

The Old Sedgwick County Courthouse

### **COUNTY PROFILE**

### History

Originally a camping ground of the Osage and Wichita Indian tribes, Sedgwick County, Kansas is thought to be a place of discovery for such explorers as Francisco Coronado and Kit Carson. The earliest European settler to the region was M. DuTissenet, a Frenchman operating under the direction of the governor of Louisiana, in 1719. DuTissenet brought with him soldiers, traders and hunters that soon populated and transformed the region from prairie to a land of opportunity.

Sedgwick County was officially established nearly 150 years later on February 26, 1867 and bears the name of Civil War hero Major General John Sedgwick of the Union Army who was killed during the battle of Spottsylvania Courthouse in Virginia. After an initial failed attempt at establishing an official county government, the Governor of the State of Kansas appointed three Commissioners to aid in the effort. In April of 1870, the first county officials were elected and the county seat of Wichita was chosen.

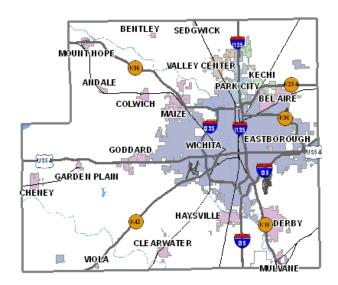
### Geography

2009 Budget



Occupying 1,009 square miles of land in South Central Kansas, Sedgwick County falls within the borders of the Arkansas River

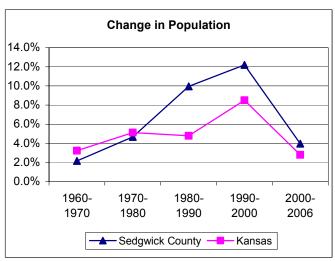
Lowlands. It is noted for its extreme flatness, its highest point only 1,540 feet above sea level. The County's lowest point, approximately 1,220 feet above sea level, occurs along the southern border where the Arkansas River leaves the County.<sup>1</sup> Sedgwick County's largest city is Wichita which is located along Interstate 35 with service areas to Interstate 135, U.S. 54 and various other highway projects.



Source: Sedgwick County GIS, 2008

### **Population**

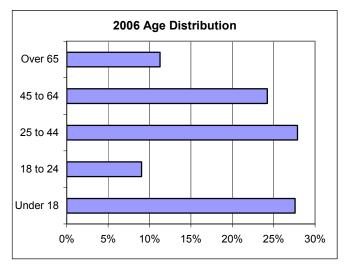
Sedgwick County is a growing region, currently home to an estimated 470,895 citizens. Population growth in the County has been increasing for the past five decades, with the period of strongest growth occurring between 1990 and 2000, when the population increased 12.2 percent. Sedgwick County's population growth has consistently outpaced the State of Kansas' population growth since the 1980's.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

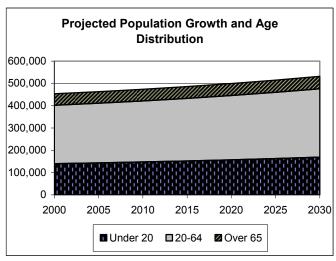
<sup>1</sup> http://www.kgs.ku.edu/General/Geology/Sedgwick/index.html

In addition to a strong growth trend, the *U.S. Census Bureau*, 2006 American Community Survey reports that Sedgwick County is a relatively young community, with 89.0 percent of its population under the age of 65. Over time, it is expected that the percent of the population over the age of 65 will increase.



