

Data Insight: POINTS OF PRIDE

The Greater Wichita region is a region on the rise, regularly appearing at the top of national rankings across a wide range of industry and quality of life indicators. The following are a few of the region's accolades and areas of recognition.

Business and Industry Success

#1 in Manufacturing Jobs as Percent of all Jobs

of the 100 largest U.S. metro areas. (Brookings Institution, 2012)

#3 in Percent of “Very High-Tech” Manufacturing Jobs

of the 100 largest U.S. metro areas. (Brookings Institution, 2012)

#3 U.S. Advanced Industry Hotspot

for R&D and STEM-worker intensive industries powering regional and national economic success. (Brookings Institution, 2015)

South Central Kansas is “the Most Manufacturing-Specialized” Region in the U.S.

With 17.9% of regional jobs in manufacturing, more than half of which are engaged in making some of the world's most sophisticated aircraft. (Brookings Institution)

Wichita Ranks #1 for Digital Service Job Growth Rate

Of the 100 most populous U.S. metro areas, Wichita ranks #1 in the growth rate of digital services jobs between 2015 and 2017. (Brookings)

Wichita Ranks #1 Best City for Manufacturing Jobs

In a study that compared the top 50 cities where manufacturing is thriving the most, Wichita ranks #1 for manufacturing jobs. Using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the study analyzed total manufacturing jobs per 100,000, year-over-year growth, median income for the manufacturing industry and median housing cost. (Kempner Industries, 2019)

22nd in Jobs Involving STEM Occupations

Of the 100 largest U.S. metro areas Wichita ranks 22nd in percentage of jobs involving science, technology, engineering and math – STEM occupations. (Brookings Institution, 2013)

#3 in Innovation Partnership Funding Between Business and Academia

This Brookings report is major recognition of the innovation partnership between Wichita's private sector and Wichita State University. Wichita trailed only Columbus, OH and Albany, NY on the key metric of private sector funding for university-based research and development as a proportion of the local economy. Brookings considers this metric a useful proxy for the extent to which industry and academia are engaged in a productive partnership of innovation-oriented collaborative research. (Brookings, 2015)

Highest Concentration of Aerospace Manufacturing Employment in the Nation

The Wichita metro area has the highest concentration of aerospace manufacturing employment (NAICS 3364) in the nation. Industry concentration is measured by location quotient (ratio of local concentration to national concentration). Metro Wichita has an aerospace manufacturing employment LQ of 27.36. The next highest such concentration is in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue WA metro area with an LQ of 14.23 – roughly half that of Wichita. (Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014)

Wichita Companies Delivered **35%** of All General Aviation Airplanes Built in the U.S.

During 2018, Wichita companies delivered 35% of all general aviation airplanes built in the United States, and accounted for 25% of global general aviation airplane deliveries. (General Aviation Manufacturers Association - GAMA)

Between NCAT's Aviation Building and Advanced Manufacturing Building, an Entire Business Jet Could Be Made From Design to Finish

National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) at WSU Tech is leading a consortium of community colleges in developing industry-standard manufacturing training programs and curricula.

Manufacturing Accounts for **17.9%** of Wichita Metro Area Employment

Nearly double the national percentage (8.8%) – Portion of Total Employment in Manufacturing Sector: Wichita, KS - 17.7%; Tulsa, OK - 11.2%; U.S. National - 8.7%; Dallas-Fort Worth, TX - 7.7%; Kansas City, MO-KS - 7.1%; Omaha, NE - 6.7%; Oklahoma City, OK - 6.0%; Des Moines, IA - 5.7%; Denver, CO - 4.9% (Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics Average, 2019)

A Top City for Veterans

Wichita was ranked the #22 Best City for Veterans in 2018. Veterans United compared the 100 most populated U.S. cities across four key dimensions: economic wellness, employment, availability of VA benefits and quality of life for veterans. (Veterans United, 2018)

University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Ranks **6th** for Family Practice Physicians

A 2013 study by the Association of American Medical Colleges' Academic Medicine magazine ranked the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita sixth in the country for producing family practice physicians. Overall, the U.S. has a shortage of family physicians, and so do many rural areas of Kansas. The study examined 759 medical residency sites to see where their graduates were practicing three to five years after residency. Between 2006 and 2008, 233 doctors graduated from a KU School of Medicine-Wichita residency program, and about 46 percent went on to practice primary care. Of those 233, 46 were in rural areas. (Association of American Medical Colleges' Academic Medicine, 2016)

