Population and Demographics

Wichita, the largest city in Kansas, population 397,532 is the county seat of Sedgwick County. Major highways, including the Kansas Turnpike and Interstate I-135, link the city with a large trade area encompassing a population of more than 1.1 million people within a 100-mile radius. The nearest large cities are Denver to the west, Kansas City to the northeast, Oklahoma City to the south and Tulsa to the southeast.

Population Growth

Wichita's population growth has remained steady for the past three decades. The majority of recent growth has occurred along the far west/northwest, east/northeast and southwest peripheries of the city, and into the unincorporated portions of the county.

As of May 2022, the city's total land area was approximately 167 square miles. The majority of annexation over the past couple of years has been in response to a need for improved utility service in the annexed areas, especially water service.

Population Distribution

The metropolitan statistical area (MSA) includes Butler, Harvey, Sedgwick and Sumner counties. The MSA has a population of 647,610. Sedgwick County represents 80.9 percent of the area's population of 523,824 residents in 2020.

The city's population density decreased by nearly 50 percent in the past few decades. Today, there are approximately 2,386 persons per square mile in Wichita compared to 4,625 per square mile in 1960, when growth within the city limits peaked. The trend of perimeter growth, and the associated increase in demand for local government services, is expected to continue for Wichita.

Demographics

The racial and ethnic composition of Wichita's population is comparable to the national average. The fastest growing group, both in Wichita and nationally, is people of Hispanic origin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>WICHITA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Hispanic</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

| WICHITA METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA
| POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTY, 2020 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>POPULATION (IN 1,000'S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sedgwick</td>
<td>523.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butler</td>
<td>104.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumner</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


POPULATION TRENDS, 1960-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>WICHITA (IN 1,000'S)</th>
<th>PERCENT CHANGE</th>
<th>SEDGWICK COUNTY (IN 1,000'S)</th>
<th>PERCENT CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>254.7</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>343.2</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>276.6</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>350.7</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>279.3</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>367.1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>304.0</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>403.7</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>344.3</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>452.9</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>382.4</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>498.4</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>397.5</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>523.8</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Climate

Wichita is located on the central plains far from any large moderating influences, such as mountains, oceans, or lakes. There is a wide range of temperatures, which fall between a humid subtropical climate and a humid continental climate with hot, humid summers and somewhat cold, dry winters.

Despite these extremes, Wichita is known to have more sunny days throughout the year than Miami. Over the course of a year, temperatures range from an average low of about 20° F (−7° C) in January to an average high of nearly 93° F (34° C) in July. The maximum temperature reaches 90° F (32° C) an average of 64 days per year and reaches 100° F (38° C) an average of 14 days per year. Conversely, the minimum temperature falls below 0° F (−17.8° C) an average of 3.6 nights per year. The first fall freeze typically occurs between the second week of October and mid-November, and the last spring freeze occurs between the end of March and the final week of April.

Education

Wichita’s population has achieved relatively high levels of education. In 2020, 88.5 percent of Wichita’s citizens aged 25 years and older had at least a high school diploma, exactly the same as the national average.

The city of Wichita is served by eight unified school districts. The Wichita Public School District (USD 259) is the largest in the city. In fall 2021, Wichita USD 259’s enrollment was 46,701 students, a 0.6 percent decline compared to 2020 as the novel coronavirus reduced school enrollments throughout the country. The largest enrollment declines were in the elementary grades and middle school, while high school enrollment increased.

In addition to the public school districts, there are numerous private, public, and technical schools, including 12 colleges and universities providing educational opportunities in many fields of study. Among these are Wichita State University, Newman University, University of Kansas School of Medicine, Friends University, and Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Health Care

Wichita is a regional leader in health care with over 1,600 licensed beds at 12 acute care and freestanding specialty hospitals. In addition to these major treatment facilities, there are approximately 70 nursing homes and assisted living facilities with more than 4,500 beds. Wichita is also home to the Riordan Clinic, an international biomedical research and educational organization, specializing in nutritional medicine and preventive care. Several medical research organizations provide clinical research services for the pharmaceutical, nutritional and medical device industries.

