

2016

Comprehensive Economic
Development Strategy (CEDS):
Executive Summary



Boone, Callaway, Cole, Cooper,
Howard and Moniteau Counties

What is a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

A CEDS is a regional planning document that looks beyond individual cities and counties and instead focuses on a regional approach to economic development. Stakeholders from multiple communities come together to focus on strategies that will benefit the regional as a whole.

CEDS are typically developed in partnership with the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA designated Economic Development Districts (EDD) are responsible for updating a region's CEDS every five years. As the region's EDA designated Economic Development District, the Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission (Mid-MO RPC) has been the lead organization in the 2016 CEDS update process.

Mid-MO RPC Economic Development District (EDD)

The Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission has been an EDA designated Economic Development District (EDD) since 2003. In that time, Mid-MO RPC has been involved with more than 40 planning studies and 35 infrastructure projects that have received \$13 million in grant funding.

**Mid-MO RPC EDD:
13 years, \$13 million
in grant funding**

Mid-MO RPC's status as an EDA Economic Development District allows member communities to apply for EDA grant funding to support public works projects that have a job creation element. Mid-MO RPC has worked on three major EDA public works grant projects since becoming an EDD. These projects include:

\$2.5 million in grant funding for the MU Life Science Incubator at Monsanto Place;

\$1.5 million in grant funding to renovate Science Hall at former Kemper Military Academy in Boonville into a IT training center; and

\$600,000 for infrastructure improvements at the University of Missouri's Discovery Ridge Research Park.



The Mid-MO RPC Region

The Mid-MO RPC Region is comprised of six counties in central Missouri, approximately half way between St. Louis and Kansas City. These six counties are Boone, Callaway, Cole, Cooper, Howard and Moniteau.

Mid-Missouri is blend of urban and rural communities with Columbia and Jefferson City serving as the major urban centers of employment and commerce. Columbia is home to the University of Missouri's flagship campus and Jefferson City is the state capital and center of state government. Outside of the urban centers, agriculture plays a more important role in the economy; however,

many people that live in rural areas work outside of the agriculture industry. They either commute to one of the urban centers or to one of the many smaller towns in the region. Many of the smaller communities have their own economic drivers that contribute to the strength of the region. For example, Fulton and Fayette are both home to four-year higher education institutions; Boonville has become a regional tourism destination; Centralia is home to one of the largest manufacturers in the region; and a major agricultural processing plant is located in California.

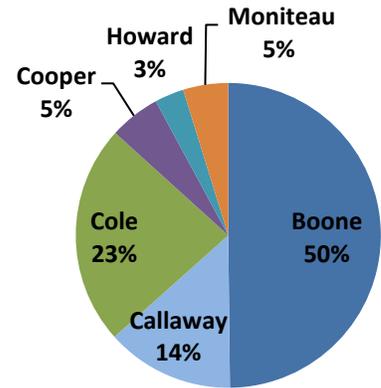
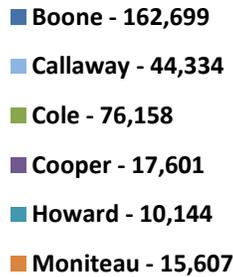


Regional Profile

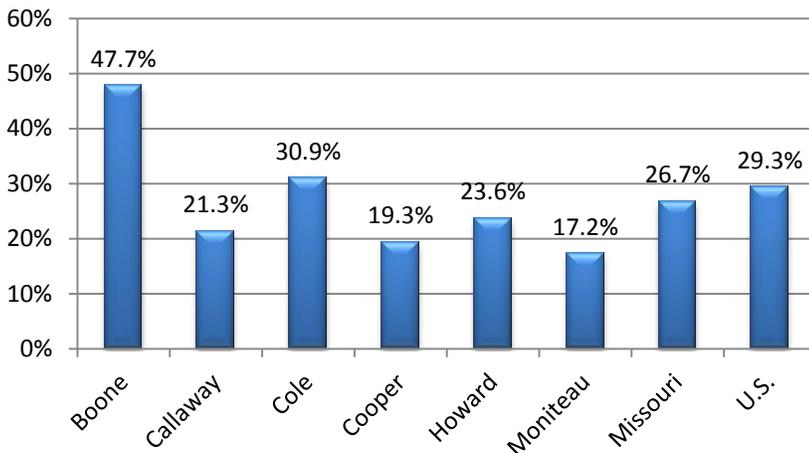
A key component of the CEDS planning process is creating a profile of the economic conditions in the region. This serves as a starting point for conversations with economic development professions and other stakeholders in the region about regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.

Population

The 2010 U.S. Census shows that the total population of the Mid-MO RPC Region is 326,543. Columbia and Jefferson City are the two largest cities in the region with 108,500 and 43,079. The Mid-MO RPC Region has several other cities with populations ranging from roughly 2,500 to 13,000. These communities are (in descending order) Fulton, Boonville, Centralia, California, Ashland, Tipton and Fayette.



