Rural area decline will continue in most parts of Clay County in the future. The 30 year trend is clear in each individual case with the population gain running well below the national and state norms. The actual population change (not the percent rate of change) is greatest in the smallest communities (Morganville and Longford) where labor and jobs are exported to other regions. As would be expected, the actual population change, and the absolute rate of change, is strongest in the southern portion of Clay County where Junction City/Fort Riley serves as a regional service, health care provider and job center.

Table 4.5 lists the 1970 - 2000 population of all townships in Clay County. The township is generally between 36 and 40 square miles in area and might contain one or more municipalities. It is a separate census tract and the population count does not include persons living within municipal boundaries. However, it is important to understand that, in general, township population should be counted together with the population of the nearest municipality since both farms or rural, non-farm sprawl on large lots of rural subdivisions are a part of the larger community.

Table 4.5

Township & Minor Civil Subdivision Population

Township	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1980 - 2000
Exeter Township	115	94	81	-29.6%
Gill Township	150	181	140	-6.7%
Five Creeks Township	171	160	159	-7.0%
Garfield Township	159	134	107	-32.7%
Chapman Township	264	188	202	-23.5%
Clay Center Township	383	398	401	4.7%
Bloom Township	122	98	125	2.5%
Athelstane Township	154	194	144	-6.5%
Blaine Township	293	298	259	-11.6%

Goshen Township	110	80	92	-16.4%
Highland Township	376	340	310	-17.6%
Hayes Township	221	261	206	-6.8%
Grant Township	144	116	132	-8.3%
Oakland Township	108	96	110	1.1%
Republican Township	971	1,055	1,244	28.1%
Sherman Township	394	347	328	-16.8%
Union Township	178	159	140	-21.3%
Mulberry Township	501	402	331	-33.9%
Total	4,814	4,601	4,511	-6.3%
Minor Civil Subdivisions				
Longford City	109	68	94	-13.8%
Green City	155	150	147	-5.2%
Clifton City	324	327	557	71.9%
Oak Hill City	35	13	35	NC
Morganville City	261	181	198	-24.1%
Vining City	55	35	58	2.5%
Total	939	774	1,089	16.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, Characteristics of the Population, Counties and County Units, 1990 & 2000

Townships show population change in three ways. First, if they are remote from the principal municipalities in a county, with the majority of the residents involved in agriculture, they tend to slowly decline as the median age of farm families continues to rise. Second, townships can show strong positive change if they contain a settlement of sufficient size capable of generating suburban or rural sprawl type of growth, or have certain amenities, such as Milford Lake. Typically, rural sprawl begins with a community of 2,500 or more. Second, townships will show strong growth if they are located within the 15 -25 mile commuting band of an urban area. In Kansas, townships that are located in this commuting band have an 18 percent average rate of decade change - well above the national norm. Republican Township, together with the City of Wakefield, is a good example of this type of growth generated by the Junction City/Fort Riley area. Finally, there are certain cases where townships will show a population decrease, while in fact growth has occurred. This is due to annexation of developing areas by municipalities.

The data in Table 4.4 form a clear pattern. Statistically, population loss is significant in all townships, with the exception of Republican, Bloom and Clay Center Townships during the 20-year period 1980 – 2000. Three townships, Exeter, Mulberry and Garfield lost more than 30 percent of their population during the same period. The average rate of decline in all townships for the 30 year period is -11.0 percent. There is nothing unusual about this type of township population loss. A reduction in farm families since 1960, lower birth rates, and a near total out migration of youth aged 18+ all contribute to population loss in rural areas.

The Demographics of Clay County

Demographics are a key to the strength and vitality of a county's population base. Demographic factors, such as age, gender, household and family size determine the growth or decline of the county over time. Selected demographic indicators for Clay County are compared with the Kansas average in 2000.

Table 4.6
Demographic Quick Facts

	Clay County	Kansas
Population, 2001 estimate	8,771	2,694,641
Population percent change, April 1, 2000-July 1, 2001	-0.6%	0.2%
Population, 2000	8,822	2,688,418
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	-3.7%	8.5%
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2000	5.4%	7.0%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2000	24.9%	26.5%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2000	20.8%	13.3%
Female persons, percent, 2000	50.2%	50.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Finder, 2004.

Other important demographic factors in any area are the age structure and median age. Table 4.7 reports the age structure of Clay Center City and Clay County. The age data for both Clay County and the City of Clay Center show definite strengths. Typically, the age groups ranging from 14 –19 to 45 –54 years are the most important indicators of future population vitality. Persons in these age groups will either just be entering the job market or in established mid-career jobs. The number of persons aged 15 – 19 in Clay County is about what should be expected for a rural county entering population stability. In contrast, the number of persons in the 45 – 54 age groups (1,261 persons) indicates exceptional vitality and is above average for rural Kansas.

According to the 2000 Census, about 54 percent of the population in Clay County falls within the vital years that will determine the rate of change over the next 20 – 25 years. The child bearing years, normally those females aged 15 – 44, appear to be especially strong.

The percent of elderly in the total population, a growing challenge for many small, rural communities and counties, will be a critical factor in Clay County. Those persons aged 65 and above now account for approximately 25 percent of the population – many rural areas now have 33 percent of their population composed of persons 65 years of age and older. At the projected rate of change, the compression of elderly persons should appear in Clay County and the City of Clay Center within the next 10 years – about the year 2015.

Table 4.7
Age Cohort Data for Clay Center City & Clay County, 2000

Age Group	Clay Center City		Clay County	
	2000 Census	Percent of Total	2000 Census	Percent of Total
Under 5	241	5.3	475	5.4
5 - 9	281	6.2	588	6.7
10-14	335	7.3	703	8.0

15-19	299	6.6	640	7.3
20-24	227	5.0	387	4.4
25-34	457	10.0	880	10.0
35-44	549	12.0	1,229	13.9
45-54	636	13.9	1,261	14.3
55-59	200	4.4	448	5.1
60-64	192	4.2	380	4.3
65-74	468	10.3	818	9.3
75-84	449	9.8	710	8.0
85+	230	5.0	303	3.4
Total	4,564	100	8,822	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Characteristics of the Population.

There is one factor about the demographics of Clay Center City and Clay County that is unusual and potentially disturbing. The number of persons aged 55 – 59 and 60 – 64 is not in line with what would be normally expected of these age groups. At sometime during the past 20 years there was a significant out migration of mid or early career persons. The age groups on either side of the 55 – 59 and 60 – 64 group appear to be normal – the group 45 – 54 comprises 13.9 percent of the population and the 65 – 74 group is 10.3 present of the total population. Clay County officials and economic development personnel should pinpoint this particular age drain.

