



**Camden, Laclede, Miller & Morgan  
Counties**

# **2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

**Comprehensive Economic  
Development Strategy for  
Lake of the Ozarks Council of  
Local Governments - 2022**

**Prepared for the  
Economic Development  
Administration**



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Economic Development  
Administration**

**Prepared by**

**Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local  
Governments and our CEDS Advisory  
Committee Members 2022**



**Lake of the Ozarks Council of  
Local Governments (LOCLG)**

**985 E Hwy 54  
P.O. Box 3553  
Camdenton, MO 65020  
Phone: 573-346-5692  
[www.loclg.org](http://www.loclg.org)**

## Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the region's economic development vision for maintaining and growing our economic base while creating jobs and supporting future development and growth within the region. The CEDS encompasses the Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments (LOCLG) region, which consists of Camden, Laclede, Miller and Morgan Counties. Three of the four counties have a large tourism-based economy while the fourth supports a manufacturing base. The four-county region has a total population of 128,274 (2019 US Census ACS data). The CEDS was developed to meet the requirements outlined in the 13CFR 303.7. It also incorporates components necessary for our communities to be eligible for the Section 6025 Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) program. This program through the USDA provides communities the opportunity for an additional ten percent grant funding for certain projects.

The CEDS outlines a strategy for building Social Capital, Economic Cooperation, and Job Growth within the Lake of the Ozarks Region. Our goal in developing the CEDS strategy was to identify key priorities and principal organizations as planning partners that will help bring both public and private investment into the region. An overall review of the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats demonstrated that we face many of the same issues that were present during the 2017 CEDS planning process. There were several areas of concern, including workforce housing, workforce development, transportation, and the cyclical nature of the tourism industry which are expounded on in this revision of the CEDS.

In an effort to really focus on areas of growth and opportunity, an industry cluster analysis was conducted to evaluate all sectors represented. Drilling down to the county level exposed which areas have the most potential for growth. In Camden County, the health care sector demonstrated a significant increase in the number of jobs created from the 2012 and 2022 versions of the CEDS. Due to the steadily increasing number of retirees within the region, there may be additional opportunities for growth within this sector.

There is a strong manufacturing base in Laclede County that has outpaced the rest of the regions job growth in manufacturing. Miller County's manufacturing base includes automotive parts and a new window factory which opened in 2019. Both have been a key focus for employee and business recruitment for the State of Missouri. Miller County could emphasize the available opportunities in conjunction with the state's initiatives. Morgan County's largest employment base was in the retail sector.

The CEDS committee developed seven goals that represent key components for future growth in the Lake area. Goals and objectives emphasizing the unique needs for each segment of the region have been defined. Along with the regional goals, we identified the community capital available within the region including Natural Capital, Human Capital, Social Capital, Manufactured/Built Capital, and Financial

Capital. The implementation of the CEDS plan incorporates the regions capital resources to meet the defined goals

The CEDS is updated every five years to be in compliance with the EDA guidelines. The previous version of the LOCLG CEDS was completed and adopted in 2017. In the interim, an annual performance report is sent to the EDA documenting the accomplishments during each grant cycle during the CEDS period. There is a provision to update the CEDS if there is an economic factor that warrants a re-examination of the planning document to meet the current economic needs within the region. The update process for the CEDS started in early 2020 with public out-reach and our CEDS committee's regular meetings. A draft document was completed December 2021 and circulated for comments amongst the CEDS stakeholders. All comments were evaluated and included where appropriate in the documents upon approval of the CEDS committee. February 2022, the CEDS committee and the LOCLG staff completed the revisions and shared the final 2022 CEDS document with the LOCLG Board of Directors for review and formal adoption. Communities and economic development organizations within the region were encouraged to adopt the 2022 CEDS.

## Board of Directors 2022

Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments (LOCLG) continues to see changes in the Board makeup as yearly elections impact our government representatives. LOCLG continues to engage newly elected officials to make sure that we have a dedicated and active Board of Directors. In addition to the elected officials, we also have non-government representation and key stakeholder groups represented on our Board. As of the submission of this CEDS 2022 this is the current list of our governing body, Board of Directors 2022.

**Government Representatives-** *Persons representing general purpose units of government, this includes elected officials such as county commissioners, mayors, city/town council members, tribal chairman, and/or tribal council members. Any employee of a general-purpose unit of government may be appointed to serve on the board in this capacity.*

Name	Jurisdiction	Position
Greg Hasty	Camden County	Presiding Commissioner
David Mitchem	City of Lake Ozark	City Administrator
Chuck Jordan	Laclede County	Councilman
Allen Kimberling	City of Laurie	Mayor
Tony Stephens	Morgan County	Presiding Commissioner
John Olivarri	City of Osage Beach	Mayor
Holley Dake	City of Iberia	Mayor
Randy Angst	Laclede County	Presiding Commissioner
Tom Wright	Miller County	Presiding Commissioner
Jamie Morrow	City of Versailles	Mayor
Jeff Hooker	City of Camdenton	City Administrator
Roger Corbin	City of Sunrise Beach	City Planner
Jeff Davis	City of Linn Creek	Mayor
Patricia Crockett	City of Eldon	Alderman
Jim Holcomb	Village of Four Seasons	Board Trustee President



### Non-Government Representatives-

**Private Sector Representatives:** *Private Sector Representative means, with respect to any for-profit enterprise, and senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position.*

Name	Company	Position
Joyce Chorpene	Retired	Volunteer

**Stakeholder Organization Representatives:** *Stakeholder Organization Representative includes four subcategories including Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Post-Secondary Education, Workforce Development Groups, and Labor Groups. There must be at least one representative from any (not necessarily each) of the subcategories.*

Name	Organization	Position
K.C Cloke	Camdenton Area Chamber	Executive Director
Paige Jones	Lake Area Chamber	Executive Director
Tom McNeill	Lake West Chamber	Board President
Darrell Pollock	Lebanon Area Chamber	Executive Director
Dina Dunklee	Versailles Chamber	Executive Director
Vacant		

Camden County Representation = 5

Laclede County Representation = 3

Miller County Representation = 5

Morgan County Representation = 7

## CEDS Strategy Committee

The CEDS Strategy Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis. The meetings were originally planned to rotate through each of our counties of Camden, Laclede, Miller and Morgan. Due to COVID-19, several meetings were held virtually via the ZOOM meeting platform. Virtual meetings provided greater opportunity for committee member participation. Each meeting focused on specific components of Economic Development and Strategic Opportunities that the committee wanted to explore and include in the CEDS.

### Dates and Locations

CEDS Meetings	Date	Location
1st Meeting	February 2, 2021	Zoom
2nd Meeting	April 6, 2021	Zoom
3rd Meeting	June 1, 2021	Zoom
4th Meeting	October 5, 2021	Wilmore Lodge/Zoom
5th Meeting	December 7, 2021	Camdenton Area Chamber/Zoom

### CEDS Strategy Committee Members

**Private Sector Representatives:** *Any Senior Management official or executive holding key decision-making position, with respect to any for-profit enterprise.*

Name	Company/Enterprise	Position
Corey ten Bense	Co-Mo Electric Co-Op, Inc.	Director of Member Care
Jennifer Presberry	Co-Mo Electric Co-Op, Inc.	Economic Development Specialist
Mitch Shields	Lake Regional Health System	Program Coordinator

<b>Lance Smith</b>	Laurie Care Center	Administrator
<b>Jill Durnin</b>	Lake Career and Technical Center	Director
<b>Lori Hoelscher</b>	Ameren UE	Regional Account Executive
<b>Chris Foster</b>	Rock Island Village	Business Owner
<b>Matt Schrimpf</b>	Berkshire Hathaway	Co-Owner/Realtor

**Representatives of Other Economic Interests:** *Persons who provide additional representation of the main economic interests of the region. These may include, but are not limited to: public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private individuals.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Position</b>
<b>Jeana Woods</b>	City of Osage Beach	City Administrator
<b>Jeff Hooker</b>	City of Camdenton	City Administrator
<b>K.C. Cloke</b>	Camdenton Area Chamber	Executive Director
<b>Paige Jones</b>	Lake Area Chamber	Executive Director
<b>Brendan Dungan</b>	Missouri DED	Project Manager
<b>Brian Thompson</b>	Lebanon REDI	Executive Director
<b>Tom McNeill</b>	Lake West Chamber	Board President
<b>Heather Brown</b>	Convention & Visitor Bureau	Executive Director
<b>Harrison Fry</b>	City of Lake Ozark	Community Economic Development
<b>Steve Dust</b>	Retired DED Director	Volunteer
<b>Matt Davis</b>	Eldon School District	Superintendent

# **Chapter 1**

## **A Tourism Destination and a Manufacturing Powerhouse**

## Regional Overview

Welcome to the Lake of the Ozarks region, consisting of Camden, Miller, Morgan and Laclede Counties. The body of water that bears the region's name is one of the largest man-made lakes in the United States. With a population that routinely swells by 300% every weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day, the region has seen drastic swings in economic activity in the last 15 years. Fortunately, one thing has stayed constant: the scenic waterway that is the source of all the tourism and new development.

Based on its geography and orientation to large traffic arteries, our region varies significantly in types of industry. The economy of Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties has distinct seasonal and annual nuances. The seasonal economy consists primarily of Retail Trade and Accommodations/Food service businesses. These three counties (as well as a fourth, Benton, which is not a part of the region) touch the Lake of the Ozarks, the Midwest's premier vacation destination. The annual economy is Health Care and Construction related. Laclede County, centered around the intersection of Highway 5 and Interstate 44, has an economy that has consistently been driven by Manufacturing, including the aluminum fishing boat industry cluster, metal stamping, and climate technology.

### People

Population growth in the Lake of the Ozarks region during the 20th Century was stagnant to declining for much of the first half of the time period. This stagnation or decline was caused by the generally stagnant economic climate in rural Missouri through the early part of the century as well as the shift away from an agricultural to a tourist or retiree destination in Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties. Beginning in 1960 in Camden and Laclede Counties and in 1970 in Miller and Morgan Counties, the region's population began to shift strongly upward. The rate of growth in Missouri from 1990-2000 was about 9%. The Lake of the Ozarks region grew 24% during the same time period (Camden 35%, Miller 14%, Morgan 24% and Laclede 20%).

Table 1.1 below shows the growth in the four counties from 2010-2020. Camden County had the largest increase in population both in numbers and as a percentage. Miller County was next with Morgan and Laclede Counties having minimal increases.

Table 1.1 - LOCLG - Population 2010-2020							
	2010 Census	2014 Estimates	2019 Estimates	2020 Census	# Change 2010- 2020	% Change 2010- 2020	County Rank
Camden County	44,002	44,237	46,305	46,414	2,412	5%	26th
Laclede County	35,571	35,473	35,723	35,895	324	1%	32th



<b>Miller County</b>	24,748	25,113	25,619	25,791	1,043	4%	43th
<b>Morgan County</b>	20,565	20,171	20,627	20,716	151	1%	54th
<b>LOCLG</b>	124,886	124,994	128,274	128,816	3,930	3%	

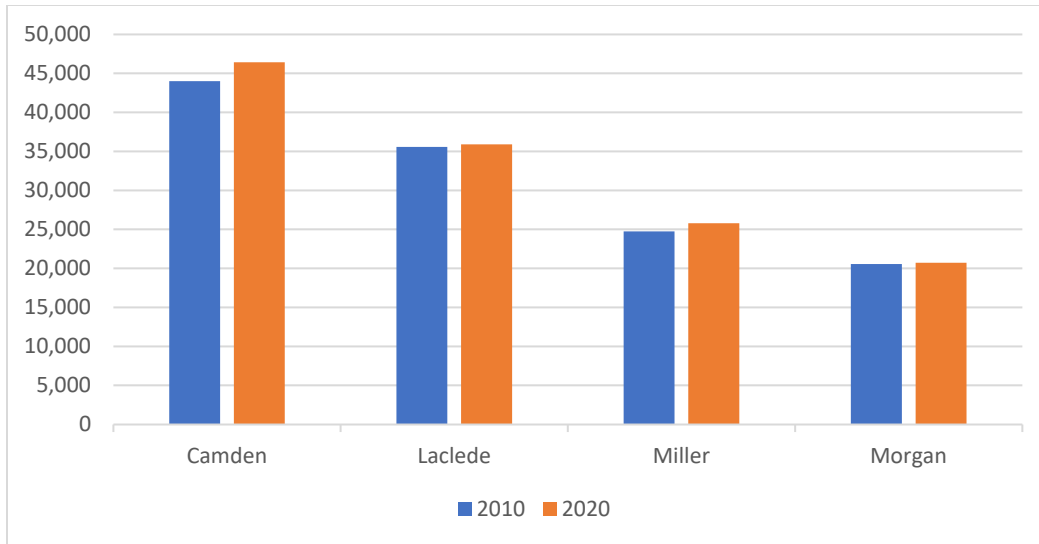
Due to the timing of the 2020 Census and the impacts of COVID-19, the population in Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties, may be under-reported. Record new housing starts, homes sales, tax revenues (double digit increases two years running) and increased primary school enrollments support the assumption. Camden County School District RIII enrollment increased from 4,115 for the 2019-2020 school year to 4,178 in 2021-2022. Even these numbers are potentially low regarding the number of new K-12 students in the county due to the prevalence of home schooling as a result of COVID-19.

The more rural areas within the region are seeing the population decline as the younger population are moving to the more urban areas.

### Population Growth

Population growth in the Lake of the Ozarks region during the 20th century was stagnant to declining for much of the first half of the period. This stagnation or decline occurred because of a generally sluggish economic climate in rural Missouri through the early part of the century and a shift away from an agricultural region to a tourist or retiree destination in Camden, Miller, and Morgan Counties. Beginning in 1960, the region's population began to shift strongly upward due to the development of area around the Lake of the Ozarks. Between 1960 and 1990, all four counties increased in population by at least 40 percent. The rate of growth continued, at a slightly lower yet significant pace between 1990 and 2022.

The chart below shows the Lake of the Ozarks region's population growth over the last decade, up to the most recent Census in 2020. Much of the population growth in the region centered around the Lake of the Ozarks in Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties and in and around Lebanon and the I-44 corridor in Laclede County. The bar graph shows the degree of population growth in various portions of the region from 2010 to 2020 (Fig 1.1).



### Age Dynamics

In addition to population trends, it is also relevant to look at age dynamics. It is generally considered helpful to have a relatively large share of young adults combined with a good portion of experienced adults. Having a high share of 15 to 24-year old's can be a good source of long-term human capital, while a good share of 25 to 34-year-olds indicates access to current human capital, and a strong share of 35 years or older can be an important contributor of experience and knowledge. In other words, a balanced population with respect to age groups is important when discussing available human resources.

**Table 1.2 - LOCLG - Population Age Dynamics - 2019**

	0 to 4	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65+
<b>Camden County</b>	4.3%	13.8%	6.3%	17.8%	30.1%	27.7%
<b>Laclede County</b>	6.7%	17.8%	7.4%	23.8%	26.9%	17.5%
<b>Miller County</b>	6.6%	17.2%	7.7%	22.7%	27.0%	18.8%
<b>Morgan County</b>	6.5%	16.3%	6.5%	19.8%	27.5%	23.4%
<b>LOCLG</b>	6.0%	16.3%	7.0%	21.0%	27.0%	21.9%
<b>Missouri</b>	5.9%	16.2%	9.1%	26.8%	25.1%	16.9%

When looking at the age dynamics in Table 1.2 for the LOCLG region, the first thing to notice is the high ratio of residents older than 45 in the region. In these counties this age group is more than 2-5 percent higher than the state average. As a result, the younger age brackets going from 0 to 44-year-olds are all below the state average, indicating a relatively small portion of children, young adults, and adults in Camden and Morgan Counties. In the other two counties, Laclede and Miller, the young adult age brackets 5 to 17 slightly below the state rate, albeit less so than in Camden and Morgan. The proportion of adults between 25 and 44 is comparable to the state rate for Laclede and Miller Counties. Overall, all the counties are low in this age range when compared to the state average. The implication of this is that a lack of young adults could potentially hurt the region's ability to invest in and develop its long-term human capital resources. An overabundance of an older generation may be a good source of experienced professionals, but transferring that knowledge to the next generation will require serious efforts and investment on the part of both public and private entities.

## County Overviews

**Camden County** is the largest county in the LOCLG region with approximately 46,414 residents. Camden County is ranked the 26th largest county in Missouri. The county has experienced significant population growth which appears to be caused mostly by retirees moving to the area. It is therefore noteworthy that in 2013 the county was ranked as the 4th best retirement community in Missouri by the Missouri Senior Report. Two of the area communities were ranked in the top 20 best in the state according to NICHE with Village of the Four Seasons listed as number 6. Camden County has the strongest economic base in the region with income levels close to the state average. Educational attainment in the adult population has also seen a success story with a significant increase in residents with higher level degrees. Additionally, the county has relatively the lowest numbers of young adults in the area.

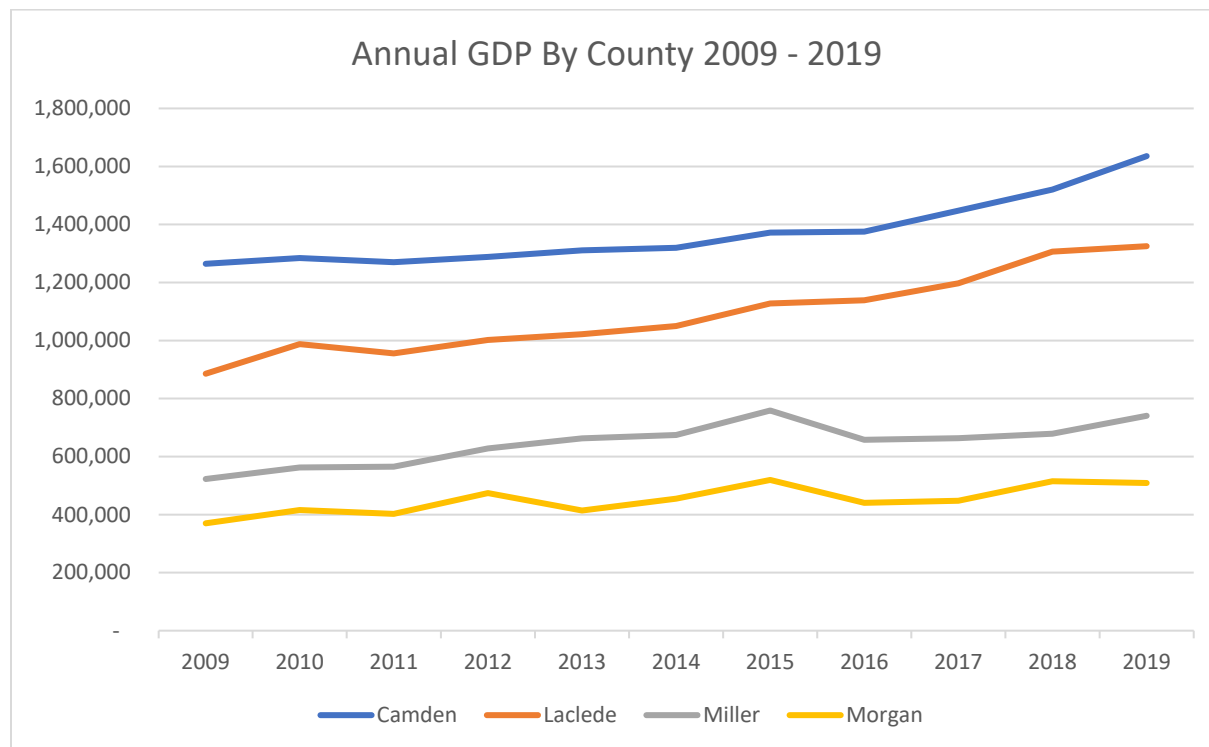
Between the years 2015 to 2019 the Camden County had experienced continued job growth with a steady increase of approximately 200 jobs. With numbers in 2015 at 16244 growing to 16439 the change was gradual but at an increase. Though in 2020 the jobs industry took a hit and fell to 15825 jobs in the county.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic was officially declared by the Federal Government. This resulted in local government agencies shutting down businesses across the board. Due to the shutdowns, April 2020 saw the highest unemployment rates in the past 20 years at 17.7 %. However, the local government decided to allow local businesses to re-open. By May 2020 the unemployment rate had already declined to 10.1% and by September 2021 the rate had fallen to just 2.7%. The primary industry driving the increase in employment was tourism to include outdoor tourism businesses such as boating, fishing and hiking along with the necessary support businesses. *Drawing up to 13 million visitors to the four-county area, tourism provided the necessary revenue streams to maintain businesses and increase the number of available jobs. The willingness of the local workforce to fill the available jobs reflects positively on the community. During the same time period, the US average unemployment rates varied from 14.8% in April 2020 to 4.6 in September 2021.*

The county's economy has largely been driven by the retail trade, health care, tourism, accommodation and food services sectors. The health care sector appears to be the strongest in terms of maintained historic growth, while tourism had declined over the past decade, the economic impact of COVID-19 increased tourism to record setting levels.