Source: American Community Survey, 2006

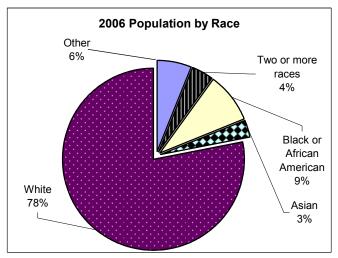
The population of Sedgwick County is expected to grow 0.6 percent per year through the year 2030, expanding to approximately 538,987 citizens. With the population growth, it is also expected that by 2030, 20 out of every 100 people will be 65 years of age or older. This ratio exceeds the 2000 rate of people above the age of 65 (11 out of every 100 people).<sup>2</sup>



Source: CEDBR at Wichita State University, 2004

## **Racial/Ethnic Composition**

Although Sedgwick County is home to citizens of many diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, census data reveals that a large portion of the population (78.0 percent) is White/Caucasian. The most populous minority groups are Black or African American (8.8 percent) and Hispanic or Latino of any race (9.7 percent). <sup>3</sup>



Source: American Community Survey, 2006

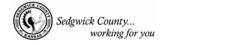
Among its residents, Sedgwick County also has citizens who consider themselves to be of two or more races (3.6 percent) and approximately 6 percent of the population reports being of another race than those listed.

#### Education

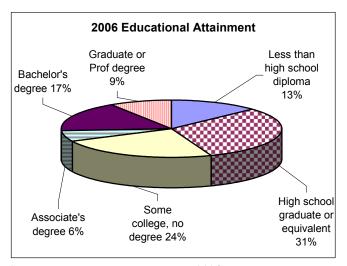
Sedgwick County strives to make and maintain education as one of the primary focuses of the community. Sedgwick County contains 20 unified school districts within the public school system as well as several private institutions and over 80 schools within the Catholic Diocese. An educated citizenry benefits the community on the whole, and typically includes a lower unemployment rate and higher percentages of citizen involvement in voting and community service.

Amongst the population that is age 25 and over, 87.0 percent have at least a high school diploma, if not some type of experience in higher education. This number exceeds the national average. Approximately 17.0 percent of the population has at least a bachelor's degree and 9.0 percent of residents report having some type of graduate or professional degree.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> American Community Survey, 2006



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Addendum to Population and Employment Forecast for Sedgwick County Kansas 2000-2030 compiled by the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University, 2004



Source: American Community Survey, 2006

A recent Sedgwick County initiative is the development and growth of technical education and training. In March 2008, Sedgwick County broke ground for the National Center for Aviation Training. Facing a future shortage of skilled aviation workers, this world-class aviation training facility is a critical step to keep Kansas' aviation industry globally competitive. Sedgwick County's ability to train workers locally will enhance the community's ability to keep aerospace manufacturing jobs in Kansas.



In addition to the National Center for Aviation Training, there are more than 10 institutions of higher education located in Sedgwick County. Wichita State University, Friends University, Newman University, the Wichita Area Technical College, and the University of Kansas School of Medicine - Wichita, all have main campuses in the County, while seven other colleges and universities have chosen to locate branch campuses within the County.

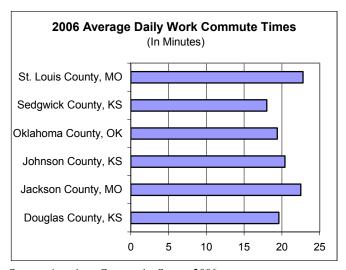
# **Transportation**

Sedgwick County has multiple transportation options available to residents, businesses, and travelers. If traveling by road, Interstate 35, the only Midwest interstate highway to connect Canada, the United States,

and Mexico, runs directly through Sedgwick County providing an optimum north/south route for those traveling and for businesses importing/exporting goods out of Kansas. For those wishing to travel or ship goods east or west from Sedgwick County, two primary options exist. Interstate 70 lies 90 miles north of Wichita, while Interstate 40 lies approximately 150 miles to the south. In turn, truck transportation establishments are prevalent in Sedgwick County.

Air transportation is another viable option. Although under the jurisdiction of the City of Wichita, Sedgwick County is home to Wichita Mid-Continent Airport, the only commercial airport in south-central Kansas. The facility currently services four major cargo carriers and nine major passenger airlines including: Air Tran Airways, Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Continental Express, Delta Airlines, Frontier Airlines, Northwest Airlines, United Airlines, and US Airways. These airlines offer non-stop service to 13 different destinations across the United States, including Las Vegas, Orlando, Minneapolis, Dallas/Fort Worth, Chicago, Los Angeles, Memphis, Denver, Atlanta, Phoenix, Detroit, Houston and St. Louis.