Mid-MO RPC Population w/ Bachelors Degree or Higher (Age 25+)



Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey: 2014 5-year Estimates

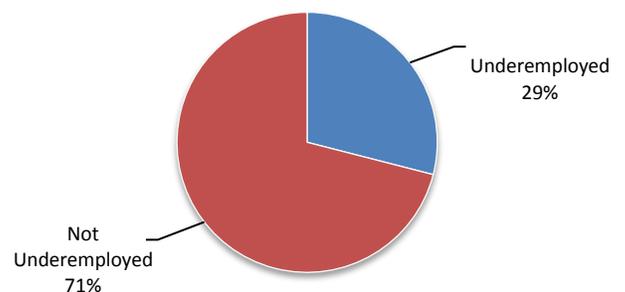
Educational Attainment

Mid-Missouri has a highly educated workforce. In Boone County--where half of the Mid-Missouri population resides--47.6% of the population has at least a Bachelor's degree. Compare this to the nation as a whole where only 29.3% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher. Cole County-- the region's second most populous county--also exceeds the national average for bachelor degree or higher attainment.

Underemployment

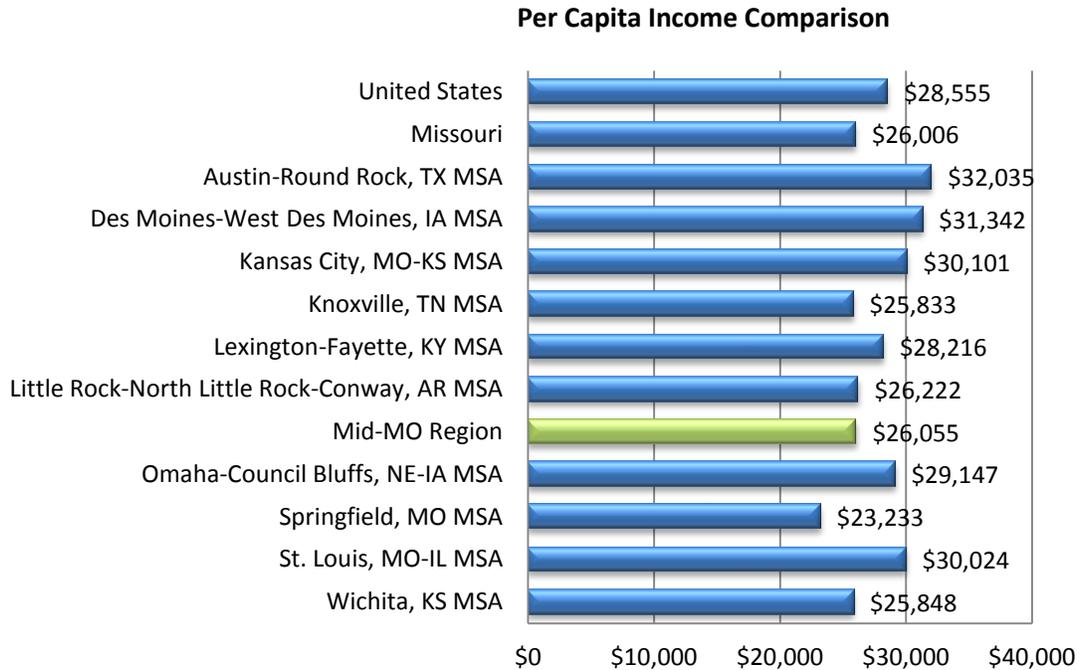
Underemployment is defined as a worker that is employed at less than full-time or at less skilled tasks than their training or abilities permit. The Docking Institute recently conducted a study of the Columbia Missouri Labor Basin, which includes all six Mid-MO RPC counties. This study shows that in Mid-Missouri almost 1/3 of employed members of the Mid-Missouri available labor pool are underemployed.

