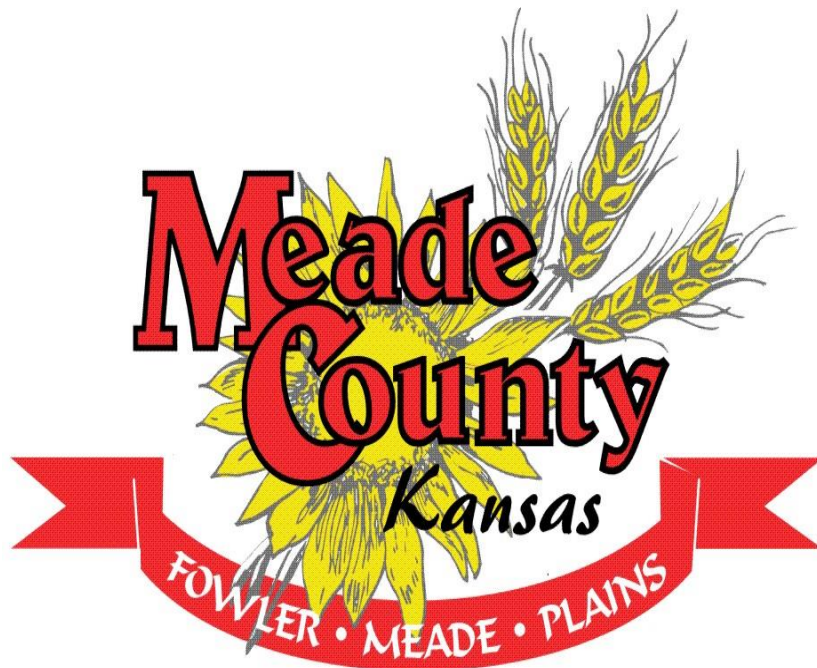


MEADE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared by:

Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc.

(MCEDC)



(Revised 2014)

MEADE COUNTY **STRATEGIC PLAN**

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IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

The Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC) first produced a county wide strategic plan in 1993 and subsequently updated it in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009 and 2014. This plan outlines a common vision for the communities of Meade County (Fowler, Meade and Plains) and its rural areas that will be achieved through various goals and implementation of strategies and actions. The purpose of planning is to address the specific needs of our county, its communities, and rural areas to prepare Meade County for the future.

The 2014 update to the Meade County Strategic Plan builds upon the foundation created by the first plan. It strives to acknowledge its communities and local businesses individually, along with the surrounding agriculture areas, by supporting goals and addressing basic needs.

Broad-based community participation in the planning process was partially achieved through a survey published in the Meade County Mercantile which was mailed to every post office box in the county. Responses to the survey from approximately thirty percent (30%) of the businesses and residents in Meade County provided an invaluable informative database of information.

Input was obtained from the County Commissioners, Mayors, City Council Members of the three (3) communities (Fowler, Meade and Plains) and the public. In addition to the above government entities, input was acquired from three additional critical sectors; Business, Education and Human Services. The Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC) has overseen and observed the planning in conjunction with the Public Square Communities, LLC's process that resulted in the formation of "Positive Pursuits" through public community conversations, a vision retreat and the formation of Action Teams..

Trends, Strengths & Challenges

Trends & Demographics

The population of Meade County had increased from 4,247 persons in year 1990 to 4,631 persons in year 2000, but it decreased by 56 persons to 4,575 persons in year 2010 at (-1.2%). The populations of two of the three towns grew from year 2000 through the last census in year 2010; Fowler's population increased 23 persons from 567 persons to 590 persons at 4%. Meade increased 49 persons from 1,672 persons to 1,721 at 3%. Plains decreased 17 persons from 1,163 persons to 1,146 persons at (-1.5%), and rural Meade County decreased 111 persons from 1,229 to 1,118 at (-9%). As of year 2000, the sum of the southwest Kansas counties decreased 10,011 persons from 225,960 persons to 215,949 persons at (-4.4%).