Due in part to Sedgwick County's comprehensive network of highways and roads in both the rural and urban areas, average daily work commute times are lower than many regional comparison counties. Sedgwick County's average daily work commute time is 18 minutes, compared to 19 minutes in Oklahoma County, Oklahoma, 20 minutes in Johnson County, Kansas, and 23 minutes in Jackson County, Missouri. In turn, the Sedgwick County workforce spends less time commuting to work, which results in less spent on fuel and other vehicle related expenses.



Source: American Community Survey 2006

### **Public Safety**

Sedgwick County continues to place high priority on public safety, with approximately one third of all County expenditures being spent on public safety. As a full service government, Sedgwick County has jurisdiction over the Fire District, Emergency Medical Services, and the Sheriff's Office.



In 2007, Sedgwick County Fire District #1 responded to slightly more (5,507) alarms than in 2006 (5,439), an increase of 1.3 percent. In total, the dedicated crews of the eight fire houses managed to save 71.0 percent

of affected property, totaling nearly \$5.3 million in 2007.<sup>4</sup>



Sedgwick County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provides emergency response and scheduled transfers for the citizens of the County. Through the use of Advance Life Support ambulances, EMS service is provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In 2006, EMS responded to 88.0 percent

of urban calls in less than 9 minutes and 89.0 percent of suburban calls in less than 13 minutes. On average, EMS received 118 calls per day in 2006.



Because Sedgwick County contains 20 cities, there are numerous law enforcement agencies in the area in addition to the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office patrols the unincorporated portions of Sedgwick County and operates a 1,068 bed adult detention facility, which is the

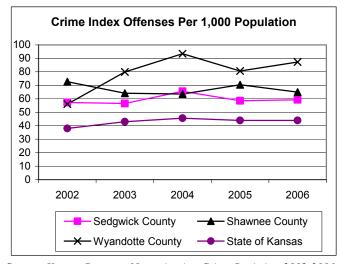
largest jail in the State of Kansas. From 2004 to 2006, the average daily inmate population in the adult detention facility increased 6.9 percent and continued growth is expected.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, the Sedgwick County crime index offenses per 1,000 population increased slightly over the past four reported years, from 57.3 offenses in 2002 to 59.3 offenses in 2006. Comparatively, Sedgwick County has fewer crime index offenses per 1,000 population when compared with Shawnee County and Wyandotte County, Kansas,

<sup>4</sup> Sedgwick County Fire District #1 December 2007 Monthly Report

Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office 2006 Annual Report

but is higher than the State of Kansas average of 43.9 offenses in 2006.



Source: Kansas Bureau of Investigation Crime Statistics, 2002-2006

#### **Health Care**

Home to over 3,000 licensed hospital beds, Sedgwick County is on the cutting edge of healthcare in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The community contains 19 individual hospitals that serve the needs of the community by providing acute, general and specialized care. Additionally, Sedgwick County has 50 nursing homes and assisted living facilities to aid those in need of special care. <sup>6</sup>

Sedgwick County also provides services to those in need of mental health care as well as alcohol and substance abuse treatment through Comprehensive Community Care of Sedgwick County (COMCARE). The department has grown dramatically since its inception as the community continues to see an increased demand for services in this area. Between 2002 and 2006, the number of consumers in the COMCARE system increased 110.0 percent, and is projected to reach nearly 12,500 in 2008.