Underemployment in Columbia Labor Basin



Income

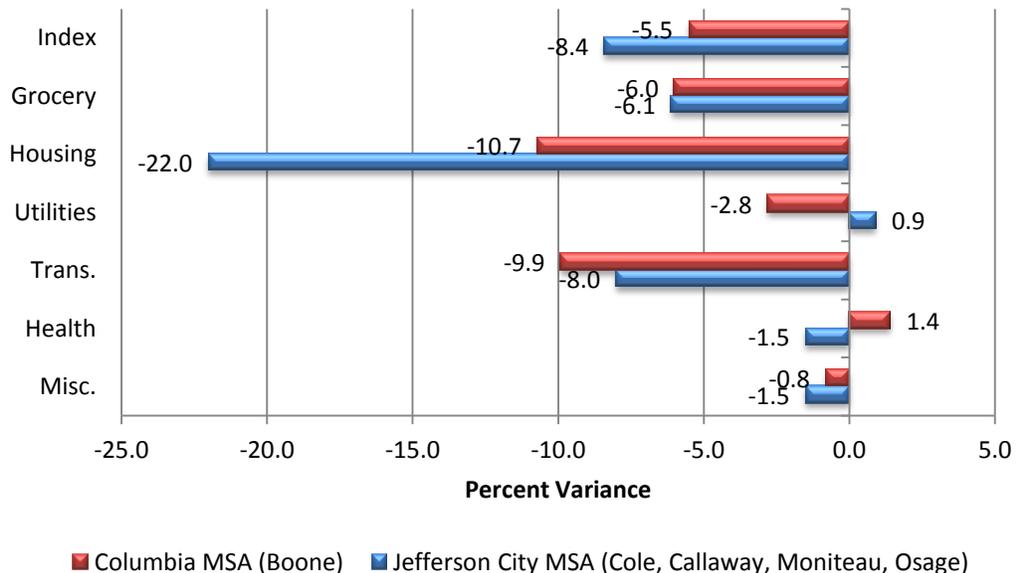
The per capita income for the Mid-MO Region as a whole is similar to the per capita income of Missouri as a whole but well below U.S. per capita income. Per capita income levels in Mid-Missouri are also considerably lower than several metropolitan areas throughout the Midwest and South.



Cost of Living

The Council for Community and Economic Research's (C2ER) cost of living index shows that the Columbia and Jefferson City MSA's, which represent four of Mid-MO RPC's six counties, have a lower cost of living than the national average. Housing and transportation costs are particularly low compared to the national average.

Cost of Living Index Comparison: Mid-MO RPC Region and National Average



Economic Base and Key Industries

Higher Education

Higher Education is the single biggest driver of economic growth in Mid-Missouri. In total, the region is home to 7 four-year higher education institutions and 3 two-year institutions of higher education have a presence in the region. Columbia is home to the University of Missouri, a \$2.1 billion enterprise and a world-class research institution.



State Government

The State of Missouri is the single largest employer in the Mid-Missouri Region, and state government is the dominate employer in the Jefferson City economy. The state also draws thousands of employees from neighboring counties inside and outside of the Mid-MO RPC Region. Boone, Callaway and Moniteau counties are the Mid-MO RPC counties that have the most state employees outside of Cole.

Healthcare

The healthcare industry is the third largest employer in the region behind state government and the University of Missouri. University Hospital & Clinics, Boone Hospital Center, SSM Health - St. Mary's Hospital, and Capital Region Medical Center are all either currently undergoing major expansions or have completed major expansions within the last three years. These facilities have each earned multiple awards for excellence in care.



Manufacturing

Manufacturing is an integral component of the Mid-Missouri economy. International companies like 3M, ABB, Caterpillar, Unilever, and Hubbell Power Systems all have manufacturing facilities in the region.

The Mid-Missouri region has numerous training opportunities for manufacturing industry businesses to train their workforce. The curriculum for the Mechatronics program at Moberly Area Community College (Columbia Campus) was developed with strong coordination with local manufacturers like 3M, Kraft, Quaker Oats, and Gates Corp in order to meet local manufacturers' need for high-skilled technicians. The Mechatronics program combines courses in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and computer control systems in order to achieve this purpose. State Technical College of Missouri, located 20 miles east of Jefferson City, is another valuable training resource. It is the premiere two-year technical college in the state and offers training opportunities for individual businesses.



Nuclear Sector

Nuclear reactors in Boone and Callaway counties are pivotal pieces of the Mid-Missouri economy.

The 10 MW University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR) is the largest university research reactor in the country and is a vital piece of infrastructure encouraging a potential cluster of nuclear sector related businesses. MURR has recently attracted a medical isotope production company to relocate to Columbia and more companies have shown an

interest Columbia in recent years in order to take advantage of MURR.

The Callaway County Energy Center (shown in picture on the right) located just south of Fulton is a 1,360 MW facility owned and operated by Ameren Missouri. It's Missouri's only commercially nuclear unit. In recent years, there have been discussion about building a second reactor at Callaway Energy Center or constructing Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) on site, but neither of these projects has materialized.

Finance and Insurance

Financial services is one of the fastest growing sectors in the Mid-Missouri Region. Between 2009 and 2013, jobs in insurance agencies, brokerages and related services increased 331%. Companies like Shelter Insurance, Farm Bureau, Veterans United Home Loans and Central Bancompany all have a major presence in Mid-Missouri.