Median age data are a critical source of population change and vitality. Kansas, as a whole, and all local areas are aging over time. The median is the mid point measure – a median age of 35 years is the point where one half of the population is 35 aged years or younger and one half of the population is 35 or older. Table 4.8 compares the median ages of Clay Center City, Clay County and the State of Kansas from 1960 to 2000. The Kansas trend shows consistent and significant aging over the 40 year period – from 26.9 to 35.2 years of age. The data for Clay Center and Clay County indicates a cycle of aging and renewal over the same time period. This data can be compared to nearby counties. For instance Ottawa County’s current median age is 40.1 years while the median ages for Cloud County is 41.4 and Republic and Washington Counties are 45.7and 43.6 year respectively. A median age of 46.9 for a county is the highest in Kansas and indicates significant aging in the rural population (Comanche County). On the other hand, Clay Center City, the population center of Clay County, has a median age of 43.2 years – eight years higher than the Kansas median age.

Table 4.8
Clay Center City and Clay County Median Age Data, 1960 – 2000

Year	Clay Center City	Clay County	Kansas
1960	36.6	38.7	26.9
1970	37.2	40.3	28.7
1980	38.6	37.3	30.1
1990	43.1	39.3	32.9
2000	43.2	41.3	35.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000; U.S. Census Bureau, Characteristics of the Population, Counties and County Units, 1990

Population Forecasts

Forecasts for rural counties can be problematic at best. The most accurate models for rural places employ straight-line (linear) models that assume past growth or decline is an adequate predictor of future performance. The forecaster must also employ certain assumptions based on the economic activity and changes in the age structure and family size. An understanding of the growth dynamics of the immediate region is also used to make informed assumptions - but these must be frequently adjusted after each census counting period if there is to be any hope of accuracy. It is important to note that the “base population year” of 2000 is used for several of these forecasts. The base year is itself a count of all persons in a particular local area provided by the U.S. Census. In this particular case, the data are quite recent so that no adjustments are required.

Table 4.9 contains several population forecasts. The first series is based on a linear or “straight line” model prepared for this plan. The scenario uses three assumptions. First, Clay Center City and Clay Center Township will follow the growth pattern of its immediate region. This would indicate a growth rate that varies between -1.1 percent to 1 and 2 percent per decade. Second, Wakefield and the immediately region will remain nearly constant in size and fluctuate between 850 and 950 persons. Third, the remaining rural population of Clay County will continue to decrease by about 350 - 550 persons every 10 years until approximately 2020. Following this, Clay County’s population base will become stable and hover around the 8,000 person level. If migration levels become stable over the next 20 years, Clay County will only lose 15-20 persons per year due to the imbalance of births and deaths.

The second series employs regional population and economic variables drawn from small town performance in the immediate region. The data is supplied by Woods & Poole, a private company that uses specialized census data to forecast different population elements. Woods & Poole employ a large baseline of data (1960 – 2020) in their forecasts. These data indicate a slow, marginal population decrease amounting to only 322 persons over the next 15 years. In other words, the Woods & Poole forecast agrees nicely with the Phillips and Associates forecast that concludes population stability will soon be reached in Clay County.

The final forecast was provided by the Kansas Water Office. Their model is based on a timeline series of water use data. The natural increase in water use each year is held constant in their model to control for increases in water costs and yearly variations in temperature related to yard and garden watering. The chief assumption is that an increasing trend in the use of water is indicative of jobs growth and strong economic activity in the region. The Kansas Water Office forecast indicates modest, incremental growth to 2020. This incremental growth amounts to approximately a gain of 600 persons over the next 15 years.

Table 4.9
Population Forecasts and Projections for Clay County to 2020

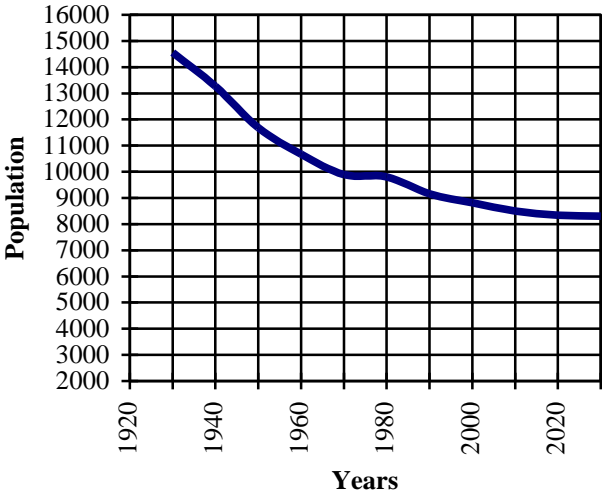
Series	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Linear Model	8822	8580	8338	8141	8050
Woods & Poole	8822	8720	8630	8560	8500
KS Water Office	8822		9333		9418

Source: Phillips & Assoc., 2004; Woods & Poole Associates, 2003.

Slow growth rather than slow decline is possible but not probable in Clay County. The Linear Model and the Woods & Poole forecasts given in Table 4.9 are consistent with the overall population performance of both Clay County and Clay Center City for the past 50 years. The Kansas Water

Office forecast is probably optimistic. Figure 4.5 graphically depicts the most probable projection for Clay County in the future.

Figure 4.5
Population Projection for Clay County, Kansas 2004-2030



The data in Figure 4.5 rest on three key assumptions. First, the rate of population change in Clay County will become static sometime around 2020 as in-migration and births will offset deaths and out-migration. Second, Clay Center City will retain its status as a local trade and business center and thereby assure a basic supply of younger and middle aged families engaged in business, trade, and the professions. Third, and perhaps most important, opportunities in Clay County will eventually bring about a reversal of the trend to migrate out of Clay County in the early and regular years of retirement.

Conclusions

Most of the indicators reviewed for this section of the plan point to only modest change over the next 30 years. The forecasts should be accurate to within 2-3 percent if the general economic and employment sectors remain at or above present levels. Jobs loss or migration after retirement to instate and out of state locations could indicate a small but persistent population loss to the county. Strategies to stabilize population loss should definitely be considered by local decision makers. Recruitment of micro firms, new business assistance, and aggressive incentives to attract new firms are typical actions. Finally, Clay County stands squarely in the middle when compared to all rural counties. Its rate of population and jobs loss over the past 30 years places it about 47th when compared to all counties in Kansas. If it is to retain this standing, rather than slip into the lower half of rural counties that lose population at a more rapid pace, decision makers must concentrate on retaining vital health care, social and personal services, and local businesses that provide critical goods.

Housing Market Trends

This section seeks to understand changes occurring in local housing conditions using census data and interviewing local realtors. A comparison between 1990 and 2000 census data illustrates several interesting trends (see Table 4.10).