One of the great assets benefiting the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Camden County is the local SCORE chapter. Another asset is the State Fair Community College and Columbia College in Osage Beach.

**Laclede County** is the second largest county in terms of population size with 35,531 residents per the 2020 Census. Laclede County is ranked 32nd largest county by population in Missouri. The county's productivity is very strong with the 2nd highest regional GDP \$1,325,125 compared to Camden County's \$1,635,897 GDP.



The total number of jobs in the county grew from 2015 to 2019. Most of the growth came from a large increase in jobs from small sized businesses with 2 to 99 employees, while businesses with 100 to 499 employees added a few jobs. Again, much like in Camden in 2020 Laclede saw cutbacks and lost some 800 jobs with the annual total being 13092.

Historically the county has had a strong presence of large establishments, but this appears to be changing towards a county with fewer large employers and smaller to medium sized businesses.

The county's main economic driver has historically been in the manufacturing sector. In particular, the transportation equipment manufacturing cluster is growing due to the proximity of Lebanon to Lake of the Ozarks and the emphasis on watercraft manufacturing. Other large industry sectors include retail and health care.



The city of Lebanon also has a SCORE Chapter through the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce. Another valuable asset is the Ozarks Technical Community College campus in Lebanon.

**Miller County** is the third largest county in the region. Miller County is ranked the 43rd largest county in Missouri. The county experienced the slowest population growth in the region and has experienced a significant decline of young adults over the last two decades. On the upside the county had the highest labor force participation rate at 47.7% and an unemployment rate of 9.8%.

Miller County is a similar story in terms of job creation to its surrounding counties. Through 2015 to 2019 Miller County ended with a high of 7278 jobs with steady growth throughout. Though as COVID-19 hit the county job count went to 7082 jobs. This loss was less of a major hit when compared to Laclede, but it is still significant to the area.

Industry data indicates that the strongest sector in terms of jobs is related to education and information dissemination firms. Other economic driver sectors include retail trade, construction, manufacturing, and health care.

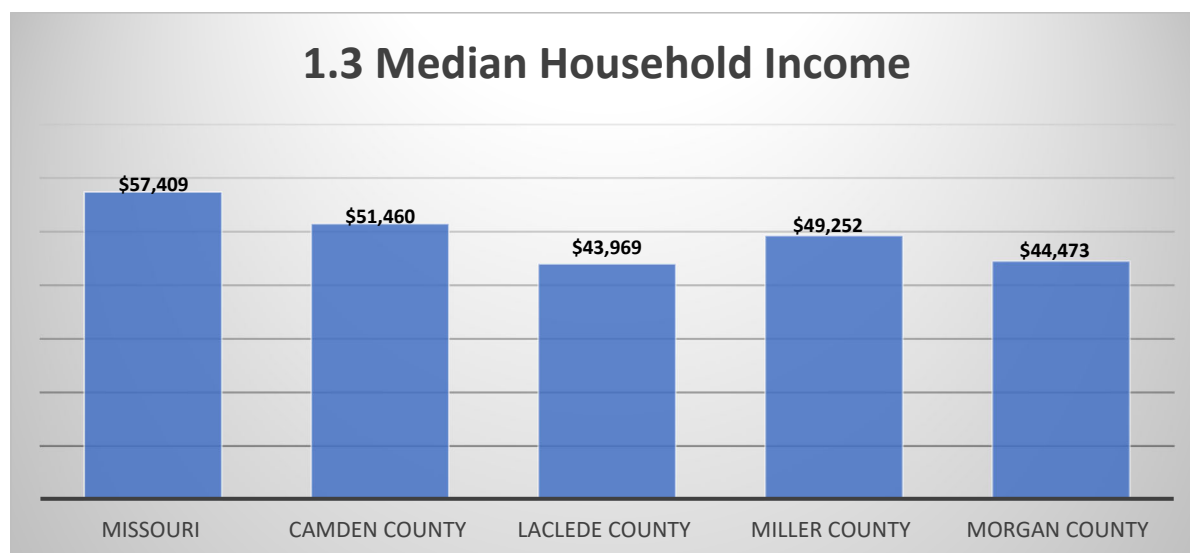
One of the important assets in the county is the State Fair Community College campus in Eldon.

**Morgan County** is the smallest in the region in terms of population. Morgan County is ranked the 54th largest county in Missouri out of 115 total counties. The county has a very high share of retirees and the lowest share of young adults in the region. The biggest challenges in the county appear to be the decline in young adults and the decline in higher educational attainment levels.

Morgan county's trend in jobs shifted through the 5 year period of 2015 to 2020. In 2017 the county saw a small dip in jobs with the area losing approximately 33 jobs in its area. Between the years 2018-19 jobs greatly rose to a peak of 4375. Unfortunately, due to the effects of the pandemic this growth was lessened to 4307 jobs as of 2020.

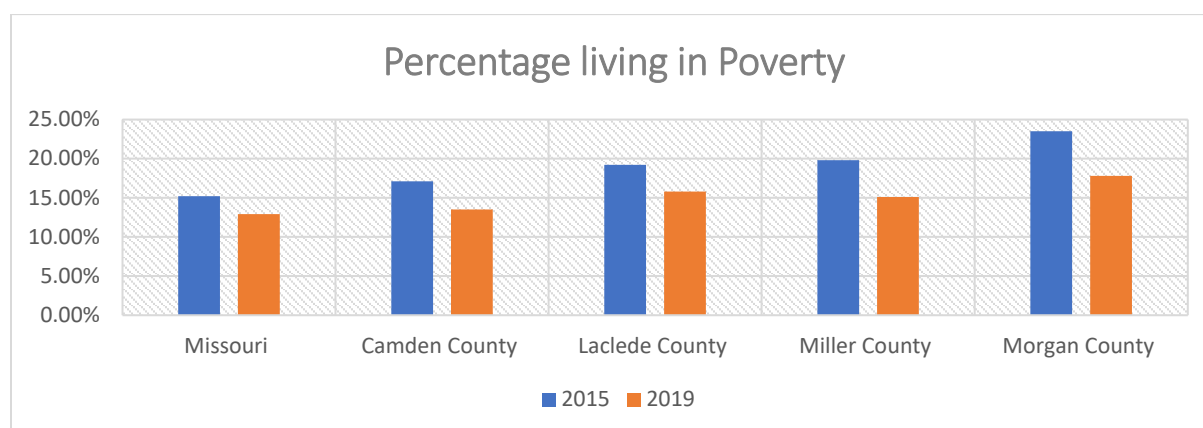
Manufacturing, construction, retail trade, and food service sectors are the biggest economic drivers in the county.

## Economic Characteristics



The data in Table 1.3 shows median household income is far below the state median in Laclede, Miller, and Morgan County, while Camden is close to state median. Per capita income follows the same pattern, with the same three counties being below state level, and Camden close to it. The labor force numbers do not follow that pattern; however, all counties fall below the state average, but Laclede and Miller come closer than Camden, with Morgan being the furthest below. Income measures should of course not be considered in a vacuum, but rather in the context of cost-of-living measures. According to [missourieconomy.org](http://missourieconomy.org), the 2019 Missouri average cost of living index was 88.3 (100 being the national average). The counties in the LOCLG region's cost of living index were 79.3 for Camden County, 77.9 for Laclede County, 78. for Miller County, and 78.1 for Morgan County. The lower cost of living index numbers helps counterbalance some portions of the lower income levels, but the overall region still suffers from low-income levels.

## Poverty



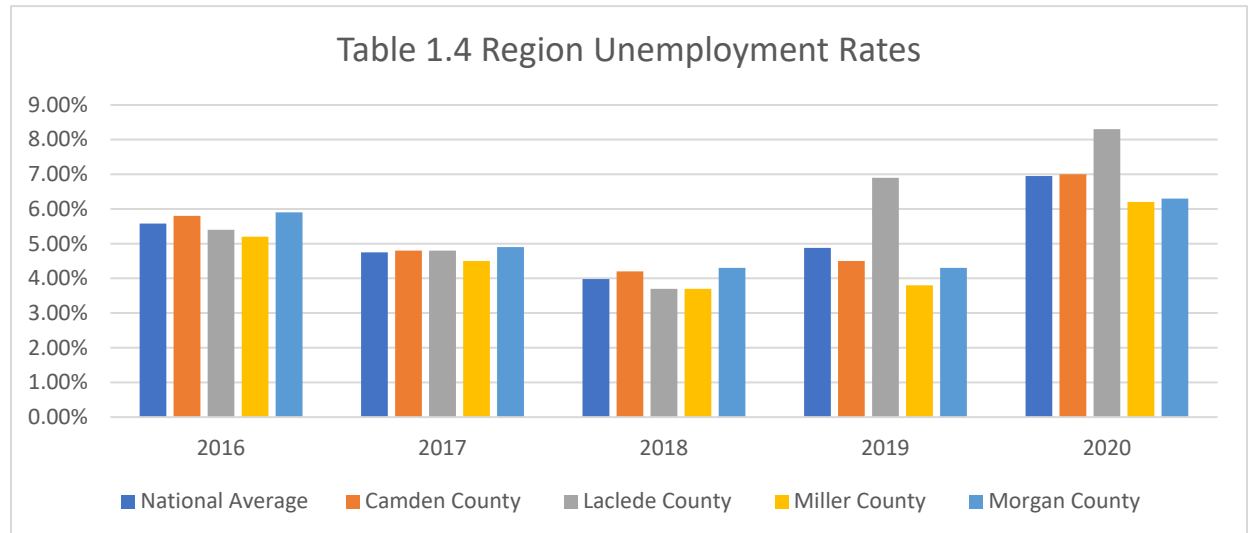
Beyond income and labor force dynamics, it is also relevant to consider poverty rates. The relationship between entrepreneurship and poverty is challenging, but nonetheless relevant. A region's poverty rate is expected to have a negative relationship with its level of entrepreneurial activity and innovation since



low-income levels may discourage the development of new firms and the expansion of existing ones while encouraging would-be entrepreneurs to move out of the area. At the same time, weak levels of innovative activity can cause weak job growth and contribute to a higher poverty rate. With the exception of Camden, there is not much variation among the region's rates. All area counties have a relatively high poverty rate. One of the contributing factors to the higher poverty rates may be a lack of well-paid job opportunities, and an excess of low-wage/minimum wage jobs in the region. Other factors may be relevant too, but to combat the poverty issue it would be worthwhile to investigate opportunities for developing more well-paid jobs. However, the poverty rate has been decreasing since 2015 to now.

## Unemployment

Another aspect of the economic landscape is the region's unemployment rates. If unemployment rates are high and businesses are hesitant to hire, it is likely to have an adverse effect on a region's ability to attract new talent and retain current unemployed and underemployed residents. The unemployment rates shown below in Table 1.4 are therefore, indicators of the strength of the labor market.



At 6.95%, the LOCLG region has an average unemployment that is higher than the state and U.S. averages, indicating that the region as a whole has lagged in getting back on track post-recession, though it has made significant gains the last five years.

Among counties, there is very little deviation in the average unemployment rates, ranging from 3.8% Miller, to 6.9% Laclede, to 4.5% Camden, and 4.3% Morgan in 2019 prior to COVID-19's impact on the region. In the past five years, the region had made significant strides in decreasing the difference between it and the state. In 2020 the numbers went up when the effects of COVID became apparent on the counties. Laclede had the largest increase of 6.9% to 8.3% in unemployment. In 2012, the national rate was almost 4% lower than the region's 11.8%; in 2016, that difference has been cut in dramatically, to 1%. Increasing our focus on reducing the unemployment rate is an important component in our effort to foster an entrepreneurial economy.

The chart presents unemployment data for each of our four counties and the region as a whole, as well as the national averages. Each year is comprised of 12 individual-month data, averaged. While year-

averages give a more accurate picture of a county's long-term economic health, the most current data can also provide a snapshot of where we are the region is headed.



### **Educational Attainment**

Looking at educational attainment the data in Table 1.5 on the following page, shows some serious regional challenges. The percent of people age 25 or older with at least a high school diploma is well below average in Laclede, Miller, and Morgan. In contrast, Camden is just below the state average in high school graduates. When looking at the percent of people with a Bachelor's Degree or higher, all counties are below the state average, although Camden County's average is still above the other counties. All counties are well below average for Master's Degree attainment marking at less than half the state average.

**Table 1.5 - LOCLG - Highest Educational Attainment**

	High School (+)	Bachelor's Degree (+)	Master's Degree (+)
<b>Camden County</b>	90.4%	21.1%	7.6%
<b>Laclede County</b>	85.2%	14.6%	4.3%
<b>Miller County</b>	87.3%	19.4%	6.8%
<b>Morgan County</b>	78.1%	13.3%	4.6%
<b>LOCLG</b>	85.3%	17.1%	5.8%
<b>Missouri</b>	90.7%	30.2%	11.8%

## Regional Jobs

When looking at regional jobs, the data in Tables 1.6 below shows that establishments increased by approximately 27 jobs between 2015 and 2019. This change in business can mean a wide range of new opportunities for the communities in the region.

Table 1.6 Total Regional Jobs					
Size of establishments	Years				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
All establishments	3335	3385	3420	3372	3362
Establishments with 1 to 4 employees	1957	1959	2003	1916	1917
Establishments with 5 to 9 employees	683	706	675	703	703
Establishments with 10 to 19 employees	383	387	422	431	410
Establishments with 20 to 49 employees	225	240	225	229	226
Establishments with 50 to 99 employees	53	58	55	52	65
Establishments with 100 to 249 employees	20	19	24	22	21
Establishments with 250 to 499 employees	10	12	10	9	12
Establishments with 500 to 999 employees	4	4	0	0	0
Establishments with 1,000 employees or more	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Census CBP Table 2015-2019

Table 1.6 also indicates that smaller businesses (1 to 4 employees) had a decline between 2015-2019. Though business between self-employment and small teams had a decline, overall, the number for all establishments increased. Businesses with 10 to 19 employees had the largest increase in establishments of 27 new businesses. Though small businesses are the backbone of the region large employers seem to have leaved the region. Business with 500+ employees have all but disappeared from the area.

Entrepreneurs play a vital role in economic development and job creation. But this role works better when market conditions allow those who truly want to go into business for themselves to do so. Sometimes it may be caused by necessity, but for the most part it should be driven by a personal and professional desire.

Overall, the data provides strong evidence for the view that small and medium sized businesses are the main job providers and creators. Therefore, economic development investments should include providing meaningful support for these establishments. This also indicates that while the traditional approach to job creation by attracting large outside employers is important, a transition of resources should be considered to support entrepreneurship. Development efforts should therefore be supplemented by more relevant strategies that focus on helping new businesses start and existing businesses grow.

Growing your own businesses has been successful in many rural areas across the county. With a focus on support for startups and new businesses and creating a culture that supports entrepreneurship needs to be a part of the region's overall strategy for economic growth and job creation.

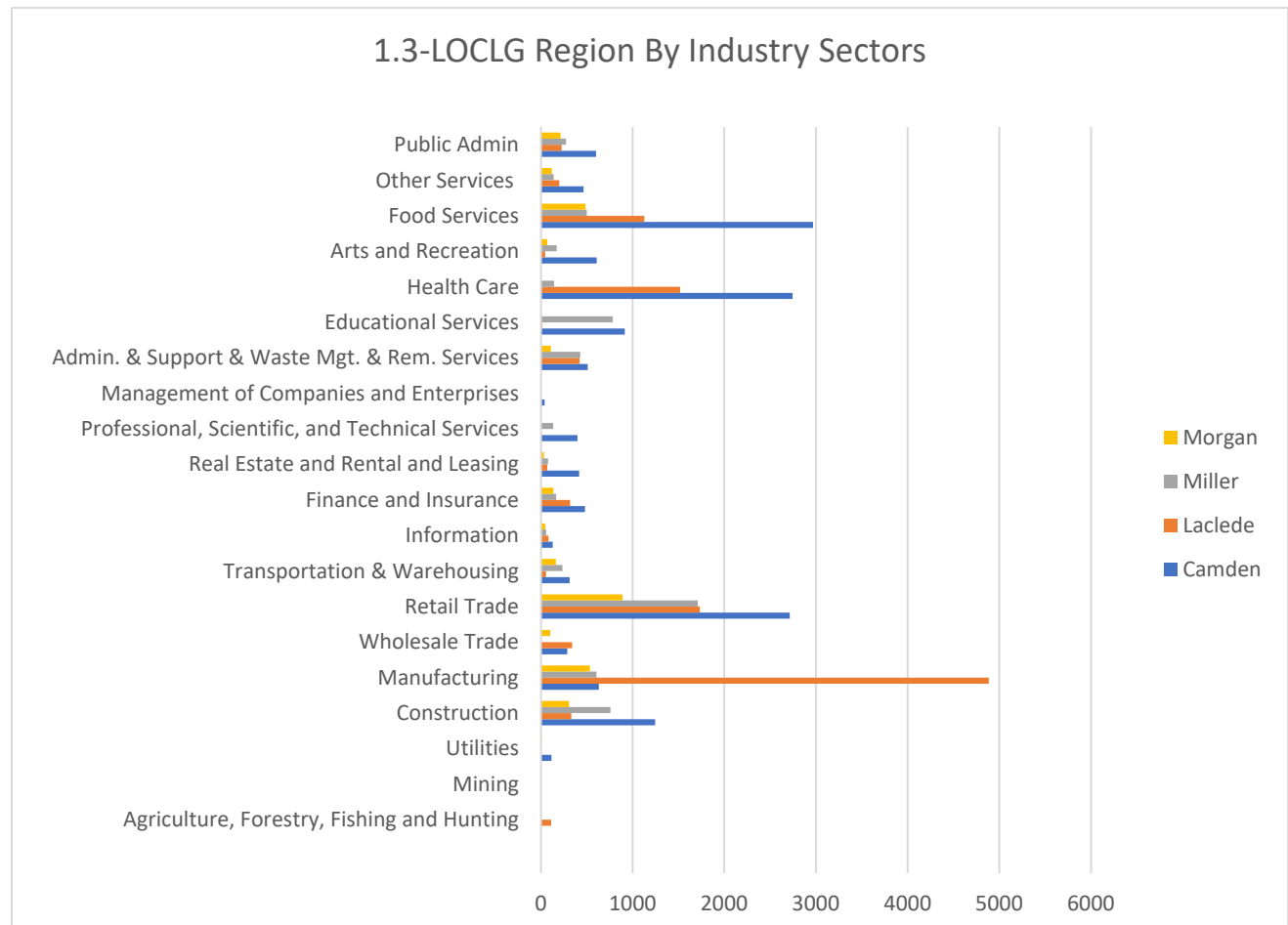


### **Workforce**

There are 52,452 workers in the four-county region. Of those who work in the LOCLG region, 37,438 live there as well, while 14,019 live in another county. Also, as of 2019 there were 2,227 workers who work from home. A much larger impact to the workforce was the Pandemic of COVID, the impact to these number is expected to be much higher, but no data is available to include at this time.