Cluster Analysis

Through an extensive planning effort and a 4-digit NAICS code cluster analysis, the State of Missouri has identified the following seven target clusters as the focus of its economic development efforts: Advanced Manufacturing, Energy Solutions, Biosciences, Health Science and Services, Information Technology, Financial and Professional Services, Transportation and Logistics. In an effort to keep Mid-Missouri economic development efforts consistent state economic development strategies, RPC staff conducted the same 4-digit NAICS code cluster analysis that the state used for its statewide plan for each county in the region. The following table depicts the Mid-Missouri industries that the cluster analysis showed to be the strongest sectors within the state target clusters.

Mid-MO Strengths within the State of Missouri Target Clusters

Target Cluster	Industry	County / Region	Location Quotient (LQ)*	Job Growth Rate (2009 to 2013)	Local > National Growth Rate
Advanced Manufacturing	Plastics Product Manufacturing	Cole	0.94	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
Bioscience	Oilseed and Grain Farming	Callaway and Cooper	9.23, 12.02	132%, 26%	Yes, No
Bioscience	Hog and Pig Farming	Callaway	18.81	25%	Yes
Bioscience	Medical and Diagnostic Labs	Boone	2.80	2%	No
Financial Solutions	Insurance Agencies, Brokerages Related Services	Boone	2.44	331%	Yes
Financial Solutions	Depository Credit Intermediation	Cole and Howard	1.35, 3.02	11%, 2%	Yes
Health Science and Services	Nursing Care Facilities	Mid-MO Region	1.14	9%	Yes
Health Science and Services	Residential Mental Health Facilities	Boone	1.21	3%	No
Health Science and Services	Community Care Facilities for the Elderly	Boone and Howard	1.23, 6.60	45%, -2%	Yes, No
Information Technology	Data Processing and Related Services	Cole	2.73	152%	Yes
Information Technology	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	Boone and Cole	1.11, 1.16	150%, 66%	Yes, Yes

* An **LQ greater than 1** means that there is a high concentration of industry employees in a given region when compared to the nation as a whole. An **LQ greater than 1.25** is a very high concentration.

Key findings of the Mid-Missouri cluster analysis include:

- Strength within the bioscience cluster, as anticipated.
- Growth within the Insurance Agencies, Brokerages, and Related Services industry is phenomenal, with over 300% growth rate between 2009 and 2013.
- Evidence of a plastics product manufacturing cluster in Cole County. While the table shows an LQ just under 1, a new plastics product manufacturer has recently relocated to Jefferson City. When new numbers are available, they should show an LQ well over 1 and a growth rate greater than the national average.
- Boone County and Cole County both have strong information technology industries.

SWOC Analysis

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges in the region as identified through data analysis and public outreach in the region are identified in the table below and then elaborated on in more detail.

Figure 4.0 SWOC of the Mid-Missouri Economy

Strengths / Opportunities	Weaknesses / Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly educated workforce • Broadband – National leader in gigabit • Highway and rail access • Centrally located • University of Missouri's economic development mission • Job training resources • Life science / bioscience sector and infrastructure • Nuclear infrastructure including University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR) and Callaway Energy Center • Discovery Ridge Research Park • Entrepreneurship development efforts growing in larger communities • Competitive Electric Rates • Tourism • Quality of Life/Recreational Opportunities • Low cost of living • Healthcare • Crime rates • High economic resilience • Redevelopment opportunities are abundant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing talent to STL, KC and out-of-state • Low unemployment rate • Underemployment • Lack of wet lab space • Regional airport infrastructure • Lack of port availability and access • Lack of access to capital • Transportation infrastructure condition and funding • Transit services availability and access • Connecting education and job training to existing jobs • Aging utility infrastructure • Wastewater infrastructure in small/rural communities • Duplicating successes across the region • Rural broadband outside of areas served by Co-Mo Electric and Socket Telecom. • Entrepreneurship resources, especially in rural communities. • Lack of funding for small rural economic development organizations • State government employee pay and employment levels

Strengths/Opportunities

Broadband. The availability of gigabit Internet speeds is increasing around the nation, but it is still a rare asset. It is especially rare in rural area. Many major metropolitan areas still do not have fiber to the home capabilities. Mid-MO RPC has three gigabit Internet service providers and five of Mid-MO RPC's six counties have residential gigabit broadband access. Gigabit Internet is even available in some of the most rural parts of the region due to Co-Mo Electric Cooperative's new gigabit fiber-to-the-home network.

Highway and rail transportation. Interstate 70, which runs through the heart of Mid-Missouri, is the most vital transportation asset in the region. It not only connects Mid-Missouri to the state's two largest cities -- St. Louis and Kansas City -- it also is also one of the nation's most heavily traveled roadways. Mid-Missouri is also a location

where several important highways converge, including highways 63, 54 and 50. Potentially impactful highway projects in the region include rebuilding I-70 and converting Highway 50 into an entirely four-lane highway. This would connect Jefferson City, the state capital, to the state's two major metropolitan areas via a four-lane highway.