- Clay County lost 54 occupied housing units, or about 1.3 percent of the total, due to disaster, misuse, or dilapidation.
- The most significant changes in the housing market are the loss of rural occupied housing units and a gain in urban housing units. Between 1990 and 2000, the county experienced a 14% gain in urban occupied housing units, and a corresponding 14% loss in rural occupied housing. This clearly suggests people are leaving their farm homes or rural home sites for urban homes.
- The county saw a 38% decline in the number of farm occupied units between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, 548 farm housing units were occupied. By 2000, the number of units occupied by farm families housing units was 339 - a loss of 209 farm occupied housing units in one decade.
- Another noteworthy change in the county occurred in the decline in married-couple family with children under the age of 18. The county lost 154 families with children between 1990 and 2000.

Market Drivers

Real estate professionals in Clay County were interviewed to discover possible local housing trends or issues. They were asked to respond to four categories of questions: 1) market drivers; 2) general household characteristics of those moving to Clay County; 3) future residential development prospects, and 4) prime areas for non-urban residential development. Results of the interviews are summarized below.

Several potential housing market drivers were presented to the informants for their comments. They were asked to assess each potential market driver and then to identify the two most important market drivers. The market drivers are discussed below.

- **Commute Distance to Jobs.** The geographic location of Clay County to nearby job markets in Fort Riley, Manhattan, and Abilene plays a significant role in the housing market.
- **Small Town Living.** Small town character is considered a key factor for homebuyers moving to Clay County. This market attribute was thought of as beneficial to both young families and retired households.
- **Housing Affordability.** The affordability of housing in the unincorporated areas, as well as the cities, of Clay County is viewed as another factor making it an attractive housing market.

In summary, the real estate professionals interviewed consider highway access/ease of commuting and small town atmosphere as key factors driving the housing market in Clay County. Other market drivers included lower crime rate, slower pace of life, and return to family or hometown.

Characteristics of Those Moving to Clay County

Generally speaking, a cross-section of homebuyers is moving into the county. Examples of the type of households identified in the realtor survey include:

- People moving from a nearby city
- Young families with small children returning to home town
- Retirees moving from the farm to a city
- Military households looking for affordable homes (can purchase more square footage than in Manhattan or Junction City)
- People moving from a large city (typically a higher end buyer)

Rural County Residential Building Permits

Presented below in Table 4.9 are historical data on residential building permits issued in the unincorporated areas of Clay County from 2000 through December 31, 2003. Based on annual average during the 4-year period, 8 site built homes were constructed in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Table 4.9
Residential Building Permits, Clay County, KS, 2000-2003

Year	Site Built Home	Manufactured Home
2000	7	0
2001	9	2
2002	10	1
2003	6	0
Total	32	3

Rural County Residential Subdivisions

Only two platted residential subdivisions exist in the unincorporated portion of Clay County.

- The first subdivision was platted in 1970 and is known as the “Country Club Hills Subdivision” south of Clay Center.
- The second subdivision is known as the Prairie Meadows Subdivision located on Highway 24 east of Clay Center. The first phase of the subdivision was platted in 1996 with 7 lots and phase two was recorded in 2000 adding 3 new lots.

Households by Type, Occupancy & Tenure

Table 4.10
General Housing Characteristics, Clay County, KS 1990-2000 Census

	1990		2000		1990-2000 Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent

Total Housing Units	4,138	100%	4,084	100%	-54	-1.3%
Occupied housing units	3,641	88%	3,617	89%	-24	-0.66%
Vacant housing units	497	12%	467	11%	-30	-6.0%
Urban and Rural Distribution	3,641	100%	3,617	100%		
Urban occupied housing units	1,716	47%	1,953	54%	+237	+13.8%
Rural occupied housing units	1,925	53%	1,664	46%	-261	-13.6%
Farm	548	15%	339	9%	-209	-38.1%
Nonfarm	1,377	38%	1,325	37%	-52	-3.78%
Occupied Households by Type						
Total Occupied Households	3,641	100%	3,617	100%		
Family Households	2,595	71%	2,501	69%	-94	-3.62%
Married-couple family	2,345	64%	2,188	60%	-157	-6.69%
Married couple family/ no own children under 18	1,338	37%	1,335	37%	-3	
Married-couple family /children under 18	1,007	28%	853	24%	-154	-15.29%
Nonfamily Households	1,046	29%	1,116	31%	+70	+6.69%
Householder 65 years and over	646	18%	581	16%	-65	-10.06%
Householder living alone	983	27%	1,002	28%	+19	+1.93%
Housing Tenure						
Total Occupied Units	3,641	100%	3,617	100%		
Owner-Occupied Units	2,674	73%	2,776	77%	+102	+3.81%
Renter-Occupied Units	962	27%	841	23%	-121	-12.57%
Average Household Size	2.45		2.39			
Owner-Occupied Units	2.49		2.54			
Renter-Occupied Units	2.32		1.88			

Source: 1990 & 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 1, General Housing Characteristics and Summary File 4

Age of Housing Structures

Table 4.11 contains census data on the age of housing in the county. These data are subject to sampling variability because there is often a degree of respondent error when they indicate the age of the structure they own or rent. A case in point is the number of structures classified as being built in the 1940's and pre-1940's. A gain of nine units classified as 1940's illustrates survey respondents were probably having difficulty deciding if their structure was built in the 1940's or 1950's.

This information is useful in assessing the development history of housing in Clay County. The proportion of new units built within the preceding 10 years is about the same in 1990 and 2000, at approximately 6 percent. It does appear that the housing stock built pre-1940's is losing units, which is likely due to demolitions and disrepair.

Table 4.11
Change in Housing Units of Each Age, Clay County, KS

	1990		2000		1990-2000 Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Loss/Gain	Percent Remaining
1990's	---	---	228	6.3%	+228	100%

1980's	279	6.7%	249	6.9%	-30	89%
1970's	678	16.4%	614	16.9%	-64	90%
1960's	424	10.2%	350	9.8%	-74	70%
1950's	449	10.9%	316	8.7%	-133	70%
1940's	292	7.1%	301	8.3%	+9	100%
pre-1940	2,016	48.7%	1,559	43.1%	-457	77%
Total	4,138	100.00%	3,617	100.00%	-521	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 4, General Housing Characteristics

Public Education Facilities

This section describes public educational services provided in Clay County. Although county government does not make decisions regarding educational services or facilities, having information about the growth or decline of the school population and the school district in general is helpful as decision-makers face county development choices. Information in this section was obtained from the Clay Center Unified School District No. 379.

Unified School District No. 379 Enrollment

Table 4.12 shows the district enrollment figures from 1997 through 2004. During this six year period, the district lost an average of 23 students each of the six years.