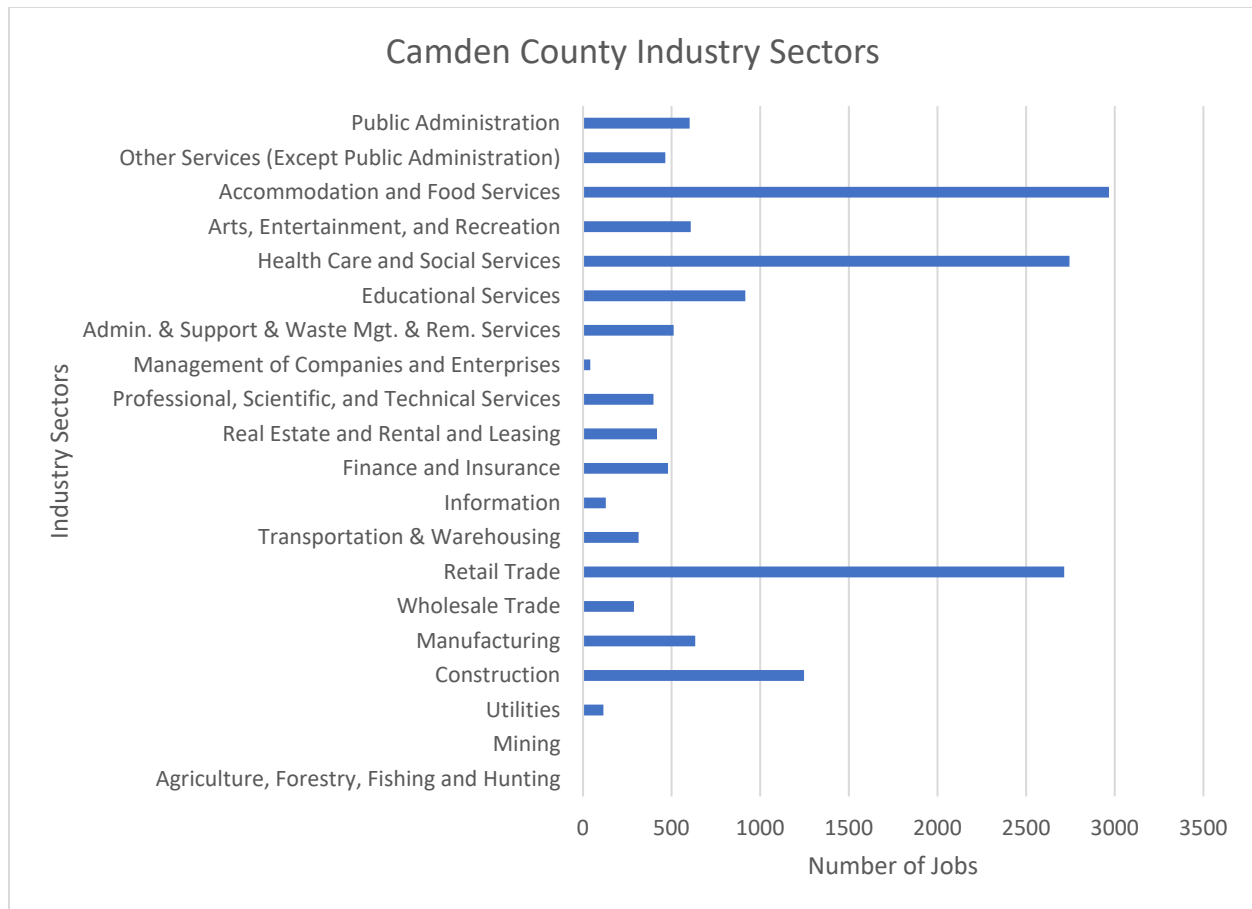
## Industry Clusters Identified

LOCLG examined the most prevalent NAICS codes within our four-county region to identify key industry clusters. For the overall region (1) Retail (2) Manufacturing (3) Food Service and (4) Health Care and Social Assistance. (Fig 1.3)



### Camden County

As of 2020, Camden County had a total of 15,825 jobs. The top three industry sectors, (1) Accommodation and Food Services, (2) and Health Care and Social Assistance, (3) Retail made up 53.3% of the county's jobs, and are three of the four largest clusters by total jobs in the entire region. The difference in the number of jobs in each of these clusters compared to the region's other three counties is significant. Camden County has the highest population of the three counties (46,414) and as a result leads the region in several other industry sectors as well. (Fig 1.3 LOCLG Region by NAICS Industry Sector, 2020)

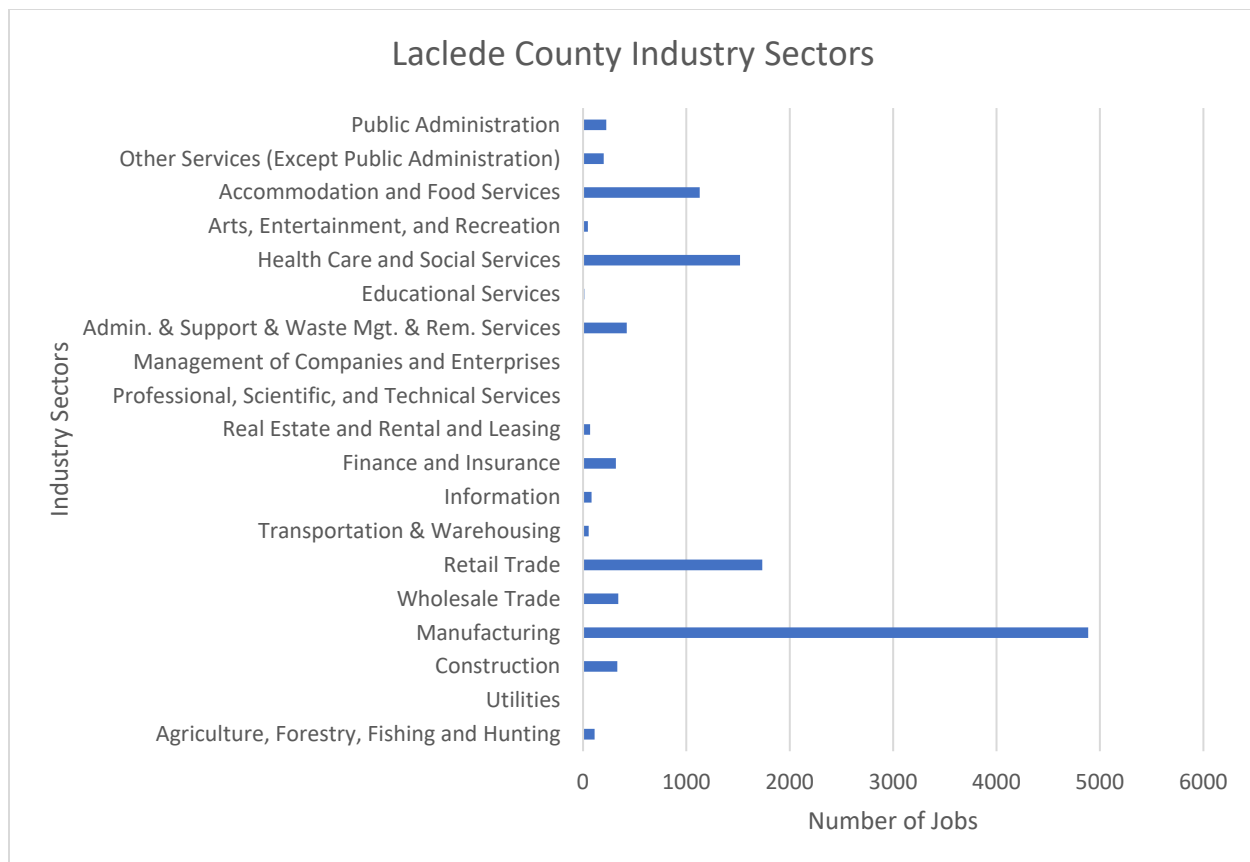


The Health Care cluster in Camden County is centered on the Lake Regional Health System, with their primary campus in Osage Beach. Camden County is also the retail hub of the region, anchored by Osage Beach Premium Outlets and several Big Box stores. The county is also home to the region's largest Accommodation and Food Services sector, supported by several resorts (Camden on the Lake, Lodge of the Four Seasons, Margaritaville, and Old Kinderhook), as well as a plethora of dining options.

#### **Laclede County**

As of the 2019 American Community Survey, Laclede County had a total of 13,092 jobs. Its largest sector, manufacturing, is also the largest cluster of any kind throughout the region, with 4,886 total jobs. Laclede County is the largest producer of aluminum boats in the United States, with G-3 Boats, Lowe Boats, and Tracker Marine all stationed in Lebanon.

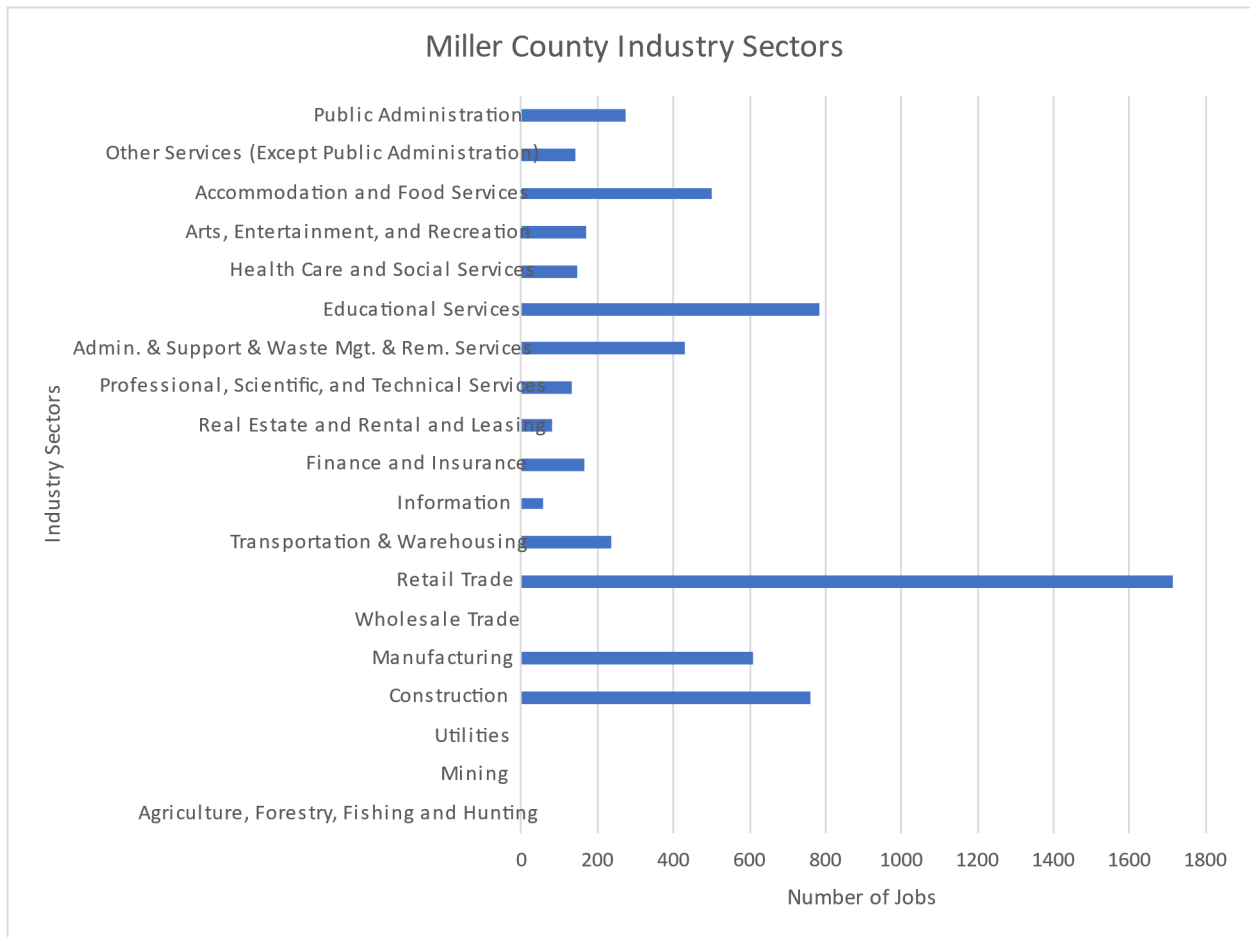




Laclede County is the home of the region's largest Wholesale Trade sector, undoubtedly anchored by its strong manufacturing presence. Laclede County has the second-largest population (35,895) in the region and is also second in number of jobs in many industry sectors.

### Miller County

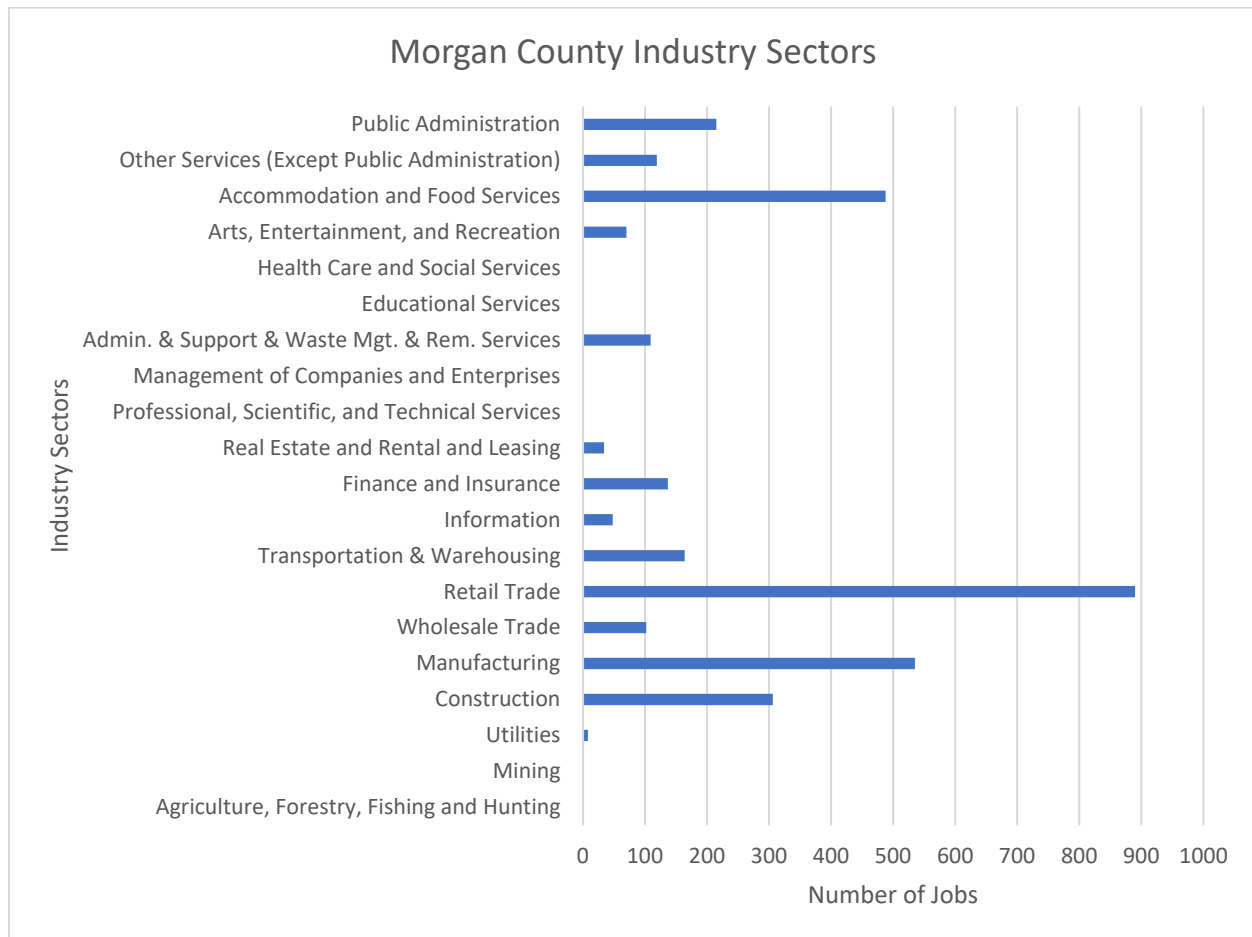
There were 7,082 jobs in Miller County as of 2020. Miller County is home to the region's 2nd largest Construction sector. It is also the base of the region's second-largest Manufacturing and Transportation clusters, anchored by some of the largest employers in Eldon; Adient, Opies Transport, and Gateway Industries. Of note is the fact that Miller County has more jobs in Construction than Laclede County, despite having nearly half the total population. (Fig 1.3 LOCLG Region by NAICS Industry Sector, 2019)



Retail is still a large sector of the jobs available as it is part of the tourism region surrounding Lake of the Ozarks. Which also represents the Accommodation and Food Service jobs within the region.

## Morgan County

Morgan County is home to the region's largest Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting cluster, with nearly twice as many establishments in that sector as the next closest county (21 to 11; Laclede). Also, of note is that agriculture is large but with zero jobs listed in the county area. This is mostly due to these establishments being family business and self-employed jobs.



Retail sales is also a large sector within Morgan County as a part of the Lake Ozark tourism region. There is little manufacturing within Morgan County even though it has a Gates Manufacturing Plant in Versailles. Many years ago, the county suffered a great loss when Ticonderoga pencil manufacturing moved to Mexico.

## Transportation Infrastructure

### Important External Connections

**Interstate 44:** This interstate serves as a primary transportation route from the Southwest Missouri region to the St. Louis metropolitan area in the northeast, and to Oklahoma City, OK in the southwest. It is a pivotal location for large trucking companies transporting materials across the United States. Although Interstate 44 only directly passes through one of the counties in our region (Laclede), it still has a major impact on the other surrounding counties within our central region. For example, logistics play a major role on where certain developments are going to occur. Having close access to Interstate 44 allows businesses to develop and prosper, creating tax revenue for the county. Also, Interstate 44 serves as a well-known entry point for travelers coming into the region to vacation, shop, and eat.

**US 54:** Stretching all the way to the southern tip of New Mexico to the northeastern portion of Missouri and ending in Pittsfield Illinois, US 54 serves as a nationwide highway connection. Within our central region US 54 runs through both Camden and Miller County. This serves as a major entrance point for vacationers, second home residents, and local employees traveling to the Lake of the Ozarks area, especially those traveling to the “Lake” from St. Louis and Kansas City.

**MO 5:** Missouri Route 5 is the only Missouri state highway to traverse the entire state. To the north, it continues into Iowa as Iowa Highway 5 and to the south it enters Arkansas as Highway 5. It is the longest state highway in Missouri. Highway 5 goes through three counties in our region: Laclede, Camden, and Morgan. The highway also serves as a key link between the tourism-dominated lake counties and I-44.

**MO-7:** Missouri Route 7 connects the Kansas City area, beginning near Independence, to the Lake of the Ozarks Area. MO-7 ends southeast of Richland, a community on the eastern edge of Camden and Laclede counties.

### Important Internal Connections

**MO 52:** Missouri Route 52 is an east-west highway running from its eastern terminus at Route 133 just 7 miles east of St. Elizabeth to the Kansas state line where it continues as K-52. Missouri Route 52 crosses over both Morgan and Miller County, serving as a route to delivery and trucking of livestock, fertilizer, and other farming materials.

**MO 17:** Missouri Route 17 runs its northern terminus at US Route 54 six miles northeast of Eldon; its southern terminus is at the Arkansas state line where it continues into Arkansas as Highway 395. Missouri Route 17 runs mostly through Miller County and a small portion of Laclede County.



### **Recent Improvements**

Listed under county titles are the transportation improvements performed throughout the counties over the past couple years. These improvements were provided by and performed by MoDOT and totaled 50 million dollars in work projects.

#### ***Camden County***

Route 54 had experience road improvements from Osage Beach to Camdenton, J turns where also added to make cross lane merge easier. Route D's Minnow Creek had a bridge rehabilitation to improve poor scoring bridge. Route J had a new bridge placed over the Little Niangua River. Route KK, MM, TT, F had a new overlay with addition of 2' shoulders. This segment of highway will be undergoing a complete surface recoat in the upcoming two years and will be on a reoccurring treatment every eight years according to MoDot as part of the Asset Management Program.

#### ***Laclede County***

Interstate 44 got new overlays along east and westbound lanes along with a bridge rehabilitation for the Gasconade River Overflow. Route 5 got a new overlay in Lebanon along Jefferson Street a major road in Lebanon. Route 5 also got a new overlay along the shared four lane from North Lebanon to the Camden County line. A project that is being studied by MoDot is a new Route 5 bypass or aka The Lebanon Loop, this will address the congestion and traffic concerns through the downtown city commercial corridor.