In year 2010, 785 persons at seventeen percent (17%) of the Meade County population was age 65 and over. The median age for Meade County residents in year 2010 was 38.8 years. The median age has increased 8.9 years, since year 1960, from 29.9 years. The median age for all Kansas residents increased .8 years from year 2000 at 35.2 to 36 in year 2010.

In year 2009, the per capita income in Meade County was \$40,020, and in Kansas it was \$39,173. The Meade County median income in year 2010 was \$49,846, and in Kansas it was \$51,273.

Meade County residents are relatively well educated. Eighty six percent (86%) of the persons age 25 and over are high school graduates, and twenty three percent (23%) have earned a bachelor's degrees or higher. The unemployment rate in Meade County in year 2010 was four percent (4%), while the Kansas average was six and six-tenths percent (6.6%).

Strengths

The strengths of Meade County are the building blocks for future economic growth and social vitality. A definitive strength for Meade County is a strong foothold in agriculture and agri-business. While a volatile and changing industry, Meade County possesses the resources to sustain a strong agriculture industry. It is important to maintain this strength as it is the backbone of our local economy.

Meade County has strength in its proximity to the heavily traveled U. S. Highway 54, the Union Pacific Rail Line, and State Highways 23 and 160. Meade has a municipal airport with several improvements and expansions completed in recent years; a new ramp area, along with a new parking lot with tie-downs, security fence and a self-serve fueling station. In addition, the airport has an Automatic Weather Observation System (AWOS). Local businesses, the hospital, air ambulances, agri-business and the tourism industry are benefited from all of these means of travel.

Meade County communities are also in the unique position of being able to attract growth from neighboring Liberal, Dodge City and other communities. Liberal and Dodge City are expected to experience heavy growth, increasing their populations by more than fifty percent (50%), over the next 30 years. As these cities grow, an opportunity will arise for Meade County to satisfy the needs of individuals that are tied to these cities through employment, but prefer the lifestyle offered by small communities and country living.

Meade County enjoys residents that are largely committed to living in the area. It does not have a transient population. Eighty four percent (84%) of the respondents to the Meade County survey, which was completed in 2003, indicated that they expected to be living in Meade County five years from the time of the survey. Seventy five percent (75%) of those responding had been citizens of Meade County for more than ten years.

The crime rate is low. Only four percent (4%) local inmates (average of three persons) reside in the seventy-six (76) bed county jail with the remaining ninety six percent (96%) of inmates being from other counties.

The Meade County communities are collaborating together more. A community development program, The Public Square Communities process, began in 2009.

Meade County is home to a modern hospital that opened in 2004 servicing county and regional residents along with good school systems, governing bodies, a well maintained State Park and Lake, an improved municipal airport with an Automatic Weather Observation System, historical sites, such as the Dalton Gang Hideout & museums, parks, senior centers, utility companies, cattle feed lots, agriculture products & services, modern dairy operation, farming and cattle production, a cement & construction company, an apple orchard, guided hunting/lodging, golf courses, camping facilities, fair ground, churches, restaurants, auto sales & services, general shopping & services, and general lodging. It is positioned to accommodate future growth and stability.

Challenges

While Meade County has historically enjoyed a successful agricultural economy, it is understood that all businesses will jointly sustain future economic growth.

Agriculture has become more efficient, but it is faced with specific challenges such as water becoming more restricted. Partnering with the agriculture industry, all county businesses and youth will remain critical to the county's future.

Emphasis on retention and expansion of existing agriculture and community businesses is considered imperative, along with attracting regional events. By continuing to address the communities' needs, business, education (youth initiatives), human services and government, enormous challenges and opportunities exist.

Renewable energy is considered a critical area for the future, offering Meade County an opportunity to finalize guidelines for potential growth in wind and possibly solar technology, that will preserve the county's and communities' infrastructures. Timely development of the new renewable energy era in Meade County is viewed as beneficial for the county, its rural areas and its communities overall.