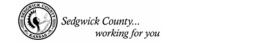
### **Arts, Culture & Entertainment**

As an expanding metropolitan area, Wichita and Sedgwick County work to provide the utmost in community entertainment and recreation. After



two years of planning and community input, Sedgwick

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Wichita Chamber of Commerce Website



County broke ground in December 2007 for the INTRUST Bank Arena, a 15,000 seat multi-purpose arena in the heart of downtown Wichita. The Arena was funded through a 30 month, 1 cent, county-wide sales tax which generated receipts of \$206.5 million. Scheduled to open in January 2010, the Arena will host numerous types of events, including family shows, sporting events, and concerts, and will assist in the revitalization of downtown Wichita.

Not far from the new INTRUST Bank Arena, the City of Wichita continues their work to develop its downtown area, known as Old Town. This urban entertainment district has more than 100 shops, nightclubs, movie theaters, art galleries, and businesses. With continued growth of entertainment activity in downtown Wichita, Old Town will continue to be a hot spot for nightlife.



Sedgwick County is also a proud sponsor of the Sedgwick County Zoo, the number two outdoor family attraction in the State of Kansas. Founded in

1971, the Zoo is ranked among the best zoos in the world, receiving numerous national and international awards. Occupying 247 acres, the Zoo is home to such exhibits as the Downing Gorilla Forest, the Cargill Learning Center, and the Cessna Penguin Exhibit. The Zoo opened a new restaurant in 2008 and is creating a world-class Asian tiger exhibit, which is scheduled to open in Spring 2009.



Wichita is home to a minor league hockey team, the Wichita Thunder and the Wichita Wild, an indoor arena football team. These teams provide hundreds of

hours of entertainment each year for the citizens of Sedgwick County and surrounding areas. Sedgwick County's Kansas Coliseum also hosts a wide variety of entertainment events each year including the Shrine Circus, paintball tournaments, horse shows, and major concerts.

In addition to these centers of culture and entertainment, Wichita and Sedgwick County have 12 museums and numerous cultural events including the Metropolitan Ballet, Music Theatre of Wichita, Wichita Symphony Orchestra and the Wichita Grand Opera. Wichita also has a broad selection of restaurants, offering every type of cuisine and style of food imaginable.

#### **Events**

Each year Sedgwick County takes part in numerous community activities. Support ranges from event sponsorship to employee participation. Some examples of events that the County has participated in the past include:

- Wichita River Festival
- Wichita Flight Festival
- Wichita Open Golf Tournament
- Sedgwick County Fair
- City and town fairs and festivals
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters Bowling Tournament

### **GOVERNMENT**

## **Organizational Structure**

The County's organizational chart in its entirety can be found on the last page of this section.

### **Elected Officials**

Sedgwick County is governed by a five-member Board of County Commissioners that meets in regular weekly sessions. Commissioners are elected according to geographical area (districts) and serve four-year terms with those terms overlapping. The Commissioners are full-time County officials and perform all executive, legislative and policy-related functions. The Board also governs Sedgwick County Fire District #1, a separate special-purpose local government. The Chairman of the Board is elected by the Commissioners and serves a one-year term, January thru December. The Board of County Commissioners is currently comprised of the following individuals:

Commissioner	District	Term Expires
Dave Unruh	1st District	January 2011
Tim Norton	2nd District	January 2009
Tom Winters, Chairman	3rd District	January 2009
Kelly Parks	4th District	January 2011
Gwen Welshimer	5th District	January 2011

In addition to the Board of County Commissioners, citizens of Sedgwick County elect six other positions:

- County Clerk
- Register of Deeds
- County Treasurer
- Sheriff
- District Attorney
- 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Judges

# **Appointed Officials**

Sedgwick County was recognized by the International City-County Management Association (ICMA) in 1981 as a Council-Manager form of government. Therefore, the Board appoints a professional County Manager to administer most County functions and to implement policy decisions. Tasks of the County Manager range from the management of special projects to the daily functions of the County's nearly 3,000 employees.

The Board of County Commissioners also appoints:

- County Counselor
- County Appraiser
- Director of Public Works

The Kansas Secretary of State is responsible for appointing an Election Commissioner for Sedgwick County.