Public Safety

According to FBI data, the number of violent crimes committed in Wichita decreased 13.8 percent from the first half of 2018 to the first half of 2019. However, this number increased by 8.4% from 2019 to 2020. Over the years, the Wichita Police Department received national recognition and was the recipient of several awards.

Transportation

Wichita Eisenhower National Airport, the largest airport in Kansas, is a combination commercial air carrier and general aviation complex, providing accommodations for all aircraft. Passenger service is offered through the following airlines: Alaska Airlines, Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Delta Airlines, Southwest Airlines, and United Airlines to 14 nonstop destinations around the U.S. Cargo service is provided by four major carriers: DHL, Federal Express, UPS Supply Chain Solutions, and UPS.

The airport replaced its main terminal with a $160 million facility which opened on June 3, 2015. The two-story, 273,000 square-foot terminal is a state-of-the-art amenity capable of accommodating two million passengers annually.

After rapid growth in recent years, Eisenhower’s total passengers contracted 55.1 percent in 2020 to 785,000 passengers as the novel coronavirus pandemic limited air travel. Air freight shipments declined 1.3 percent in 2020 to 56.8 million pounds (inbound and outbound). In 2021, passenger volume rebounded, with a 63.3 percent increase over 2020 to a total of 1.28 million passengers. Air freight shipments increased 9.0 percent.

Culture and Leisure

Recreational opportunities abound in Wichita. The city’s compact size allows minimal travel time (average 30 minutes) to outlying areas with open prairie and lakes. Inside the city there are 126 municipal parks covering more than 5,000 acres. Cultural activities include art, natural and historical museums, theater, the Mid-America All-Indian Center, the Wichita Symphony, the Wichita Grand Opera, the Metropolitan Ballet, the Lake Afton Public Observatory, Botanica Wichita, and the Sedgwick County Zoo. Exploration Place, the Sedgwick County science and discovery
Downtown Wichita’s residential offerings have continued to expand in recent years, with almost 1,228 residential units added between 2010 and 2019 in the form of newly constructed apartment buildings and repurposed commercial buildings. Construction on the $40 million 225 Sycamore apartment complex was completed in 2021, including 200 units.

**Economic Indices**

**WSU Current Conditions Index**

The average annual WSU Current Conditions Index declined 5.9 index points to 92.2 points in 2020 as the novel coronavirus pandemic sharply reduced economic output in the second quarter. An employment decline of 6.1 percent and the unemployment rate more than doubling from 3.4 to 8.3 percentage points in 2020 were the main causes of the decline in the index. This followed the index reaching its highest level in 2019 since 2008. The index recovered throughout 2020 and into 2021, growing to 93.3 index points by March as the economy recovered. The index has continued its growth thus far into 2022, rising to 96.9 in March.

**WSU Leading Economic Indicators Index**

The WSU Leading Economic Indicators Index is designed to foreshadow the Wichita economy approximately six months into the future. In 2020, the annual average indexed value decreased 8.1 percent relative to its 2019 value to 90 index points after the novel coronavirus pandemic reduced the economic outlook for both the Wichita and national economies. The index increased to 95.7 points in March 2021, a sign that the economy should continue to improve throughout 2021. As of March 2022, the index has increased a small 0.4 points to 93.7, a sign that conditions are looking more favorable than on average in 2021, though not by much.

**Employment**

Wichita’s employment includes a broad mix of business types, with a sizable base of relatively high paying manufacturing jobs. A list of Wichita’s major private employers includes Spirit AeroSystems Inc., Via Christi Health, Textron Inc., Bombardier Learjet, Koch Industries Inc., Wesley Medical Center, Dillons Food Stores, Cargill Protein, Johnson Controls and Cox Communications.