#### ***Miller County***

Miller County had major changes around the Bagnell area with a new Route 54/Route W new interchange completed in 2021. Also, Bagnell Dam received a bridge and surface rehabilitation started in fall 2021 and is scheduled to be completed in early Spring 2022. Route C also received a bridge rehabilitation over Deane Creek. Route U got a new overlay with the addition of 2' shoulders.

### ***Morgan County***

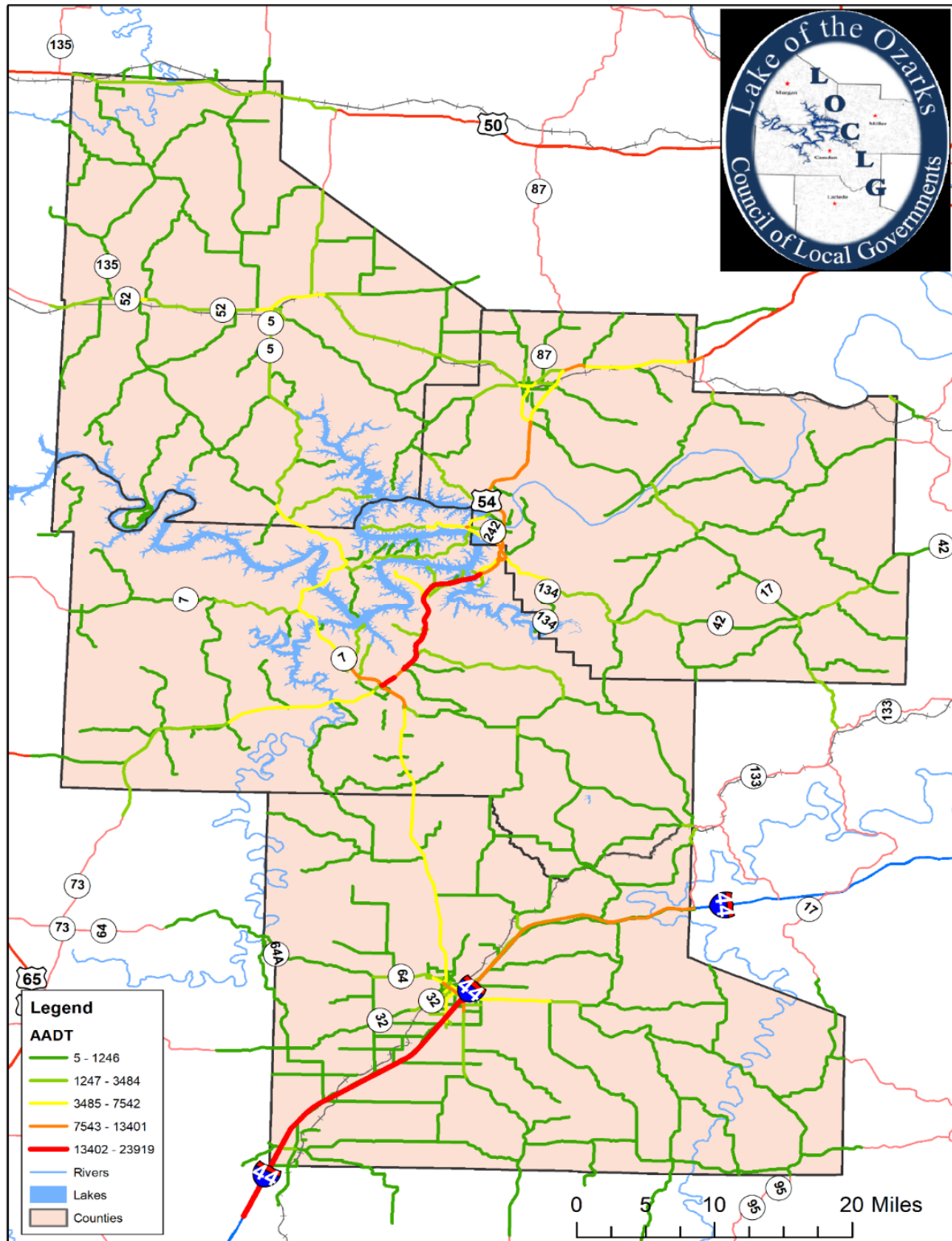
Route 50 in Morgan County received improvements with a new overlay reaching from Pettis County to California. Also, the Route 50/5 intersection was subject to safety improvements to make a better functioning area. Also new overlays from Versailles to Jefferson City on Route C. Finally, Route W got a new overlay with the addition of 2' shoulders from Versailles to Route Y.

### **Traffic Volumes**

Traffic volumes are measured through Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), which is often referred to as ADT (average daily traffic). AADT is the number of vehicles that pass a particular point on a roadway during a period of 24 consecutive hours, averaged over a period of 365 days. The map to the below shows that I-44 has the highest traffic volumes along its route in the region. Portions of US-54 experiences similar traffic volumes to I-44. The importance of the MO-5 connection between the lake counties and I-44 can be seen in the high traffic volumes shown along its route. Missouri Route 52 plays an important role as an east/west connection in the northern portions of the region.

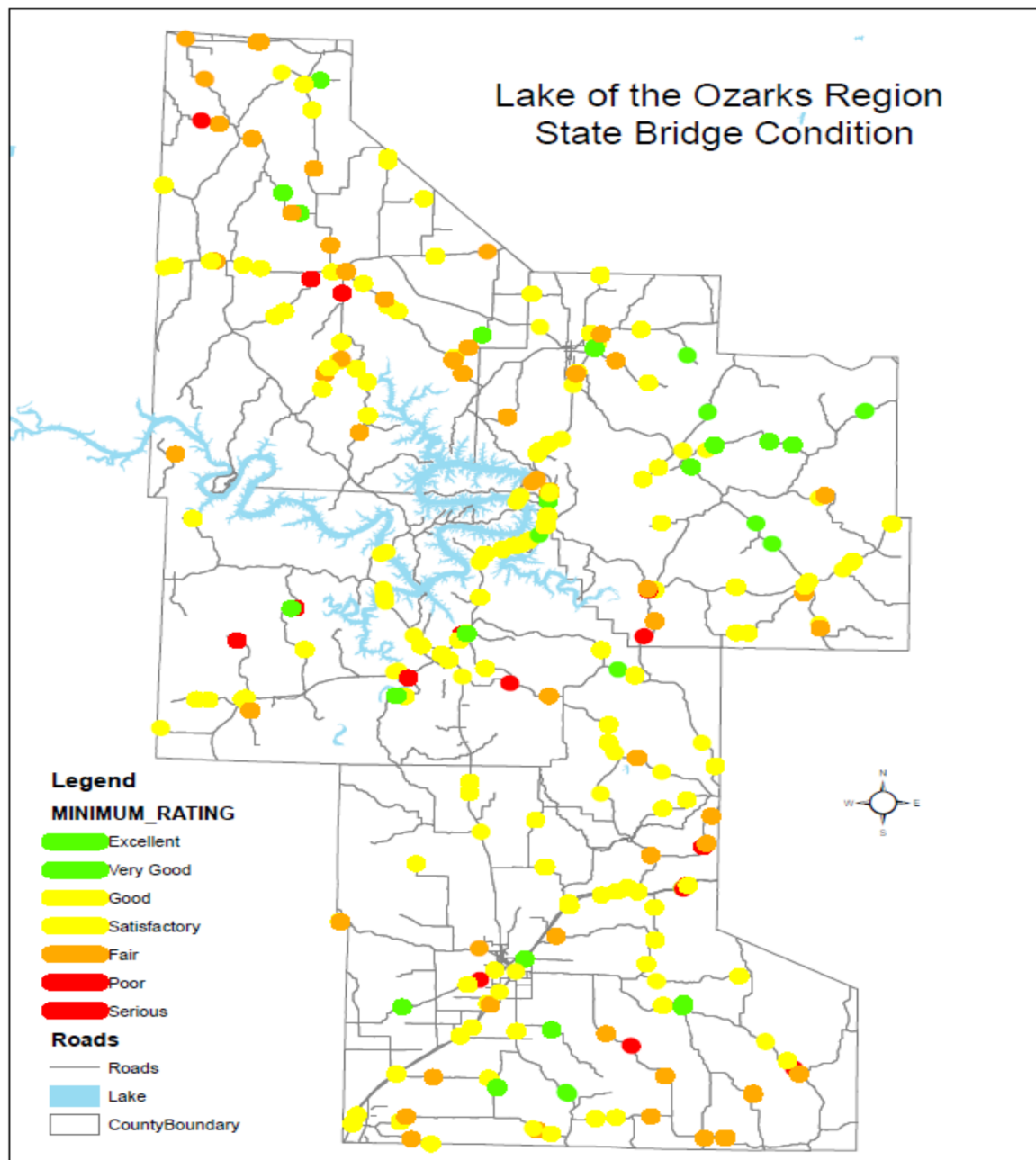


# LOCLG Traffic Volumes



## Bridge Conditions

An important indicator of the region's transportation infrastructure health is the condition of its bridges. A bridge's superstructure (the load -carrying members and connections), substructure (piers and abutments) and the bridge deck are rated based on the scale shown below. The overall score for a bridge is the lowest of the three components, the score of the weakest link. Fifteen of the region's bridges are classified as "poor" or worse. Fourteen bridges are rated good and 21 are rated as excellent. The following map shows bridge conditions in the region. The newly passage of SB-262 and IJA MoDot will have additional funds to deploy across the entire State of Missouri to assist with several of the major bridges in poor condition.



## Environmental and Cultural Resources

The Lake of the Ozarks region is home to a wide range of environmental and cultural resources. The most obvious environmental resource is the Lake of the Ozarks itself. There are also a number of national historic sites and districts and a number of state parks and conservation lands that represent the cultural heritage of the region.

### Water Recreation

The Lake of the Ozarks was formed in 1931 when Bagnell Dam was built on the Osage River by Union Electric (now Ameren Missouri). Truman Dam, 92 miles northwest of Bagnell Dam, forms the other boundary of the Lake on the Osage arm. Along those 92 miles of twists and turns lies almost 1,300 miles of shoreline, all privately owned. Several other rivers and watersheds feed into the Lake including the Niangua River, the Wet-Dry or Grand Glaize River, and Gravois Creek. However due to the water level management by Ameren Missouri, storm water drainage rarely causes flooding in the region. While removed physically from the Lake of the Ozarks, Laclede County has its own waterways, including the Gasconade and Niangua Rivers, which are integral to its region. The Gasconade and the Niangua support recreational activities such as fishing, floating and camping in the region. These activities overlap with other public and private recreational opportunities on the Lake of the Ozarks. Swimming, water skiing, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, boating, sailing, hiking and hunting are all available in and around the Lake of the Ozarks region.



Photo By: Lake of the Ozarks CVB





Photo By: Lake of the Ozarks CVB

## **Public Lands**

The Lake of the Ozarks Region is home to large areas of publicly accessible lands. There are 35 conservation areas managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation and 3 state parks managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The Lake of the Ozarks State Park, the largest in the state, covers 17,741 acres. The Park is home to a number of camping areas; cabins, biking, hiking, and horse trails; boat launches; fishing docks; historic sites; and summer camp areas. Ha Ha Tonka State Park located on the shores of Lake of the Ozarks, is home to historic Ha Ha Tonka Castle, caves, natural bridges, sinkholes, springs, and numerous hiking trails and interpretive programs. The Park is approximately 3,710 acres. In Laclede County, Bennett Springs State Park provides trout fishing, hatcheries, dining, canoeing, swimming, and hiking opportunities. Bennett Springs State Park is approximately 3,240 acres.

Public lands managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation include areas as small as a couple acres, such as Tuscumbia Access on the Osage River or Brown Bend Access on the Lake of the Ozarks, to as large as the 4,890-acre Saline Valley Conservation Area. The conservation areas offer public access to several rivers and streams, and the Lake of the Ozarks. They also provide hunting opportunities for a variety of species. Some areas also offer camping opportunities and hiking trails. There are over 10,200 acres of land managed by the Department of Conservation within our region.





Photo By: Lake of the Ozarks CVB

### **Historic Districts and Structures**

The Lake of the Ozarks region contains a number of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are 21 sites and 6 districts within the region.

The largest district is the Lake of the Ozarks Highway 134 Historic District in the Lake of the Ozarks State Park. According to the district's nomination form, the district contains seventeen buildings and 80 structures of historical or architectural significance on approximately 3,120 acres. The district recognizes many structures built by the CCC during the great depression. Also, within the Lake of the Ozarks State Park, Camp Pin Oak and Camp Hawthorne have also been identified as important historic areas. Also, in Camden County, Urbauer Fishing Lodge Historic District highlights the history of a private fishing retreat, now home to Riverbird Winery. The district is located on a bluff overlooking the Niangua River 5 miles southwest of Camdenton. In Miller County, the Iberia Academy & Junior College Historic District is located in Iberia. The academy and junior college opened in 1890 and the last class graduated in 1951. The districts contain 4 buildings, 3 of which are currently extremely deteriorated. The Bennett Springs State Park Hatchery-Lodge Area Historic District is located in Laclede County. The district contains seven buildings and structures related to the CCC development of the park during the great depression.

The newest edition to the National Historic Registry is the Grand Auglaize Swinging Bridge. The bridge is a 500-foot wired cable suspension bridge, which spans the Grand Auglaize Creek. The bridge was built

between 1920-1931 by Joseph A. Dice. Currently as of 2022 the bridge is on the National Registry of Historic Places. LOCLG is currently seeking funding on the behalf of the “Save the Historical Brumley Swinging Bridge” organization. With appropriate funding the bridge could reach a drivable and preserved state.

There are 21 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the Lake of the Ozarks Region. Sites include the Laclede County Jail, the Morgan County Courthouse, the Pin Oak Hollow Bridge, and the P.A. Sanning Store in Mary’s Home, MO. Camden County has 6 sites, all of which are located in the Lake of the Ozarks State Park. Miller County has five sites, Morgan County has four, and Laclede County has five.





### **Route 66**

Historic Route 66, America's Mother Road, runs through Laclede County. While Route 66 is popular with Americans, many of the tourists that regularly travel the route are international tourists. The history and lore of the road is well known across the world. There are a number of historic Route 66 businesses and attractions in Laclede County, especially in Lebanon.



### **Fort Leonard Wood**

The main area incorporated in and around US Army Fort Leonard Wood is located just outside of our region. While Laclede County does have some of the outlying areas of the fort within the region. The fort is home to the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence (MSCoE). The MSCoE provides initial entry training, advanced military occupational training. The fort is also home to three US Army Schools: US Army Engineer School, US Army Chemical, Radiological, and Nuclear School, and US Army Military Police School. Fort Wood is the 5th largest employer in the state of Missouri, with an operating budget of \$450 million and military salaries of \$990 million in 2017. The fort has nearly 11,000 service members in training, employs or hosts more than 11,200 military and civilian employees, and supports 10,300 family members and 60,200 retirees. Laclede County is home to many who work on Fort Leonard Wood each day. Civilian family members work in many of the businesses in Laclede County and students attend the local schools. Approximately 36,400 direct and indirect jobs are created in Missouri due to Fort Leonard Wood and an estimated 200,000 family members visit Fort Leonard Wood each year, resulting in a total economic output of \$2.8 billion.



## Healthcare

The Lake of the Ozarks has two hospitals in the region. Lake Regional Health System is in Camden County and Mercy Hospital Lebanon in Laclede County. Mercy Hospital Lebanon is an acute care, general medical-surgical hospital with 58 beds. Mercy Hospital Lebanon has the latest technology and includes Digital Mammography, Electronic Health Record, My Mercy, a free service which allows patients to connect online with their physician, see their medical information and view test results, all at the click of a button. Additionally, Mercy Hospital Lebanon has a 24-hour physician-staffed emergency room, Safe Watch, an electronic method of monitoring patients, Telemedicine, including telestroke, a wound clinic, and the Curry Cancer Center. Mercy is ranked No. 1 Top Integrated Delivery Network in Modern Healthcare, is recognized as a Pink Ribbon facility by Hologic, and recipient of Excellence in Patient Safety Hospital Award from Healthgrades. Mercy Health Foundation-Lebanon is the fundraising arm of Mercy-Lebanon. Mercy Health Foundation-Lebanon is dedicated to community health improvement projects, scholarships for students interested in entering the healthcare profession, and the expansion of services at Mercy Hospital-Lebanon.

Lake Regional Hospital, a 501(c)(3) corporation, is accredited by The Joint Commission and is a three-time recipient of the Missouri Quality Award. The 500,000 square foot, 121-bed hospital is designated by Medicare as a Regional Referral Center. The hospital employs 1,143 employees with growth every year for the past 5 years.

The facility features private patient rooms, a large Outpatient Department and a 35-bed Emergency Department. The ED is a state-designated Level III Trauma Center and a Level II Stroke Center that treats more than 36,500 patients annually. The hospital also features an 18-bed Intensive Care/Cardiac Care Unit and a 22-bed Stepdown Unit for patients progressing in their recovery from the ICU/CCU.

Lake Regional operates seven freestanding primary care clinics in Camdenton, Eldon, Iberia, Lake Ozark, Laurie, Macks Creek and Osage Beach. Completing the health system are specialty clinics, urgent care clinics, four satellite physical and cardiac rehab therapy sites, retail pharmacies and home health services. A freestanding imaging center also was added to the hospital campus in 2006.

In addition to these two facilities, the Lake of the Ozarks has clinics, private practices, and urgent care facilities throughout the region in the following towns: Camdenton, Osage Beach, Lake Ozark, Iberia, Conway, Eldon, Tuscumbia, St. Elizabeth, Versailles, Laurie, Macks Creek and Stover.

Compass Health, known as Pathways Community Health in Camden, Laclede, Miller and Morgan Counties, the nonprofit organization serves the most vulnerable members of our communities. Compass provides behavioral health support that enable those citizens to enjoy healthier and more productive lives.

Nearly 140 employees serve the region through five facilities in Camdenton, Eldon, Lebanon, Linn Creek and Osage Beach. Through those locations, Compass Health offers outpatient behavioral health, substance use disorder treatment, and community-based behavioral health services and support.

Nearly a third (29 percent) of the 138 total employees who live and work in the area hold a masters or higher degree, and in total, the staff earned more than \$4.4 million in compensation in 2016. The five facilities are also equipped to allow any of the agency's more than 40 psychiatrists to use cutting-edge and, for Missouri, unique technology to provide care for the area's citizens via Telehealth Medicine.

Through these highly-educated staff members, the citizens of the region who receive services through Compass Health contribute more to the economic well-being of the region. In many cases, if not in most circumstances, the community members served through Compass would otherwise go without care.

Compass Health provides family medicine, dental, behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment for the entire community regardless of a person's insurance status. Compass Health also partners with other community organizations to identify gaps in services. In some communities that means services can include: assist with housing, emergency room diversion services, veterans' services, suicide prevention as well as other supportive services.

The agency employs nearly 2,500 employees throughout its service area, including more than 60 physicians and dentists. The Compass Health network formed in 2014 and includes Pathways Community Health, Crider Health Center and Royal Oaks Hospital.

The following page details a complete list of facilities and services that are available within our region. There are a total of six acute care and specialty surgical services available. The region supports nine full-service nursing home facilities, five assisted living facilities, one independent living facility. There are also eight rehabilitation and health clinics within the region. The area is also served with a VA clinic in Osage Beach. The healthcare sector has seen a significant increase in services within our region. With a larger number of retirees this would seem to be a growing sector where job growth could be expected.