In addition to the county government, Sedgwick County contains 27 townships, 20 cities, 20 unified school districts, 1 fire district, 1 soil conservation district, 4 rural water districts, 6 watershed districts, 8 sewer districts, 12 improvement districts, 4 industrial districts, and 1 rural library district.

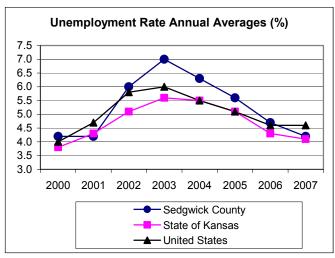
## **County Services**

Sedgwick County prides itself on being a full service government for all of its citizens. Community residents are familiar with the concept that Sedgwick County provides services from A-Z: everything from Animal Control to the Sedgwick County Zoo. In addition to the aforementioned services provided by the elected and appointed officials, Sedgwick County provides services pertaining to: community development, culture and recreation, finance, health, human services, information and operations, and public safety.

## **ECONOMIC OUTLOOK**

# **Employment**

The United States Department of Labor reported that the average 2006 Civilian Labor Force for Sedgwick County was 245,576 residents, an increase of 1.4 percent from 2005. Of those who are eligible for employment, approximately 95.3 percent (234,097) of individuals were employed in 2006. Sedgwick County's unemployment rate for 2007 was 4.2 percent, slightly lower than the U.S. unemployment rate of 4.6 percent.

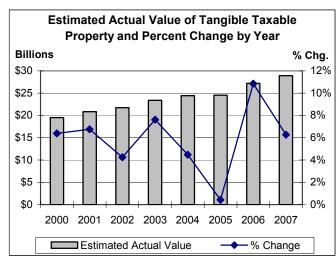


Source: U.S. Department of Labor

Since 2000, Sedgwick County's unemployment rate has varied, with its highest point being 7.0 percent in 2003. The County's unemployment rates are again around 4.0, their level prior to the terrorist attacks in 2001.

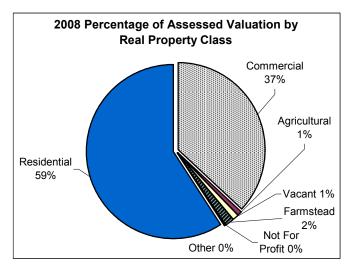
## **Property Values/Tax Payers**

One sign of the economic strength of Sedgwick County is the continued growth in property values. From 2000 to 2007, the estimated actual value of taxable tangible property increased annually by 5.8 percent, from \$19.5 billion to \$28.9 billion, or 3.0 percent when adjusted for inflation. The increased property value is beneficial for property owners, but also for governments who collected taxes based on these values.



Source: Sedgwick County Clerk, 2008

In Sedgwick County, residential property accounts for the largest percentage (59.2 percent) of the total assessed value of real property. The second largest is commercial property, comprising 37.0 percent of the County's total assessed value of real property. Sedgwick County's large percentage of residential property shows that individuals and families recognize that Sedgwick County is a growing community where they can purchase a home and establish roots, while the large portion of commercial property shows that the County's business environment is also favorable.



Source: Sedgwick County Appraiser, 2008

Another economic indicator is the total assessed value of the top five taxpayers compared to the total assessed valuation of the County. A concentrated property tax base can be detrimental to a community in times of economic downturn, especially if a jurisdiction's top taxpayers are in the same industry. Sedgwick County's top five taxpayers comprised 6.2 percent of the County's total assessed value. Also, the top five taxpayers are diversified, representing aerospace manufacturers, a utility and telephone company, and a medical entity.

