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County Profile

The County Profile section of the FY 2018 Budget provides basic demographic and trend information about Johnson County, as well as national comparable counties. The first section highlights basic population, employment, housing, ethnicity, crime, business industry data, and some general information to provide a snapshot of the County.

The second section includes additional measures, or "community indicators", in an effort to align the FY 2018 Budget with the Board of County Commissioners’ (BOCC) strategic priorities: 1) Complete or advance existing projects approved by voters and the Board of County Commissioners with efficiency and effectiveness, 2) Increase the economic health of Johnson County, the State of Kansas, and the metropolitan area, 3) Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to protect, support, integrate, and utilize County government's data and systems, 4) Develop a vision and financing plan with a focus on alternative delivery methods for the shared transport of people, coordinating implementation with metropolitan services, 5) Advance the self-sufficiency of vulnerable populations, 6) Facilitate increased coordination, collaboration, and consolidation within and among all governmental entities for the efficient and effective delivery of public services, 7) Recognize and promote the benefits of an inclusive and diverse population in enriching the fabric of the community and Johnson County government, 8) Increase awareness of Johnson County government programs and services to foster public trust, and 9) Attract and retain a quality workforce that shares the County’s Mission, Vision, and Values.

The comparable counties included in this section provide indicators for the County and its departments and agencies as they research and analyze different best practices and benchmarks in the delivery of services to the community.

Section I - Johnson County Demographic and Statistical Profile

Image #1

Image #1 depicts Johnson County’s location within the State of Kansas.
Johnson County was founded August 25, 1855, six years prior to Kansas becoming the 34th state to enter the Union. Johnson County is Kansas City’s metropolitan area’s growth engine. It lies at the heart of the nation while possessing all the ingredients necessary for economic growth and success. The County boasts nationally ranked schools, low crime rate, high quality neighborhoods, low cost of living, and a variety of cultural and entertainment amenities. Johnson County is known for its beautiful parks, award winning school districts, affordable housing, and access to jobs.

The area is comprised of gently undulating terrain ranging in elevation from 742 feet above sea level near its northern border along the Kansas River to 1,130 feet in the south central part of the County. The County and its 20 incorporated cities and seven townships continue to work together to ensure that the necessary infrastructure improvements are in place to accommodate further growth. Currently, around 60% of the 477 square miles of land in the county has been developed, leaving about 40% as rural/unincorporated area.

The number of jobs in Johnson County grew from 302,008 in 2006 to 334,418 in 2016 – an increase of 32,410 or 11%. During the decade, the Johnson County economy accounted for 65% of the total net job growth in the State of Kansas and, since 1995, has been the state’s largest provider of employment. During the decade, Johnson County also accounted for 54% of the job growth in the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The Johnson County Park and Recreation District offers over 6,500 acres of public park land, with more than 3,000 acres available for future expansion as the population continues to grow. During 2015, over 7 million people visited Johnson County’s parks, and over 2.8 million people participated in Park activities.

There are 32 educational institutions of higher learning in the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area offering 276 degrees and credentials. The county has six school districts (K-12) totaling over 94,000 students. Seven nationally-recognized Blue Ribbon schools are located within the county.
Johnson County, its municipalities, and the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area consistently rank among the best places to live and work in the country. In early 2017, Niche, an Internet site ranking the best places to live in the United States, ranked Johnson County as the fourth best county in which to live based upon crime, public schools, cost of living, job opportunities, and local amenities. Niche also ranked the county in the top ten for public schools and family environment. The career development website Zippia ranked Olathe and Overland Park, the two largest municipalities in the county, first and second among the 2016 Happiest Cities in America based upon education level, poverty rate, commute time, home ownership, family status, cost of living, and employment rate. Safewise.com ranked six Johnson County municipalities (Prairie Village, Leawood, Olathe, Lenexa, Overland Park, and Shawnee) among the 20 safest cities in Kansas based upon the number of reported crimes.

Johnson County has experienced continued growth in population, diversity, and development from 2000 through 2016. The county population has increased by over 28 percent, and is projected to continue to grow over the next decade. As of July 1, 2016, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates the total County population to be 584,451.