The aging infrastructures of Meade County's three communities (Fowler, Meade & Plains) are recognized as another critical issue, along with the need to continue addressing old abandoned buildings with leaking roofs, and making available real estate useable. Implanting the "need for growth" idea in the minds of the public to encourage support for future funding to sustain economic development is sited as being of utmost importance.

Goals and Vision for the Future

Goals . . .

1. **Communities** - Each community in Meade County has individual needs, interests and each is affected by external factors; technology, governing issues, expenditures, etc. As goals and plans are established for the future, it is vital to recognize and embrace the individuality of each community.

2. **Business** – Existing businesses include agriculture, retail, service, manufacturing, oil & natural gas, cement & construction, health/medical, academics, recreation, and tourism are the backbone of Meade County’s economic growth and vitality. Identifying ways to add value to its businesses will lead to more products and services while continuing to place emphasis on retention, expansion and recruitment of new businesses. Business Directories, both alphabetized and by category, are available on the MCEDC website: www.meadecountycodevo.com.

3. **Youth** – Statistics continue to reflect their desire to be a part of Meade County’s future. It is important to nurture and utilize the leadership abilities of its younger generations, empathize with them, provide exceptional educational opportunities and support economic opportunities that will include the youth.

4. **Housing** - Affordable, suitable and available housing continues to be a vital component of economic growth. To aid in the growth of the Meade County communities, specific needs must be identified as existing housing is rehabilitated, and new structures are developed.

5. **Quality of Life** –Taking advantage of today’s opportunities of living in or near a small Meade County rural community offers an environment that can be appreciated by those wanting to do so. Retention and expansion of existing business operations, accommodating their needs, including new start-up businesses, will help assure the future of Meade County. Emphasis on community facilities will remain important.

6. **Tourism** - Maintaining the historical attributes of Meade County communities and rural areas, will continue to preserve sites like the well known Dalton Gang Hideout and others that reflect back to the beginning of Meade County. Tourism occurs daily.

7. **Internet** – The Internet has become a way of life for many. It opens a way to possibly help Meade County grow by providing a place for those utilizing the Internet to introduce their products and services to national and international markets. By continuing to enhance communication systems in Meade County, including wireless technology, the utilization of the Internet is considered a positive and beneficial endeavor.

8. **Renewable Energy** – While Kansas continues to embrace renewable energy by developing various incentives and supporting the growth and expansion of all energy sources, Meade County wants to position itself as a viable place to develop wind, solar and other renewable energy industries. The Kansas Corporation Commission reports Meade County as being a favorable location for wind farms in relation to its amount of wind being a reliable source.

Vision . . .

Meade County's vision is for its communities and rural areas to become stronger while taking control of its future. The goals and projects outlined in this plan represent a portion of what is considered needed to secure the future economic growth of Meade County. Economic development plays a major part in facilitating growth efforts throughout Meade County, its communities and rural areas.

The Meade County **POSITIVE PURSUITS** vision is to be *Motivated for tomorrow, Uniting communities based on trust, Where opportunity thrives. "A place called home!"*

Community Development Objectives . . .

Communicate with community governing bodies. Offer assistance and support to Positive Pursuits and other MCEDC sponsored groups that will enhance community development.

Strategy A1

Communicate with the communities' governing bodies to develop a dialogue. Distribute applicable information from community development sources to assure each is aware of current releases and events. Observe sponsored group meetings.

Action A1

Continually research news releases where other communities have benefited from individual initiatives, the Internet and attend seminars/conferences regarding community development ideas and programs, like the "Positive Pursuits" process.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Excerpts from subscribed business journals and articles furnished by Meade County Economic Development's sources, are shared with the Clerks to share with the governing bodies.

Action A1.1

Attend governing bodies meetings upon request and share information pertaining to community development, and assist whenever new start-ups, retention or expansion of existing businesses occurs and MCEDC can facilitate a project.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Each time a project is initiated that is pertinent to the county and each community, the Clerks are notified of the data and materials to share locally.