County	Name	Facility Type	Location
Camden County	Lake Regional Health System	General Acute Care Hospital	54 Hospital Drive Osage Beach, MO 65065
	Osage Beach Center for Cognitive Disorders	Psychiatric Hospital	840 Passover Road Osage Beach, MO 65065
	Arrowhead Senior Living Community	Senior Living	6100 Arrowhead Drive Osage Beach, MO 65065
	Bristol Manor of Camdenton	Senior Living	75 Fourth ST Camdenton, MO 65020
	Camdenton Windsor Estates	Senior Living	2042 N Business Route 5 Camdenton, MO 65020
	Lake Parke Senior Living	Senior Living	145 4th St Camdenton, MO 65020
Laclede County	Mercy Hospital Lebanon	General Acute Care Hospital	100 Hospital Drive Lebanon, MO 65536
	Cedar Hurst of Lebanon Assisted Living & Memory Care	Assisted Living Facility	842 Lynn Street Lebanon, MO 65536
	Countryside Home, LLC	Rehabilitation Facility	24499 Park Dr Lebanon, MO 65536
	The Essex of Lebanon	Rehabilitation Facility	1316 Deadra Dr Lebanon, MO 65536
	Lebanon North Nursing & Rehab	Senior Living	596 Morton RD Lebanon, MO 65536
	Lebanon South Nursing & Rehab	Rehabilitation	514 West Fremont Road Lebanon, MO 65536
	Northridge Place—Assisted Living by Americare	Assisted Living Facility	1500 Lynn St Lebanon, MO 65536
Miller County	Bristol Manor of Eldon	Rehabilitation Facility	1201 East North St Eldon, MO 65026
	Eldon Nursing & Rehab	Senior Living	1001 E North St Eldon, MO 65026
	Lee House Senior Living LLC	Rehabilitation Facility	105 North Mill St Eldon, MO 65026
	Miller County Care and Rehabilitation Center	Senior Living	1157 Highway 17 Tuscumbia, MO 65082
	Rock Island Village	Assisted Living Facility	619 East 8th Street Eldon, MO 65026
	St Elizabeth Care Center	Senior Living	649 South Walnut St Saint Elizabeth, MO 65075
	Stonebridge Lake Ozark	Senior Living	872 College BLVD Osage Beach, MO 65065
Morgan County	Ashbury Heights of Laurie	Rehabilitation Facility	299 Highway RA Laurie MO 65038
	Bristol Manor of Stover	Rehabilitation Facility	607 West 4th St Stover, MO 65078
	Golden Age Living Center	Senior Living	404 E Third ST Stover, MO 6578
	Good Sheperd Care Center	Senior Living	1101 West Clay RD Versailles, MO 65084
	Kidwell Home	Rehabilitation Facility	1000 Kidwell DR Versailles, MO 65084
	Laurie Care Center	Senior Living	610 Highway O Laurie, MO 65036
	Laurie Knolls	Rehabilitation Facility	610 Highway O Laurie, MO 65036





## Education

Camdenton R-III, Versailles, School of the Osage and Eldon High School participate in the A+ Schools program. In addition to A+, here are other highlights from the schools within the region.

The Camdenton R-III School District has a student population of over 4,115 students with eight school facilities on three campuses, employing 447 teachers and over 4,240 residents. The Camdenton R-III School District has earned the distinction of District Accreditation through AdvancEd. This is a protocol embraced around the world and is a clear and comprehensive program of evaluation and external review, supported by research-based standards, and dedicated to helping schools, districts and education providers continuously improve.

School of the Osage School District has consistently been rated as “Accredited with Distinction in Performance” by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The professional staff at School of the Osage totals 223, with 67.10 % holding a Master's degree or above.

Eldon R-I is a Designated A+ School. The A+ Schools Program was created in 1993 by state law as an incentive for improving Missouri’s high schools. The primary goal of the A+ Schools Program is to ensure that all students who graduate from Missouri high schools are well prepared to pursue advanced education and/or employment.

The Morgan County R-2 School District covers approximately 209 square miles. It includes the communities of Versailles, Gravois Mills, Laurie, Glensted and Excelsior. There are approximately 1,299 students in grades PreK-12. High school students graduating from Morgan County R-2 with an A+ Certificate are able to attend a two-year college or technical school in Missouri with 100% of their tuition paid by the state.

Lebanon R-III School District is the largest district in Laclede County. Lebanon school district hosts 4,274 students. The district met all standards in the area of student performance on achievement tests.

The Missouri state average for ACT scores is 20.70. Out of the 15 school districts in the region, four of them have scores above the state average. Four of the five largest school districts (the largest in each county) are above the state average.

Aside from primary schooling, the region's post-secondary opportunities have grown significantly in the last 15 years. Columbia College, State Fair Community College, Ozarks Technical Community College and Central Methodist University have campuses in the region.

In partnership with State Fair Community College, Central Methodist University offers degree-completion programs at the State Fair Community College-Lake of the Ozarks campus.

Central Methodist University College of Graduate and Extended Studies at State Fair Community College offers convenient locations, quality online or evening classes, and affordable tuition; financial aid available for degree seeking students. Central Methodist University offers small classes with individual attention from professors.

Degree-seeking students can pursue four-year degrees and/or a graduate degree; non-degree-seeking students can take classes to improve knowledge and skills.

Major course offerings at these post-secondary educational facilities include:

- Accounting
- Business
- Child Development
- Criminal Justice
- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- General Studies
- Middle School Education
- Nursing
- Psychology
- Special Education

Camden County Districts	ACT Score 2020
Stoutland R-II	17.4
Camdenton R-III	21.1
Climax Springs R-IV	19.8
Macks Creek R-V	17.6
Miller County Districts	ACT Score
Eldon R-I	22.5
School of the Osage R-II	20.8
Miller County R-III (Tuscumbia)	20.6
St. Elizabeth R-IV	22.5
Iberia R-V	18.0
Morgan County Districts	ACT Score
Morgan County R-I (Stover)	19.0
Morgan County R-II (Versailles)	20.3
Laclede County Districts	ACT Score
Laclede R-I (Conway)	20.6
Lebanon R-III	21.0



## **Higher Education**

Listed in this section are the Secondary Higher Education facilities in the four-county area of LOCLG. These are campuses or branch campuses of colleges and universities that offer higher education possibilities. These include certificate and training programs along with full two year and four-year degrees. Higher Education organizations are necessary for training new workers and making sure there is a trained worker base that continues to work in the community. Each location is broken into its own section along with a table showing the programs the school offers.

### **State Fair Community College**

State Fair Community College - Lake of the Ozarks Campus is the comprehensive community college for lake-area residents interested in general education classes, technical courses, associate degrees, and even bachelor's degrees.

The 28,000-square-foot location in the upper level of the Stone Crest Mall features 11 classrooms, three science labs, three computer labs, a testing center and a commons area for students.

SFCC-Lake of the Ozarks serves traditional students, nontraditional adult students who want to upgrade their skills and industries needing customized training. The Learning Force, the college's noncredit custom training unit, provides targeted short-term courses for a new skill, existing skill enhancement, certification preparation, and training specific to a company's equipment and processes.



### Areas of Study

<b>State Fair Community College</b> <b>3797 Osage Beach Pkwy, Osage Beach, MO 65065</b>	
<b>Area of Study</b>	<b>Program Award</b>
Teaching	Associates
Associate of Arts	Associates
Business Management	Associates
Criminal Justice	Associates
Construction Technology	Associates
Marine Technology	Associates
Medical Assisting	Associates
Medical Assisting	Professional Certificate
Medical Assisting	Skills Certificate
Practical Nursing	Professional Certificate
Nursing	Associates
Business	Bachelors
Child Development	Bachelors
Criminal Justice	Bachelors
Early Childhood Education	Bachelors
Elementary Education	Bachelors
Nursing	Bachelors
Psychology	Bachelors
Sociology	Bachelors

SFCC's The Learning Force provides non-credit short-term skills training for a company's new and existing workforce. Training categories include technical, production, workplace, leadership, quality, safety and others by request. As the administrator of Department of Economic Development | Missouri One Start programs, LOCLG assist in writing and securing grant funding for eligible companies to help offset the cost of training for their workforce to ensure workers have the skills necessary to perform their jobs now and as processes and technology changes; keeping the company ultimately competitive in their marketplace. Professional development certification prep courses are also available.

Because of a partnership with Central Methodist University (CMU), students attending SFCC-Lake of the Ozarks also can earn Bachelor of Arts or Science degrees in Business, Child Development, Criminal Justice, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Nursing, Psychology, and Sociology. CMU's courses at SFCC-Lake of the Ozarks are taught in the late afternoon and early evening to accommodate working students and are designed for students who already have completed Associate of Art or Associate of Applied Science degrees. CMU's courses also are appropriate for students who are interested in personal or professional enrichment and who are not seeking bachelor's degrees. CMU degree programs offered at SFCC are fully accredited.

#### **Columbia College (Osage Beach)**

Columbia College – Lake of the Ozarks was established in 1990 and moved to its current facility in 2005. The campus consists of a two story 17,400 square-foot building that offers large comfortable classrooms, a state-of-the-art science lab and high-tech computer labs. Students enjoy a large commons area with a small kitchen, computers and comfortable study chairs. Nursing students work in a medical

skills lab complete with current hospital equipment. Also, students in the Nursing program partner with Lake Regional to do clinicals and gain real world experience.

The venue provides a unique educational opportunity to working adults through its degree offerings and eight-week course format. With a national network and a robust online program, the college offers convenient courses to civilians and military learners. Much of the Osage Beach campus are students who are looking for career changes and are often older than high school graduates.

More than 950 students each year take a mix of in-seat and online classes here. Half of these students attend in person classes with flexible schedules to best fit their needs.

#### **Areas of Study**

<b>Columbia College (Osage Beach)</b> <b>990 College Blvd, Osage Beach, MO 65065</b>	
<b>Area of Study</b>	<b>Program Award</b>
Business Admin	Associates
Real Estate Management	Associates
Computer Information Systems	Associates
Arts	Associates
General Studies	Associates
Health Services	Associates
Nursing	Associates
Pre-Nursing Science	Associates
Health Sciences	Associates
Criminal Justice	Associates
Human Services	Associates
Nursing Certified Medical Assistant	Certificate
Business Admin	Bachelors
Human Resource Management	Bachelors
Management	Bachelors
Organizational Leadership	Bachelors
Cybersecurity	Bachelors
Management Information	Bachelors
General Studies	Bachelors
General Studies with Elementary Education	Bachelors
Political Science	Bachelors
Marketing	Bachelors
Criminal Justice	Bachelors
History	Bachelors

Columbia offers a flexible schedule that can accommodate eight-week courses for individuals to earn a mix of associates and bachelors' degrees. Columbia college is an accredited school by the Higher Learning Commission since 1918. It also offers 30 educational venues across the country making it easy to earn credits via online and in person courses.

### **Ozark Technical College (Lebanon)**

OTC Lebanon Center is located near Interstate 44 on Highway MM. The Lebanon Center serves as both a training facility for students and a support system for local professionals. The campus brings affordable higher education to southwest Missouri's rural communities while still maintaining the quality Ozarks residents have come to expect from the OTC system. Classes began in 2011, and the Center has continued to expand its programs in the years since.

The Lebanon Center features two state-of-the-art buildings: the Information Commons and Casey Hall. The Information Commons is the nerve center of the campus, housing both classrooms and administrative offices.

#### **Areas of Study**

<b>Ozark Technical College (Lebanon)</b> <b>22360 Hwy MM, Lebanon, MO 65536</b>	
<b>Area of Study</b>	<b>Program Award</b>
Arts Degree	Associates
Arts in Teaching	Associates
Business and Marketing	Associates
Early Childhood Development	Associates
Electrical Distribution Systems	Associates
Mechatronics	Associates
Manufacturing Technology	Associates
Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning	Associates
Nursing-Practical Nursing	Professional Certificate

Its main areas of study are technical service jobs that appreciate prior experience or training in the designated field. OTC Lebanon center has a training program for several tech jobs one of their largest being Electrical Distribution Systems and Mechatronics. The Electrical Distribution Systems program trains electrical linemen and distribution professionals in a two-year course with a lecture and lab component. This ensures that linemen are trained with the best knowledge to perform right out of school.



Missouri State University also has a campus in OTC's building that includes an Admission Office and several classrooms. OTC and MSU have a cooperative relationship with many students using Associates at OTC to get a jumpstart at a 4-year education. The MSU branch at OTC also offers a teaching scholarship allowing teachers to directly get an education in the area.

A+ Eligible Summary Over Time for Lebanon Students			
Academic Year	Enrolled Students	A+ Eligible Students	A+ Eligible %
2018-19	493	138	28%
2019-20	532	162	30%
2020-21	340	137	40%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>33%</b>

Above is seen in OTC Lebanon Campus enrollment data with a good portion of students being within the A+ program. This means that OTC can be a jumping off point for a full Bachelors or greater. OTC also has full time students and those who finish their degree within Lebanon. This is shown in the image below with 30% of fulltime students graduating.

Graduation Summary Over Time for Lebanon Students			
Graduation Cohort	Cohort Students	Cohort Graduates	Cohort Graduates %
16/FA	100	33	33%
17/FA	103	33	32%
18/FA	103	34	33%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33%</b>

#### Lake Career and Technical Center-LCTC

Lake Career and Technical Center is a technical center that aims to provide quality career, and career education for members in the community. Located in the City of Camdenton, LCTC has a facility built in between the high school and elementary buildings of Camdenton school district.

LCTC serves several high schools within the surrounding area including: Camdenton, Climax Springs, Macks Creek, and School of the Osage. This captures a large area of young adults wanting to learn about technical careers and advance courses.

These programs are set by local community leaders in a form of advisory board. These advisory boards direct what skills and programs are essential for the local businesses in the area. This means that a student in LCTC can make a direct entry into the local workforce. Also, in programs like nursing and computers they offer advance credits for higher education.

LCTC also offers programs to adults in the surrounding communities. One of the largest of these programs is the adults only course of Marine Service Technology. Along with a marine and power sports course LCTC offers programs that have direct impact to the Lake area.

### Areas of Study

<b>Lake Career &amp; Technical Center (LCTC)</b> <u>269 Dare Blvd, Camdenton, MO 65020</u>	
<b>Area of Study</b>	<b>Program Award</b>
Agricultural Education	Industry Recognized Credentials
Automotive Technology	Industry Recognized Credentials
Collision Repair	Industry Recognized Credentials
Computer Intergration	Industry Recognized Credentials
Construction	Industry Recognized Credentials
Culinary Arts	Industry Recognized Credentials
Graphics	No Credits Currently
Health Sciences	Industry Recognized Credentials
Law Enforcement/CSI	Industry Recognized Credentials
Marine and Power Sports	Industry Recognized Credentials
Metal Fabrication	Industry Recognized Credentials
Automotive Technology	Industry Recognized Credentials
Collision Repair	Industry Recognized Credentials
Computer Intergration	Industry Recognized Credentials
Marine Service Technology	Industry Recognized Credentials
Metal Fabrication	Industry Recognized Credentials

LCTC has connections to career and student organizations that operate outside of the program. These organizations are: FFA, FBLA, Future Healthcare Professionals, and SkillsUSA. Each of these clubs' help promote leadership, community service, skills competition, confidence, and social skills. It also hosts a range of updated and efficient equipment for students to learn from.

### **State Technical College of Missouri (Linn, MO)**

As part of our research LOCLG visited State Technical College of Missouri in Linn. We approached the technical college due to their very rapid growth they have experienced in the past six years. State Tech has grown in its number of facilities and the equipment within them and ranked number one college in the US for the past several years. The growth in the electrical distribution field and the turf management are currently undergoing new additions. This includes new electrical training areas and recently acquired golf course for testing ground for the turf management students.

Also, the area surrounding the State Tech Campus in Linn has been impacted with many new housing developments being built in and around the area for student housing. This means the area has bolstered their private housing base and created a market of affordable housing for students. The success of State Tech seems to be rooted in creating a centralized campus as a destination and rebranded itself as a place of learning and student life. For the students they have a place to call their college and to receive a true campus life experience. It is a place for the student and future Alumni to be proud of. State Technical College has a great record of 100% placement post-graduation students. This means a strong consolidated program aimed to bring a university and community feel to their location and programs.

LOCLG recommends adopting this model and creating a destination education program that suits the community. The region could benefit from technical and service-based jobs such as water/powersports, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, diesel maintenance and operation, and commercial/residential construction. Developing or expanding this style of education and technical programs with the campus life can bring new, young individuals into the community for school and ultimately bring new workforce and future residents of the area.



## **Economic Development Organizations**

### **Economic Development Partners**

Collaboration among community and economic development partners within the region is imperative to the success of our planning and implementation efforts. As LOCLG updated the CEDS, each of our planning and economic development partners were asked to provide information and data to incorporate in the CEDS, developing a strategy for the next five years that will have a positive economic impact.

### **Central Ozarks Development, Inc.**

Central Ozarks Development, Inc. (COD) was established in 1983 as a 501(c)(3) organization designated as a Community Development Corporation (CDC). As a CDC, the organization focuses on economic development in regard to community betterment, and business development, by providing educational and business support activities within the region. This organization is also responsible for oversight of the Revolving Loan Fund.

### **Eldon Development Corporation**

The Eldon Development Corporation (EDC) is a 501(c)(6) organization formed in 1998 to provide and plan for the industrial, commercial and residential growth of Eldon, Missouri. The EDC is governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Directors of not less than six persons. Currently, the City of Eldon, the Eldon Chamber of Commerce and the EDC work together to provide opportunities for a strong economy. The EDC serves as a private sector point of contact for anyone interested in developing a project in Eldon.

Eldon has a diverse economy supported by agriculture and manufacturing industries, as well as retail, medical and professional services. Eldon has reasonably priced land, skilled work force, zero property tax, low utility rates and a strategic location between the Missouri State Capitol and the Lake of the

Ozarks. Eldon's largest employer is Adient, Inc. who provides over 550 quality, high-tech manufacturing jobs for the area and continues to grow. The EDC encourages and helps foster entrepreneurship and work closely with area colleges to assist with job training needs.

### **Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council**

(LOREDC) is a not-for-profit public/private partnership that serves Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties. LOREDC is an active economic development organization that is supported by the counties and numerous cities within the region. LOREDC plays an active role in promoting the lake region with their economic development efforts. During 2015, LOREDC completed a number of important initiatives, including: Lake of the Ozarks Quality of Labor Workforce Assessment, LOREDC Partners in Marketing Grant Program, Lake of the Ozarks he most recent activity of the EDC was the Eldon Together Project. This project characterized a promising 10.24 acre-site within the Eldon Industrial Park which is construction ready. The site will also be submitted to the Missouri Certified Sites program as a result of the due diligence accomplished from the project. This work was accomplished through collaboration from the EDC, Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Government and the Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council.

The most recent activity of the EDC was the Eldon Together Project. This project characterized a promising 10.24 acre-site within the Eldon Industrial Park which is construction ready. The site will also be submitted to the Missouri Certified Sites program as a result of the due diligence accomplished from the project. This work was accomplished through collaboration from the EDC, Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Government and the Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council.

### **SCORE**

The lake region is fortunate to have a very active SCORE Chapter, with offices in Camdenton and Lebanon. The Lake of the Ozarks SCORE members help small businesses through mentoring and training. Volunteer counselors bring decades of experience in a variety of business disciplines and industries.

## **Chambers of Commerce**

The region is blessed to have seven active Chambers within the region. Each of the Chambers work closely together and often support joint efforts in community projects and economic development efforts. Four of the Chambers have representation on the Board as members of LOCLG, including: Camdenton Area Chamber, Lake Area Chamber, Lake West Chamber and the Lebanon Area Chamber. Working together in a collaborative effort has provided many opportunities and successes for our communities their residents.

### **Eldon Chamber of Commerce**

The Eldon Chamber of Commerce unites business, industry and professional individuals to improve Eldon's economy and build a better community. The chamber acts as an information center, maintaining data, folders, & maps about the community.



### **Camdenton Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Camdenton Area Chamber of Commerce's mission is to be the motivating force in coordinating, leading, and promoting business development, economic diversity, and tourism, while enhancing the quality of life and the natural resources through community involvement, recognition, and pride. A Board of Directors establishes the annual budget, develops positions on key issues, and has fiduciary responsibility in overseeing the operation of the Chamber. Committees include Air Show, Dogwood Festival; Budget and Finance; Member Services; Christmas on the Square; Leadership Camden County; EXPO and Nominating. In addition, ad hoc committees or task forces are appointed as needed.