Beyond these major private employers, Wichita’s numerous small and mid-sized companies supply a wide variety of goods and services both to local and global markets. According to Census 2020 County Business Patterns, the total number of business establishments grew 0.5 percent in the metropolitan area in 2020, to 15,009 establishments. Approximately 97.1 percent of all business establishments in the metropolitan area employed fewer than 100 workers.

Total employment in the Wichita metro area grew by an estimated 1.7 percent in 2021, recovering about 4,900 jobs from those lost during the pandemic. The production sector declined by about 470 jobs, while the service sector gained about 3,670 jobs. Total employment is forecast to grow an additional 1.3% in 2022, most of which is expected in the production sector.

**Economic Development**

Downtown Wichita serves as the region's commercial, entertainment, artistic, cultural and government center. The central business district has 1.1 million square feet of rentable office space, which accounts for 38 percent of all rentable office space in Wichita as of 2021.5

Old Town, located in the heart of the city, is known for its brick-lined streets, historic lamp posts and converted warehouses. The late 19th century and early 20th century buildings house more than 100 restaurants, shops, clubs, theaters, museums and businesses.

Minor league baseball, basketball, hockey, soccer and indoor football are some of the professional sporting attractions available in the Wichita area. Wichita is also the host of the annual National Baseball Congress World Series tournament. The city will host the men’s NCAA basketball tournament first and second round games again in 2025 and will host the women’s first and second round games in 2022. The Wichita Wind Surge, a Double-A minor league baseball team formerly known as the New Orleans Baby Cakes, played their first game in the new stadium in May 2021. In 2022, the Wind Surge is scheduled to play games Tuesdays through Sundays, April through September.

Built in 1969, Century II is the performing arts and convention headquarters downtown. The INTRUST Bank Arena is Wichita’s largest sports and entertainment venue, with an over 15,000 seat capacity. The arena ranked as the 123rd busiest worldwide in Pollstar’s 2019 Year-End Arena Rankings. The arena cancelled its events for the remained of 2020 after the coronavirus outbreak and began reduced activity in January 2021. As of 2022, events have largely returned to normal.

Wichita is home to many festivals, sporting events, and holiday celebrations, the largest of which is the nine-day Riverfest in June. This event began as a city-financed centennial celebration in 1970. In 2019, Riverfest’s attendance reached 440,000, and the event was canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic. In 2021 the festival resumed with two extended weekend events, one in June and the other in September.

**City Profile**

center, promotes an interest in science for all ages through its permanent and traveling exhibits, summer camps, Maker Faire Wichita, and the Wichita Regional Science and Engineering Fair. The Wichita Art Museum’s permanent collection includes over 8,000 objects, with a focus on American art.
The industries with employment declines were manufacturing (8,400 jobs), wholesale trade (500 jobs), retail trade (1,200 jobs), transportation and utilities (600 jobs), information (300 jobs), professional and business services (1,700 jobs), leisure and hospitality (4,400 jobs), other services (300 jobs), and government (1,200 jobs).

In 2021, the largest employment sectors were trade (17.0 percent), education and health services (15.8 percent), and durable goods manufacturing (12.9 percent). Overall, private sector services comprised 47.5 percent of Wichita employment, while the goods producing sectors comprised 21.4 percent and government 14.1 percent.

Though the local economy grew rapidly in 2018 and 2019, employment declined sharply in the second quarter of 2020 with the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic, followed by the beginning of the employment recovery in the third and fourth quarters of the year.

In 2022, annual average employment is projected to grow at a rate of 1.3 percent, slower than in 2021. This rate is forecasted to half to about 0.7 percent in 2023 and stay around that point in the coming years. The unemployment rate has thus far continued to decline in 2022, with the March rate sitting at 3.6 percent.