Table 4.12
Clay Center USD 379 Enrollment

School Year	Enrollment	Gain/Loss	Percent Change
1997-98	1687		
1998-99	1641	-46	-2.7%
1999-00	1601	-40	-2.4%
2000-01	1567	-34	-2.1%
2001-02	1566	-1	-0.06%
2002-03	1549	-14	-0.89%

Inventory of Schools in Clay County

Table 4.13 shows the enrollment for each of the schools for the year 2002-2003. The School Board decided in March of 2004 to close the Green Elementary School.

Table 4.13
Clay Center USD 379 Enrollment, 2002-2003 School Year

Grades	Number of Students
--------	--------------------

High Schools		
Clay Center Community High	09-12	448
Wakefield High	09-12	97
Middle Schools		
Clay Center Community Middle	06-08	303
Elementary Schools		
Garfield Elementary	04-05	151
Lincoln Elementary	KG-03	268
Green Elementary	KG-05	35
Longford Elementary	KG-05	26
Morganville Elementary	KG-06	49
Wakefield Elementary	KG-08	172

Enrollment Forecast

Based on conversations with the School District Superintendent, district forecasts show a continuing student population loss for the next 4-6 years, and then a stabilizing enrollment of approximately 1,350 students. During this period of enrollment decline, the district anticipates the closing of Longford and Morganville Elementary Schools.

Park & Recreation Facilities

Clay County Parks

Clay County government owns or leases approximately 39 acres of land allocated for park and recreation activities.

Table 4.14

Clay County, KS Park Land Inventory

Park	Acreage
Clay County Fairgrounds	38.9
Total:	38.9

According to officials at the Clay City Parks Department, people residing outside Clay Center City are eligible to enroll in recreation programs offered by the city at no additional cost. Residents of Clay County also benefit from the recreation facilities located at Milford Lake. Below is a brief inventory of recreation facilities available at the state park. The information outlined below comes from the Milford Lake website.

Milford State Park

Milford Lake is the largest man-made lake in Kansas with 15,700 surface acres of water. Over 33,000 acres of land resources are managed for quality recreational experiences as well as for protection of the project's natural and cultural resources. Approximately 70% of the land resources are available for public hunting.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates eight park areas at the Milford project. Also, there is a Milford State Park, Clay County Park, and a park operated through the city of Milford, KS. Together these facilities offer many diverse recreational opportunities. The activities includes camping, cabin rental, marinas, boating, swimming, fishing, playgrounds, hunting, hiking, wildlife watching, off-road vehicle trails, bicycle trails (including mountain biking), etc.

Trails

Waterfall Trail: A 0.6 mile walk that leads through woodland and prairie habitats. A manmade waterfall and pond is located at the trailhead.

Crystal Trail: This trail is 2.2 miles. It passes by an old quarry where small geode rocks can be found. Deer viewing is good along open fields and by food plots. Viewing of bald eagles is excellent from November through March along the water's edge.

Eagle Ridge Equestrian Trail: Over 8 miles of horseback riding on some of the most scenic and diverse areas that Milford Lake has to offer.

Wildlife Viewing Tower & Trail: The tower is accessed from a wrap-around staircase, which rises 21' to the top platform. Excellent wildlife viewing is made available with nearby food plots.

Milford Nature Center

The Milford Nature Center is designed to give visitors a better understanding of and appreciation for the natural communities in Kansas. Visitors have the opportunity to see and touch many native animal furs, print their own animal tracks, and discover hidden wonders. A walk through the nature center reveals that Kansas has an astonishing abundance and variety of wildlife because of the many different kinds of habitat found here.

Tallgrass Trail: A 1/2-mile loop or a longer 1 1/2-mile hike takes you through wooded areas, native prairie grass, and down to a nearby pond.

Kansas Landscape Arboretum

Meadow Willow Trail: A 1/2 mile trail with 7 bridges to cross, one of which is a covered bridge.

Wild Acres Trail: A 1/4 mile walk to discover Kansas' wildflowers.

Woodland Trail: A 1-mile trail that travels through a bird sanctuary and down to a small pond oasis.

Off-road-vehicle Trail

The School Creek off-road vehicle (ORV) area consists of approximately 287 acres. It is restricted to vehicles that are 50 inches wide or less. Full size 4-wheel drive vehicles and dune buggies are not allowed to operate on the trails. As usage of the trail system has grown over the years another sport, mountain biking has gained a foothold in the area. ORV riding and mountain biking have coexisted for several years now along the trail system without incident.

Source: Corp of Engineers Milford Lake website.

Environment & Natural Resource Issues

Water Basin Planning

Clay County is situated in two water basins: Kansas/Lower Republican Basin and Smoky Hill-Saline Basin. Portions of southwest corner of the county drains into the Saline Basin while the (estimated) remaining two-thirds of the county drains into the Kansas/Lower Republican Basin. Much of the following information comes from the *Kansas Water Plan*, prepared by the Kansas Water Authority, November 25, 2003.

Generally, water basin planning is concerned about water supply and quality issues. The State of Kansas identified all of Clay County as critical for protecting surface water resources. The identification of water-quality protection areas in Clay County ensures that future land use decisions are evaluated for their impact on water quality. While not a traditional function of county government, a greater responsibility is placed on local government to communicate a strategy for local water-quality protection. To date, most state programs have been designed as “voluntary efforts” to work with private landowners to implement “best management practices” to improve water quality or promote sustainable use of water.

Since Clay County surface water is in watersheds above public water supply reservoirs, the county is classified as either a Kansas Department of Health & Environment High Priority Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) area or Kansas Department Wildlife & Parks High Biological Priority area. Due to the increasing urbanization of the Kansas River Basin, the protection of the Clay County watersheds has become critical. According to the Kansas Water Plan, “water quality is addressed through a combination of restoration and protection efforts utilizing voluntary, incentive based approaches, as well as regulatory programs”. The intent is to reduce nonpoint and point source pollution to improve

water quality. The protection and improvement of water quality is achieved through source water protection and wetland and riparian management.

Source water protection is addressed by the State of Kansas Department of Health and Environment. This agency works with public water suppliers in the basin to complete source water assessments. “The next step, which is voluntary, is the development of a source water protection plans.” The desired outcome of these water protection plans is to improve water quality in the watersheds where water is taken from streams or city lakes and federal reservoirs for public water.

Wetland and riparian management is implemented by State agencies working with landowners by providing technical and financial assistance to protect and restore wetlands and riparian corridors.

