



Section III: Corridor Conditions

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The K-96 Corridor is located in south central Kansas between Wichita and Hutchinson. The K-96 Corridor is approximately 40 miles long and runs through both Sedgwick County and Reno County. Municipalities located on the corridor are Maize, Mount Hope, Haven, and South Hutchinson. Major junctions along the corridor include U.S. HWY 50, K-17, and K-296. The following graphic shows the corridor in relation to communities in the region.

Between Wichita and Hutchinson, K-96 is a major commuter route. Many area residents live in one community and work in another. In addition, residents of the smaller “bedroom” communities use the regional entertainment, recreational, healthcare, and retail opportunities only found in Wichita or Hutchinson.

The K-96 Corridor is in close proximity to Interstate 135. I-135 runs north and south and connects I-70 to I-35. From I-35, commuters have direct access to metropolitan areas such as Kansas City and Oklahoma City.



Figure 3-1: Regional Context Map

K-96 was named after F.W. “Woody” Hockaday, a service station operator in Wichita. Woody placed signs along K-96 advertising the service station. The Kansas-Colorado Boulevard was determined to be the road with the highest number of Hockaday signs, so the state allowed him to choose the number. Woody’s phone number was 96.

The stretch of K-96 between Hutchinson and Wichita originally meandered through the countryside going from farm town to farm town. In the mid-20th Century, an effort was made to “straighten out” K-96, reducing the number of bends and drive time. By 1973, the Hutchinson-Wichita stretch of K-96 was changed into a diagonal line, running northwest to southeast. The upgraded stretch of road was called the “State Fair Freeway”.

CORRIDOR DEMOGRAPHICS

The K-96 Corridor runs through twelve U.S. Census block groups. The twelve block groups with the study area are roughly 320 square miles in size. The graphic below illustrates the block groups. The following corridor demographics are derived from the twelve block groups.

As of 2000, the block groups located along the K-96 Corridor, had a total population of 14,864. This is an increase of 1,720 people (13%) since 1990. It should be noted that the corridor has experienced substantial growth in population since the completion of the 2000

Census. In particular, the City of Maize has seen its population increase dramatically, due to the increased development adjacent to the City of Wichita. Unfortunately, amended data at the Census Block level was not available for inclusion in this report. To maintain consistency in information, 2000 Census Block data was used for this report.

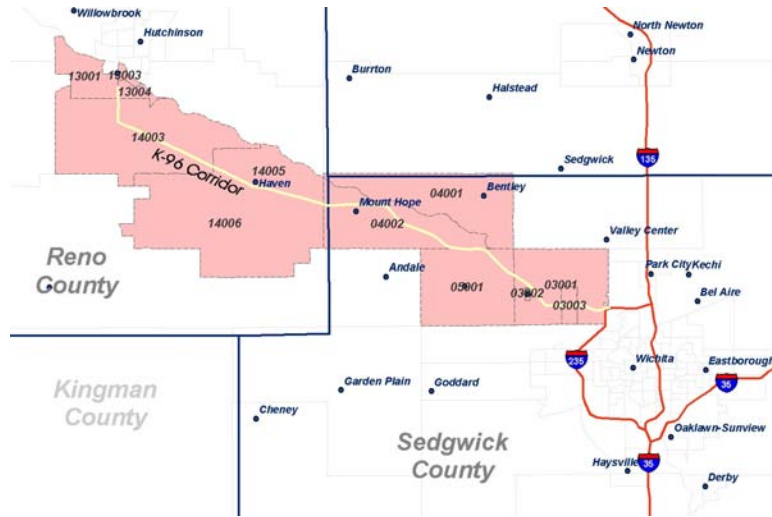


Figure 3-2: Census Block Map

The vast majority of the corridor’s racial composition is White. In 2000, 96% of the total population classified themselves as White. This is slightly lower than in 1990 when 98% of the total population classified themselves as White. In 2000, the racial category “Other” had the second highest total at 418 people, or 3% of the total population. The category “Other” also had the greatest percentage increase, between 1990 and 2000, of over 429%.

The corridor’s ethnic composition in 2000 was predominately non-Hispanic. The corridor’s Hispanic population comprised only 2.5%, or 366 people, of the total population. However, the Hispanic population grew by over 130% in the ten-year period.