Cost of Living
Wichita continues to maintain a moderate cost-of-living rate of 89.6, almost 10 percent lower than the average among 269 urban areas in the United States and lower than 70 percent of U.S. urban areas. According to the National Association of Realtors, The 2022 first quarter median sales price of existing single-family homes in the Wichita MSA was $190,000 compared to the national median price of $368,200. Wichita’s home prices ranked the 21st least expensive among metro areas in the U.S., more than 40 percent less than the national median. The average sale price of a newly built, single-family home in 2021 in the Wichita metro area was $269,985, considerably lower than the national average price of $398,393.

Personal Income
The Wichita MSA’s total nominal personal income is forecasted to increase 2.6 percent in 2022 after increasing 2.2 percent in 2021. Beyond, personal income is forecast to 2.2 in 2023 and slow to 1.7 percent in 2024.

In 2021 the Wichita MSA had a total personal income (TPI) of $36.2 billion. This TPI ranked 88th largest among 384 metro areas in the United States. From 2009 to 2019, the average annual growth rate of TPI for the Wichita MSA was 3.2 percent, modestly lower than the national 4.4 percent growth rate, due in large part to the slower population growth in the Wichita area.

Manufacturing Sector
Manufacturing accounted for 15.6 percent of total nonfarm employment in the Wichita MSA in 2021. About 82.9 percent of manufacturing jobs are in the durable goods sub-sector, primarily in aviation manufacturing, along with a sizable machinery
manufacturing subsector. About 17.1 percent of manufacturing jobs are in the non-durable goods sub-sector, dominated by jobs in food processing and printing.

Late 2019 and 2020 presented new challenges for Wichita’s manufacturers, especially in the aviation market. Boeing froze production on its 737 Max airliner in December 2019 after the grounding of all 737 Max planes in March 2019. This had reverberations throughout the aerospace supply chain that were felt by Spirit, which supplies the fuselage for the 737 and other parts, and Wichita’s smaller aerospace suppliers.

Compounding these issues, pandemic led to manufacturing pauses and significantly reduced demand in the commercial aerospace market due to a plummet in air travel demand. Nationally, the number of air traffic passengers declined 61 percent in 2020 relative to 2019. Though Wichita’s manufacturing sector has diversified over the last decade, the area’s heavy focus in the aerospace sector led to a larger decline locally in manufacturing than nationally during the pandemic.

With these headwinds, annual average employment in Wichita’s manufacturing sector declined 15.3 percent in 2020, from 54,900 to 46,500 workers, with the largest decline in the aerospace sector. Spirit announced multiple rounds of layoffs throughout 2020, laying off almost 5,000 workers throughout the year, and this led to other local suppliers decreasing their employment due to lower demand.

The industry began recovering from these losses in the third quarter of 2020 as Boeing resumed production of the 737 Max, though at a substantially reduced level compared to 2019 production. Spirit AeroSystems has increased its employment numbers from this position over the previous years alongside increases in production, which was a rate of 31 aircraft per month in May of 2022.

**Service Sector**

The service sectors grew 2.7 percent in 2021, an increase of 3,670 jobs:

- The information sector contracted by 170 jobs, a decline of 4.8 percent.
- Financial activities employment remained flat with 0.01 percent change.
- The professional and business services sector decreased by 440 jobs, an increase of 1.3 percent.
- The education and health care services sector suffered a decline of 850 jobs, a decrease of 1.7 percent.
- The leisure and hospitality sector recovered 3,130 jobs for an increase of 10.9 percent.
- The other services sector expanded by 10.1 percent, declining by 1,070 jobs.

Prior to the novel coronavirus pandemic, local service sector growth had been broad-based, with the largest growth in the professional and business services, health care, and leisure and hospitality service sectors. The service sector was Wichita’s most consistent source of employment growth, with gains outpacing total local employment growth in nine of the past ten years. From 2010 to 2019, service sector growth has expanded by more than 13,000 workers, accounting for more than 67 percent of all local job growth.