Action A1.2

Assist in the "Positive Pursuits" process, which works with the county's communities and the four (4) sectors; Business, Education, Human Services and Government.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: A Steering Committee received investments from the four (4) local sectors of Meade County and its three (3) communities. The Director of MCEDC is an at-large member of the Steering Committee.

Strategy A2

Facilitate and foster community involvement in local events in Fowler, Meade, Plains and the rural areas, including the Meade State Park and Lake.

Action A2

Upon request, participate in the annual Meade County Fair at the Fairgrounds.

This action item provides an opportunity to develop and initiate family oriented events prior, during and after the fair.

Timeline: Ongoing
Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)
Extension: Meade County Fair Board

Progress: Several events have occurred the past several years hosted by various groups. Such as, the WRCA Ranch Rodeo, KPRA Rodeo and Livestock events, plus the annual Duck Races hosted by MCEDC at the end of the fair.

Action A2.1

Upon request, participate in the annual Fowler Threshing Days Festival by offering to assist in the preparation and activities.

This action item affords the MCEDC Director an opportunity to assist and utilize the Meade County Trolley, as well.

Timeline: Ongoing
Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)
Extension: Fowler Threshing Days Festival Committee

Progress: This annual event has occurred several decades. The MCEDC Director is available to assist.

Action A2.2

Upon request, participate in local Meade events to the extent feasible.

This action represents specific activities designed to involve and benefit each community in Meade County.

Timeline: Ongoing
Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Several events have occurred and more are being planned to provide various types of family activities for everyone to enjoy.

Action A2.3

Upon request, participate in the Lions Club of Plains annual Christmasing in Plains Parade and activities.

This action item provides a means for the MCEDC Director to assist with the planning and be part of the weekend activities, including the Meade County Trolley.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extension: Lions Club of Plains

Progress: The MCEDC Director is a Board Member, who helps with preparations, assists during the weekend activities and utilizes the Meade County Trolley.

Action A2.4

Upon request, participate with the newly formed annual events upon their initiation.

This action item offers an opportunity for MCEDC to be part of new events within Meade County and its communities.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extension: Any newly formed group or organization initiating a new event.

Progress: Discussions occur regularly, which could develop into new events.

Business Development Objectives . . .

Facilitate growth of existing county wide businesses, industries and new start-up businesses.

Assist in the academic development of Meade County's youth in preparation for their future careers and business endeavors.

Strategy B1

Provide support for local business retention, potential expansion opportunities, and recruitment of new businesses by offering a variety of business development services through the Meade County Economic Development office and its resources.

Action B1.1

Develop and maintain a Business Resource Network, Internet Access and limited Office Library to serve as a reference, information and problem-solving hub for existing and potential Meade County businesses.

The intention is to create a significant source for business development needs. One that can be utilized by all Meade County businesses and anyone interested in starting or relocating a business to Meade County. The Business Resource Network, Internet Access and Limited Office Library include:

- Access to the World Wide Web and internet resources.
- Access to information on up-to-date community data & demographics, local codes & regulations, site information, business and marketing plans.
- A directory of network of professionals and consultants available to assist in business planning needs
- Assistance with sources of business plans, cash flow analysis and financing
- Assistance with government programs
- Various sources provide consulting and group seminars

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: County Commissioners, Mayors, and Clerks & Councils

Progress:

- MCEDC has a high-speed Internet access.
- MCEDC maintains access to useful business resources.
- MCEDC maintains contacts with the Kansas Small Business Development Center (KSBDC), K-State Extension, Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), Office of Rural Opportunity, Great Plains Development, Inc. (GPDI) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- MCEDC offers both Micro Loans and Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) loans to those qualifying.
- MCEDC offers consultation and applications for its loan programs and assistance programs.
- MCEDC's Director visits businesses county-wide.

