

FUNDING CYCLE REPORT
2019–2021

**BETTER
TOGETHER**



Salina Community
Economic Development
Organization



GATHERING TOGETHER



Who We Are

Throughout the history of Salina, successful collaborative partnerships have been the seeds that helped flower the city's economic, business and community growth. Public-private partnerships have been instrumental in the:

- creation and development of Salina 2020, an ambitious plan to extensively renovate the downtown district
- building of a thriving arts community that includes the Stiefel Theatre for the Performing Arts, Salina Community Theatre and Salina Art Center
- visionary renewal and development of the Smoky Hill River
- construction of the Salina Fieldhouse to provide space for youth sports in our area

In 2015, through an agreement by the City of Salina, the Saline County Board of Commissioners, the Salina Airport Authority and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, the Salina Community Economic Development Organization (SCEDO) was formed. SCEDO is a separate nonprofit entity whose mission is to actively recruit new businesses to Salina and encourage entrepreneurship in our community.

This edition of the SCEDO Funding Cycle Report will describe the many diverse business, arts and education opportunities available in Salina; the three big successes of this funding cycle that includes the relocation of 1 Vision Aviation to Salina and the expansions of Schwan's Company and Great Plains Manufacturing; and an optimistic view for the future growth of "The Crossroads of Kansas."

“ *When Salina decided to build a downtown Fieldhouse for youth sports in our area, there were certainly tough, spirited battles between the private and public participants. But like any good partnership, both sides wanted what was best for all. Not only has this partnership provided our kids with a great environment to play in, it helped jump start many other downtown partnerships and tens of millions of dollars in investments. Salina is a better place to work, live and play because of the willingness of our local private/public leaders to work together for the greater good.”*

Brian Richardson, CEO, OPC



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and play because of the willingness
of our local private/public leaders to
work together for the greater good.

Brian Richardson, CEO,
Occupational Performance Corporation

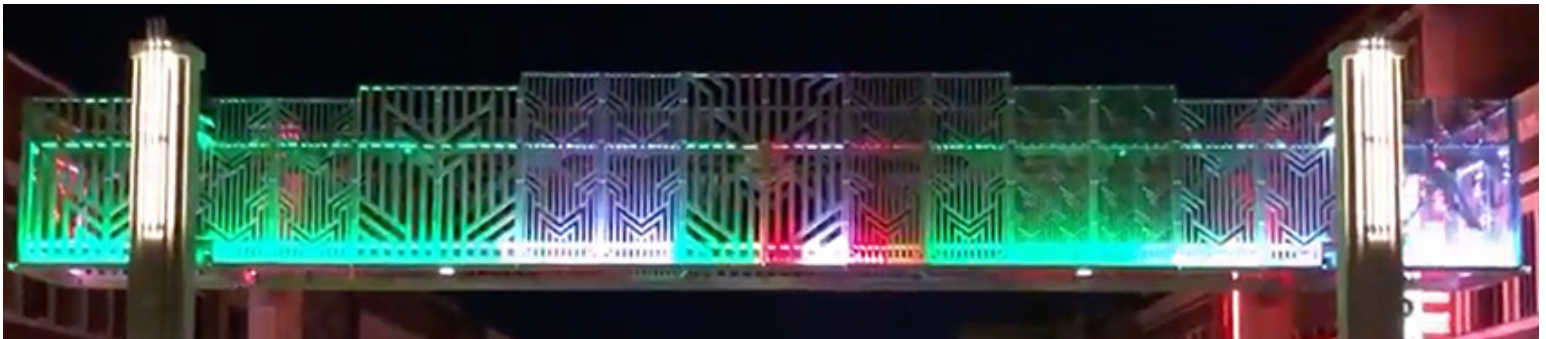


During the past three-year budget cycle, the Salina Community Economic Development Organization (SCEDO) has been able to have a real impact on the City of Salina and Saline County.

- The expansion projects at Schwan's Company and Great Plains/Kubota and the relocation of 1 Vision Aviation headquarters to Salina will have long-term significance for our community, with new jobs and investments
- Our partnerships with our funding agencies, the City of Salina, Saline County, the Salina Airport Authority, and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, have been critical to our efforts and the success of the community. Our partners have extended funding for another three year period from 2022 to 2025
- Entrepreneurship is a critical part of the SCEDO's mission, working in partnership with the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce to promote startups and new businesses
- We have a strong partnership with the Kansas Department of Commerce Secretary David Toland and his staff. Their advocacy for Salina and incentive programs have been great resources
- We have worked closely with staff members from the Department of Transportation, including the Division of Aviation, promoting both manned and unmanned aviation here in Kansas
- The SCEDO is supporting the City of Salina in their efforts to attract new residential and apartment development within the community. The City Commission and staff spent this past spring revising and updating the community's housing plan and adding new incentives, resulting in new housing projects being approved for construction with more under consideration

Our partnerships have resulted in great progress here in Salina during this past funding cycle, and have helped shape our strategic planning process targeting future development in Salina and Saline County. We have a clear sense of the issues that face our community and plans are in place to address them. Thanks to the strong relationships we have within our community and across the state, the future looks bright for SCEDO and for Salina, as we work together to support Salina's continued vibrant growth.