A noteworthy finding of the Kansas Water Plan relates to water supply and delivery for the City of Longford. Studies prepared by the Kansas Water Office in 2002, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in 2003, identified the City of Longford as one of 20 public water suppliers in the Smoky Hill-Saline Basin that were drought vulnerable. The City of Longford is drought vulnerable because of their basic source of water. The Kansas Water Office is seeking to ensure “that all public water suppliers have the technical, financial and managerial capability to meet their needs and to meet Safe Drinking Water Act requirements.” The drought conditions Kansas experienced in the summer of 2000 pressed the Kansas Water Authority to focus on several issues regarding the management of the Kansas River and associated federal lakes (which includes Milford Lake). The Corps of Engineers in the summer of 2000 were faced with issues regarding water releases for Missouri River navigation support from Kansas’ lakes. These events highlighted the need to deploy new management strategies of the Kansas River system. According to the Kansas Water Plan, a coordinated approach to management of the Smoky Hill-Saline portion of the Kansas River system is needed. “Lead agencies include the Kansas Water Office and the Department of Agriculture-Division of Water Resources. Other involved agencies include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation.” As of January, 2004, findings and recommendations from this multi-agency study have not been released. Clay County officials should remain attentive to the State of Kansas effort to implement the “Comprehensive Operation and Management of the Kansas River System”. Ultimately, decisions by the Kansas Water Authority affect long term water users within the basin.

Milford Lake Wetlands Restoration

The wetland restoration is planned for approximately 2,300 acres of the 23,000 acres of the Milford Lake Project lands licensed to and managed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. This restoration project will change marginal wetlands and poorly drained areas of croplands subject to flooding into dependable and manageable wetlands. Construction of these wetlands will restore fish and wildlife values that have been lost. Construction began in the summer of 2001 and when completed in 2004 will create the third largest wetland area in the State of Kansas.

The completed project will increase water management capability within these areas, which allows the development of consistently high quality wetland habitat. Hydrologic control is the major factor in the establishment, enhancement, and long-term management of the wetland ecosystems. Rather than depending upon the variations of existing natural cycles ranging from annual flood to drought conditions, wetland areas having water control structures combined with a supplemental water source will allow for reliable and controlled ponding of water. Consequently, the creation and maintenance of a range of seasonal habitat types will be possible under a comprehensive management plan.

Manageable wetlands allow for production of a variety of beneficial habitat. Breeding, nesting, feeding and resting sites can be produced for waterfowl. Mudflats and shallows are produced for shorebirds, wading birds and water birds, and aquatic habitat for amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.

Wetlands are ecosystems capable of treating nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. NPS occurs when water running overland picks up and transports pollutants to lakes, rivers and groundwater. Agricultural processes, faulty septic systems, recreational boating, urban runoff, construction and energy production are all possible sources of NPS pollution. Wetlands treat NPS pollution by intercepting surface runoff, subsurface flow, and in some cases groundwater. Biological processes, nutrient uptake and denitrification, and physical process, filtration methods accomplish treatment of NPS pollution. This treatment process allows wetlands to remove, transform and store pollutants as sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus and certain heavy metals. Wetlands provide an effective, natural method of improving water quality.

The local sponsors for this project are the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) and the Kansas Wildscape Foundation.

Source: The above information came from the Milford Lake Wetlands Project website.

On-Site Wastewater & Water Supply Management

In 2002, Clay County amended their 1992 adopted sanitary code to establish regulatory control over the placement and construction of on-site wastewater systems. The code creates a 3-acre minimum for the construction of a private wastewater disposal system, as well as minimum standards for soil, topography, and geology conditions, and requirements for construction and maintenance.

The Clay County sanitary code also includes provisions for regulating the development, maintenance, and use of all water supplies other than Public Water Supplies in the unincorporated areas of the county. The code defines a private water supply as one connection and nonpublic means more than 2 and less than connections.

According to the Soil Survey, the following soil types are rated severe for septic tank absorption fields. The reasons for their poor rating are usually do to depth to rock, unsuitable slope, and flooding or slow percolation rate.

Table 4.15
Soil Types Rated Severe for Septic Tank Absorption Fields, Clay County

Map Symbol	Soil Name	Soil Limitation	Range Site
Be	Benfield	Depth to rock, percs slowly	Loamy Upland
Cb	Calco	Flooding, wetness	
Cg	Cass	Flooding, poor filter	Sandy Lowland
Cr	Crete	Percs slowly	Clay Upland
Ed	Edalgo	Depth to rock, percs slowly	Clay Upland
Eu	Eudora	Flooding	Loamy Terrace
Gm	Gibson	Flooding, wetness	
He	Haynie	Flooding	Loamy Lowland
He	Sarpy	Flooding, poor filter	Sandy Lowland
Ho	Hobbs	Flooding	Loamy Lowland
Ks	Kipson	Depth to rock	Limy Upland
Ks	Sogn	Depth to rock	Shallow Limy
Lc	Lancaster	Depth to rock	Loamy Upland
Lh	Lancaster	Depth to rock	Loamy Upland
	Hedville	Depth to rock, slope	Shallow Sandstone
Mu	Muir	Flooding	Loamy Terrace

Sa	Sarpy	Poor filter	Sandy Lowland
Su	Sutphen	Flooding, percs slowly	Clay Lowland
Tu	Tully	Percs slowly	Loamy Upland

Source: Soil Survey of Clay County, Kansas, USDA, 1983

Soil Information

According to the [Soil Survey of Clay County, Kansas](#), “The western part of the county is in the Central Kansas Sandstone Hills land resource area, and the rest is in the Central Loess Plains land resource area. The soils in the Central Kansas Sandstone Hills are dissected by entrenched drainageways. They are shallow to deep, and gently sloping to moderately steep, and have a clayey or loamy subsoil. The soils on the Central Loess Plains are generally deep, are nearly level to moderately sloping, and have a clayey or silty subsoil. The five major soil associations are described below. “Each association has a distinctive pattern of soils, relief, and drainage. Typically, an association consists of one or more major soils and some minor soils”.

Crete-Hobbs Association

Deep, nearly level to moderately sloping, moderately well drained and well drained soils that have a clayey or silty subsoil; on uplands and floodplains. This association is on broad ridgetops and side slopes that are drained by intermittent streams. Slope ranges from 0 to 8 percent. This association makes up about 54 percent of the county.

Crete-Lancaster-Hedville Association

Deep to shallow, moderately sloping to steep, moderately well drained to somewhat excessively drained soils that have a clayey or loamy subsoil; on uplands. This association is in the Dakota Sandstone Hills. It is on ridgetops and side slopes that are dissected by deeply entrenched, intermittent drainageways and small creeks. Sandstone outcrops are common in the steeper areas. Slope ranges from 3 to 30 percent. This association makes up about 15 percent of the county.

Muir-Eudora Association

Deep, nearly level to moderately sloping, well drained soils, that have a silty or loamy subsoil; on terraces and floodplains. This association is on bottom land along the Republican River and other major streams. These soils are subject to flooding. Slope ranges from 0 to 5 percent. This association makes up about 15 percent of the county.

