Greater Wichita Partnership
PRINTED WEBSITE REPORT

10 KEYS TO GREATER WICHITA SUCCESS

In considering sites for business growth and expansion, it's important to consider elements beyond the numbers. The Greater Wichita region's economy benefits from key initiatives and organizations that drive cross-industry innovation and power progress in our communities. These are the elements that define us and make the Greater Wichita region uniquely attractive for businesses of all kinds.

1 | We Build the World's Most Advanced, Complex Products

- Ranked as the most manufacturing-specialized region in the United States and home to the number-one skilled workforce, the Greater Wichita region provides direct access to the most-trained and most-advanced workers in the world.
- Greater Wichita is where the leading edge of aerospace, engineering and materials development converge, making the complex, possible.
- As materials, processes and capabilities advance, all manufacturing-focused industries benefit. Today's workplaces are a far cry from 20th century factories, with modern facilities characterized by high-end, multimillion-dollar machinery, automated processes, strict adherence to efficiency and safety protocols, and a diverse highly trained workforce.
- The region boasts many exciting support efforts for training, continuing education and industry leadership with an ascending pipeline of talent ready to join, or rejoin, the workforce.

2 | We Are the Air Capital of the World

- Greater Wichita is one of five true aerospace clusters and, for generations, has been known as the Air Capital of the World. Aircraft and aircraft components have been built with Wichita expertise and craftsmanship for over 100 years, creating an embedded ecosystem of manufacturing innovation.
- The Greater Wichita region is home to Textron Aviation which includes internationally known brands Cessna Aircraft and Beechcraft Corp. and Hawker; Airbus Engineering Design Center; The Boeing Company; ad Bombardier Learjet.
- During 2018, companies in the region delivered 35% of all general aviation airplanes built in the United States and accounted for 25% of global general aviation airplane deliveries. We directly manufacture, or provide critical components for over half of all general aviation, commercial and military aircraft.
- Located here is some of the most specialized equipment in the world for metal and composite material fabrication. Decades of aircraft production have built a comprehensive network of over 450 precision machine shops, tool and die shops and other aerospace subcontract manufacturers, creating a robust, internationally-known supply chain.

3 | We Are a Center for Entrepreneurial Success

- The Greater Wichita region is where entire industries take flight — from the original business aviation companies to pizza and hamburger franchises to modern plastics and composites. Today Greater Wichita is home to a thriving, diverse community of creators and entrepreneurs, driven by robust industries such as information technology, and transportation and logistics.
- Koch Industries, Inc. and Cargill Protein – the top two largest privately held companies in the U.S. – are headquartered in Wichita. And, in addition to the starting place for many of the world's leading aviation companies, we are the birthplace of household brands Pizza Hut, White Castle and Coleman, as well as the future of promising new companies and brands launching from Wichita to the world.
- A spirit of entrepreneurism continues to fuel hundreds of start-ups in a city dedicated to big ideas. Entrepreneurs, community leaders, and volunteers contribute to the Greater Wichita region's creative culture through makerspaces, an impressive craft brewing scene, and community pride.

4 | We Expect, and Get, More Out of Life

- The Greater Wichita's region's low cost of living (nearly 13% below the national average) plus high quality amenities provide residents with the means to enjoy a vibrant, robust lifestyle. Simply put, you can experience and get more out of life here.
- Trendy downtown lofts, lakeside living, historic homes in charming neighborhoods, suburban dream homes, tiny homes, and big sky properties – the region offers infinite possibilities. Our median selling price for a single-family home is just $135,700, and apartment rental rates are nearly 30% lower than the national average.

5 | We Are Where to Find the Largest Aerospace R&D Institution in America

- The National Institute for Aviation Research at Wichita State University (WSU) is a 120,000 square-foot facility with 15 advanced research and testing labs, including several wind tunnels.
- NIAR provides applied research for advanced materials and composites, 3-D prototyping, aerodynamics, aircraft aging, aircraft icing, crash dynamics and other fields critical to aircraft design and manufacturing.
- NIAR has been appointed by the Federal Aviation Administration as the lead institution of the Center of Excellence in Composites & Advanced Materials (CECAM), which has been designated by NASA and the FAA to develop national standards for aircraft composites.
- According to the most recent National Science Foundation data (FY 2018), WSU ranks fourth among all U.S. universities in aerospace engineering research and development funding. WSU-NIAR spent $57 million on such activity during FY 2018.
- NIAR offers cost-effective proprietary research for private industry clients. Total research investments place WSU a coveted spot among the Top 50 R&D institutions in the nation.