Mitch Robinson, Executive Director, SCEDO



I am very proud of the economic development successes we have achieved in our community. The unified effort of the City of Salina, Saline County, Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and the Salina Airport Authority has been rewarding. I thank the SCEDO board of directors and CEO Mitch Robinson for their role in unifying our community effort.

Our community success goes far beyond the SCEDO stakeholders and board. Generous individuals have led the efforts to improve our downtown with the Homewood Suites hotel, the Fieldhouse and the Alley. Beyond these new additions, the group known as 2020 has invested in renovating downtown buildings and then making them available at reasonable rates. These efforts have resulted in the successful recruiting of new businesses to our downtown.

Taxpayers stepped up with positive votes for a one-hundred million dollar bond to update our school buildings. Our community also approved sales tax increases for a new jail,

improvements to streets and parks and the renewal of the nearly 7 miles of the Smoky Hill River. We have also demonstrated our commitment to youth sports through improvements to facilities for baseball, softball and tennis.

The wonderful quality of life in Salina draws people to our community - a vibrant downtown, a strong and diverse arts community, varied sports and entertainment options - a community willing to invest in itself. These strengths distinguish us, but we still have work ahead to address our housing and childcare needs.

I am so proud of what our community has accomplished, and the quality of life that makes our community a great place to live and work. Our economic successes mean that we need to spread the message about our quality of life to attract the work force we need, now and into the future.

Lloyd Davidson, Chairman of the Board, SCEDO



CREATING TOGETHER



What We Offer

Salina is fortunate to have a diverse economy, supported by manufacturing, health care, distributive services, finance, higher education, agriculture and cultural outlets. This degree of healthy diversity helps create economic stability and has helped our city withstand economic challenges and pressures over time and historical change.

Infrastructure Investment

In recent years, Salina community members have made substantial investments in areas of infrastructure, education and arts/entertainment:

- **\$160 million** invested in public and private dollars for downtown infrastructure and revitalization
- **\$110 million bond** issue passed in 2014 to support and remodel 8 elementary, 2 middle and 2 high schools in the Salina School District, which also provided all-day kindergarten, enhanced school safety measures and updated career and technical education spaces
- Nearly **\$40 million** raised in sales tax to support Kenwood Cove water park & renewal of the Smoky Hill River

Education

Salina offers higher education opportunities at three post-secondary institutions: Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina Area Technical College and Kansas State Salina College of Aerospace and Technology. These schools provide a talent and skills pipeline to the region and work closely with local employers to develop programming and training programs to support and grow their businesses. The three colleges do an exceptional job of collaborating with each other with little overlapping programming or competition.



Partnerships at Salina public schools galvanize the power of community. Educational institutions in Salina collaborate at every opportunity to benefit students and help them see a 'whole experience' here in Salina. Partnerships with K-State Salina, Salina Area Technical College, Bethany College and Hutchinson Community College offer more than 220 dual credits to our students. While students are still in high school, they can earn industry-recognized credentials and an associate degree through these partnerships."

Linn Exline, Superintendent, USD 305



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Downtown Salina

The Salina 2020 Plan has resulted in a rebirth of the downtown area that includes a renovated streetscape, a new luxury hotel at the corner of Santa Fe Avenue and Mulberry Street, more retail businesses, sports and game complexes, diverse arts and entertainment outlets, and several upscale restaurant choices.

Healthcare

Salina is served by a large group of skilled primary care practitioners, medical specialists and medical subspecialists. In addition to the Salina Regional Health Center and the Salina Surgical Hospital, Salina is home to the KU School of Nursing, KU School of Medicine - Salina, Kansas Wesleyan School of Nursing, and Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency. This extensive network of medical resources serves over 250,000 people throughout north central Kansas.