#5 Among U.S. Cities for Architecture and Engineering Jobs

In Wichita, nearly 24 out of every 1,000 jobs are in the architecture or engineering fields with a median salary of \$76,620. (Abodo, 2017)

Wichita Ranked as a **Top 5** City for Low Startup Costs

In a study which estimated total expenses during the first year of business for a startup, Wichita ranked as the 4th least expensive city. Wichita's total first-year costs were only 2% higher than the least expensive city in the study. (SmartAsset, 2019)

Top 20 Best Metros for Remote Workers

Using Speedtest data from the 100 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States and median home values, a study ranked the Wichita metro among the top 20 best cities for remote workers. (Speedtest, 2018)

Energy Rates are **3%** Lower than National Average

Energys' industrial and commercial rates in the Wichita area are 3% and 15% lower than national average, respectively. (2015)

Construction Cost is **10%** Lower than National Average

Wichita's July 2016 Means Commercial Construction Cost Index was 90.2 – nearly 10% below national average.

Wichita's Class A Rent Average is **\$11.65/SF Lower** than National Average

Wichita area Class A office space asking rent averages \$17.32 per square foot per year – versus the national metro average of \$28.97. (Q2-2015)

Wichita's Industrial Rent Average is Over *\$1/SF Lower* than National Average

Wichita area industrial space asking rent averages \$4.34 per square foot per year – versus the national metro average of \$5.61. (Q2-2015)

Wichita Ranks *#1* for Growth of Jobs

Over the last 10 years (2009-2019) (Brookings, 2020)

Wichita Ranks *#7* for Having an Equitable Economy

(Brookings, 2020)

Wichita Ranks *#9* in Growth of Business Productivity

Over the last 10 years (2009-2019) (Brookings, 2020)

Wichita Ranks as a *Top 20* City to Be Tour Own Boss

Based on six factors: the percent of self-employed workers, their average income, median housing costs, median housing costs as a percent of self-employed income, the city's tax environment and unemployment rate illustrate why Wichita is a great place to start a business. (Entrepreneur, 2017)

#1 Best U.S. City for 5G Coverage

Based on each city's area that is covered by the three top U.S. carrier's 5G networks (WhistleOut, 2020)

High Quality of Life

Wichita Named “One of the *Cooldest Cities* in America”

(2019 Thrillist)

#4 Best Value City

for hotel quality ratings and prices. (Trivago, 2016)

#4 Best Value City for Raising a Family

quick commutes, low cost of living, and affordable cultural amenities. (Cheapism.com, 2014)

Top 100 Cities to Start a Business

based on percentage of self-employed, incomes, living costs, tax environment (WalletHub, 2019)

Top 10 Best Places to Make a Living

affordability, low cost of living and low unemployment rates (Money Rates, 2017)

Wichita's Cost of Living is *9%* Below the National Average

Wichita's overall cost of living index is a very moderate 90.7, roughly 9% below the national urban area average of 100. (ACCRA Cost of Living Survey, Third Quarter 2016)

Purchasing a Home in Wichita is *44%* Cheaper than the National Median Price

Median selling price of existing (previously owned) single-family homes in the Wichita metro area was \$135,700 in the Third Quarter 2016 survey by the National Association of Realtors. Wichita ranked 27th lowest of 179 reporting metro areas; and \$105,500 or 44% below the national median price of \$240,900.

Newly Built Home Prices in Wichita are *31%* Below National Average

Newly-built home prices are also quite reasonable. The third quarter 2016 average sale price of newly built single-family homes in the Wichita metro area was \$228,773. That is \$102,496 or 31% below the corresponding national figure of \$331,269. (ACCRA Cost of Living Survey)

Apartment Rent is **32%** Lower in Wichita than National Average

Wichita area apartment rent is also very reasonable. Average two-bedroom apartment rent was \$692 in the third quarter 2016 ACCRA Survey. That is \$332 or nearly 32.5% lower than the national figure of \$1,024. (ACCRA Cost of Living Survey)

Top 10 City Where Your Dollar Stretches Farthest

(Forbes, 2017)

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#1 Least Congested City; Commute time is **27%** Shorter than National Average

Craving big city culture, shopping, events and sports – but not wanting to sacrifice comfort or personal space for life in a metropolis? Wichita is the answer. Wichita metro area average one-way travel time to work is about 18 minutes (27% shorter than the national average.) (Inrix, 2020)

Top 50 Sunniest Cities in the U.S.