In 2020, almost every service sector in Wichita experienced a contraction in employment, as some sectors were directly affected by social distancing measures and others had more indirect effects due to the contraction of the manufacturing sector and general reduction of economic activity. These sectors were hardest hit in the second quarter of 2020, and most began to recover some of their lost employment in the third and fourth quarters of the year. Growth is forecasted to slow in 2022, reaching a rate of 0.7%, according to CEDBR calculations.

The leisure and hospitality sector was the single hardest hit service sector in Wichita by the novel coronavirus pandemic, contracting 13.3 percent with the loss of 4,400 jobs in 2020. Prior to 2020, the sector had been Wichita’s fastest-growing, with employment expanding 20.8 percent from 2011 to 2019. In 2021, reductions in social distancing and the resumption of full capacity dining in restaurants is expected to propel the leisure and hospitality sector to Wichita’s fastest growth, an expansion of 5.6 percent.

The other services sector suffered the second-largest contraction of Wichita’s service sectors in 2020, a decline of 11.4 percent. The sector experienced an outsized effect from the novel coronavirus pandemic due to so many of its establishments requiring close contact with customers, such as barber shops, salons and other personal care services. From 2014 to 2019, the sector had steadily grown, adding 1,100 jobs to expand 11.7 percent. Despite this setback, the sector rebounded greatly in 2021 and is forecasted to continue the growth of 2.1 percent in 2022.

The education and health care services sector is Wichita’s single largest sector, with 46,100 workers in 2021. The sector suffered a 1.7% decrease in employment from 2020 levels, amounting to a loss of about 800 jobs.

During 2020, most new projects were put on hold, but in 2019 a $62 million renovation of the Via Christi Health’s St. Joseph campus was completed. Wichita State University, the largest local university, continues its Innovation Campus initiative with the completion of a new on campus YMCA, a new residence hall, a Student-Athlete Success Center and the NIAR Advanced Virtual Engineering and Testing Labs in 2019 and 2020. A new $60 million building for the business school is expected to be finished with construction in the coming months.

The professional and business services sector is projected to increase by 600 workers, an expansion of 1.9 percent. The
employment services subsector and the administration and support subsector are expected to experience the bulk of this growth, as they were the sectors most disrupted by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

**Construction and Natural Resources Sector**

Natural resources, mining and construction employment comprised 27.2 percent of all good-producing industry employment in Wichita in 2021, as well as 5.8% of all employment. The sector grew by 1.0 percent in 2021 and is expected to reach high rates of growth in 2022 and 2023, where it is forecasted at 3.1 and 3.0 percent, respectively.

The residential market built on fast growth in 2020 with even faster growth in 2021 as housing demand spiked sharply and home prices soared. Home sales increased 6.2 percent, new home construction grew by 30.0 percent in 2020. Stan Longhofer, director of the Wichita State University Center for Real Estate, forecasts that new home construction may slow its growth rate during 2022, down to 6.0 percent. Home sales activity, on the other hand, is forecast to reach 5.5 percent in 2022, above its 2021 level but below 2020.

**Sources:**

This report was prepared by the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University at the request of the City of Wichita Department of Finance.

2. 2020 Decennial Census Estimates. The Wichita MSA is comprised of Butler, Harvey, Sedgwick, and Sumner counties, as defined by the Census Bureau in March 2020 Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department.
4. City of Wichita Park and Recreation Administration.
6. C2ER, ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 2021 Annual Average
7. C2ER, ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 2019 Annual Average.
9. Longhofer, Stanley D. 2022 Kansas Housing Markets Forecast, Center for Real Estate, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita State University.
10. 2020 Kansas Statistical Abstract. Data for Sedgwick County
The following maps provide insight into the past and future of the boundaries of the City of Wichita. The Wichita City Limit: Growth by Decade map illustrates decades of fast growth, such as the 1910s, 1950s, and 1960s, with periods of relatively slower expansion in the 1920s, 1970s, and first half of the 2010s.
"The 2035 Urban Growth Areas Map" looks into the future of growth in Sedgwick County.