Arts & Culture

Salina is known throughout the state for its vibrant arts community. These local arts institutions enhance our community and regularly draw visitors from around the region and out of state:

- **The Garage** – a new automotive museum featuring an eclectic mix of classic and custom cars and interactive educational experiences
- **Historic Stiefel Theatre for the Performing Arts** – 1,300 seat restored movie palace that showcases some of the best touring acts in the U.S., from rock to country to comedy
- **Rolling Hills Zoo and Wildlife Museum** – nationally recognized wildlife sanctuary in the U.S.
- **Salina Art Center/Cinema** – contemporary and cutting-edge art exhibits featured with the best of independent and foreign cinema
- **Salina Arts and Humanities** – oversees the Smoky Hill River Festival, a summer weekend of arts and crafts and music, and supports the arts around the community through a variety of programs
- **Salina Community Theatre** – award winning institution produces professional-level musicals and plays featuring a wealth of local talent
- **Salina Kanvas Project** – launched in 2021 with a large-scale mural on a grain elevator just north of downtown, with murals on walls around the community planned for the future
- **Salina Symphony** – community musicians perform classical and contemporary orchestral compositions with world-class guest musicians
- **SculptureTour Salina** – display of sculptures along downtown sidewalks that changes annually
- **Smoky Hill Museum** – exhibits the story of the Smoky Hill region with artifacts and historic and educational displays



Kansas Wesleyan University is blessed to be part of a flourishing community. Our students, faculty and staff value the welcoming and inclusive environment, plus the support they receive from part-time employers, host families, donors and attendees at concerts, plays and athletic events. We are proud to have on-going and active relationships with nonprofit organizations like Salina Regional Health Center, Salina Family YMCA and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce; government and local entities like Saline County and USD 305; and local businesses like JRI Hospitality, Blue Beacon and Vortex.”

Matt Thompson, President and CEO, Kansas Wesleyan University





BUILDING TOGETHER



What We've Accomplished

During its most recent three-year funding cycle, some of it adversely affected by a worldwide pandemic, SCEDO, under the leadership of executive director Mitch Robinson and his team, encouraged and facilitated the continued growth of our local and state economies and local workforce through three successful projects: bringing 1 Vision Aviation to Salina and the expansions of Schwan's Company and Great Plains Manufacturing.



SCHWAN'S COMPANY EXPANSION

Project Start Date:

September 2020

Project End Date:

December 2024

Investment:

Year 1 – Retain 1,100 jobs

Year 2 – 42 new jobs
\$65,210 base avg wage

Year 3 – 183 new jobs
\$61,839 base avg wage



Schwan's Company, a leading food producer and service company in the U.S., announced plans in August 2020 to build a new 400,000 square foot expansion at its pizza manufacturing plant in Salina, which will include automated state-of-the-art pizza production lines, shipping and receiving docks and office space.



For more than 50 years, we have made steady investments in growing our operations in Salina, and our facility eventually became what we believe is the largest pizza production facility in the world. This new investment in Salina will help ensure that we can achieve our growth plans and continue to provide delicious pizzas to millions of families for decades to come."

Dimitrios Smyrnios, CEO, Schwan's Company

1 VISION AVIATION ADDITION

Project Start Date:

July 2019

Project End Date:

December 2021

Building Square Footage:

128,000

Year 1 – 100 jobs

\$21.81 base avg wage

Year 2 – 250 jobs

\$21.19 base avg wage

Year 3 – 450 jobs

\$24.21 base avg wage



1 Vision Aviation is an aircraft maintenance company, overhaul facility and flight school designed to deliver the best service for pilots, aircrafts and airline companies through airframe inspections and repairs as well as power plant work on many types of large air carrier sized aircraft.

CEO Jim Sponder initially employed fewer than 50 workers in 2019 with plans to hire hundreds more, but the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 diminished that number to 30, due to the pandemic stalling commercial flights worldwide. As of April 2021, however, 1 Vision increased its workforce to 250 with the goal of creating 450 jobs at the Big Bertha hangar once again attainable.

“Everybody was working hard to get me here, so that impressed me a whole lot. They were always asking what they needed to do to help me come this direction, and without even asking they took it upon themselves to figure out how the hangar needed to be upgraded. It made me want to come here even more.”

Jim Sponder, Owner, President and CEO, 1 Vision Aviation





GREAT PLAINS MFG EXPANSION

Project Start Date:

July 1, 2021

Project End Date:

December 2024

Investment: \$53 million

Year 1 – 30 jobs

\$35.44 base avg hourly wage plus overtime

Year 2 – 60 new jobs

\$27.96 base avg hourly wage plus overtime

Year 3 – 40 new jobs

\$26.82 base average hourly wage plus overtime

Year 4

Additional 250 – 300 jobs



On Aug. 14, 2020, Great Plains Manufacturing, one of the largest privately held agricultural and landscaping equipment manufacturers in the U.S., announced its plans to purchase the Signify building, formerly the location of Philips Lighting on South Ninth Street. Great Plains will use the new 750,000 square foot facility in support of the growing demand for Kubota construction equipment. The company has projected their work force to grow to 2,110 by 2025 and 2,310 by 2030.

“Great Plains was able to work closely with SCEDO, the City of Salina and the Kansas Department of Commerce to provide our headquarters the information they needed to make the final decision on selecting the city of Salina for this important project.”