The Camdenton Chamber of Commerce is a member of the Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council, Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments, Adopt-A-Shoreline Advisory Board, Lake of the Ozarks Water Safety Council, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Camdenton R-III Lake Career and Technical Center Advisory Board and ACCE-American Chamber of Commerce Executives. Close ties are maintained with other chambers in the area, the Lake of the Ozarks Convention and Visitor Bureau, University of Missouri Extension of Camden County, SCORE and the Tri-County Lodging Association. The Lake Area, Lake West and Camdenton Area Chambers of Commerce are continuing to collaborate on a number of initiatives on behalf of the business community

### **Lake Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Lake Area Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit, membership-driven organization comprised of approximately 550 business enterprises, civic organizations, educational institutions and individuals. The Chamber represents and promotes the area's business economy, and encourages business and industrial investment, broadening the tax base and providing employment. To business prospects and newcomers, the Chamber represents the community's pride and self-image.

The Lake Area Chamber serves the Lake of the Ozarks community including North Shore, Lake Ozark, Horseshoe Bend, Osage Beach, Kaiser and Linn Creek. It is one of the many chambers that surround the Lake of the Ozarks and is one of the largest in Central Missouri.

The business and affairs of the organization is managed by a governing body consisting of 15 Board of Directors. An Executive Director works with the Board of Directors to oversee the operations of the Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. Fourteen Standing committees and task forces consist of; Economic Development committee, Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Legislative/Governmental Committee, Membership/Marketing Committee, Street Meet Nationals Committee, Young Professionals of the Lake Committee, Area Beautification Task Force, Golf Tournament Task Force, Home Show Task Force, Nominating Task Force, Strategic Plan Task Force, Wine & Brew Festival Task Force and Annual Fall Dinner Committee.

### **Lake West Chamber of Commerce**

The Lake West Chamber of Commerce was established in 1987. The Chamber represents businesses along Highway 5, representing the cities of Laurie, Sunrise Beach, Gravois Mills and the Greenview area. With members from all around the Lake and central Missouri, the Lake of the Ozarks West Chamber of Commerce represents over 450 members. Focusing efforts on business expansion, attraction and tourism along with special events to enhance the business climate and quality of life at the Lake of the Ozarks.

### **Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce**

The Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce was established in 1948 and has been in existence for 73 years. During that time, it has been heavily involved in multiple events, situations and opportunities from which Lebanon and the area has grown and prospered. The Chamber has a 13-member board with a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. There are multiple committees under the Chamber umbrella including- Ambassadors, Leaders Growing Leaders, Local Makes Sense, Friends of the Fort, Business Expo, Our Town Your Town, Wall of Honor and the Lebanon Christmas Parade with each of these assisting the Chamber to reach its mission. That mission is "To develop and maintain a working partnership with business/service, the City and County to promote the area, help create new employment and to assist and help grow existing business while continuously improving the area's quality of life. The Chamber is led by its Executive Director and is charged with growing the Chamber, accomplishing the mission of the Chamber and works to advise, counsel and assist business while encouraging entrepreneurial efforts within the area.

### **Stover Chamber of Commerce**

The Stover Chamber of Commerce has been serving the Stover, MO area for over five decades. The chamber is made up of Stover's finest businesses and individuals, all working together for our future. They do not require that any interested party or business belong to any particular affiliation or possess any previous memberships to join the Chamber - all are welcome! The Chamber strives to organize support through regular participation in activities since volunteers are the engine that keep Stover strong.

### **Versailles Chamber of Commerce**

The Versailles Chamber of Commerce is an active chamber with all volunteer staff. They were established in 1979 to support the community of Versailles. They also serve the communities of Stover, Gravois Mills, Eldon, Syracuse and Barnett. The northern portion of Morgan County is home to a large Mennonite community in which they also serve. The Chamber currently has 100 members. The Chamber provides a number of tourist and visitor events, including the Apple Festival, Vietnam Memorial Moving Wall event, the Circus as well as a number of holiday events year-round in conjunction with the holidays.

### **Convention and Visitor Organizations**

In the Lake region we have two organizations that specifically focus on tourism and visitor relations. These organizations have worked hard to put Lake of the Ozarks on the map as a destination location, including getting the "Best Recreational Lake" in the nation for consecutive years by USA Today Readers.

### **Lake of the Ozarks Convention and Visitors Bureau**

The Lake of the Ozarks Convention & Visitor Bureau (LOCVB) was originally established in 1932. Over the years it has changed its names several times, however their purpose has remained the same, promoting Lake of the Ozarks as a tourist destination. LOCVB is supported by a membership of 650 plus business members in the region and through a portion of the tri-county lodging tax. LOCVB promotes the lake in a number of innovative and integrated marketing tools.

**Lake of the Ozarks Tri-County Lodging Association**

The Lake of the Ozarks Tri-County Lodging Association (TCLA) was originally established by local business owners to advertise and promote Lake of the Ozarks. After receiving the proper legislative authority and establishing the Business Districts in each of the counties, the local people were asked to vote on a lodging tax to support the marketing efforts. Marketing the region in magazines, newspapers, television, radio, internet, billboards and many other activities and events to encourage tourists to make Lake of the Ozarks a vacation destination.

**Lebanon Convention and Visitors Bureau**

Located in the Cowan Civic Center in Lebanon they promote tourism within Laclede County. There is a lot of activities from fishing, hiking, camping and Route 66 to promote within the region. The convention center often hosts great events that promote county music, gospel music, survivor training and a host of activities that attract visitors locally and from all over. In Laclede County, the Lebanon Convention and Visitors Bureau is also a very active organization promoting Laclede County

**Lebanon Regional Economic Development Incorporated**

Lebanon-REDI, is a not-for-profit, 501c(6) organization that was formed in 2004 to be the economic development organization for Lebanon and Laclede County.

The mission of Lebanon-REDI is "To strengthen the Laclede County economic base and increase the standard of living of all residents through retention, expansion, attraction and development of primary jobs and capital investments."

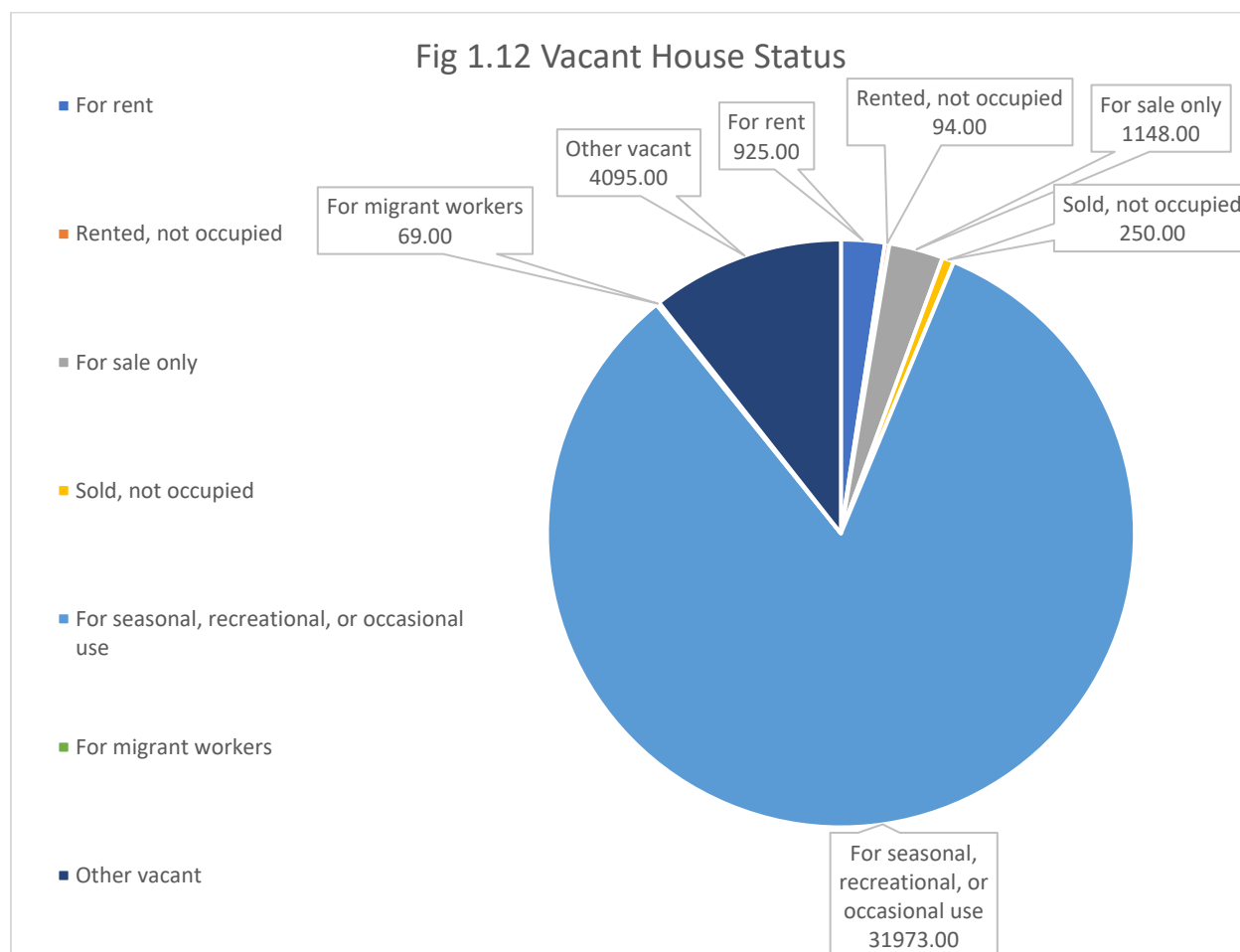
**Lake Arts Council**

Arts and culture at the lake is represented by a number of organizations and groups that belong to the Lake Arts Council. They focus on youth and community. There are a number of programs and events that bring both cultural opportunities as well as economic opportunities to the lake region.

## Housing

Understanding the housing situation in the Lake of the Ozarks region is complicated by the region's status as a tourist destination. Camden County has an extremely large number of second-homes which skews typical housing variables, such as vacancy rates. As a result, community leaders looked deeper into available statistics in order to understand the region's housing market.

### Regional Housing Stock Vacancy Rate (Stats America Regionizer data – 2020)



Of the region's 84,486 housing units, 38,554 units are vacant. The region's vacancy rate of 45% is much higher than the State of Missouri's housing stock vacancy rate of 11%, indicating a high number of vacant housing units. The Lake of the Ozarks Region is a tourist destination and many of the region's housing units are second homes and vacation homes. The increased demand for resident housing has outpaced the willingness of the 31,937 seasonal home owners to sell. Should these homes all become available, there is an imbalance within the four-county region with 73% of these homes located in Camden County. Second homes are regularly considered vacant in national statistics, although second homes are not the type of house commonly thought of as vacant by local residents. Housing units for

sale, units for rent, or units that are severely deteriorated are typical 'vacant' housing units. The graph (Fig 1.12) shows the breakdown of vacant housing by current status. The largest of these sectors are for seasonal and recreational use while the other sectors are severely behind.

### **Regional Housing Stock**

The four-county Lake of the Ozarks region contains 47,842 occupied housing units. These occupied housing units represent a household's primary residence. Seventy-two percent of the region's 47,842 primary residences are single-family, detached housing units. Mobile homes make up 14.8% of the region's housing stock. The remaining 12.5% is composed of duplex/townhomes, multifamily/condos units, and boats, RV, or vans. Occupancy rates for the entire housing stock vary across 31,973 homes in the four-county region are second homes, with 73% located in Camden County. Second homes are regularly considered vacant in national statistics, although second homes are not the type of house commonly thought of as vacant by local residents. Housing units for sale, units for rent, or units that are severely deteriorated are typical 'vacant' housing units. The graph on the previous page (Fig 1.12) shows the breakdown of vacant housing by current status. When second homes, homes for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, are excluded from the vacant classification, the region's housing stock vacancy rate is actually lower than the corresponding rate for the State of Missouri (8% compared to 10%).

Overall, a more in depth analysis of available data indicates a housing market that would benefit from additional housing construction. The high number of second homes, presently considered vacant, skews the availability of vacant housing units available to the region's full-time residents. A shortage of housing affordable, and safe housing either for purchase or rent for full-time residents is a commonly voiced concern.

A review of the local housing sales between 2019 and 2021 shows that all types of housing are in demand and selling quicker than average. Per MLS reporting, there were 663 more single family homes sold in 2021 than in 2019 for a 44% increase. This statistic is in direct opposition to the Census data indicating single digit population growth in the region. This level of increase cannot be solely attributed to families upgrading their living accommodations. Single Family homes accounted for 51% of the sales in 2021, whereas Condos accounted for 32% of sales. For all home types, the days on the market has decreased by an average of 52% to approximately 60 days or less. It has also been reported, that bidding wars will occur for properties and that the final sales will exceed actual values. To make the region stronger, more stable, and to help the workforce be housing secure, the housing market shortcomings must be addressed.

**Chapter 2**  
**Today and Tomorrow**  
**SWOT of the Region**

The Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDS Committee) completed a SWOT analysis that included consideration of the impacts COVID-19 had on the communities in addition to the standard economic factors included in an Economic SWOT analysis. The committee also spent considerable time at several of the planning meetings to closely identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the region that could be developed into actionable activities in the development of the CEDS 2022.

Residents and community leaders alike believe the Lake of the Ozarks Region is well positioned to grow and develop during the next few years. The region is experiencing unprecedented population growth that has not been documented via the Census due to the timing of the Census and the response the region had to the COVID-19 restrictions around the country. Developers are pursuing large scale projects around the lake, and business are expanding their footprint in all four counties.

Communities within the Lake of the Ozarks region have, over the last decade, completed various planning efforts to address specific regional issues to address the needs of specific communities. New planning documents help with growth, but more is needed to steer growth in a strategic manner. By developing and reviewing these plans, today's government and business leaders can judge the success of implemented solutions and determine which issues remain to be addressed. Including the results of the SWOT in the Critical Analysis will help paint a clearer picture of the region's strengths and challenges.

## **Identified Strengths**

### **Quality of Life**

The region is home to several great State Parks and other natural features and is a central strength of the Lake of the Ozarks region. The Quality of Life is the biggest strength of the region, and the beauty and surrounding environment of the Lake is our best asset. According to a 2015 USA Today 10 Best Reader's Choice Survey, the Lake of the Ozarks was voted "Best Recreation Lake" in the United States. In 2018 USA Today named Lake of the Ozarks as the 2nd best place in the nation for Fall Foliage. In the category of Best State Park, Ha Ha Tonka State Park was voted 4th best in the nation. The region is also home to Bennett Springs State Park, a popular trout fishing destination. The region's natural beauty also serves as an important backdrop to area historic districts, such as the Bagnall Dam (90 years old with 100-year centennial in 2031) and multiple cave complexes such as Bridal Cave, Jacobs Cave, Stark Caverns and Ha Ha Tonka State Park's River Cave. These environmental resources bring national attention to the region and attract visitors from around the world. The environment is also a major driver for people moving to the region. The SWOT analysis indicates that our best strength is the Quality of Life.

### **Development Groups**

The existing economic development groups operating within the Lake of the Ozarks Region is a sign of an involved citizenry. Business owners, government officials, and private residents have organized around a common desire to see the region expand. Existing groups have a wide range of skills and assets to offer the region. The Lake of the Ozarks Regional Economic Development Council (LOREDC) provides information to site selectors and prospective businesses. The Eldon Development Corporation has land

and capital to develop the community of Eldon. Lebanon's Regional Economic Development, Inc "REDI" focuses on Business Retention and Expansion; Business Attraction; Community Development; Workforce Development; and Corporate Development. The Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments has technical resources and insight to federal funding options to develop and implement development activities. These groups represent foundational pieces of economic development and regional growth.

### **Tourism Industry and Retirement Center**

The Lake portion of the Lake of the Ozarks Region is an extremely popular tourism destination and is becoming major retirement destination. The population explodes in the summer months with the popularity of the Lake. This could not be truer than the 2020 and 2021 seasons. The Covid Pandemic of 2020 took the county by surprise, and many communities across the nation closed their doors on businesses. The local leadership decided to remain open. This decision by City and County leadership proved to be the right one for the region. The visitors did not stop coming, in fact record numbers of visitors flocked to the region. The message was broadcast throughout the country that the Lake of the Ozarks was open for business and as the rest of the nation's economy closed down. Cities and Counties experienced record revenues and many people decide to stay, live and work here remotely. Additionally, many middle- and upper-income families who spend time vacationing at the lake during their working years then choose to retire at the lake to enjoy the golf, shopping, boating, and fishing. Many of these retirees are former entrepreneurs, business executives, account executives, marketing professionals, senior partners and Military Veterans. The accumulated business acumen in this population is staggering. Along with experience, this group has established financial portfolios, and many are interested in investment opportunities. This mixture of skills and investment resources is a strength for a community pursuing growth through entrepreneurship.

### **Review of Community Planning**

Residents throughout the region have identified several regional strengths. One strength noted in both the Lake Area Master Plan and the Entrepreneurial Assessment is the increase in education levels in the region. Additionally, the recreational opportunities and economic activities provided by the clean water of the Lake of the Ozarks is a huge strength of the region. Residents have also noted that broadband internet is being utilized by many businesses and is generating enough demand to support a number of different service providers. The Entrepreneurial Assessment also noted the presence of two SCORE chapters and the alternate funding opportunities available through Central Ozarks Development, Inc. in coordination with LOCLG.

## **Identified Weaknesses**

### **Infrastructure Development**

While Broadband access and internet options have increased in our more populated areas it continues to be a struggle in our more rural areas. Residents were concerned by the limited availability and speed of Broadband internet in many unincorporated portions (and some incorporated portions) of the region. When we look at infrastructure needs in addition to Broadband, there are also needs for water, wastewater, natural gas, electric, road and bridges maintenance/development.



## **Seasonal Employment**

The Destination Camdenton and the Lake Area Master Plan noted portions of the regional economy lack diversification and therefore lack of diversity in available employment opportunities. The seasonal business environment increases costs for business due to high turnover, increased training, and inefficient workforce due to inexperience. There is also an impact to the short- and long-term rental housing businesses since several units remain un-occupied during the fall and winter months.

## **Identified Opportunities**

### **Career Centers and Workforce Development**

The Eldon Career Center has had an excellent track record of working with its local employers to fill job openings with recent graduates. Superintendent Matt Davis has stated that students taking the district's building trades classes begin getting job offers by March of their senior year. The district has also implemented industrial maintenance programs through a partnership with State Fair Community College to provide a workforce for Adient and Quaker Windows. The district has ensured the students are learning skills needed by local employers. This strong connection between school districts and employers should be duplicated by the other larger districts throughout the region, such as at the Lake Technical and Career Center in Camdenton.

State Fair Community College is the administrator of the Missouri Department of Economic Development Missouri Works Training programs. They provide assistance to eligible companies to apply for Missouri Works Training grant programs to support the recruitment of a qualified workforce for a new company entering the region, customize specialized skills training for a company in growth and expansion phase and prepare a pipeline of qualified workers into a region.

State Fair Community College opened its doors in August 2016, is home to the Small Business & Technology Development Center specializing in no-cost counseling, low-cost training and support services to entrepreneurs and small business owners in any stage of their entrepreneurship idea and business. The Small Business & Technology Development Center operates through SFCC's The Learning Force and is part of Missouri's network of centers, made possible by a funding partnership through the federal Small Business Administration (SBA), the University of Missouri Extension and State Fair Community College. In 2021, the Missouri Job Center Lake Satellite office opened at State Fair CC in Osage Beach. This office provides services to employers and job seekers for Camden, Miller and Morgan Counties.

### **Developmental Cooperation**

The Lake of the Ozark's region is home to many development groups and chambers of commerce. These groups work independently to advance the needs of their respective communities. Regional leaders recognize an opportunity to increase cooperation between these groups. Greater cooperation would allow resources to be shared and allow the region to quickly respond to development opportunities. Local chambers would know which regional groups to contact for project assistance and regional groups would know who was active at the local level.

The HUB Business Incubator was created by the local community business development and support organizations. The HUB is designed to foster entrepreneurship in the Lake of the Ozarks region by

creating an environment in which existing businesses grow and expand and start-ups are encouraged and developed by building and coordinating an ecosystem of small business and entrepreneurship resources and services, such as mentoring, programs, connections, and financial support.

