Addendum: Regional Growth Plan

In 2018, the Greater Wichita Partnership convened a process to develop a new Regional Growth Plan; the resulting Plan for our region is characterized by 5 strategic pillars, 7 target sectors, and 37 key initiatives. This Addendum to the Plan identifies key trends impacting our strategic pillars and target sectors, and new opportunities that merit consideration in the wake of a global pandemic. It also appropriately aligns the Plan and its priorities with the Kansas Framework for Growth and associated funding opportunities.

Pandemic-Related Trends

- Remote work is creating new opportunities in talent attraction and new demands in training and workforce development.
- Gaps in broadband access were highlighted during the pandemic; high speed internet access is essential infrastructure.
- Household mobility was constrained during the pandemic, but communities still competed aggressively for relocations.
- Corporate relocations from high-cost, high-regulation environments have accelerated.
- Reshoring and decentralization to reduce supply chain vulnerability are also driving domestic project pipelines.
- The growth of Ecommerce, online grocery sales, and other trends has drastically increased demand for storage space.
- Communities with ready-to-go industrial sites and available buildings are well positioned to capture this growth.
- Digital transformation and technology adoption accelerated by necessity in a variety of sectors during the pandemic.
- A variety of new aerospace technologies represent niche growth opportunities for established clusters.
- The pandemic accelerated the shift to virtual customer experience operations, altering the real estate climate for BPO.
- Cybersecurity investments continue to accelerate but the competition for jobs across the U.S. is tremendous.
Addendum: Regional Growth Plan

In addition to a review of relevant trends by pillar and target sector, the full Addendum to the Regional Growth Plan identifies a series of opportunities – potential tactical adjustments and regional investments – to be considered in response to observed trends and/or to promote alignment with the Kansas Framework for Growth. Throughout the complete Addendum, tactical adjustments for the Partnership are differentiated from regional investments that align with the Kansas Framework for Growth and may be eligible for funding from associated grants programs. Additional opportunities to be advanced by partners through regional collaboration are also included.

Post-Pandemic Opportunities

- Utilize data, analytics, and new intelligence to enhance corporate recruitment, talent attraction, and entrepreneurship efforts.
- Invest in tools, technologies, and lead generation that aid competitiveness within an increasingly virtual site selection environment.
- Create an efficient but effective innovation attraction program targeting companies that visit the Smart Factory @ Wichita.
- Prioritize business retention and expansion (BRE) among a targeted cohort of companies; connect BRE to strategy and analytics.
- Update Advanced Manufacturing marketing and attraction to incorporate the region's Digital Transformation competency.
- Focus Aerospace recruitment efforts on growing technologies such as UAS/UAM, hypersonics, and aviation battery technology.
- Evaluate the viability of developing an aerospace-focused accelerator in Greater Wichita.
- Expand development and utilization of speculative building incentive programs to capture projected growth in the logistics sector.
- Develop an interactive portal modelled after best practices connecting job seekers to opportunities in high-growth occupations.
- Advance development of a Cybersecurity Range and cyber boot camps to improve the region's cybersecurity asset base.
- Develop facilities and attract expertise that solidifies the region's growing competency in Digital Transformation.
- Advance key infrastructure enhancements (water, wastewater, taxiway) at regional airports to support targeted activities.
- Develop a new “Remote Work Ready” certificate to support retraining and employability.
- Align outbound marketing efforts and expenditure with planned new state investments in trade shows and outbound marketing.
- Expand Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) training infrastructure at WSU Tech.
- Pursue development a new transload facility to support activity in our Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace, and Logistics sectors.