The population of the corridor was divided into six age groups; under 5, 5-

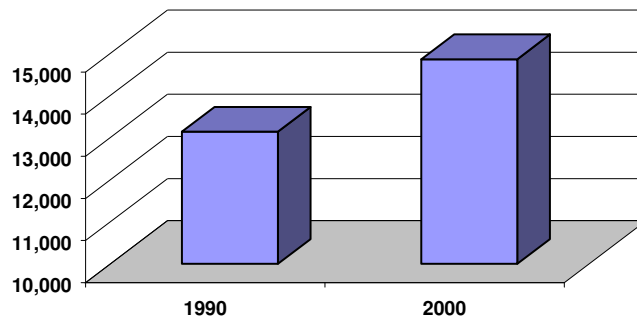


Figure 3-3: Population Trend

17, 18-29, 30-49, 50-64, 65 and up. Between 1990 and 2000, four of the six categories grew in size at a greater rate than the 13% growth rate of the total population. The age group that experienced the greatest growth was the 50-64, growing by almost 22%. The two age groups that grew below 13% were 5-17 and 18-29. The 5-17 category grew by just under 6% and the 18-29 category actually decreased by – 1.3%.

The age demographics show that the population is aging. The older age groups are increasing in size disproportionately faster than the younger groups. The low growth in the 5-17 age group suggests that fewer families and more “empty nesters” are residing along the corridor. Likewise, the negative growth experienced in the 18-29 age group suggests that young adults are leaving the area when they leave home. However, some adults potentially are returning to the area to start or raise their family.

	1990	2000	% Chg.		1990	2000	% Chg.
RACE				AGE			
Total Population	13,144	14,864	13.09%	Under 5 Years	950	1,006	5.89%
White	12,842	14,209	10.64%	5-17	2,965	3,430	15.68%
Black	64	69	7.81%	18-29	1,780	1,758	-1.24%
Asian Pacific	52	63	21.15%	30-49	3,955	4,505	13.91%
American Indian	107	105	-1.87%	50-64	1,860	2,268	21.94%
Other	79	418	429.11%	65 and Up	1,634	1,897	16.10%
ETHNICITY				SEX			
Hispanic	159	366	130.19%	Male	6,497	7,431	14.38%
Non-Hispanic	12,985	14,498	11.65%	Female	6,647	7,433	11.82%

Figure 3-4: Race & Ethnicity Trends

Figure 4 shows in greater detail the racial, ethnic, sex, and age cohort demographic trends between 1990 and 2000.

The number of housing units increased within the twelve census block groups located on the corridor. Between 1990 and 2000 the number of housing units increased by 642 units or 13%.

During the same ten-year period, the percentage of owner occupied housing to renter occupied stayed the same. Roughly 84% of the occupied housing is owner occupied, while 16% of the units are occupied by renters. However, even with a 13% increase in housing stock, the number of vacant dwelling units dropped by 8% from 317 to 292 units.

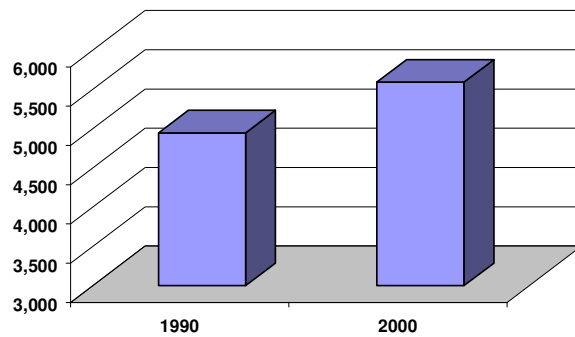


Figure 3-5: Housing Unit Trend

TRANSPORTATION

Thousands of automobiles drive the K-96 Corridor daily. The highest volume of traffic on the corridor is just west of Wichita. Just over 15,000 automobiles drive on this section of the highway. Continuing northwest on K-96, the traffic volume decreases. The daily traffic volume is less than 5,750 by the time you reach the K-17 junction.

However, the stretch of highway into South Hutchinson, that K-96 and K-17 share, has a average daily traffic count of 8,370.

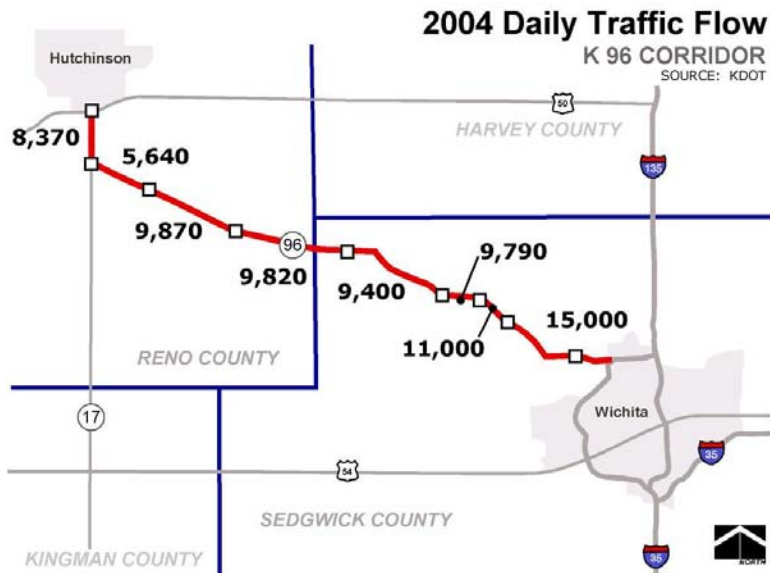


Figure 3-6: Traffic Counts

K-96 is a restricted access highway according to the Kansas Department of Transportation. However, the majority of intersections within the study area are “at-grade intersection” that provides easy

automobile access to K-96. Intersection improvements are planned at Yoder Road and U.S. 50 Highway. These improvements will include “grade separated” intersections to better facilitate the movement of traffic on each roadway.

PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

Existing Land Use and Zoning

The predominant land use along the length of the K-96 corridor is agricultural, consisting mostly of farmland. Additional land uses including industrial, commercial and residential also exist. The majority of industrial and commercial land uses are either within or in proximity to the municipalities that exist along the corridor. Currently, Sedgwick County has countywide zoning and Reno County does not.

Each of the municipalities along the corridor has zoning. Additionally, each of the municipalities have located a portion of the commercial and industrial zoned property adjacent to the K-96 Corridor. Maize has a substantial amount of land in the northwest section of the City, adjacent to the K-96 Corridor that is zoned for "Industrial" use. The city also has a corridor along West 83rd Street that is zoned for retail, west, and office uses, east of K-96. Similarly, Mt. Hope has a portion of land on the west side of town, adjacent to K-96 on the south, that is zoned "Industrial", and a piece along the north side of the highway zoned for "Highway Business."

Haven also has commercial and industrially zoned property along K-96. The commercial zoning stretches the length of the city along K-96 and the industrial is located in the southwest corner of town, along the north side of K-96. South Hutchinson is somewhat different from the other municipalities. To take advantage of the cross of K-96 and US 50/K-61 Highways, most of the area has been



Agricultural Land Uses

zoned for commercial services. Industrial land uses remain off the corridor.

Sedgwick and Reno counties allow municipalities to have a defined extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) adjacent to their city boundaries. The municipalities have development review and some times zoning rights within the ETJ. This is particularly important in Reno County where no formal zoning exists in this part of the county. The ETJ for each municipality differs according to their agreement with the presiding county. The ability to develop within the ETJ could be an important factor in looking at the development of the corridor.

MARKET ANALYSIS

The K-96 corridor commercial market is characterized by a mix of conditions ranging from rural, undeveloped industrial sites to available sites that are most suitable for build to suit tenants and/or owners. The corridor is emerging as a “bedroom” community to the large job centers and major employers in Hutchinson and Wichita. New corridor commercial development has to compete now and into the immediate term with existing vacant commercial buildings and already improved business parks in the larger, adjoining cities.

South Hutchinson has the highest number of businesses among the corridor’s cities, and Mount Hope has the fewest number of business establishments. South Hutchinson has the most jobs per capita among the corridor’s cities: 72 jobs for every 100 residents, while Maize has the fewest jobs per capita. Among the corridor’s cities, unemployment is lowest in Haven and highest in South Hutchinson.

The unemployment rate is lower in each of the corridor’s cities than Sedgwick County as a whole. While this contributes to stronger local economies, it also indicates that new retail, office and industrial businesses are limited in the amount of available labor. Therefore, new employers are likely to draw many of their initial employees from beyond the corridor. To the extent that the new jobs offered along the corridor are able to offer competitive wages; new business growth can and will contribute to stimulating demand for new housing.