Rail access is a vital economic development asset, and five of Mid-Missouri's six counties have active rail lines running through them. The Union Pacific line that runs along the Missouri River and through Mid-Missouri is one of the most heavily utilized freight lines in the state. There are, however, several places around the region where rail spurs would allow communities to have better access these rail lines.

University of Missouri's economic development mission. The University of Missouri includes economic development as part of its mission. This emphasis on economic development has spawned hundreds of development efforts among academic units, faculty, students and affiliate organizations. The University has made economic development a priority and devoted resources in every department to this end. The aim is to assist private business development, transfer research and technology to the private economy, and to facilitate entrepreneurial expression of faculty knowledge, research and interest.

Job training resources. With more than 10 higher education institutions in Mid-Missouri, job training resources in the region are immense. The two-year institutions are particularly important job training assets. Moberly Area Community College's Mechatronics program is a model for the region and beyond. It is a textbook example of how the public and private sectors can work together to create a curriculum that meets the actual needs of manufacturers in a local community. State Technical College (STC) has a small campus in Jefferson City, but it's main campus in neighboring Osage County is a real destination where employers from around the country send employees to learn hard skills needed for high demand jobs. An increased presence of STC in the region would be a real asset. State Fair Community College's presence in Boonville is having a real impact on the community. When the Science Hall renovation is complete (made possible with the assistance of EDA funding), the expanded IT offerings will help fill the region's IT workforce needs.

Life science / bioscience sector and infrastructure. The establishment of the Christopher S. Bond Life Sciences Research Center and the Monsanto Place Life Sciences Business Incubator have been significant steps in growing a life science industry cluster in the region. This includes those industries that focus on the enhancement of quality of life through psychological, biological, medical research and engineering.

University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR). The University of Missouri Research Reactor (MURR) is the key piece of infrastructure which is at the center of a new cluster developing in Columbia. MURR is the largest university nuclear research reactor in the country. MURR is key reason a radioisotope production company recently chose to locate in Columbia and several other companies have also expressed an interest in relocating to Columbia in order to utilizing material from MURR in their processes.

Callaway Energy Center. Nuclear energy production is a cornerstone of the Mid-Missouri economy with the Callaway Energy Center employing more than 750 employees. In recent years, proposals have been put forward to build a second nuclear power plant in Callaway County and to develop the capacity to manufacture small modular reactors (SMRs) in Callaway County but the projects have never fully materialized. Although the nuclear infrastructure at the Callaway Energy Center is a real strength for the region, in order for either of these proposals to fully develop, major infrastructure improvements would likely be needed to the surrounding area. In particular, road access to the Callaway Energy Center is in need of improvement.

Entrepreneurship culture growing in larger communities. The four largest cities in the region -- Columbia, Jefferson City, Fulton and Boonville -- have all placed a focus on entrepreneurship. Columbia, in particular, is a leader in this

area with its annual pitch competition growing into a major event and other outreach activities starting to create a unique entrepreneurship culture.

Tourism. Tourism is an opportunity for Mid-Missouri to continue to develop. Destinations like University of Missouri sporting events, Isle of Capri Casino, Warm Springs Ranch (home to the Budweiser Clydesdales), and state capitol continue to draw visitors from outside the region. The University's move to the Southeastern Conference has resulted in a major increase in visitors during home football weekends in the fall. Tours of the former Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City are also bringing new visitors to the region. Columbia's Roots & Blues and True/False Film Festival have started garnering national attention. The central location of the region makes it an ideal location for statewide events.

Abundant redevelopment opportunities. There are abundant opportunities in the region to redevelop large facilities that could have major impacts on the region. Boonville's redevelopment of the former Kemper Military Academy Campus continues to progress and there are still buildings in need of renovation in order to continue the progress being made. Jefferson City has two potential sites for renovation and revitalization. St. Mary's Hospital has recently moved into a new facility and its old facility -- located near downtown Jefferson City -- is currently unoccupied. The former Missouri State Penitentiary is a historic property that is starting to attract visitors to the area.

Weaknesses/Challenges

Low unemployment rate. While low unemployment is a positive economic indicator, it is sometimes a challenge for economic development professionals in the region. It concerns some potential employers because it suggests that they may have a difficult time finding employees to fill their positions.

Underemployment. Underemployment is defined as when a worker is employed at less than full-time or at less skilled tasks than their training or abilities permit. The abundance of university's in the region contributes to a high level of underemployment. The region has a highly educated labor force, but not enough quality jobs to employ everyone up to their level of education. For this reason, a lot of the region's top talent leaves for St. Louis, Kansas City or somewhere out-of-state. Underemployment is a key concept for employers to understand that are hesitant to locate in Mid-Missouri because of a fear the region's low unemployment rate. Although individuals may already be employed, they are willing to change jobs if a job is created that better fits their set of skills.