6 | We Deliver World-Class Aviation and Advanced Manufacturing Training

- The National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) is a $50 million, 230,000 square-foot world-class aviation and advanced general manufacturing training center. The center's programs assure a steady pipeline of qualified workers for the regional aerospace and advanced manufacturing industries.
- NCAT has capacity to provide technical training for at least 1,500 students annually. WSU Tech serves as managing partner and coordinates program offerings such as Composite Technology and A&P Mechanics.
- NCAT training is employer-driven to flexibly adapt to industry needs. Its facilities allow realistic hands-on training on the latest equipment in aviation and advanced manufacturing, including a composites materials lab and an autoclave for heat-curing composites.
- The NCAT-NIAR partnership allows NIAR to develop and certify new advanced materials and techniques in the lab, and then rapidly train production workers to utilize the new technology.

7 | We Are Innovators, Fostering a Design-Thinking Approach

- Wichita State University's Innovation Campus brings together resources, ideas, and expertise to harness real-world work experiences for student talent. Business and education partners collaborate to inspire an innovative design-thinking approach to today's industry challenges.
- Nearly a dozen companies and organizations are located on the Innovation Campus, interacting regularly with students and faculty to accelerate product creation. By providing access to nationally recognized experts in virtually every field, companies can bring products to market faster.
- Fortune 50 company Deloitte joined forces with Wichita State to launch a new Industry 4.0 immersive experience and facility, The Smart Factory @ Wichita. This new facility, launching in Spring 2021 on the Wichita State campus, will bring together the digital, physical and experimental to show how Industry 4.0 spurs innovation.
- The National Institute for Research and Digital Transformation, located on the Innovation Campus, focuses on research and innovation in cloud computing and software development, service laboratories in cybersecurity and cyber operations and providing a globally in-demand system engineering technology for Kansas.
- The Innovation Campus provides state-of-the-art research facilities, makerspaces, and labs, and access to more than 30 top-flight centers and institutes at the university.
- The Innovation Campus features GoCreate, one of the largest makerspaces in the U.S.

8 | We Are Anchored by a Thriving, Revitalized Downtown

- As Kansas' largest city, the Greater Wichita MSA has a growing population of nearly 640,000, Wichita is the commercial, industrial, financial, medical, cultural, and entertainment hub of the state. Offering vibrant cultural experiences, walkable amenities and easy access to either side of town, Downtown Wichita is the place to go for great art, local flavor, vibrant nightlife and active adventures.
- Immersed in the center of it all are major employers who have made downtown their home. A new $70 million global headquarters for Cargill's Protein Division was recently completed. In the last decade, over $1 billion of investment has been a catalyst for growth and future development.
- With 740 residential units under development, 121 unique retailers and 3.1 million square feet of occupied office space, the core of the largest city in Kansas – downtown Wichita is the employment epicenter.
- A thriving hub of social, professional and cultural experiences, downtown is home to INTRUST Bank Arena, Century II Performing Arts Center, the historic Orpheum Theatre and more.

9 | We Are a Hub for National Security

- McConnell Air Force Base borders southeast Wichita with over 17,000 personnel and 2,838 active duty military. It is one of the main operational bases for the KC-46A Pegasus, key to recapitalizing the U.S. Air Force's tanker fleet. McConnell was the first base to take delivery of the KC-46A in January 2019. The KC-46A will provide next generation aerial refueling support to Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and partner nations.
- The 22nd Air Refueling Wing is the active-duty host unit at McConnell Air Force Base along with support from the 931st Air Refueling Wing, charged to develop and maintain the capability to conduct air-refueling operations supporting command objectives in any part of the world, in any condition or climate.
- The KC-135 Stratotanker has provided the core aerial refueling capability for the U.S. Air Force for more than 50 years. The KC-135 enhances the Air Force's capability to accomplish its primary missions of Global Reach and Global Power, and provides aerial refueling support to the Air Force and Navy.
- The 184th Wing of the Kansas Air National Guard is located at McConnell Air Force Base, employing about 1,300 Air National Guardsmen, most of whom are part-time and serve one weekend a month. These highly trained professionals develop and deploy strategic and tactical strength to U.S. troops around the world including mission support, battlefield intelligence, command and control, and cyberspace operations.

10 | We Offer an Unexpectedly Amazing Arts and Cultural Scene

- The Greater Wichita region has a dynamic art scene bursting with emerging up and comers and experienced art veterans. These active and enthusiastic artists are constantly contributing to the identity of our region, making the area a more authentic, reflective, and beautiful place to live.
- Greater Wichita was named "one of the coolest cities in America," by Thrillist. Our cultural gems include the biggest festival in the state, a nationally known performing arts scene, public art including the largest mural in the world and a transformed, underutilized alley in Downtown, named Gallery Alley, 30-plus museums and an explosion of craft breweries and farm-to-table restaurants.

Explore Key Industries

Learn how these dynamic organizations are complements to the growing key industries within the Greater Wichita Region:

Advanced Manufacturing & Materials

Aerospace

Agriculture

Energy

Healthcare

IT Systems & Support

Transportation & Logistics

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The Greater Wichita Partnership stands ready to streamline your process by working directly with businesses and site selectors. Contact us directly for strategic solutions, incentives, presentations, and reports designed specifically for your situation.

Contact Andrew