### **Economic Diversification and Laclede County**

Manufacturing based economies, like those found in Laclede County, suffer slowdowns due to national trends, but equipment and consumer goods are still purchased during national downturns. For manufacturing-based economies, threats to economic resilience come from specialization in a particular industry. Laclede County is known for its concentration of aluminum boat manufactures. As a result, its economy has been vulnerable to downturns in consumer demand for boats. However, Laclede County is also home to HVAC manufactures and a number of machining businesses. This diversification has helped reduce the impact of the business cycle. The skilled workforce in Laclede County presents a great opportunity to continue to diversify into other sectors of the economy. These opportunities may still be based on, for example, metal machining, but provide components for new sectors of the economy. With the change in outdoor recreational activities in 2020 and 2021, the demand for related consumer goods has increased. The boat manufacturing businesses are currently running at peak capacity. However, as already noted, a change in economic stability could significantly impact this industry. Another major manufacturer in Laclede County that has been able to maintain productivity is the Missouri Cooperage in Lebanon.

### **Review of Community Planning**

The most recognizable strength of the region is the Lake of the Ozarks, the economic driver that supports the region. The lake as an asset provides the recreational opportunities and economic activities for the tourist as well as full time residents. The activities of the lake need to be address in all aspect of community planning. The regional is experiencing unprecedented activities with projects and development. Several large projects are in early planning stages and community needs to plan for these multi-million developments. The object of the private investment is to develop the project in the best cost-effective manner and cities and county need to support the development and work toward a coordinated solution for both community and developer. Having Comprehensive plans in place provide the foundation to build and expand cities. These planning document assist with cities to be able to handle the growth as is comes.

## **Identified Threats**

### **Discretionary Income and the Lake Area**

The creation of the Lake of the Ozarks and the recreational tourism it fostered is an important driver of our regional economy. Today, tourism and retirement relocation continue to bring important dollars into the lake area's regional economy. Community leaders have worked to diversify the lake area economies; however, the Great Recession and the recent COVID 19 pandemic have demonstrated the area's vulnerability to national economic trends. There is little that the community can do to generate economic activity when tourists have no money to spend or are unwilling to travel. A strictly tourism-based economy is not a resilient economy.

### **Housing Stock**

As previously discussed, the region needs additional housing. Specifically, this housing should be targeted at full-time residents and include affordable housing options. The region's housing stock has been depleted in the past two years as more people have re-located to the Lake Area. This is due to the high number of people that are working remotely from their homes and have decided that living at the Lake of the Ozarks to work is more enjoyable than doing the same work from a metropolitan location. This change has produced record single family and condominium sales in 2020 and 2021. The result is that home prices have escalated and seasonal homes or sub-leasing of homes for seasonal employees has been drastically decreased. This has been experienced in the manufacturing centric cities as well due to the increased number of employees required for manufacturing boats, and the opening of Quaker Windows in Eldon. The high number of second homes in the region suggests many of these new homes are being marketed to visitors to the region. Efforts to attract businesses to the region will be hindered by the lack of available housing stock.

### **Broadband Planning**

Threats identified by residents include threats to the local economy and how that threat could impact the citizens of the region. The availability of broadband threatens growth in the rural portions of the region. The underserved area suffers the most from lack of Broadband. Current efforts to pinpoint the areas needing additional support through the Missouri Broadband Resource Rail project through the University of Missouri should be continued and utilized to enhance Broadband services.

# **Chapter 3**

## **Vision**

**Vision Statement:** Continued economic development in the LOCLG region with the promotion of tourism, light industry, entrepreneurship and collaboration between public and private entities leading to creation and retention of sustainable jobs and stimulating economic growth.



## Goals & Objectives

Local leaders in the Lake of the Ozarks Region desire a future with a more diverse regional economy, supported by a well-trained workforce and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. For these traits to become reality, six goals for the region's economic development have been identified. Economic development is dependent on workforce, regulations, quality of life, infrastructure, along with many other ideas. Therefore, the CEDS plan addresses a wide range of issues. Each goal is supportive of the broader community vision and of the other goals.

1. ***Development of a wide range of housing options and affordable housing choices in support of a strong, diversified regional economy.***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Ensure municipalities encourage a variety of housing types as well as affordable options for each type
  - b. ***Objective:*** Seek opportunities to assist communities and developers with grants and/or other subsidies that may encourage development in affordable housing. Development of a task force to study the housing problems to develop solid solutions.
  - c. ***Objective:*** Ensure municipal policies support affordable and safe housing options for residents.

2. ***Provide high quality infrastructure that supports future private investment/development.***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Encourage coordination of County and City governments as well as business developers to promote all infrastructure (water, wastewater, natural gas, broadband, and electric) development by working with state and local agencies
  - b. ***Objective:*** Improve coverage and available speeds of broadband throughout the region.
  - c. ***Objective:*** Increase awareness and involvement of Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments in regional activities that promote economic growth within the region.
3. ***Be a region with a strong entrepreneurial spirit where risk taking is encouraged.***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Expand local funding opportunities to help provide regular investment into local businesses that do not qualify for conventional financing.
  - b. ***Objective:*** Provide local people with opportunities to increase their skills necessary to increase successful entrepreneurial ventures.
  - c. ***Objective:*** Increase numbers of high-quality amenities for entrepreneurs and our workforce alike.
4. ***Embrace and expand the regional diversified economy, invest in what the region is good at, manufacturing and tourism.***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Develop an environment that will encourage a wide range of year-round economic opportunities within our region.
  - b. ***Objective:*** Ensure businesses are expanding to the changing regional economy.
  - c. ***Objective:*** Adjust business practices to meet market needs and offer services that accommodate public interests.
5. ***Be a home to a workforce that attracts business to our region***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Educate residents about training opportunities offered through our many educational facilities to continually advance overall quality of life in the region to retain high quality and trained workers.
  - b. ***Objective:*** Encourage workers to communicate their skills to employers.
  - c. ***Objective:*** Develop an environment that attracts young people to work and live in region
6. ***Be a region known for being fair and cooperative, and having common-sense regulations and oversight.***
  - a. ***Objective:*** Encourage continued collaboration between the public and private entities to help provide the resources necessary to promote economic growth
  - b. ***Objective:*** Seek networking, marketing, and economic development activities that provide community engagement
  - c. ***Objective:*** Develop tools to demonstrate and display collaboration among community organizations with successful projects.

**Why these Goals?**

Taken together, regional business, government and infrastructure influencers believe these goals and objectives represent key mechanisms for future growth in the Lake of the Ozarks region. Efforts were made to adapt each goal and objective to the needs of the region in support of overall economic development. Economic growth is reliant on a wide range of regional features goals and objectives. The following pages are dedicated to the discussion of each goal and objective and to describing how it improves a key factor of economic growth.



## Regional Goals and Community Capital

Local leaders throughout the region have recognized the need to address economic development in the Lake of the Ozarks region. Regional goals have been defined that promote a positive impact on the region's five types of capital: natural, human, social, manufactured, and financial. These five types of capital represent the interaction of infrastructure, education, environment, and finance needed to make a region grow. By addressing these five areas, economic development in the Lake of the Ozarks region will occur. Below are explanations of the five types of community capital\*.

### 1. **Natural Capital**

*Natural Capital, or environmental capital, represents the regions vast array of natural resources. The fields and forests in the region provide timber and agricultural products, and habitat for many birds and mammals. They also produce oxygen and help filter pollutants from our water. Our water, found in the Lake of the Ozarks, the Niangua River, Bennett Springs and in underground aquifers, provide drinking water and recreational opportunities. Our region is particularly dependent on Natural Capital. The region's economy is built on clean water, tourism around the Lake of the Ozarks and Bennett Springs, and water recreation in general for the boat manufactures in Laclede County. Anything that threatens this form of regional capital, threatens economic growth of the region*

### 2. **Human Capital**

*Human Capital represents the knowledge, skills, motivation, and general health of residents within the region. Human Capital is also a way to measure the joy, passion, and empathy of a region's residents. As employers consider locating to the region, or expanding in the region, they evaluate the quality of our workforce. It is important for residents of the region to have access to high quality education and technical training opportunities, as well as excellent healthcare to ensure regular good attendance at school or work. Employers also look at the emotional wellbeing and community engagement of residents to gauge the stress level of a region's human capital stock. Many of the lake area's current employment opportunities are seasonal tourism jobs requiring more soft, interpersonal skills, than technical skills. On the other hand, jobs in Laclede County require more technical knowledge and a specific set of basic mechanical skills. Each area within the Lake of the Ozarks region has a unique accumulation of Human Capital that contributes to the region's diverse offerings of skills and knowledge. As the region looks to diversify its economy it is critical to ensure the Human Capital is available to match a new, expanding industry.*

### 3. **Social Capital**

*Social Capital represents the connections and trust that exists between organizations, people, families, churches, businesses, governments, and schools within a region. These connections and trust allow for cooperation, information sharing, and the development of regional partnerships. Additionally, because of strong Social Capital that individuals are raised and educated to be productive members of society and add to the region's Human Capital. Strong Social Capital also facilitates access to financial resources by*

*building trust amongst lenders and borrowers and by sharing funding opportunities with those in your social group and those in other social groups. A region must have Social Capital to pursue common economic development initiatives and function as a cohesive community.*

**4. Manufactured/Built Capital**

*The roads, bridges, buildings, sewers, pipes, welding, trailers, cook tops, and paint booths all represent some component of the Lake of the Ozarks' Manufactured and Built Capital. These resources are used to make products, transport products, or transport community services throughout the region. Good roads and bridges are equally as important as new machines and buildings for the economic development of the region.*

**5. Financial Capital**

*Financial Capital represents the wealth, banks, and lending organizations within a region. Healthy Financial Capital allows companies to purchase equipment, individuals to fund education and training, and communities to build libraries, and schools. Financial Capital facilitates the creation of Manufactured and Human Capital, a positive regional development, and can facilitate the exploitation and overuse of Natural Capital and Social Capital, a negative setback in regional development. Access to Financial Capital will allow for entrepreneurial risks and the development of new ideas.*

## Explanation of Goals & Objectives

The goals and objectives have been outlined on the previous pages. Now we will delve into the details of these goals and the objectives, and why they are important to the region. Exploring the details helped the CEDS committee to determine specific strategies and actions that would relate to the goals and objectives.



### ***Development of a wide range of housing options and affordable housing choices in support of a strong, diversified regional economy.***

The Lake of the Ozarks region has become a region with scarce affordable housing options thus restricting local business's ability to expand and residents to stay in their communities. While second-home construction will continue to be an important driver of the local construction market, communities will need to incentivize construction of housing for residents. These new units will allow young professionals, young families, and established families to enter the housing market and move beyond starter homes. The successful building of a strong local housing market will make it easier for local business to take risks and expand operations.

Municipalities need to encourage a variety of housing types as well as affordable options for each type. Community research has identified a need in the region to expand housing choices and diversify the housing components. The Covid Pandemic has exacerbated the affordable housing market and pushed the real estate market even higher, pricing out the lower end homes. The current housing market is dominated by condominium and second home development significantly increasing those values and

making the need for more affordable options even greater. The shortage of local developers and/or builders and a perceived hesitancy in regional builders to invest in the local market has created a huge problem with inventory of any type of affordable housing. The demand has never been higher, but the workforce and builder are concentrating on the higher end homes or second home market. The market did not seem to address housing needs of residents, and the human capital we need to bring into the area to handle the increased development boom. Local agencies will work to educate the development community about regulatory barriers and where feasible remove regulatory barriers. Encouraging developers to build housing projects aimed at residents will support building the region's Human Capital.

In addition to encouraging more diverse housing types, community leaders recognized a need for housing accessible to all residents. Educating developers about available financing tools for building affordable units and educating property managers about requirements for accepting housing assistance will be critical for success.

LOCLG and cities officials can work together on opportunities to secure federal, state grants and or other subsidies that may encourage development in affordable housing. As a growing number of people, across the age and income spectrum, are choosing to be renters because of economic reasons, the need for additional rental housing options is an increasing need within the region. Communities need to collaborate with developers in ways that encourage housing growth and aid when available. The newly formed Community Development Corporation needs to address this issue and try to work with outside the region builders and developer to come here and build the affordable housing inventory to help increase our population.

Ensure municipal policies support affordable and safe housing options to residents. Regional leaders recognize a need to ensure all rental housing, across all levels of affordability, offer regional residents a safe and decent place to live and raise a family.





***Provide high quality infrastructure that supports future private investment/ development.***

The Lake of the Ozarks Region is actively engaged in planning activities related to infrastructure and transportation. The Council has completed and are working on several city comprehensive plan for cities within the region. That planning process focuses on infrastructure and the need to expand to assist with development opportunities and to plan a city for tomorrow's future. Other broadband planning projects are also be conducted to bring broadband to underserved areas. The effort in cooperation with the Governor's Office and is actively engaged in feasibility studies for broadband expansion throughout all four counties. There is an active Transportation Advisory Committee in the region that works with MoDOT to plan transportation improvements. Related planning efforts also include hazard mitigation plans for the four counties. Drawn from these planning efforts, three objectives have been identified as feasible for the next five years. For the purpose of the CEDS infrastructure can include but is not limited to water, wastewater, utilities, broadband, and transportation.

Encourage coordination between Economic Development Leaders and organizations to promote infrastructure (water, wastewater, natural gas, and electric) development throughout the region: An important first step towards achieving this goal is to increase communication between existing entities. As an example, there is currently no overlap between members of the CEDS committee and of the Transportation Advisory Committee. LOCLG can become the bridge and assist with a more cohesive communication. Currently there is representation on the CEDS committee by members of the region's special road districts and electrical cooperatives. Increasing communication between these groups helps ensure everyone is working towards a common goal and positively impact Social Capital levels by building trust and open communications between all parties.

Community leaders believe the increased communication between interested parties fostered by this goal will help identify barriers to expanding the entire region. Leaders have expressed interest in proactively addressing all infrastructure needs. Improving the overall infrastructure system within the region and improving the region's manufactured and built capital.

With the impact of distance learning due to COVID-19, broadband access is even more critical to the region. Considering that, the passing of the American Rescue Plan Act funds can be allocated directly to improving broadband access. In addition, Missouri's Office of Broadband Development Each county will need to identify the opportunity and solution for utilizing those funds.

Working with state and local governments on transportation infrastructure improvements: If the Lake of the Ozarks Region is going to develop a resilient economy, it must ensure workers are able to access employment before, during, and after economic shocks and natural disasters. Addressing this issue involves making improvements to the roads and bridges that make up the regional Manufactured and Built Capital, a process facilitated by the Transportation Advisory Committee and coordination with MoDOT. The passage of Senate Bill 262 and IJA and the new gas tax will all help to bolster new infrastructure project. New funding will help fund major transportation improvements projects in the region. MoDOT has several major projects scheduled for construction that will have huge impact to the region. Counties may be able to use ARPA fund to invest in the county roads and low water crossings that rural residents must cross to access the regional system. Finally, there is a need to establish alternative modes of transportation for those that are unable to drive or choose not to.





***Be a region with a strong entrepreneurial spirit where risk taking is encouraged.***

Community members and government officials in the Lake of the Ozarks region have identified Entrepreneurship as an important economic driver. A resilient economy must include businesses based within the region, as well as a strong mix of multi-state or multi-national companies, which helps insulate the economy from economic downturns in other parts of the country.

**Develop funding opportunities to help provide regular investment into local businesses.**

Access to capital is an important component of growing entrepreneurship. LOCLG has grown its lending activities with the latest COVID 19 Planning Grant and the latest Revolving Loan Fund #2, which which has provided small businesses loans to approximately twelve entrepreneurs to start or to expand their business. This program provides the capital resources small businesses and entrepreneurs need to maintain the backbone to the economic engine our cities and counties rely on. This program is only one example of the region's Financial Capital programs needed to support and generate new businesses.

**Provide opportunities to increase skills necessary to take entrepreneurial risk.**

Developing a pipeline of young entrepreneurs is a key requirement for economic growth. In order to ensure people are prepared to start new businesses, students should be exposed to entrepreneurship throughout their education process. While LOCLG and the CEDS committee do not have any control over curriculum taught to students, these organizations can make special presentations and complete activities with school-age children to increase exposure to entrepreneurship. Additionally, local business owners have expressed interest in creating direct opportunities for personal contact with entrepreneurs

through programs such as shadowing or internships. The social connections created during the student's experiential learning would make entrepreneurial ventures more successful. Developing Human Capital and optimizing Social Capital through training, internships and relationship building will lead to a more robust economic environment.

**Increase numbers of high-quality amenities for entrepreneurs and our workforce.**

To provide an enticing environment for young adults it is imperative that the region invest in amenities and programs targeted specifically for young adults. Improving quality of life has a positive impact on Human Capital and can result in improved Built Capital in areas such as cultural arts, theaters and entertainment venues.



***Embrace and expand the regional diversified economy, invest and grow the services associated with the abundant environmental assets!***

**The economy of the lake area counties is driven in large part by the region's key environmental resource, the Lake of the Ozarks.**

Visitors and retirees bring incremental revenue into the area because of the lake. The sales tax dollars and the counties' property tax rolls could not otherwise be reached without those demographics. While many of the tourism jobs generated as a result of the lake are not high paying jobs, the lake has allowed a larger economy to develop than would have developed without tourism. The Lake of the Ozarks itself is not the region's only environmental resource. Parks like Ha Ha Tonka and Bennett Springs also bring valuable tax dollars to the region. Local and regional leaders have acknowledged the need to protect these important environmental assets.

A priority for protecting the environmental resource includes seeking financial assistance to expand, make repairs to and develop new infrastructure (water, wastewater, natural gas, electric, broadband,

and transportation) vital to the region. The rural character and rugged topography of the region requires unique solutions such as the widespread use of on-site or small regional wastewater treatment facilities. The importance of protecting the region's Natural Capital cannot be overstated.

**Protecting the tourism industry and looking for opportunities to expand and reinvest in those areas is key to growth.**

Local organizations and business groups along with LOCLG suggest planning efforts look toward new tourism destination trends and expanding local events to assist growth. The Ozarks International Raceway is a good example of an introduction of a new tourism event that did not exist in the region. The proposed Sport Complex and Osage Ozarks Casino if/when built will bring additional new tourism destination attractions that are currently unavailable, but should promote major economic expansion. The new Rock Island Trail State Park will provide another attraction-based destination through Miller and Morgan Counties and Cities along the trail. These are just a few examples of when the local communities and businesses need to support new regionally significant development to maximize Social and Financial Capital.

**Foster an environment that will encourage a wide range of year-round economic opportunities within our region.**

Laclede County, with its strong manufacturing base, has a strong supply of jobs throughout the year. The lake area counties, on the other hand, have strongly seasonal economies. Local government and business leaders have identified the need to decrease the seasonality and lower the unemployment rate during the winter months. Expanding the tourism season from a recreational based seasonal tourism market to a yearlong tourist destination will help provide that stability. The region will also need to increase manufacturing and corresponding support businesses. This focus will contribute to the economic growth and it also provides much needed diversification.

**Ensure new development near environmental assets make a positive contribution to the region's quality of life.**

The Lake of the Ozarks is a central reason for the current economy of the region, especially Camden, Miller, and Morgan Counties. Many of the region's quality-of-life amenities are dependent on the lake and the recreational opportunities it provides. Additionally, Bennett Springs is an important source of tourism revenue for Laclede County. Therefore, it is vital that any new development in the region has the full support of the entire region. Embracing what the region does well provides a strong base for success.





### ***Develop and expand our workforce to attract business to our region***

As discussed within the entrepreneurship section, a pipeline of qualified workers is important for economic growth and to prepare the future workforce. Multiple business focus groups in the region have expressed a strong desire to include workforce goals in this plan. It is recognized that members of the EDAC have no direct control and little influence over the curriculum decisions of area schools or the training offered by most regional businesses. As a result of these limitations, partnerships are an important component of this goal. The two Missouri Career Centers within the region play an important role in workforce development within the region.

Three objectives have been identified as feasible ways to achieve this goal.

- 1. Educate residents about training opportunities offered through our many educational facilities to continually advance overall quality of life in the region to retain high quality and trained workers:**

Members of the CEDS committee believe a closer relationship should be developed with leaders of the career centers and workforce boards. These organizations specialize in the development of Human Capital, and stronger connections will build the region's Social Capital.