Crete-Kipson-Sogn Association

Deep and shallow, nearly level to moderately steep, moderately well drained and somewhat excessively drained soils that have a clayey or silty subsoil; on uplands. This association is on ridgetops and side slopes that are dissected by deeply entrenched drainageways. Limestone outcrops are common in the steeper areas. Slope ranges from 0 to 20 percent. This association makes up about 11 percent of the county.

Geary-Holder Association

Deep, moderately sloping and strongly sloping well drained soils that have a silty subsoil; on uplands. This association is on side slopes along the valley of the Republican River. Slope ranges from 2 to 15 percent. This association make up about 5 percent of the county.

Source: Soil Survey of Clay County, Kansas, USDA, 1983

Prime Farmland

Listed below are the U.S. Department of Agriculture definitions of prime farmland in Clay County.

Crete silt loam, 3 to 6 percent slopes
Cass fine sandy loam
Crete silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes
Crete silty clay loam, 1 to 7 percent slopes
Eudora very fine sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent
Eudora loam
Geary silt loam, 2 to 7 percent slopes
Hobbs silt loam
Holder silt loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes
Lancaster loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes
Longford silt loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes
Muir silt loam
Suthen silty clay loam
Tully silty clay loam, 2 to 7 percent slopes
Wells loam, 3 to 7 percent slopes
Gibson loam

The following list of soils are classified “Farmland of Statewide Importance”.

Longford silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slope
Clime-sogn silty clay loam, 5 to 20 percent slope
Kipson-sogn complex, 5 to 30 percent slope
Benfield silty clay loam, 3 to 7 percent slope
Crete silty clay loam, 3 to 8 percent slope
Edalgo silty clay loam, 4 to 8 percent slope
Geary silty clay loam, 4 to 9 percent slope

Source: Clay County, Kansas, Natural Resource Conservation Service Office.

Stream Corridors, Woodlands & Riparian Areas

The Republican River is the major river flowing through Clay County and eventually runs into Milford Lake. Several tributaries drain into the Republican River. These include the following: Mulberry Creek, North Branch Five Creek, Five Creek, Otter Creek, Cane Creek, Mall Creek, Peet Creek, Dry Creek, and Spring Creek. Chapman Creek (located in the Saline Basin) is the major stream in southwest corner of Clay County.

The majority of the tributaries lie within the 100-year and 500-year floodplains. Existing large mature tree cover is disbursed throughout the tributaries. As part of the State Water Plan, the State of Kansas is offering programs to landowners to provide technical and financial assistance to protect and restore riparian areas along stream corridors. A riparian area is the wooded and/or vegetative covered areas adjacent to the stream.

Riparian corridor protection is now even more important as the State begins to address Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) impairment from pollutants. Benefits derived from riparian areas include erosion and sediment control, timber protection, wildlife habitat, water quality protection, recreation and aesthetic improvements. An undisturbed riparian zone acts as a natural filter helping remove sediments, nutrients, and other contaminants from water. Riparian areas help stabilize stream banks, which reduces erosion and contamination.

Floodplain

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) breaks down flood zones into two categories: 100-year floodplain and 500-year floodplain. Sound planning and construction practices suggest that very little construction activity if any at all should not occur within the 100-year floodplain. Limited construction may occur within the 500-year floodplain. All in all, it is best to keep development within the floodplain to a minimum. See Floodplain Boundary Map.

Wind Power

“According to the American Wind Energy Association, Kansas ranks third in the nation, just behind North Dakota and Texas, for potential energy production from wind. Kansas has broad expanses of open plains and high ridges. The high ground, coupled with a lack of trees, urban areas, or large individual buildings, serves as an excellent source for relatively straight, high-speed winds.” A review of the Kansas Wind Resource Map (Final Report, July 31, 2003) indicates that Clay County is rated Class 3. An area having a wind classification of Class 3 or higher is potentially suitable for energy production. The Kansas Wind Resource Map cautions that “This map can serve to better quantify Kansas’s wind resource and to serve as a prospecting guide. Site specific wind resource measurements should still be taken according to standard industry practices prior to project development, regardless of size”. Proximity to electric transmission lines is another key factor in assessing potential wind energy viability. A 230 voltage transmission line traverses Clay County. Based on the above information, it appears that certain portions of Clay County may be suitable for wind power generation.

It may be insightful to learn that Clay County is not included in a list of the top 25 best possible sites for wind farms in Kansas (research conducted by Dyncorp). “The ranking of these sites was based on existing wind data, transmission line access and capacity, land characteristics and ownership and any other mitigating circumstances such as soil characteristics, avian fly ways, etc. Geographic diversity within the state was also a consideration.”

Source: Kansas Energy Information Network (KEIN) website at www.kansasenergy.org and Kansas Wind Resources Map, Final Report, July 31, 2003, Coriolis Architecture Energy.

Rural Water Districts

Property owners in unincorporated portions of Clay County are served by four rural water districts. See Rural Water District Boundary Map.

Clay County Rural Water District No. 1

There were 56 units served by the district as of March, 2004. The district pumps groundwater from a well located in the Republican River valley. District officials indicate that they are investigating the establishment of second well to serve as a back-up supply of water. Based on 2003 data, the district serves a population of 98.

Clay County Rural Water District No. 2

There are 312 units served by the district as of March, 2004. The district has five wells northwest of the City of Longford providing water to its customers. The district is searching for additional wells to

ensure water during drought conditions. It is estimated that the district adds between 3-4 new units annually. Based on 2003 data, the district serves a population of 950.

Washington County Rural Water District No. 2

The district serves 42 units in Clay County, which is estimated to be a population of 80.

Dickinson County Rural Water District No. 1

The district serves approximately 25 units in Clay County (includes part of the City of Industry), which is estimated to be a population of 50.

Source: Interviews with Rural Water District Managers and EPA Envirofacts Warehouse website.

Rural Fire Protection

There are 8 fire districts providing fire protection services to home and business owners in the unincorporated areas of Clay County. Several of the fire districts have agreements with municipal fire departments to provide protection services. The districts are listed below and their boundaries are shown on the Fire District Boundary Map.

- Mulberry Rural Fire District
- Sherman Rural Fire District
- Morganville Rural Fire District
- Clay Center Rural Fire District
- Green Rural Fire District
- Wakefield Rural Fire District
- Miltonvale Rural Fire District (also serves Ottawa County)
- Longford Rural Fire District

Historic Buildings & Sites

The following structures or sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Auld Stone Barn.** Located at 255 Utah Road, Wakefield. Mr. James Auld was the builder of the structure.
- **Clay Center Carnegie Library.** Located at 706 Sixth Street, Clay Center. This building reflects the Classical Revival style of the early 1900's. The Sanneman Brothers and H. B. Winter served as architect/builder.
- **Clay County Courthouse.** Located in downtown Clay Center at 5th and Court Streets. The building is designed in the Romanesque style of the early 1900's. Mr J.C. Holland was the architect.
- **Mugler Lodge Site.** This is a prehistoric site of a village during the Plains Village period between 1000-500 AD, 1499-1000AD.