Lack of wet lab space. Columbia is experiencing a major shortage of wet lab space. Increasing wet lab space is a top priority of the University of Missouri.

Regional airport infrastructure. The Columbia Regional Airport -- the region's only commercial airport -- has seen ridership increase in recent years, but infrastructure at the airport is lacking. A new terminal and increased runway capacity would allow the airport to continue to grow.

Lack of port access. During the most recent statewide transportation prioritization process, five of Mid-MO RPC's six counties identified establishing a port on the Missouri River as a project of interest. The Missouri River is an underutilized resource across the state and the region.

Lack of access to capital. Mid-Missouri is at a disadvantage to other metropolitan regions, particularly the St. Louis region, due to a lack of access to start-up capital for entrepreneurs.

Duplicating successes across the region. There are many examples of local successes that need to be duplicated across the entire region. The MACC Mechatronics program and Co-Mo Electric Cooperative broadband network are just two examples of this need. In Columbia, the businesses community partnered with the local economic development organization and a local community college to create a job training program that meets the specific needs of the local manufacturing sector. There is potential for this model to be followed around the region. The Co-Mo Electric Cooperative broadband project is a model for the entire country, but could also serve as a model for other electric cooperatives in the Mid-Missouri region. Co-Mo Electric has been able to build its gigabit fiber-to-the-home broadband network without any federal or state grant dollars. In the same way that rural cooperatives brought electricity rural customers in the 1930s, they could be used to bring high speed internet to rural areas today.

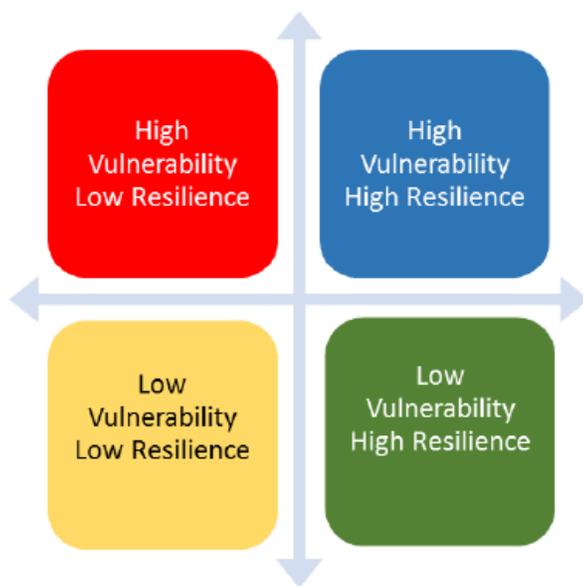
State government employee pay and employment levels. The State of Missouri is the single largest employer in the region, but Missouri state employees are also the lowest paid state employees in the country. The number of state employees has also declined in the last five years. Low wages and reduced workforce from the region's largest employer are not positive developments for a regional economy.

Economic Resilience

Economic resilience is the ability of a region to withstand and recover from economic shocks such as natural disasters, downturns in an industry that a region is reliant upon, the closure of a major employer or any other national or global market shift.

Professors with the University of Missouri's Institute of Public Policy recently published a working paper outlining a new matrix for determining a county's economic vulnerability to natural or economic disaster and its resiliency to such disasters (Miller, Johnson & Dabson 2016). This research finds that all six of Mid-MO RPC's counties are considered to have a low vulnerability to an economic disaster and four of the six counties are considered to be highly resilient if an economic disaster were to occur.

Resilience-Vulnerability Matrix



Mid-Missouri Economic Resilience & Vulnerability



Regional Economic Development Goals and Strategies

Goal: Job creation and retention, with an emphasis on quality jobs

Objective: Increase the number of quality jobs in the region by attracting new employers to the region and encouraging expansion of existing business, and retaining employers that have been the cornerstones of the Mid-Missouri economy.

Strategy # 1 – Provide linkages between communities or organizations and sources of funding and expertise for economic development activities.

Strategy # 2 – Provide direct technical assistance to communities and organizations for economic development activities.

Strategy # 3 -- Assist planning partners and other regional organizations with their identified economic development activities as follows:

- Promote target clusters including regional strengths of bioscience/life science, advanced manufacturing, health science and services, information technology, and a potential cluster developing around Mid-Missouri's nuclear infrastructure (all partners)
- Promote the region as a unique repository of a skilled and experienced labor pool (All partners)
- Promote University of Missouri as a vital economic enterprise (UMC)
- Technology transfer and entrepreneurial incubation (UMC)
- Promote workforce development initiatives, especially those that focus on technical skills and/or closely incorporate employer-based curriculum (higher education institutions, local school districts, local economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, DED)
- Promote tourism (DED) (CVBs)
- Regional branding and marketing (CORE)
- Improve economic opportunities for rural areas (USDA) (DED)



New road constructed in Holts Summit to serve the expansion of Pro Food Systems which created 43 new jobs and retained 40 existing jobs. The road was built with funding from the state Community Development Block Grant Program. Mid-MO RPC assisted with writing the CDBG grant, environmental review of the project and grant administration services.