Action B1.2

Provide small business loan opportunities whenever feasible.

Some federal, state and privately funded loan opportunities exist from which Meade County businesses can benefit. Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. will monitor these programs and its Director will distribute information accordingly.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Micro Loans and Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) loan applications are available through the Meade County Economic Development office, administered by Great Plains Development.

Action B1.3

Explore agriculture business opportunities.

Agriculture added-value and renewable energy initiatives such as ethanol, wind generators, solar, seed warehousing; diesel alternatives, sorganol, etc. are monitored to determine the feasibility of pursuing one or more of these items.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: A study of ethanol production from corn was completed and presented to the Meade County Economic Development Board and the Meade County Commissioners in the past. Renewable energy conferences are attended regularly to keep current on initiatives.

Action B1.4

Host and coordinate business education seminars upon request.

In addition to Business Resource Networks, business education seminars will be announced that highlight topics of interest and/or emerging business practices.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Whenever internet sites offer pertinent seminars, the information is forwarded to appropriate County and City Clerks to share with their governing bodies and organizations, for possible participation.

Action B1.5

Maintain an annual Meade County Business and Service Directory, a Business Available Listing, and an Employment Opportunity Listing on MCEDC's website; www.meadecountyecodevo.com.

A Business and Service Directory was first prepared for Meade County in 1996 by a K-State Summer team. This directory, both alphabetized and by category, which lists local businesses and their contact information and services and/or products provided, is updated regularly by a local entrepreneur who is the "Webmaster".

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: MCEDC maintains a list of Meade County businesses on its website; www.meadecountyecodevo.com, providing direct contact for businesses with a "Webmaster", who administers the website.

Youth Development Objectives . . .

Strategy C1

Nurture and utilize the leadership abilities of Meade County's youth.

Empathize with them, strive to provide exceptional educational opportunities, and support economic opportunities.

Action C1

Continue to explore and promote the establishment of a summer economic development internship for community youth. As a vehicle to involve community youth in local business and the community planning process, MCEDC is in a position to assist in the development of a program, and provide sponsorship for a summer internship program.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: Meade Chamber of Commerce and Meade County School Systems

Progress: Meade County Superintendents of Schools have been made aware of MCEDC's willingness to sponsor a summer internship program. The MCEDC Director is a member of the Meade Business Advisory Group and the Meade Chamber of Commerce that is aware MCEDC's interest in a youth internship program.

Action C2

Perform research on other community youth endeavors; locally, regionally and nationally. Present the research information to all school Superintendents and Clerks for review and possible implementation.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc.

Extensions: Meade County School Systems and Governing Bodies

Progress: Previous information acquired at a Kansas Department of Commerce Conference was presented to all Clerks, including federal sponsored "Helping America's Youth" program. Youth involvement has been discussed with business owners and operators during visits. Research continues in an attempt to determine whether a youth entrepreneurship initiative is feasible.

Housing Development Objectives . . .

Strive to improve on the availability of affordable and suitable housing in Meade County's communities and rural areas.

Strategy D1

Promote growth and rehabilitation of the housing.

Action D1

Encourage the use of housing development or rehabilitation grant and loan programs upon availability.

Distribute information on federal, state and privately funded grant and loan opportunities that exist to support housing rehabilitation and development to MCEDC Board Members, the Positive Pursuits Housing Action Team, and all Clerks. MCEDC will monitor new programs and continue to distribute information accordingly.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: Positive Pursuits Housing Action Team and all Clerks

Progress: Economic development has publicized USDA and Kansas housing repair grant and loan programs and the USDA 504 housing program. Several Meade County residents have been approved for grant and loan funds to make important repairs to aid in the preservation of older houses.

MCEDC has purchased land in Meade to become available for development, particularly those who qualify for USDA 504 program, to build new homes. The lots should accommodate up to three homes with attached garages. USDA representatives have been informed.