Transportation

Federal/State Highways & County Roads

Federal Highway 24 traverses through the county and provides a major east/west traffic corridor in the county. The City of Clay Center is located at the intersection of Highway 24 and Highway 15.

State Highway 15 provides a major north/south traffic corridor and eventually connects with Interstate Highway 70 and Federal Highway 36.

State Highway 80 provides a connection from State Highway 15 to the City of Morganville.

State Highway 82 provides a connection from State Highway 15 to the City of Wakefield, and eventually Federal Highway 77 and the City of Junction City.

According to Clay County Officials, several county roads classified as “Rural Secondary” serve as local commuter routes, each of these roads is an asphalt paved road. Below is a list of these roads.

- County Road 827 (Rural Secondary 123) from the City of Clifton to Federal Highway 24.
- County Road 859 (Rural Secondary 125) from the City of Green to Federal Highway 24 and Broughton Road.
- County Road 396 (Rural Secondary 130 or Broughton Road) from the City of Clay Center to Federal Highways 77 and 24.
- County Road 422 (Rural Secondary 132) from the City of Longford to State Highway 15.
- County Road 837 (Rural Secondary 134) from the City of Wakefield to Junction City.

Clay County implemented a “Rural Highway System” which permits a countywide levy to be approved to maintain roads located in the unincorporated areas of the county, and eliminates the need for township road maintenance. There are 175 miles of county asphalt roads.

Railroads

One railroad exist in Clay County.

- Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail line runs through the cities of Longford and Oak Hill.

Municipal City Planning

Phillips & Associates contacted each of the incorporated cities to determine if they have adopted a comprehensive plan and enforce local zoning laws. The Mayor of each city was sent a survey to learn what they believe are the important planning issues facing their communities and what they think is the logical direction growth would occur.

Clay Center

In 1999, the City of Clay Center adopted a “Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvement Plan for 1999-2010”. Generally, this plan identifies goals, objectives, and strategies for economic

development, housing, parks and recreation, and health and social services. The plan also includes a capital improvement program identifying highway and road improvements, sidewalks in downtown, utility upgrades, park and cemetery improvements.

Future Industrial Development

The city has two industrial parks. The Clay Center Industrial Park located on the west edge of town is home to Scott Specialties. There is undeveloped land available in the park and municipal utilities are available. The second industrial park is located at the Clay Center Airport. Development opportunities at the airport are limited because municipal utilities need to be extended to the site. The airport is currently served by a 2-inch water line.

The 1999 Comprehensive Plan states “Industrial development should first be limited to the city’s two existing industrial parks. However, if more land is necessary for industrial purposes, areas on the west side of the city along U.S. Highway 24 should be adequate to meet this demand.”

Future Commercial Development

Generally, commercial activities are located within Downtown Clay Center, West Highway 24 Corridor, or south of the downtown area along Sixth Street. A logical area for new commercial development is the West Highway 24 Corridor. Landowners located west of the city limits are opposed to annexation according to the Mayor of Clay Center. Since the city will not extend municipal utilities until annexation is approved, the future commercial westward expansion may be at a standstill. Even with the sentiment of landowners, there may eventually be a time when they become willing sellers and the land becomes suitable for commercial development. Until then there exist vacant parcels within the city limits along West Highway 24 that can accommodate infill commercial development.

The 1999 Comprehensive Plan states “commercial development should first be directed to the downtown area. However, if the central business district is not adequate for business needs, commercial development should occur to the west (Plaza area) and east areas of the Clay Center along U.S. Highway 24.”

Future Residential Development

According to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, the city needs to plan for add an additional 106 acres for residential development by the year 2020. The plan identifies the following locations as possible areas for residential expansion:

- The area located directly west of Fourth Street and sought of Kennedy Road.
- The areas northeast and east f the existing Clay Center Community High School.
- The land north and east of the Clay Center Community Middle School (CCMS).
- The parcel located west of CCMS as the corner of Ninth Street and Prospect Street.

The comprehensive plan further states, “These areas contain approximately 200 acres, which (combined with currently vacant lots located within the city) are more than adequate for residential expansion. Also it is further important that the city develop first from within (on existing vacant lots), and then continue to develop incrementally (first developing on those parcels closet to the city limits and existing developments, and then on land further out as deemed necessary. In addition, future residential development should not be allowed west of Spring Creek (also known as Huntress Creek), as construction in this area would be near industrial uses, would require building infrastructure to cross the creek, and may also harm the natural environment of the creek bed.”

Source: The above information came from pages 8 and 9 of the Clay Center Comprehensive Plan.

Rural-suburban residential development occurs on the east edge of Clay Center along Highway 24, with the development of the Prairie Meadows Subdivision. This form of housing is also present on the south edge of Clay Center along Highway 15 near the County Club golf course.

Extra-Territorial Zoning & Subdivision Authority

The City of Clay Center municipal code contains language suggesting that they have extra-territorial zoning. However, the County Clerk has no records showing the Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution granting the city extra-territorial zoning. Since the county administers zoning regulations, it must grant a city the authority to administer municipal zoning outside the city limits.

Clay County Planning

This section presents an overview of past and recent planning efforts undertaken by the county. Based on research performed by Phillips & Associates of past Clay County Planning Commission records and files, it appears that a comprehensive plan as defined by K.S.A. 12-747 has never been prepared.

The Board of County Commissioners has participated in economic development planning for the county since the year 2000 by annually reviewing and adopting a county economic development plan. Specific economic development goals and strategies outlined in the Clay County's 2004 Economic Development Plan are outlined below:

Strategy One:

Capitalize on the county's attractiveness, natural resources and capability to serve as a bedroom community to employment centers located in Riley and Geary counties.

Strategy Two:

Create a revitalization program to assist in tax relief for businesses and homeowners.

Strategy Three:

Promote a cooperative effort between county officials and city officials to enhance business retention and expansion throughout the county. A key to attracting/retaining businesses focuses on enhancing the counties existing assets, such as its youth and their employment and future educational opportunities in vocational or technical training facilities.

Strategy Four:

Enhance the recreational opportunities in Clay County for its citizens and tourists/sportsmen visiting the region.

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Plan Implementation

Below is a table outlining the various action programs identified to implement the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan. An estimated date for completion of a particular program is included, as well as the organization responsible for implementation.