Goal: Development and maintenance of infrastructure

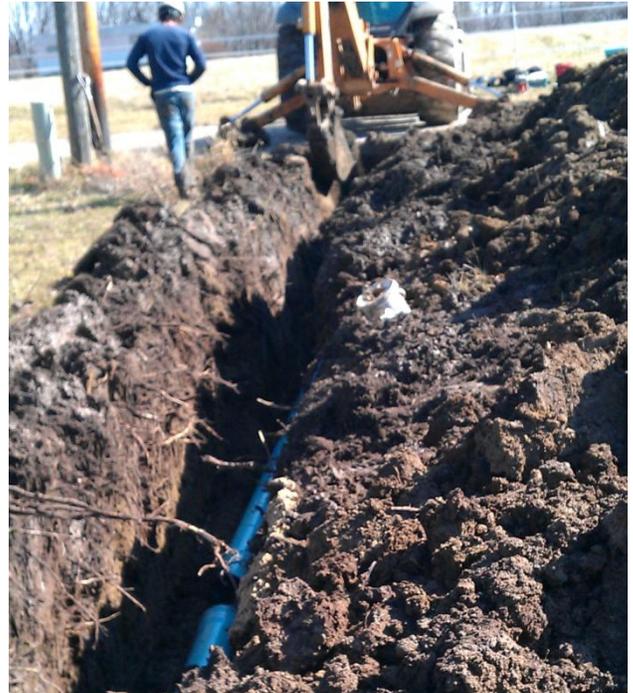
Objective: Maintain existing infrastructure and develop new infrastructure that will lead to economic development opportunities and improve the quality of life in the region.

Strategy # 1 -- Maintain the Mid-Missouri Regional Transportation Plan which identifies and prioritizes transportation projects on the MoDOT system for the region.

Strategy # 2 -- Promote local long range planning.

Strategy # 3 -- Assist partners with their infrastructure projects and initiatives.

- Create competitive industrial sites (Chambers of Commerce)
- Infrastructure required to promote University of Missouri as a vital economic enterprise, including MU Life Science Business Incubator at Monsanto Place and Discovery Ridge Research Park
- Promote improvements to the Columbia Regional Airport (REDI)
- Infrastructure required for workforce development purposes (higher education institutions, DED)
- Promote redevelopment of existing infrastructure including the former Kemper Military Academy, old St. Mary's Hospital facility and former Missouri State Penitentiary site (City of Boonville and JC Chamber)
- Maintain an adequate supply and quality of housing stock and public facilities (DED)
- Staff and participate in regional Transportation Advisory Committee (DOT)
- Staff and support Regional Homeland Security Advisory Committee (DHS)



Pipe being laid as part of water system improvements in Clarksburg. Mid-MO RPC assisted with CDBG grant writing, environmental review services, and grant administration services.



City of New Franklin wastewater lagoons in final stages of improvements. Mid-MO RPC assisted with CDBG grant writing, environmental review services, and grant administration services.

Strategy # 4 -- Provide member communities linkages to information about the latest infrastructure funding and initiatives.

Strategy # 5 -- Promote the use of modern infrastructure management systems.

Strategy # 6-- Encourage the development of new parks, trails and other recreational opportunities both as a means to improve quality of life for residents and as potential attractions to encourage tourists and others living outside the region to visit.

Goal: Be competitive and prepared for opportunities

Objective: Ensure that Mid-Missouri communities and regional stakeholders do the background, preparatory, and marketing work that makes them eligible & able to take advantage of and be competitive for economic development opportunities.

Strategy # 1 – Provide direct technical assistance for members and regional entities and provide linkages to appropriate public and private sources of support for community and economic development activities.

Strategy # 2 – Assist communities with local comprehensive plans, economic development strategies, and other local planning efforts.



Mid-MO RPC leads a SWOC analysis session with member of the Moniteau County Regional Economic Development Council and other stakeholders.

Strategy # 3 – Support and assist planning partners and other regional organizations with their community and economic development goals.

Strategy # 4 – Prepare, with the collaboration of the EDAC, a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy every five years, and review the related work plans annually.

Goal: Entrepreneurship and small business development

Objective: Capitalize on current resources and develop additional resources for entrepreneurship and small business development.

Strategy #1 - Encourage the creation of capital investment resources including RLF development in the region.