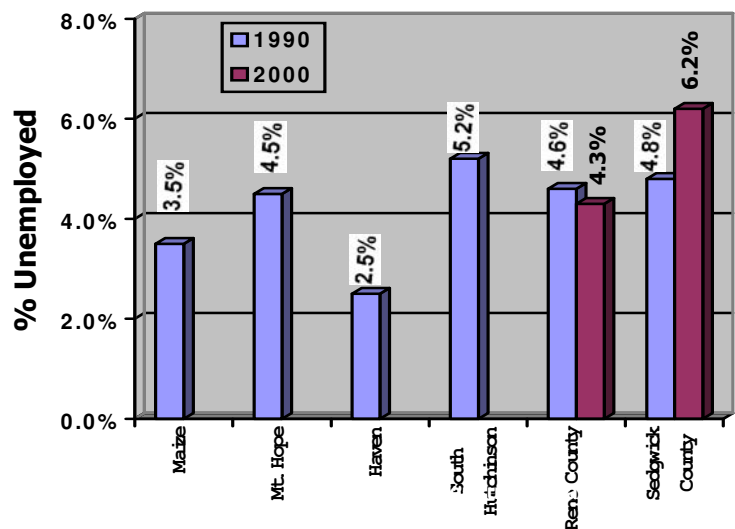


Figure 3-7: Corridor Unemployment

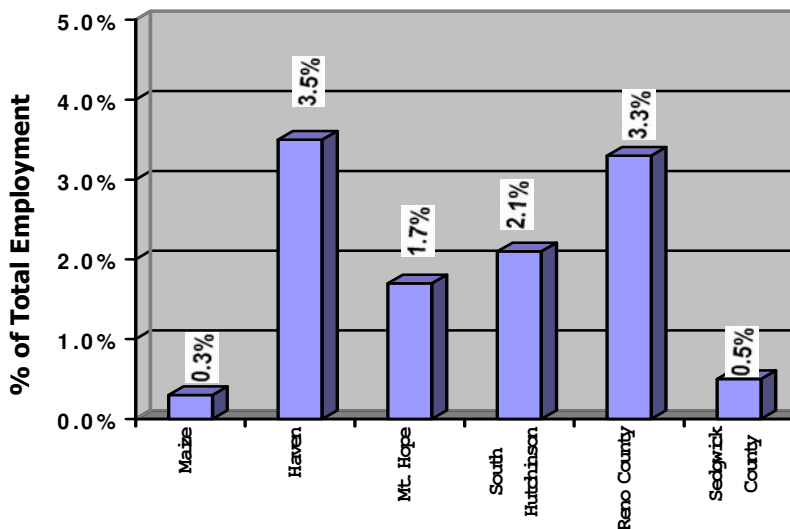


Figure 3-8: Agricultural Employment

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The corridor’s communities should focus future economic development efforts on strengthening the agri-

business element of the area. The K-96 area’s economy reflects a strong agri-business component. Haven has the largest agri-business sector among the corridor’s cities. Furthermore, the quality of the soil and availability of water in the area will tend to keep agricultural interests more viable in the long term along the K-96 corridor than other parts of South Central Kansas and beyond where soil and water conditions are not as attractive.

The number of persons employed in the corridor’s communities grew more than five times the employment growth rate of Reno and Sedgwick Counties; 3.4 percent in the corridor’s cities versus 0.6 percent, from 1998 through 2001 (see **Figure 9: "K-96 Corridor Employment Trends 1998 – 2001"**).

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	1998	2001	Net Change	% Change
Haven	511	362	-149	-29.2%
Maize	239	302	63	26.4%
Mt. Hope	211	217	6	2.8%
South Hutchinson	1,687	1,857	170	10.1%
K-96 Communities	2,648	2,738	90	3.4%
Reno County	24,923	25,311	388	1.6%
Sedgwick County	232,884	234,158	1,274	0.5%
Total	257,807	259,469	1,662	0.6%
Corridor Share of Growth			5.4%	

Figure 3-9: K-96 Corridor Employment Trends, 1998 – 2001
Source: U.S. Census Bureau ZIP Code Business Patterns.

From 1998 through 2001, the total number of business establishments in the four cities in the corridor captured 11 percent of the Reno and Sedgwick Counties new businesses and growing more than seven times greater than the combined increase in the number of businesses in the two counties; 8.1 percent versus 1.1 percent growth in new business establishments (see **Figure 10: "K-96 Corridor Total Business Establishments 1998 – 2001".**)

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	1998	2001	Net Change	% Change
Haven	39	40	1	2.6%
Maize	41	45	4	9.8%
Mt. Hope	28	34	6	21.4%
South Hutchinson	103	109	6	5.8%
K-96	211	228	17	8.1%
Reno County	1,744	1,758	14	0.8%
Sedgwick County	11,776	11,911	135	1.1%
Total	13,520	13,669	149	1.1%

Figure 3-10: K-96 Corridor Total Business Establishments, 1998 – 2001
Source: U.S. Census Bureau ZIP Code Business Patterns.

Manufacturing employment is also strong among area residents and in the corridor's communities. The K-96 corridor cities have a higher proportion of manufacturing than Kansas and Reno County and comparable to Sedgwick County and the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). A higher proportion of South Hutchinson and Maize residents are employed in manufacturing than Sedgwick County as a whole. All corridor communities have a higher percentage of workers in manufacturing than the Reno County average according to the 2000 U.S. Census (see **Figure 11: "Manufacturing Employment by Percent of Total Employment"**).

Jurisdiction	Percent of Total Employment
Haven	20.2%
Maize	25.7%
Mt. Hope	23.2%
South Hutchinson	27.6%
K-96 Communities Average	24.2%
Reno County	16.8%
Sedgwick County	24.5%
Wichita MSA (2003)	21.5%
State of Kansas	15.0%

Figure 3-11: Manufacturing Employment by Percent of Total Employment
 Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau; Kansas Department of Human Resources 2003.

** It should be noted that the employment numbers discussed in this section focus solely on commercial and industrial employment and do not include institutional employment.*