Preservation of Rural Character and Farmland		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Support the use of quarter-quarter based agricultural zoning to limit the number of non-farm houses to two, five-acre minimum sell-offs per quarter-quarter	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
2. Modify the zoning regulations to allow for farm based businesses and micro enterprises that would permit compatible occupations and support agricultural/resource based operations. Farm based businesses must remain an ancillary use, secondary to the farming operation, and should not interfere with adjacent farms or create a nuisance for nearby residents.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
3. Allow development of bed-and-breakfasts and related tourist/recreation activities on working farms or former farmsteads.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
4. Modify the zoning regulations to include an agricultural nuisance disclaimer statement in any agricultural zoning district. This would provide fair warning to those who may desire to purchase a home in an agricultural zone indicating Clay County is a right-to-farm county.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
5. Develop objective methods for evaluating the impact of development proposals on highly productive agricultural lands. For example, investigate the use of the LESA Land Evaluation and Site Assessment system for crop and grass lands.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
6. Modify the zoning regulations to permit agriculture-related support businesses (both commercial and industrial) in the county, subject to conditional review and approval. The market being served or the character of the use must be distinctly non-urban in nature (i.e., agricultural commodities, plant nurseries, etc.).	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission

Compact Town Growth & Rural Growth		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Encourage infill development within the cities on vacant or underdeveloped parcels.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
2. Encourage new residential subdivisions connected to municipal utilities to be contiguous to existing corporate boundaries and be annexed.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
3. Oppose commercial and industrial development that proposes to locate on the fringe of cities without connecting to municipal utilities and annexation.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
4. Coordinate the review and approval of residential subdivision plats in the unincorporated fringe areas between the county and affected city.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
5. Ensure that new rural residential subdivisions or homes on individual parcels in an agriculture zone in the town fringe have direct access to a paved county road or highway.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
Wind Power		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Investigate modifying the zoning codes to allow wind power generating facilities subject to a conditional use permit within the agricultural zoning districts.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
2. Adopt siting guidelines for wind power projects in Clay County that are incorporated by reference as part of the county zoning regulations.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
3. Investigate requiring that each new wind energy project must complete an environmental resource survey to be submitted as part of the project's zoning application.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
4. Investigate how to permit individual wind generators for homeowners.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
Downzoning of Property		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
3. Prepare a new zoning map based on a complete review of past rezoning cases and accurate mapping based on published legal descriptions.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission

4. Adopt a new zoning map pursuant to K.S.A. 12-753 concurrently when the Planning Commission adopts updated zoning and subdivision regulations.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
Extra-Territorial Zoning		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
2. Adopt an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Clay Center (any other such as Wakefield) granting extra-territorial zoning and subdivision authority. The following provisions should be evaluated as part of the Interlocal Agreement:	Spring 2007	Board of County Commission
Development Potential of Milford Lake		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Work with local and state economic development agencies, along with the Corps of Engineers, to promote and market Milford Lake recreation facilities, and the wetland preserve to attract eco-tourism, hunting, and fishing.	Ongoing	Board of County Commission, KDOC Tourist Office, and Corps of Engineers
2. Support the development of new homes in the vicinity of Milford Lake and the City of Wakefield.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
3. Encourage rural housing subdivisions to locate within a half-mile of Highways 15 and 82, or a hard-surfaced county road.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
4. Support the development of seasonal housing opportunities for hunters and tourist, (i.e., bed and breakfast operations, lodges, second homes for households).	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
5. Coordinate with Milford Lake officials to improve public access to Milford Lake facilities.	Ongoing	Board of County Commission and Corps of Engineers
Outfitter Business in the County		
Action Program	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Investigate allowing outfitter businesses as a conditional use in the agricultural zoning district.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission

Manufactured & Mobile Homes		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
4. Amend the zoning regulations to include a “Manufactured Home Park District” with contemporary standards for storm shelters, paved roads, minimum acreage requirement, open space/recreation and adequate on-site parking per lot.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
5. Ensure the zoning regulations have design standards for “residentially-designed manufactured homes” pursuant with K.S.A. 12-763.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
6. Ensure that manufactured home parks provide screening from nearby residential uses or provide a buffer from agricultural operations.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
Preservation of Historic Structures & Places		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
1. Support the work of local historic groups in Clay County to prepare a “Historic and Cultural Sites Inventory”.	Spring 2007	Board of County Commission and Clay County Historic Society
2. Support opportunities for selling farmsteads as cultural artifacts to new homeowners or the second-home market.	Ongoing	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
3. Investigate how heritage tourism could play a role in Clay County and work in partnership with the history of Fort Riley and the settling of Kansas.	Spring 2007	Board of County Commission, KDOC Tourist Office, and Ft. Riley
4. Investigate the creation of Clay County Revitalization Plan to rebate property taxes back to owners who have made improvements to historic properties. The rebate is determined by the increase in property taxes as a result of the improvements. See K.S.A. 12-17, 118.	Spring 2006	Board of County Commission
Protection & Restoration of Riparian & Wetlands		
Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
6. Ensure that county subdivision regulations impose minimum lot size requirements for the purpose of preventing contamination of water resources.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
7. Ensure that county subdivision regulations contain design standards that provide variable width riparian buffer and setback requirements. The intent is to establish a naturally vegetated buffer system along all perennial streams that contain critical environmental features such as the 100-year floodplain, steep slopes and wetlands.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
8. Work with State of Kansas, municipal government, and	Spring 2007	Board of County

rural water district officials to identify critical watershed protection areas or wellhead protection areas.		Commissioners, KDHE, and Kansas Water Office
9. Investigate how Clay County can support voluntary wetland and riparian protection or restoration efforts through such techniques private donations or conservation easement.	Spring 2007	Board of County Commissioners, KDHE, and Kansas Water Office
10. Evaluate street standards in rural subdivisions regarding design standards for drainage swales that can provide stormwater quality treatment.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission

Mineral Resources

Action Programs	Timeline for Completion	Responsible Organization
3. Ensure the county zoning regulations establish a conditional use permit procedure in the agricultural zoning district for mineral extraction uses.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission
4. Ensure the county zoning regulations include specific requirements for proper ongoing management addressing dust control, traffic, road maintenance, water quality /stormwater runoff, post-extraction restoration.	May 2006 (adopt new zoning codes)	Planning Commission and Board of County Commission

Evaluation & Monitoring Program

Planning is an ongoing process. The Planning Commission must review the Comprehensive Plan annually (KSA 12-747). This is the time to review progress towards achieving plan implementation through the action programs identified above. The annual review is also a time to assess changes occurring in the county. For example, the Planning Commission should monitor the number and location of non-farm housing being constructed in the county. Other important trends to monitor are the movement of soldiers to Fort Riley and their impact on the local housing market and the gain or loss of local industries. The Planning Commission should also monitor Federal and State programs and decisions affecting water quality and supply issues in the Republican River and watershed, as well as efforts occurring at Milford Lake.