**Chart A** demonstrates sustained population growth in Johnson County over the past seven years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overland Park</td>
<td>188,966</td>
<td>Fairway</td>
<td>3,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olathe</td>
<td>135,473</td>
<td>Mission Hills</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawnee</td>
<td>65,194</td>
<td>Spring Hill</td>
<td>3,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenexa</td>
<td>52,903</td>
<td>Edgerton</td>
<td>1,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leawood</td>
<td>34,565</td>
<td>Westwood</td>
<td>1,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie Village</td>
<td>21,805</td>
<td>Lake Quivira</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner</td>
<td>21,110</td>
<td>Westwood Hills</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merriam</td>
<td>11,245</td>
<td>Mission Woods</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>9,323</td>
<td>Bonner Springs</td>
<td>0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roeland Park</td>
<td>6,786</td>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>14,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSoto</td>
<td>6,071</td>
<td>Johnson County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These Cities have boundaries outside of Johnson County. The number included above represents the Johnson County portion of the population only. Source: US Census*
Chart C illustrates the diversity of Johnson County’s population. In 2016, 19.6% (114,552) of Johnson County residents identified with a racial or ethnic minority.

Chart D reflects the number of reported crimes from 2010 through 2016. Despite sustained population growth in Johnson County, total crime is down 18% compared to 2010.¹

¹ Kansas Bureau of Investigation, 2016 Crime Statistics, Johnson County
Chart E indicates total reported crimes per 1,000 residents. Violent crime is consistently low and has remained constant since 2010. Violent crime is defined as Murder, Rape, Robbery, and Aggravated Assault. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the reported crimes in Johnson County are property related.²

Chart F Johnson County indicates a flat average home sale price over 2015, but a 14.3% increase in average home sale price over the past five years. Historically, the housing market has responded to local trends as strong income growth and a desirable location have driven housing prices up in the County.

² Kansas Bureau of Investigation, 2016 Crime Statistics, Johnson County
Chart G - The number of new and existing home sales also indicate a strong market. Home sales in Johnson County increased by 27.4% over the past five years, reaching a ten year high of 11,310 home sales in 2016.

Chart H - The County’s unemployment rate has been decreasing since 2012, and continues to be lower than both the state and national rates.
Charts I and J reflect the largest industry sectors of Johnson County by number of firms and number of employers.
Chart K

Top Ten Largest Johnson County Employers 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Local Employment</th>
<th>Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sprint</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>Wireless Telecommunications Carriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olathe Unified School District</td>
<td>4,498</td>
<td>Elementary &amp; Secondary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson County Government</td>
<td>3,841</td>
<td>Executive &amp; Legislative Offices, Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garmin International Inc</td>
<td>3,766</td>
<td>Radio/TV Brdcstg &amp; Wrless Comm Equip Mfg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawnee Mission School District</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>Elementary &amp; Secondary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Valley School District #229</td>
<td>3,226</td>
<td>Elementary &amp; Secondary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black &amp; Veatch</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>Engineering Svcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olathe Health System</td>
<td>2,542</td>
<td>Home Health Care Svcs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>2,494</td>
<td>Discount Department Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hy-Vee Food Stores</td>
<td>2,424</td>
<td>Supermarkets &amp; Other Grocery Stores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Chart K - Source: County Economic Research Institute (2016)*

The Greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area consistently ranks among the top cities for small businesses and entrepreneurs, including a #16 ranking among the best places to start a business by Wallethub in 2016. Wallethub also ranked Overland Park as the 2nd best city for job seekers out of the 150 largest U.S. cities in the nation.

**Other Information of Interest:**

**Educational Institutions:** Johnson County contains six distinct school districts which serve over 94,000 students grade K-12. There are 155 public schools with a student to teacher ratio of 16:1, which exceeds the state average of 14:1. Johnson County is also home to 56 private schools with an enrollment of 13,579 students. It is the home of Johnson County Community College, the Edwards Campus of the University of Kansas and the School for the Deaf.

**Public Safety Institutions:** Johnson County has 17 Law Enforcement agencies and two School District Police Departments. There are approximately 1,300 sworn officers and 350 civilian employees in Law Enforcement in Johnson County. Johnson County Emergency Communications Center serves the 11 individual fire departments in the County, as well as Johnson County MedAct, the Countywide ambulance service, Miami County EMS, and Gardner Public Safety.

**Culture and Recreation:** Johnson County Park & Recreation District has provided high-quality parks, park services, and recreational programs in more than 6,500 acres of parkland and open green space. Each year, the District records more than 7 million park visitors and nearly 2.8 million recreation participants in over 4,000 programs.

**Johnson County Library** serves over two million people from 13 library buildings in Northeast Kansas. The Library staff are helped by 900 volunteers who donate over 50,000 hours of their time each year. The Johnson County Library loans over six million books, ebooks, audio books, and DVD’s each year.