**Linda Salem, President & CEO,
Great Plains Manufacturing Inc.**





SCEDO introduced StartUp Salina on September 5, 2018, an entrepreneur network and joint project with the Salina Chamber of Commerce. The project is designed for individuals seeking to start new businesses or grow their existing business, or for entrepreneurs who wish to share their successes and failures for the educational benefit of others in the community. Monthly meetings have featured opportunities to network, hear from other entrepreneurs and address specific issues and topics.

During the last two years, StartUp Salina partnered with the SCORE Wichita chapter to sponsor small business workshops, collaborated with the Small Business Development Center at Fort Hays State University, promoted the co-working space at the Salina Innovation Foundation in Salina and sponsored more than 25 small business workshops in Salina, engaging nearly 400 potential or existing entrepreneurs and small business owners.

MEETINGS: 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:30am or 5:30pm
The Temple, 336 S. Santa Fe, Downtown Salina





What's Ahead for Salina

Salina is situated at the geographic intersection of the two main highways that traverse Kansas, and is sustained by a variety of other intersecting concerns and collaborations. Together we are creating a thriving economy where our business community, medical community and educational and cultural institutions are flourishing, a paradise on the plains.

“ *With the support of the community through a small sales tax, the city is now poised to begin the restoration, bringing back healthy water flow while still protecting against flooding, and establishing over seven miles of multi-use trails. The river will connect seven city parks and five arts organizations, with a dramatic plaza downtown at the river's edge. Once again, the river will become the heart of the city as it was in the past, connecting people with places and nature far into the future.”*

Brad Stuewe, Board Member, Friends of the River Foundation

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Brad Stuewe, Friends of the River



**SMOKY HILL
RIVER RENEWAL**

SALINA KANVAS PROJECT



The future of Salina has never been brighter!

- Our educational and arts/cultural institutions are strong, with ambitious plans for expansion
- New housing development projects are underway, with more to come in the future as a result of new local incentives offered by the City of Salina
- Plans to address childcare needs are being developed by a coalition of community leaders and experts
- Our economic development successes in this past funding cycle are generating interest around the state and beyond

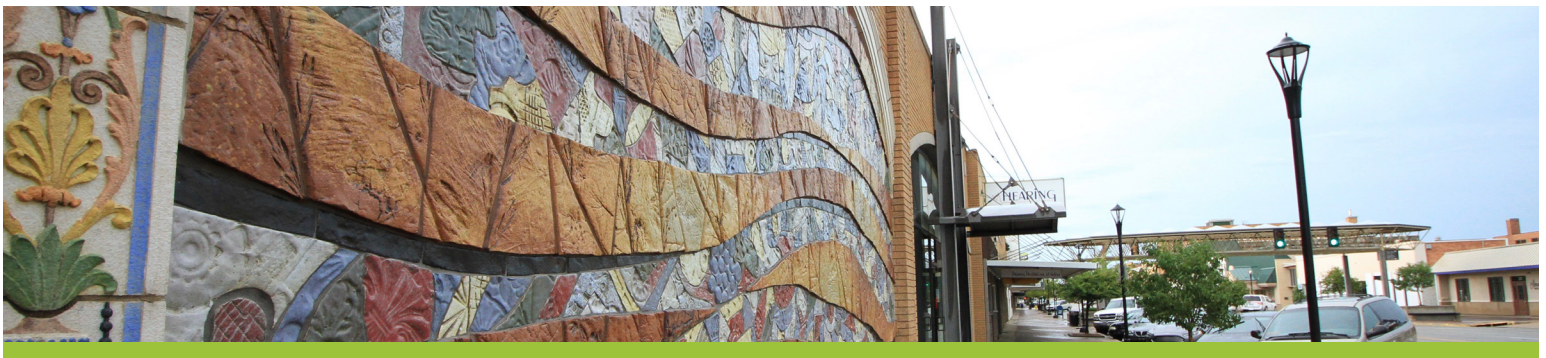
We will continue to make Salina a destination for good jobs, excellent education, outstanding healthcare, extensive arts opportunities and a wonderful quality of life.

“Hold onto your hats! Recent revitalization efforts and a new arts and entertainment district downtown have created fertile soil for the arts to flourish. New performance venues, an enthusiastic group of artists and a supportive community are combining to make the arts unavoidable in Salina. This is going to be one of the most transformative decades in the city's history.”

Brad Anderson, Executive Director, Salina Arts & Humanities

“The Salina Kanvas project is proud to have our first major mural installation completed in 2021. This privately funded project by world-renowned Australian artist Guido van Helten is one example of future commissions to come. In the past two years, Salina has been visually, culturally and economically transformed. Our historical downtown has been revitalized. Our tourism and event venues have never been stronger. Our business and educational community is thriving. By coupling these elements with the best public facing artists the world has to offer, Salina is and will continue to be Kansas's primary destination to live, work and play.”

Travis Young, President and CEO, Vortex Companies & Founder, Salina Kanvas project





Salina Community
Economic Development
Organization

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