2007 Top Five Taxpayers				
Name	Assessed Value	Percent of Total County Taxable Assessed Value		
Kansas Gas & Electric	\$ 83,426,680	1.83%		
Spirit Aerosystems, Inc.	80,500,538	1.77%		
Southwestern Bell Telephone	49,371,637	1.08%		
The Boeing Company	34,438,808	0.76%		
Wesley Medical Center, LLC	34,007,132	0.75%		
Total	\$281,744,795	6.18%		

Source: Sedgwick County Clerk, 2008

### **Retail Trade**

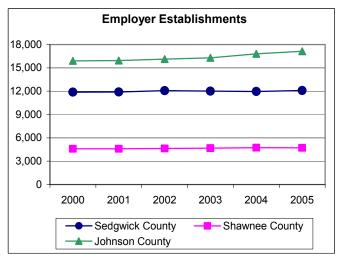
2009 Budget

Retail trade is expected to experience growth in 2008, continuing to rebound from small employment losses in 2005 and 2006. The Wichita Metropolitan Statistical

Area has numerous retail centers, including New Market Square, the Waterfront, and Bradley Fair that encourage industry growth. Additionally, inflation-adjusted taxable retail sales regained their pre-recession levels in 2007 and are expected to increase 1.6 percent in 2008.

### **Industry**

Sedgwick County is home to nearly 12,000 business establishments. Between 2000 and 2005, employer establishments in the County increased annually by 0.34 percent, which is lower than the annual growth rates of employer establishments in Shawnee County (0.48 percent) and Johnson County, Kansas (1.5 percent). In comparison, growth rate of the State of Kansas employer establishments are comparable to Sedgwick County at 0.33 percent. Overall, while there is growth in Sedgwick County's business establishments, the growth is below that of comparable Kansas counties.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

A number of Sedgwick County's business establishments are in the manufacturing industry. In fact, the largest employers in Sedgwick County are aerospace manufacturers. According to a Milken Institute Study, Wichita has the highest concentration of aerospace manufacturing employment and skills in the nation. Wichita is also known as the "Air Capital of the World," and is home to four large aircraft manufacturing plants, each of which heavily impacts the overall economy of Sedgwick County.

Oenter for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University 2007 Review and 2008 Forecast

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Wichita Chamber of Commerce Website

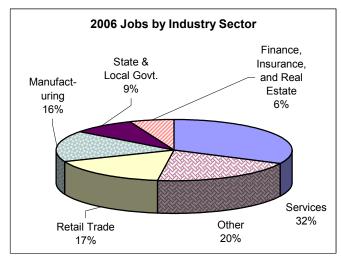
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition

Greater Wichita's 15 Largest Employers				
Company	Product/Service	Local FT Employees		
Cessna Aircraft Company	Aircraft	11,300		
Spirit AeroSystems	Aircraft Parts	10,900		
Hawker Beechcraft	Aircraft	6,767		
Unified School District 259 - Wichita	Public Primary Education	5,391		
Via Christi Health System	Health Care	4,809		
State of Kansas	State Government	4,094		
City of Wichita	Municipal Government	3,103		
Boeing Integrated Defence System	Aircraft Modification	3,005		
Sedgwick County	County Government	2,763		
United States Government	Federal Government	2,524		
Bombardier Learjet	Aircraft	2,250		
Koch Industries	Manufacturing, energy & commodities	2,000		
Wesley Medical Center	Health Care	1,682		
Wichita State University	Public Higher Education	1,670		
Catholic Diocese of Wichita	Primary Education	1,358		
Total		63,616		

Source: Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition, 2006

In addition to the manufacturing industry, Sedgwick County is engaged in a variety of additional industry sectors including retail trade, education, health and social services, the arts, entertainment and food service industries. Comprising 32.1 percent of all jobs, the largest industry in the County is the Services industry.



Source: Situation & Trends 2008, KSU Office of Local Govt.