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3 Kansas Public School Review: Johnson County
4 Kansas Bureau of Investigation - Law Enforcement Statistics
5 Johnson County Emergency Communications Center. jocogov.org
6 Johnson County Park & Recreation District - jocogov.org
7 Johnson County Library, jocogov.org Library/home
**Johnson County Museum** maintains a collection of over 1 million photographs, 15,000 3-D artifacts, and 3,000 cubic feet of archival material. The museum has also built a significant collection documenting the suburban experience in Johnson County. The museum offers long-term and changing exhibits, a speakers bureau, online resources for research, teacher training, school and public programming, summer camps, and special events. Each year, the museum serves 35,000 visitors onsite and nearly 100,000 people via its online resource materials.8

**Transportation:** Johnson County offers air/bus transportation to the region. Two airports are maintained through the Johnson County Airport Commission, New Century Air Center and the Executive Airport. The Executive Airport is the 4th busiest general aviation airport in the state of Kansas, with approximately 40,000 annual operations, and the New Century Air Center ranks 3rd with approximately 50,000 annual operations. Johnson County Transit, which merged with the Kansas City Area Transit Authority in December 2014 to form the regional transit partnership “RideKC,” provides public transportation services to much of Johnson County, downtown Kansas City, Mo., Kansas City, Kan., and other outlying areas. RideKC operates weekday commuter services in Johnson County with most routes running during peak morning and afternoon times. RideKC Freedom (formerly known as “Special Edition”) provides paratransit services to Johnson County seniors and disabled residents. In FY 2016, Johnson County had an average of 1,770 passengers each weekday.10

**Utilities:** Johnson County Wastewater (JCW) is responsible for the safe collection, transportation, and treatment of wastewater generated by residential, industrial, and commercial customers. Johnson County Wastewater provides sanitary sewer service to more than 400,000 people throughout the County. The wastewater system covers a service area of more than 172 square miles and 16 cities. Johnson County Wastewater operates a total treatment capacity of nearly 65 million gallons per day. Johnson County Wastewater processed 17.88 billion gallons of wastewater in 2016.11

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8 Johnson County Museum, jocogov.org, Museum/home
9 Johnson County Executive Airport Masterplan
10 Kansas City Transit Authority
11 Johnson County Wastewater, jocogov, About Us
Section II - Comparable Counties

A group of eight counties - Jefferson, Colorado; Dakota, Minnesota; St. Charles, Missouri; Chester, Pennsylvania; Collin, Texas; Denton, Texas; Dane, Wisconsin; and Waukesha, Wisconsin - are located throughout the country and have been deemed comparable to Johnson County in a number of categories:

- Total population;
- Constituent education level;
- Rate of employment;
- Household and personal income;
- Proximity to a large metropolitan statistical area.

While none of these counties mirror Johnson County in every category, when viewed as a whole, each provides its citizens with a lifestyle and overall environment similar to that of Johnson County. The following charts provide statistical comparisons between Johnson County and comparable counties, including a number of social demographics and economic indicators. In many instances 2016 census data was not yet available at the time of this report. In those instances, 2015 data was provided.

Chart J - Population

Johnson County has grown an average of 1.1% each year from 2010 to 2016. The 2016 Johnson County population was 584,451. Chart J shows the Johnson County population in relation to the comparison Counties.
Median Age has remained constant over the past five years at or near the 2015 level (37.4 years). Chart K shows the 2015 median age for Johnson County in relation to the comparison counties.

Chart L & M - Race and Language

Chart L shows the 2016 percentage of residents in Johnson County that identify with a racial or ethnic minority in relation to the comparison counties.
Chart M - Source: U.S. Census, Fact Finder 2015

Chart M shows the percent of the population in Johnson County that does not speak English as their primary language.

Chart N - Educational Achievement

Chart N - Source: U.S. Census, Fact Finder 2015

Chart N shows the percentage of the Johnson County population that has a college degree in relation of the comparison counties.
Chart O & P - Poverty and Disabilities

**Chart O** shows the 2015 percentage of the Johnson County population that is below the poverty line in relation to the comparison counties.

**Chart P** shows the percentage of the Johnson County population with a disability in relation of the comparison Counties (2015).
Chart Q - Median Home Value

Chart Q shows the 2011-2015 median home value of Johnson County in relation to the comparison counties.

Chart R - Average Work Commute Time

Chart R shows the 2015 Johnson County average commute time in relation to the comparison counties.
Chart S - Unemployment & Labor

Chart S shows the 2015 Johnson County labor force and unemployment percentages in relation to the comparison counties.