Wichita ranks #46, with an average 65% of days being filled with sunshine. (Nerdwallet, 2017)

#11 for Large Cities Where Bike Commuting is Growing the Fastest

More than 100 miles of bike paths and the bicycle repair stations make getting around Wichita fun and easy! (League of American Bicyclists, 2017)

Wichita Ranked *Most Affordable* City in the Nation for Renters

With rental prices increasing by 89% in the nation's top 250 cities, Wichita is the most affordable city in the nation for renters with an average cost of \$632 per month. (RentCafé, 2020)

Wichita Ranks in the *Top 25* Best Cities to Drive in

In a study which compared the 100 largest cities in the United States using 29 key indicators of driver-friendliness, Wichita ranked among the top 25. (WalletHub, 2019)

Wichita Ranks as a *Top 15* City for the Best Work-Life Balance

With data from the 100 largest cities in the country and focusing on concentration of entertainment, housing costs, average hours worked, commute times and labor force participation Wichita ranks among the top 10 cities with the best work-life balance. (SmartAsset, 2019)

Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport Ranks as the **#3** Best Small Airport in the Nation

(USA Today, 2020)

Wichita Ranks in the *Top 100* Best Places to Live

(Livability, 2019)

Wichita Ranked Among the *Top 10* Most Recession Proof Cities in the U.S.

(Livability, 2019)

Wichita Ranks in the *Top 10* Cities Where Veterans are Thriving Professionally

(SmartAsset, 2019)

Wichita Ranks **#24** in America's Best Small Cities

(Best Cities, 2018)

Wichita Named One of the *Most Underrated* Cities in All 50 states

(Thrillist, 2018)

Wichita Ranks as the **#1** City for Lowest Rent

(RentCafé, 2018)

Wichita Ranked One of *the Most Artistic Towns*

(Expedia, 2018)

#2 City With the Lowest Cost of Living

Based on rent prices, utility costs, gas prices and internet rates in the 75 most populous US cities (Move.org, 2020)

State of Kansas Rankings

#4 Business-Friendly Regulatory Environment in the Nation

Pacific Research Institute (PRI), a non-partisan non-profit think tank, released a comparison of small business regulatory burdens across the 50 states in 2015. Kansas ranked #4 among the 50 states for business-friendly regulatory environment. The Index measures 14 regulatory components that are either positively or negatively associated with small business economic burdens. (Pacific Research Institute, 2015)

#5 Business-Friendly State

Pollina Corporate Real Estate, one of America's leading corporate site-relocation experts, ranks Kansas #5 in the top 10 for most business-friendly states in the nation. Pollina praised Kansas for "pro-business policies that result in job growth" and a "conducive business atmosphere." (Pollina Corporate Real Estate, 2015)

Top 10 Best Place to Make a Living

Affordability, a low cost of living, and a lower than national average unemployment rate makes Kansas the #10 best state to make a living in 2017. (Money Rates, 2017)

Top 20 Business-Friendly Litigation Environment

Kansas ranks #19 as having a relatively business-friendly litigation (lawsuit) environment. Kansas ranked #19. (ILR State Liability Systems Ranking Study, 2015)

Area Development Shovel Awards Earned Every Year Since 2010

Area Development magazine awarded Kansas its Silver Shovel award in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016 – and its Gold Shovel award in 2013 – for job creation and investment projects in the "under 3 million population" category – Kansas is consistently ranked high for few regulatory and fiscal obstacles.

6th Lowest Industrial Natural Gas Total Delivered Cost

Kansas had the 6th lowest industrial natural gas total delivered cost among the 50 states in 2015 at \$4.24 per MCF (MM BTU.) The total range of costs among the states was \$2.89 to \$19.03, with a national average of \$3.91. (U.S. Energy Information Administration)

Kansas is *One of Only Eight* Constitutional Right-To-Work States

Kansas is a Right-To-Work state by 1958 amendment to the Kansas Constitution. The amendment was supported by 93 of the state's 105 counties and passed by a very substantial margin of 90,000 votes. Of the 28 states that prohibit required union membership (Right-To-Work or RTW states), 20 enacted RTW by state statute. Such statutory RTW laws are vulnerable to legislative reversal. Kansas is among the only eight states enacting RTW by state constitutional amendment. As such, Kansas RTW status can only be changed by a vote of the people, and is not vulnerable to legislative reversal. Unions in Kansas cannot attempt to collect "service fees" from workers who choose to not join the union. Kansas is an "at will" employment state. There are no unusual restrictions. (National Right To Work)

All Business Machinery and Equipment *Exempt from Property Tax*

All machinery includes newly purchased, leased or moved into Kansas

Kansas Ranks #1 for Regulatory Freedom

Based on data from the Freedom in the 50 States study (Cato Institute, July 2021)