Regional leaders broadly recognize the role quality-of-life plays in the growth and development of the region. In general, the region is home to many amenities and a very high quality of life. However, retaining a highly educated workforce will require a broader range of amenities than what currently exists in the region. Efforts should be made to diversify the region's quality-of-life. Diversification will develop personal well-being associated with strong Human Capital and improve Manufactured and Built Capital. Building, Improving and expanding recreational facilities such as trail networks and other outdoor amenities will build upon current environmental capital. The development of Arts and Cultural networks that will embrace and educate residents on the rich heritage of arts and culture that already exist within the region will provide alternatives to traditional lake area activities. Building a strong sense of place, will be an attraction to younger generations.

**2. Encourage workers to communicate their skills to employers:**

Additionally, business owners, schools and local support organizations such as LOREDC have expressed a desire to endorse and promote training opportunities offered within the region. Available programs represent industry accepted credentials and help workers convey their strengths and abilities, and help the region convey its human capital to those interested in the region. By improving a worker's marketability, they are better able to find new employment if an economic shock results in job loss.

**3. Ensure local young people have skills necessary to take entrepreneurial risks:**

As also mentioned in the entrepreneurship discussion, direct opportunities for personal contact with entrepreneurs would serve as a unique workforce development tool. While limited in scope, shadowing and internship would help area students understand the local economy and develop a better awareness of local demand. This awareness represents development of Human Capital created through trust and social interactions.



***Be a region known for having cooperation, and common-sense regulations and oversight.***

The need for communities and regions to cooperate to stay competitive in tomorrow's economy has never been more important than now. The development groups and chambers of commerce in the Lake of the Ozarks region are a strong example of this type of regional collaboration. Groups involved in the growth and development of this region will be familiar with each other and work together to advance the region within public and private sectors. Communities that understand the real impact of collaboration will recognize a "win" for the City of Osage Beach is also a "win" for Morgan County. The advantages and tax dollars coupled with a new or expanding business spill over the boundaries of counties and municipalities throughout the entire region.

**Inspiring continued partnerships between the public and private entities to aid, promote and provide the resources necessary to endorse economic growth within the region.**

The region has a massive number of resources in the way of economic development entities that are supporting the tourism and recreation segments. There are also numerous economic development groups that remain engaged on specific areas of economic growth. Working together as a region to use the strengths of each of these organizations will only make the region brighter. Efforts will continue to bring these groups together with a framework of cooperation, thus dramatically increasing the region's Social Capital.



**Pursue networking, marketing and economic development endeavors that provide community commitment and establish cooperation among community organizations with positive projects.**

Collaboration between various entities across the region is important to the growth, retention, and expansion of our businesses, residents and tourists. Establishing the cooperation and presenting our success stories will encourage volunteers, business leaders, and community groups to continue to work as one for a stronger area. Expanding on the Social Capital that we presently support within our region will have big investments in future economic wealth.

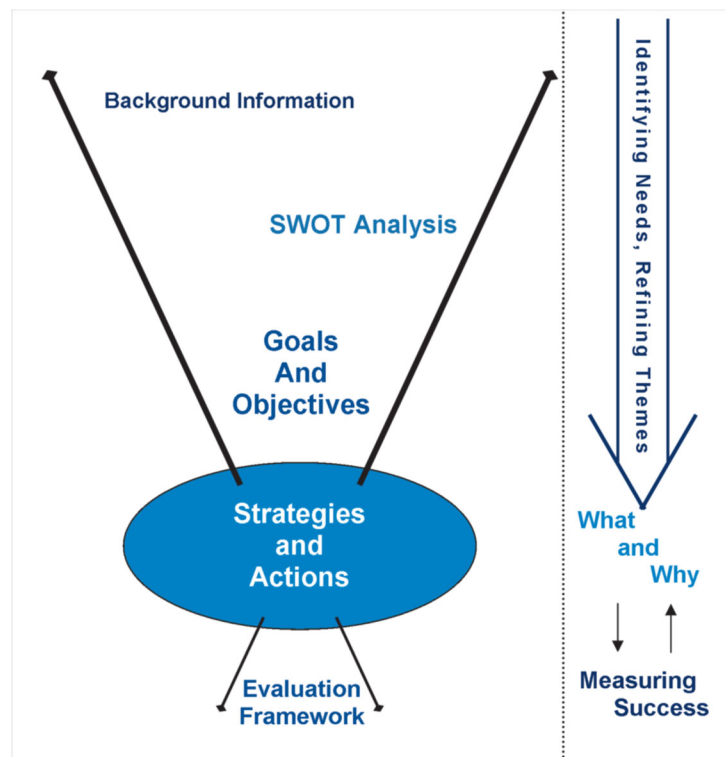
**Increase knowledge and participation of the Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments in regional activities that encourage economic growth within the region.**

Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments provides an important organizational, logistical and unbiased resource for the local county and city governments. They also provide a resource for various private and community-based organizations to help make the necessary connections for success. LOCLG also has a working relationship with the Missouri Department of Transportation and Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency, and many other state and local agencies. Continuing to work with MACOG and the state agencies will have a positive impact on the goals as outlined in this document.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Actions to Advance the Region**

The completion of a single action will not guarantee the continued growth and development of the Lake of the Ozarks region, but completion of dozens of actions can have a significant impact. It is important to not only recognize the need, but to implement comprehensive strategies and plans to sustain and boost the growth of the area's economy. The planning process has identified several important themes and regional needs as highlighted in the regional SWOT analysis. Each goal creates a crucial step in addressing these themes and needs. Developing strategies and detailed actions to address the goals is but one step to success. Actions that are implemented to advance the Region represent the culmination of issue identification and refinement that occurred through the development of the plan, as shown in the diagram below.



### Themes and Needs

Affordable housing, workforce, quality of life, and the business of Social Capital were common themes of discussion throughout the planning process. Additionally, the need to increase Human Capital skills, education, and health of the residents, were also recognized.

Community leaders consistently felt the future of the regional economy relies with local individuals starting and expanding small businesses, but also pursuing and attracting large businesses and corporations to the region. Expanding “Big Box” retailers and restaurants to the region will have a positive impact to Cities and Counties. However, most of the growth will be entrepreneurship and expansion of small business. This strategy that has proven to work in many rural communities

throughout the nation. Creating a culture where risk, reward and business development are all accepted and encouraged is all part of the strategy. Developing a common vision for the region is what the CEDS committee set out to do as they developed the specific strategies.

The region's economic development groups, described in the Robust Diverse Region, have all been identified for the strengths they can offer when implementing the strategies. Their continued support and leadership promote a unified vision for the region.

There is a common perception throughout the region that the area does not have a robust, well-prepared workforce. The workforce is just not large enough to handle the summer volumes from the tourists, therefore the region needs to draw in more skilled workforce to help bolster the lack of workers. These low levels of Human Capital availability are not just perceived. Unfortunately, no single cause and no one size fits all solution is available. Some business owners and members of various economic development programs see the issue as a lack of work ethic and a cultural expectation of government aid during the off season by segments of the local population. Especially around the lake. Still others see the disconnect between school leaders and business leaders as the cause of a workforce unprepared for local jobs, especially the region's trades. A final point of view contends the lake area's dependence on seasonal employment makes the region undesirable to quality workers.

Housing also represents a common need recognized by many leaders throughout the region. In some small and mid-sized rural communities, new housing is not being built by private sector developers. In some communities around the lake, private developers have a history of targeting second homeowners instead of year-around residents. Second homeowners also drive-up demand of housing in the region, thus impacting housing affordability for residents reliant on seasonal tourism employment. These trends have led to a housing market that is not serving the local community's needs. The effect of the Covid Pandemic also exacerbated the lack of affordable housing inventory due to the increased number of people purchasing residences in 2020 and 2021. Affordable housing opportunities whether purchase or rent are not available to young professionals and young families. Additionally, low-income residents have limited choices for quality housing at affordable prices.

Entrepreneurism, Social Capital, Housing, and Human Capital are all targeted by strategies and actions in Region Building. By combining the objectives found in the seven Region Building goals, regional leaders have sought to holistically address these, and other, themes and needs.

### **Entrepreneurism Strategy (1)**

The Regional Entrepreneurship Assessment and Strategy contained many important and useful recommendations and actions for improving the region's entrepreneurial environment. Leaders identified a set of those recommendations to include in the Region Building plan. These actions primarily focused on the development of Human and Financial Capital, although these actions do benefit other forms of community capital. Leaders also drew from goals related to housing and infrastructure to support the entrepreneurial strategy.

Entrepreneurs are job creators. They create businesses that start employing a few workers and can grow to employing several dozen. Firms with 2-100 employees had a total of 43,491 jobs in 2021.

Employment in these businesses experienced a surge in 2020 and 2021. This increase was unique to our region as it was a direct result of the Covid Pandemic. When most communities decided to close their

businesses, the four counties represented in the LOCLG region remained opened and flourished. A significant increase occurred in tourism from throughout the county as well as the vacation home sector who began living here full time to avoid shutdowns. Additionally, many businesses allowed employees to work remotely and they preferred to live at the Lake of the Ozarks versus in larger cities. Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis as of December 2021 shows that there is a total of 64,684 people employed in one capacity or another in the four-county region. Of those, 50,008 were employed in jobs that are not included in government, farming or Healthcare. This demonstrates a strong entrepreneurial presence since there are only few companies that employ more than 200 people. By implementing the identified Strategic Actions, and anticipating a continuation of current trends, the region should expect to see employment increase by up to 1.9% over 5 years. (Data provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis)

- Firms with fewer than 100 employees have the largest share of small business employment. (Source: SUSB)
- Private-sector employment increased 1.1% during the 12-month period ending in February 2019. This was below the increase of 1.8% during the prior 12-month period. (Source CPS)
- Unemployment rate trends below 5% during the tourist season and up to 7.6% in the offseason from January 2017 through December 2021 are expected to continue. There was a brief spike in unemployment April and May 2020 due to COVID related business closures. (Source BLS)

## **Entrepreneurial Actions**

Actions associated with this strategy have been organized based on the type of regional capital targeted. Human Capital actions are targeted toward area high school students. Manufactured Capital Actions are targeted to correcting the housing market, marketing existing development sites, and to the development of high-class recreational activities.

Gaining access to capital is a critical hurdle for entrepreneurs in the Lake of the Ozarks region. As a result, financial capital actions targeted towards growing equity investment opportunities, and increasing awareness of existing financial opportunities such as LOCLG RLFs. Financial actions also include efforts to create funding for future development expansion, infrastructure with broadband expansion and maximizing the community benefit of the LOCLG Revolving Loan Funds.

## **Identified Actions**

- 1.1 Seek opportunities for area high school students to interact with and learn from area entrepreneurs and other skill trades.
- 1.2 Offer educational opportunities for interested individuals about what it takes to be an entrepreneur.
- 1.3 Promote housing that will fit the needs of local permanent residents.
- 1.4 Promote and encourage the development of recreational trails and other community beautification projects, including arts and cultural activities.
- 1.5 Explore agribusiness and agritourism opportunities within the region with education, research and technical assistance.
- 1.6 Encourage and seek funding for the expansion of major infrastructure project within the region.
- 1.7 Increase the community impact of the LOCLG Revolving Loan Funds (RLF #1, #2).
- 1.8 Increase the availability of equity investors in the region.
- 1.9 Improve the suitability of start-ups for equity investments.
- 1.10 Develop a capital resource list to share with area businesses and potential entrepreneurs.

## **Resiliency Strategy (2)**



Resiliency is defined as the ability to recover quickly with little or no disruption to the previous condition. This can be applied to people, places and economic status. The Covid Pandemic or other natural disasters, climate change, and economic downturns emphasize the importance of addressing resiliency within the CEDS plan. Creating a more economically resilient community will mean looking at the physical infrastructure as well as the diversity of businesses within the region. Many businesses never recover from a disaster which could have huge economic consequences on the region. Strengthening economic resiliency is crucial for the future growth within the region, as well as the sustainability of current businesses.

### **Resiliency Actions**

Community leaders already play a part role in building more resilient communities, as all four counties within the region have FEMA/SEMA approved Hazard Mitigation Plans adopted and in place. Each county also has EOM working with the implementation of each of these Hazard Mitigation Plans. For a more complete look at the local hazards planning documents, you can see a complete list of actions identified for each county at [www.loclg.org](http://www.loclg.org).

The CEDS Committee felt that involvement and help of the Hazard Mitigation Plans is crucial and acknowledged by community leaders that have the capability to implement the actions as identified in those plans. The CEDS committee therefore focused on building identified action items to build a more resilient community regarding supporting businesses.

### **Identified Actions**

- 2.1 Aid and support where needed the execution of the Hazard Mitigation plans within the region.
- 2.2 Instruct residents and businesses on resiliency planning.
- 2.3 Promote broadband access and availability of internet access for businesses and remote workers
- 2.4 Foster business development, recruitment, and entrepreneurs that can provide year round employment opportunities.
- 2.5 Coordinating with community groups and projects that support year-long events throughout the year.
- 2.6 Offer educational opportunities for businesses to learn about natural disasters in support of business planning.
- 2.7 Educate business about financial support and services to help local businesses to recovery.
- 2.8 Expand and improve the infrastructure that provides resiliency and sustainability to important roads, bridges and community facilities.

## **Workforce Strategy (3)**

Discussion of the region's economy often includes mention of a perceived lack of qualified candidates and lack of workforce. Just not enough available candidates to fill the needed positions throughout the region. The issue of retaining a quality workforce is frequently raised in community conversations. As community leaders sought to create a workforce strategy, efforts were made to include actions addressing all perceived shortcomings of the workforce and the quality of life in the region. Affordable housing, infrastructure, education, transportation, and environmental actions all work towards developing and maintaining quality workers.

### **Workforce Actions**

Actions associated with this strategy have been established based on the type of regional capital targeted. Human Capital focused actions are targeted at area high school students and area workers. Social Capital targeted actions focus on creating art and cultural programs to build a sense of community along with building connections with partner organizations. Actions created to improve the region's manufactured capital include transportation system upgrades, rural broadband, and rental housing.

### **Identified Actions**

**3.1** Support chances for area high school students to explore regional career opportunities through technical exposure and internships.

**3.2** Support workers to aggressively improve their own job marketability

**3.3** Host workshops on customer service skills before the spring hiring season.

**3.4** Connect with Central Region Workforce Investment Board on efforts to make the region more attractive to employers. (Example: Certified Work Ready Community program)

**3.5** Promote housing targeted at affordable permanent residences inventory throughout region. (Example: LOREDC Housing Study)

**3.6** Expanded the development of rural broadband services in underserved areas.

**3.7** Development of sidewalk and trail networks.

**3.8** Invest in the regions Art and Cultural resources to attract professionals to the region.

**3.9** Analyze the financial needs of both the workforce and employers, implement competitive compensation plans to attract and retain a quality workforce.

## **Financial Capital Strategy (4)**

The financial capital strategy is three-fold, building financial strength and resources for business development while maintaining the natural environment of the lake area as well as offering affordable development opportunities. Businesses need access to reasonable capital funds to start and build a business. Tourism is a primary source of income for many of the local businesses. Preserving and expanding on the region's best assets must be maintained in order to continue to attract the tourists to the region. Expanding the tourism industry by developing the land that has the best opportunities for Affordable housing allows homeowners to build equity and wealth while providing a home for their family. Thus, strengthening their personal financial capital. Rental housing is also needed to support the local workforce and community development within the region for those that prefer or need the flexibility of rental housing.

## **Financial Capital Actions**

The CEDS Committee carefully included all these financial strategies and actions together as they felt they all went hand in hand and supporting future economic growth within the region. Developing a strategy that cross pollinates the business development, the tourist industry and the housing needs within the region was the goal in putting these actions together to support a stronger community.

## **Identified Actions**

- 4.1** Urge community leaders to support affordable housing opportunities for both primary home purchases and rental units.
- 4.2** Coordinate with State agencies to provide important regulatory updates that impact small businesses.
- 4.3** Support and expand the local Community Development Companies (CDC) in providing housing assistance to low income families.
- 4.5** Involve economic development groups such as SCORE, HUB, REDI, New Growth and any others in educational activities and mentoring opportunities that share much needed information for start-up businesses.
- 4.6** Continue to attract Federal and State funds to develop new infrastructure important to the region for continued growth.
- 4.7** Development of comprehensive plans for cities to guide future development.
- 4.8** Identify needs for additional capital investments and seek additional funding sources to fill the gap in high-risk investment areas.
- 4.9** Continue to market and expand the USDA SRF, SBA and Revolving Loan Funds (RLF#1, #2) within the region.

## **Social Capital Strategy (5)**

By developing a strong, regionally focused plan and soliciting feedback from a wide range of businesses and interest groups, trust can be created outside of those involved in the plan development. By seeking out broad-based support and involvement in plan implementation, new connections can be made within the business, education, and interest group communities. Actions included in Region Building are intended to be achievable and results-oriented to create buzz and generate community buy-in. Community leaders also see an opportunity to build trust throughout the region by boosting involvement in regularly occurring planning efforts. All four county hazard mitigation plans will be updated during the Region Building planning horizon. The region's Transportation Advisory Committee also prioritized transportation improvements on an annual basis. By purposefully involving new groups in the development and implementation of the Region Building plan, and through intentional involvement in regularly occurring planning activities, community leaders feel overall levels of social capital can grow to a point where larger, more detailed, projects may become more viable.

### **Social Capital Actions**

Actions associated with this strategy is on building trust and enhancing the overall social capital within the region.

#### **Identified Actions**

**5.1** Establish annual joint Transportation Advisory Committee meeting with the CEDS Committee meeting, offering training opportunities for the crossover of transportation infrastructure needs and economic development needs for the region.

**5.2** Support and participate in meetings with local businesses to learn more about the needs and seek opportunities for providing support for local business retention and expansion.

**5.3** Foster working groups and business relationships with existing entrepreneurs, schools, and economic development groups to increase cross-business development and workforce support.

**5.5** Working with local business leaders and local schools to develop a robust internship program that will support local businesses with workforce needs.

**5.6** Create networking opportunities for all the regional organizations that have a strong interest in economic development, providing educational opportunities to foster growth and potential new projects within the region.

**5.7** Support networking opportunities for individuals, businesses, and other equity partners that are interested in providing business investment opportunities.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Measuring Success**

Measuring the success of the CEDS plan is very important to community leaders. Community involvement is vital to ensure progress is made in areas with the most impact. Additionally, they want to know if accomplishments related to various actions are having a significant and positive economic impact within the region.

### **Overall Performance Measures CEDS 2022**

1. Partnership and support from both private and public sectors to support new economic growth within the region.
  - a. Sales Tax revenue adjusted for inflation rate (adjust tax revenue)
  - b. City, County and Regional results
2. Number and quality of Jobs Retained/Created.
  - a. Evaluate employment participation rate, unemployment rate, average wage
  - b. Compile industry sectors for both Counties and Region.
3. Affordable housing units built and occupied
  - a. Primary occupied residences versus second homes
  - b. Census, Local Housing Reports/studies and Next Site Data
4. Broadband Expansion
  - a. Missouri Broadband test results data
5. Educational Attainment
  - a. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Graduation Rates
  - b. Local Post Secondary Institutions Degree results
  - c. Census Data

### **Strategies Performance Measures CEDS 2022**

1. Entrepreneurism Strategy
  - Increased number of programs available to potential entrepreneurs.
  - Increase RLF funds available in the region.
  - Increase the number of assistance programs available to small business development opportunities.
2. Resiliency Strategy
  - Continue to support the multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans throughout the region.
  - Providing resiliency planning, training and technical assistance to communities with identified needs.
3. Workforce Strategy
  - Increased marketability of workforce, expectations of increased average annual income.
  - Continue the drive to complete the Certified Work Ready Community Program for all Counties.
  - Identify and implement educational programs to attract a diversified population to the region.

#### 4. Financial Capital Strategy

- Direct grants and more RLF funds in the region.
- Grow relationships/partnerships with local financial institutions to support non-traditional financing options.
- Develop education opportunities provided throughout the region.
- Utilize local organizations such as SCORE, REDI, SBDC and HUB partnerships along with continued educational opportunities to expand existing businesses and increase start up business ventures.

#### 5. Social Capital Strategy

- Implement a communication tool to coordinate cross functional support for each organization's projects.
- Develop accessible programs to support growth opportunities.