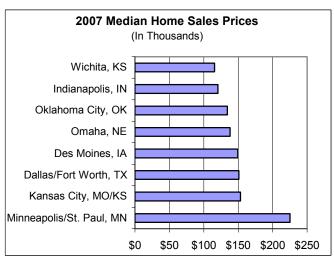
### **Educational & Health Services**

A rapidly growing industry across the entire nation, education and health services also continue to grow in Sedgwick County. Wichita's employment in this sector increased 4.3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007. Wichita is currently home to several specialty hospitals that provide specific care as well as numerous doctors' offices and medical complexes. The Center for Economic Development and Business Research notes many expansions in the health industry in its *Fourth Quarter 2007 E-Connection*, some of which are listed below:

- In March 2007, the Catholic Diocese of Wichita and Via Christi Senior Services announced the completion of a \$1.2 million Catholic Care Center expansion.
- Developers announced the construction of a \$47 million Lillie Medical Park in West Wichita.
- Via Christi-St. Francis completed the expansion of its cardiothoracic intensive-care unit.
- Via Christi Wichita Health Networks announced plans for a \$6.5 million outpatient cancer treatment center.

# **Cost of Living/Housing**

The current overall cost of living in Wichita is below the national average at 90.6. Compared to Plains cities of Oklahoma City, OK (87.4), Omaha, NE (88.2), St. Louis, MO (90.6) and Tulsa, OK (91.4), the overall cost of living for Wichita residents is average.<sup>12</sup>



Source: National Association of Realtors, 2008

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Fourth Quarter 2007 E-Connections, CEDBR, 2008

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition Website

As of 2007, the median home sales price in Wichita was \$115,600 for an existing home, approximately \$110,000 less than the national average. 13 New housing units are also very competitively priced at an average of \$170,000, 30.0 percent below the corresponding national figure. 14

The home ownership rate in Sedgwick County for 2006 was 67.6 percent, up from 65.2 percent in 2005. While home ownership rates have been on the rise, home vacancy rates have been mixed. In 2002, vacancy rates in Sedgwick County were 1.2 percent, but increased to 3.4 percent in 2005. In 2006, vacancy rates decreased back to 1.2 percent. These statistics show that the number of households owning homes in Sedgwick County continues to rise, helping to keep the vacancy rate at a minimal level.



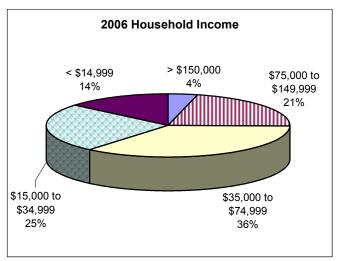
Source: American Community Survey

#### Income

As of 2005, the per capita personal income for Sedgwick County was \$34,703, slightly lower than the Kansas Metropolitan Portion of Kansas per capita personal income of \$35,841. Between 1996 and 2005, Sedgwick County per capita personal income increased annually by 4.0 percent, or 1.5 percent when adjusted for inflation. The growth in per capita personal income shows that the economic productivity of the County continues to increase. This may be affected as the national economy continues to decline. The strength and preponderance of the aircraft industry has kept Sedgwick County's economy from experiencing as severe of a decline. In turn, personal income should maintain its current level.

Per Capita Personal Income (2005 \$)

In 2006, the largest majority of households in Sedgwick County earned somewhere between \$35,000 and \$74,999 while the smallest concentration of residents earned \$150,000 or more. Approximately 14.0 percent of households earned less than \$14,999.



Source: American Community Survey, 2006

A final economic indicator for Sedgwick County is the percentage of families whose income had been below the poverty level in the past 12 months. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey, between 2002 and 2004 Sedgwick County's percentage of poverty families decreased from 9.3 percent to 7.9 percent, prior to increasing to 10.6 percent and 10.9 percent in 2005 and 2006. In 2006, Sedgwick County's percentage of families in poverty status is higher than United States levels by 1.1 percent and higher than the State of Kansas level by 2.3 percent.

<sup>\$38,000</sup> \$36,000 \$34,000 \$32,000 \$30,000 \$28,000 \$26,000 Jos Jos Jos Jos Sedgwick County Kansas Metropolitan Portion of Kansas Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

 $<sup>^{13}</sup>$  National Association of Realtors, 2008

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition Website