Chart T - Median Household and Per Capita Income

Chart T shows the 2015 Johnson County median household income in relation to the comparison counties.
**Organizational Structure**

The organizational chart for Johnson County Government is presented on page B.19.

**Elected Officials**

Johnson County is governed by a seven-member Board of County Commissioners, which meets in regular business session once each week. The Chairman of the Board is elected on a county-wide basis and serves as a full-time County official. District commissioners are elected by residents in specific geographical areas, or districts of the County and serve as part-time County officials. The Chairman and the district commissioners serve four-year terms with no term limitations.

Currently, the Board of County Commissioners is comprised of the following individuals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commissioner</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Initial Year as Commissioner</th>
<th>Term Expires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ed Eilert, Chairman</td>
<td>At-Large</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Shaffer</td>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Allen</td>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven C. Klika</td>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason Osterhaus</td>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Ashcraft</td>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
<td>District 6</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the Board of County Commissioners, residents of Johnson County elect the following positions:

- District Attorney
- Sheriff

These positions are elected at large and serve four-year terms with no term limitations.

**Appointed Officials**

In 1984, Johnson County government was designated by the International City-County Management Association (ICMA) as a Council-Manager form of government. As a result, the Board appoints a professional County Manager to administer a variety of County functions. The County Manager is responsible for policy implementation, budget development and implementation, and the appointment and direction of certain department directors.

In addition to the County Manager, the Board also appoints members for four (4) governing boards:

- Airport Commission
- Developmental Supports
- Library
- Park & Recreation

The governing boards for these four (4) agencies are responsible for a number of items, including the appointment and direction of an Executive Director and the submission of an annual budget request to the Board of County Commissioners.

In 2013, The Board of County Commissioners dissolved the Mental Health Board and assumed responsibility for that area. A Mental Health Advisory Board was appointed following this action, in accordance with state statute.
Home Rule Charter

In January of 1996, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) appointed a Citizens' Visioning Committee (JCCVC) to develop a 20-year vision for Johnson County and to recommend a future role for County government. The JCCVC completed and submitted its report to the Board in July of 1997. One of the recommended actions in the JCCVC report was the following:

"Restructure the BOCC to enhance the opportunities for county leadership that will be necessary to achieve this vision for the future. Among the changes that must be considered are the at-large selection of at least one county commissioner; selection of the chairperson (possibly by direct election of the voters) who will serve a full term as chair; and the abandonment of the annual rotation of the chair among the members of the BOCC."

In response to the JCCVC recommendation, the Board appointed a Charter Commission in May of 1999 to develop a proposed Home Rule Charter for Johnson County. The Charter Commission, which was composed of 25 citizens, met more than 30 times over a 12-month period and held six (6) public hearings. In May of 2000, the Charter Commission submitted its report and a proposed Home Rule Charter to the Board.

In November of 2000, voters approved the Home Rule Charter. Overall, no major changes in the County's operations occurred until after the election in November of 2002, which added an additional district commissioner and a commission chairman elected on a countywide basis. The next major change occurred in January of 2005 when the elected positions of County Clerk and Register of Deeds were combined into one appointed office titled the Director of Records and Tax Administration. In addition, the position of County Treasurer became an appointed office in October of 2005.

The Home Rule Charter became effective on January 11, 2001 and includes the following timeline and action items:

1. The Board of County Commissioners appointed a County Manager by December 31, 2001 (this was completed in December of 2001, when the existing County Administrator was appointed County Manager).
2. The four (4) governing boards conformed to the general administrative policies of the County by December 31, 2001.
3. Redistricting for the six (6) commissioner districts was completed by April 1, 2002.
4. Reorganization of the Board of County Commissioners with six (6) district commissioners and the elected chairman occurred on January 16, 2003.

The Home Rule Charter contains seven (7) separate articles. In addition to the items discussed above, the Charter:

1. Establishes four-year terms for all commissioners, including the chairman, with no term limitations.
2. Makes each election non-partisan. Primary elections will be held if there are more than two (2) candidates for the position. The two candidates who receive the most votes in the primary election are placed on the ballot for the November election. If there are two or less candidates who file for a position, then no primary election will be held.
3. Requires the Board of County Commissioners to appoint a Charter Review Commission. The Review Commission meets at least once per year for five (5) years, and is composed of seven (7) members who served on the Charter Commission.

Under the Home Rule Charter, the Board of County Commissioners will continue to appoint members for four (4) governing boards.