Action D1.2

Explore additional development of a cost-share program, incentive program for new home construction, or rehabilitation of housing currently unavailable.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: Local Businesses

Progress: The Positive Pursuits Housing Action Team researched this area, which revealed limited interest by construction companies and contractors. County Commissioners, Mayors and City Councils continue to research this area, as well.

Action D1.3

Continue to explore properties that MCEDC could purchase to facilitate growth of housing through investment in real estate and/or housing units. Plus, advocate and promote use of the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Rebate Program.

Meade County Economic Development Committee could possibly facilitate housing development, or rehabilitation through direct investment, or partnering in property and/or housing.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc.

Extensions: Local businesses and all governing bodies

Progress: Articles pertaining to the use of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) are periodically released on the Economic Development page of the Meade County "Mercantile" that is distributed county-wide by a local entrepreneur.

Quality of Life Development Objectives . . .

Place emphasis on the opportunities of living in or near a Meade County community.

Retention and expansion of existing agriculture and community business operations, accommodating their needs, including new start-up businesses, will help sustain the future of Meade County. Business, Education, Human Services and Government play a major role in providing good quality of life in Meade County.

Strategy E1

Promote existing businesses and organizations in Meade County locally, regionally and nationally.

Action E1

Continue supporting local Meade County Newspapers and a section in “The Mercantile” that provides space for articles by various local organizations and maintain current information about MCEDC on its website.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: Approved articles by various Meade County organizations.

Progress: Advertisement space is available in Meade County Newspapers, primarily in “The Mercantile”, which is utilized to promote business success stories, and concepts in other areas. Phone contacts allow MCEDC to determine interest levels in Meade County. A business directory is available on MCEDC’s website: www.meadecountycodevo.com.

Action E1.2

Monitor information regarding successes of other areas that might benefit Meade County.

Participate in organizations with a mission for the betterment of Meade County, the region and State of Kansas, in line with Meade County’s goals and vision.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Conferences by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC), Rural Development and Conservation (RC&D), the western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance (wKREDA), and the Southwest Kansas Economic Development Roundtable (SWKSEDR) are being attended regularly by MCEDC’s Director. Overviews of the agendas and materials are shared with the MCEDC Board Members, County and City Clerks accordingly to share with the governing bodies.

MCEDC’s Director is or has been a Board Member of K-State Extension, wKREDA, Great Plains Development, Inc., the Lions Club of Plains, the Meade American Legion, Meade County Performing Arts Council, and a member of the Meade High School Business Advisory Group, the Friends of Meade State Park and Lake, and an at-large member of the Meade County “Positive Pursuits” Community Development Steering Committee.

Tourism Development Objectives . . .

Increase tourism visits in Meade County by placing additional emphasis on existing attractions and promoting their existence on a regular basis.

Solicit and promote regional events utilizing existing facilities. Upon request, assist the various Meade County tourism organizations.

Strategy F1

Promote growth and improvements in our historical sites.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extensions: Meade County Historical Society (Museums, Dalton Gang Hideout, archeological finds, history re-enactments, and tours to historical sites).

Progress: The Meade County Historical Society has completed improvements to their inside and outside museums, plus dedicated the new Goodnight Gallery in the inside museum, which features local and regional artists. Melodramas, historical Dalton Gang awareness, archeological finds and local history tours by the Meade County Historical Society enhances their Museums, the Dalton Gang Hideout and the Heritage House.

The Meade County Trolley provides an additional means of transportation in the county for local events.

In the past, MCEDC participated in Unlock the Magic of Kansas motor coach familiarization tour.

Action F1

Explore opportunities for partnerships with other Kansas communities and tourism attractions. Meade County can benefit from alliances with neighboring areas. These partnerships are encouraged.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extension: Same as Strategy F1

Progress: The MCEDC Director attends the Wild West Country meetings.

Action F1.2

Federal, state and privately funded grant and loan opportunities are available that support tourism development efforts. Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. will monitor these programs and apply and/or distribute information.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extension: Same as Strategy F1

Internet Development Objectives . . .