Strategy # 2 - Assist partners in leveraging financing and technical resources for entrepreneurial and economic development activities.

- Increase revenue from tourism (DED) (CVBs)
- Assist the development of creative business plans (MU Extension)
- Incubate innovative biotech businesses (UMC)
- Redevelop existent industrial sites (All partners)
- Promote and support tourism organizations (all partners)
- Promote and support small farm development (USDA)
- Promote and support green technology (DED) (DNR)

Strategy # 3 - Promote collaborative marketing for business clusters.

Goal: An economically resilient region

Objective: Increase economic resiliency in the region.

Strategy #1 - Continue to promote and/or facilitate Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) awareness to Mid-MO RPC members and area chambers of commerce.

Strategy #2 - Continue educational efforts on the need to consider resiliency principles in all planning activities.

Strategy #3 - Support efforts to diversify the regional economy by attracting and developing new industries.



Past RPC Chairman Eddie Brickner introduces Joplin Chamber of Commerce President Rob O'Brian at a quarterly Mid-MO RPC meeting. Mr. O'Brian discussed how the business community in Joplin responded to the 2011 tornado that devastated that community.

Goal: Informed communities, citizens and stakeholders

Objective: Ensure that the membership of the Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission, the citizens of the region, and stakeholders have current information about economic opportunities and activities that impact the economic health of the region.

Strategy #1 – Obtain and disseminate information about current opportunities and developmental resources.

Strategy #2 – Plan and facilitate regular meetings of the membership and various committees to review and respond to information about economic activities and opportunities.

Strategy #3 – Keep abreast of “best practices” in regard to economic development by participation in professional organizations and systematically reviewing pertinent literature.

Strategy #4 – Support and assist planning partners and other regional organizations with their identified educational and communication activities as follows:

- Form and maintain strategic and mutually supportive alliances in the region (CORE)
- Keep stakeholders informed and responsive to current site selection criteria (University Extension, Chambers of Commerce)
- Maintain communications with major employers and stakeholders to identify and alleviate risks to stability (Chambers of Commerce)

Goal: An efficient and effective organization

Objective: Maintain and further develop Mid-MO RPC as an efficient and effective organization for the delivery of community and economic development services and increase staff capacity in order to better serve our membership, better collaborate with stakeholders and planning partners, and engage in dynamic community and economic development initiatives.

Strategy # 1 –Sustain and manage the funding necessary for the organization to employ appropriately skilled staff.

Strategy # 2 – Provide staff with education and development opportunities such that they keep abreast of current technology and best practices.

Strategy # 3 – Engage in continual outreach to members and community stakeholders to provide them the information they need to make best use of the RPC resources.

Strategy # 4 – Collaborate with partners to share resources and avoid duplication of services.

Action Plan - The Work Program

Mid-MO RPC submits annual work programs to EDA which reflect the work Mid-MO RPC staff will engage in over a one-year period. These work program are tied directly to the goals and strategies laid out in Mid-MO RPC's five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The following work program reflects the activities Mid-MO RPC will engage in over the next year.

Local Planning and Technical Assistance - WP #1

Mid-MO RPC staff will provide technical assistance to communities and local economic development organizations with community and economic development issues of local and regional importance. This activity could include providing information, giving presentations on local planning procedures and community development strategies, assisting with mapping needs, coordinating discussions with state regulatory and funding agencies, EDA grant writing assistance, and assisting local government membership with grant funding requests from other federal and state agencies. Full planning efforts may also be undertaken by the Commission in order to assist communities with developing community comprehensive plans and economic development strategies. The Commission may also assist communities and businesses with Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) efforts.

Economic Development Advisory Committee - WP #2

The Commission will continue to hold its Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) meetings on a bi-monthly basis. EDAC meetings will include informational programs to assist MID-MO RPC membership with economic and community development efforts. Staff will also participate in local Chamber of Commerce activities to continue to promote the linkage of public –private partnerships in economic development activities.

Community and Public Education Activities - WP #3

The Commission will educate communities in the region and the public on community and economic development issues through updating and enhancing its website for improved access to community and economic development programs and data. The Commission will also utilize newsletters, brochures and social media to educate communities about community and economic development opportunities. The website, newsletters, brochures and social media are designed to serve as a regional economic development marketing tools. The Commission is also planning to hold an economic development training workshop that will address economic development issues confronting communities in the region.

Administration-Organizational Support Services-Professional Development - WP#4

The administrative activities for the economic development work element will include: writing the annual EDA planning partnership grant application, preparing and filing work quarterly (semi-annual) activity reports and financial statements, preparing funding draw down documents and preparing and filing of all other grant administrative requirements. The Mid-MO RPC will continue to develop internal capacities and abilities by participating in relevant professional training opportunities.