Maintain a MCEDC website and promote use of websites by existing agriculture businesses, local businesses, industries, governing bodies and organizations to enhance their mission and operations.

Promote Meade County as a good location for Internet driven business ventures to offer products and services nationally and inter-nationally.

Strategy G1

Activate and manage a revised MCEDC website.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: The existing website is revised and updated regularly, which is administered by a local entrepreneur as “Webmaster” for www.meadecountyecodevo.com.

Action G1

Provide information on the MCEDC website regarding Meade County’s businesses in a directory, services, resources, loans, and available business properties through the MCEDC Website; www.meadecountyecodevo.com.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Pages specifically covering the above items are active.

Action G1.2

Provide information on the MCEDC website for the three communities and area; Fowler, Meade, Plains and rural.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Pages are available on each community’s profiles that are linked to their respective websites.

Action G1.3

Provide a Business Directory, both alphabetized and by category, of all Meade County businesses with links to those having their own website as suggested by the “Webmaster”.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Extension: “Webmaster”

Progress: The Business Directory is active and accessible by anyone with the capability to utilize the Internet and the World Wide Web. All businesses and organizations can submit additions and revisions directly to the site’s “Webmaster” through the website.

Action G1.4

Add the capability for Meade County businesses to list properties for sale and/or lease to the MCEDC website, along with positions available.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: The MCEDC website has two locations that provide for Meade County business owners/operators to list properties and positions available. The website allows them to submit their information to the “Webmaster”.

Action G1.5

Research other county websites to get ideas to improve the MCEDC website, so it is appealing and useful for everyone accessing it.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Strategy G2

Encourage Meade County governing bodies, agriculture businesses and local businesses to develop websites as an additional service to their customers and to broaden their exposure beyond area boundaries.

Action G1.6

Encourage appropriate social media to promote sustainability of Meade County.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: The Sampler Foundation’s grass root age driven initiative of PowerUps and PowerOns Movement is being researched.

Renewable Energy Objectives . . .

Meade County wants to position itself as a viable place to develop wind, solar and other renewable energy industries. Meade County Economic Development will continue to monitor federal and Kansas incentives, to keep up-to-date on the latest events as developed and be prepared for potential renewable energy projects.

Strategy H1

Communicate information to interested parties of Meade County as it becomes available. The MCEDC Director attends pertinent conferences and workshops pertaining to renewable energy issues.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: The Director of MCEDC attends the annual Kansas Energy Conference; sessions and exhibits. Western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance (wKREDA) is taking an active role in renewable energy and manufacturing components; the MCEDC Director is a Board Member.

Action H1

Provide information to the governing bodies and land owners with properties that could possibly be a candidate for wind and/or solar farms. Make information available to interested parties through the MCEDC office and the internet.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Latest Kansas Wind Resource Maps, posters, brochures, data and various articles regarding the renewable energy industries are available in the MCEDC Office Limited Library. Information is made available for the MCEDC Board Members, Mayors, and governing bodies upon request.

Action H1.2

Provide assistance to Meade County residents, land owners, businesses, organizations, alliances and governing bodies that are pursuing renewable energy endeavors. Help support their needs with internet research, and informative meetings.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: Information in the MCEDC Limited Office Library is being updated regularly. In the past MCEDC has hosted a land owner information meeting provided by the Kansas Rural Center regarding development of wind farms. Advertisements, poster preparation, mailings, and meeting equipment services are made available.

Action H1.3

Provide transportation for field trips touring various renewable energy projects for those having an interest in existing facilities, etc.

Time line: Ongoing

Responsibility: Meade County Economic Development Committee, Inc. (MCEDC)

Progress: MCEDC hosted a field trip to Hodgeman County, Kansas to hear a presentation, to tour Jetmore's electric power plant and to tour two wind turbines installed at Jetmore, Kansas. The Meade City Administrator and two Meade technicians participated.