



North Central Regional
Planning Commission
Serving Kansans Since 1972

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



A YEAR IN REVIEW

The North Central Regional Planning Commission remains committed to its vision that communities in rural Kansas will favor choices that embrace innovation, increase prosperity and demonstrate resilience. Within this Annual Report, you will find some of the highlights and progress toward that vision from our various program areas.

We certainly could not accomplish our work without the help of numerous organizations and partners from across the state. A special **thank you** to our members and to the many individuals who volunteer their time to serve on boards and committees of the NCRPC and its affiliate, NCKCN. We look forward to working together in 2022!

OUR MISSION

Advancing rural Kansas through comprehensive planning and development services.

THE NCRPC REGION



12 counties
83 cities
133,874 people
(2020 Census)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HELPING COMMUNITIES PROSPER



NCRPC assisted organizations and communities with numerous projects that were awarded private or public funds. With assistance from NCRPC, **2 Cities and 1 County were awarded Community Development Block Grant funding** for FY2021 to assist with two water source and/or distribution system improvement projects and the replacement of emergency warning sirens. When completed, these projects will have invested over **\$4.6 million** back into the region.

NCRPC staff completed the administration of **16 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Response Supplement (CDBG-CV) grants** on behalf of cities and counties. The 2020–2021 awards of approximately **\$2.1 million** assisted businesses impacted by COVID-19 and meal programs in the region.

NCRPC assisted 7 cities with **project planning and application preparation** for FY2022 Community Development Block Grant projects. The results of these applications will be announced in 2022.

NCRPC assisted multiple entities in preparing **environmental reviews, pre-applications, and applications** for other funding sources including USDA Rural Development Loan/Grant programs, the KDHE State Revolving Loan Fund programs, the Kansas Department of Transportation, EDA and private foundations. Of the projects that were awarded funding in these categories in 2021, **another \$6.8 million will be invested** in the region once complete.

HOUSING

STRENGTHENING HOUSING

- 6 communities were assisted with project management of housing rehabilitation and/or demolition projects. **Nearly \$556,000** has been invested in the service area through housing projects this year (CDBG and local match funds).
- **80+ housing inspections** including asbestos, radon measurements, First Time Homebuyer, energy audits, and lead risk assessments/clearance.
- 2 properties managed for local developments (affordable housing units).
- Home Ownership Pilot Programs were launched in 2 counties (Jewell & Saline) and Dickinson County completed its second year. The program **assisted in the purchase of 25 homes in the region** through down payment and closing cost assistance.



WEATHERIZATION

IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY



The NCRPC administers the Weatherization Assistance Program for **41 counties in Kansas**. The program provides weatherization assistance to low-income households to increase the energy efficiency of their homes. This reduces residents' energy costs and ensures their health and safety. In 2021, **93 homes were weatherized** with approximately 233 people served. Two large, multi-unit projects are also currently underway.

BUSINESS FINANCE

BUSINESS FINANCE SOLUTIONS

In 2021, the NCRPC Business Finance program assisted 7 projects in obtaining funding (1 retail, 6 service type businesses) to either start, improve, or expand a business. The NCRPC Business Finance Program assisted these projects with direct loans and/or in obtaining financing through its loan packaging services in the amount of **\$301,500 for projects totaling \$1,018,250**. These projects **plan to create 2 jobs and retained 42** in our core 12-county service area.

The NCRPC administered a new **NCK Business Relief Loan Program** which assisted North Central Kansas businesses adversely impacted by COVID-19. The US Department of Commerce through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) provided just over \$1 million of funds. The program has **disbursed \$1,014,000 in loan capital to 16 businesses in the region** including 5 manufacturers, 3 retailers and 8 service-type businesses. Other project funding sources have contributed another nearly \$2.5 million. The businesses that were assisted plan to **retain 109 full-time jobs**.



HOMELAND SECURITY PROGRAM — FISCAL AGENT

SUPPORTING SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES

NCRPC continued to serve as fiscal agent for **6 Regional Homeland Security Councils in Kansas**. Project investments address the planning, organization, equipment, training and exercise needs that help build local and regional response capabilities and encourage citizen safety and preparedness.

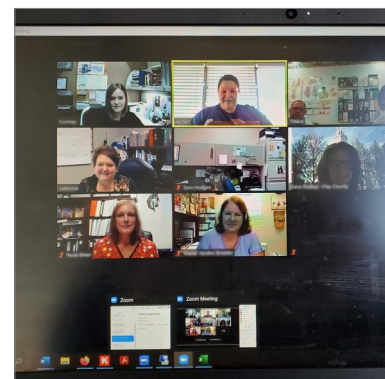
Adjustments are still being made this year due to COVID including limited in-person trainings and exercises. The Incident Support Team was able to hold their IST Symposium in February 2021 at the Webster Conference Center in Salina, Kansas. Several County Commissioners from around the State were able to attend to see what the IST Team does in the case of a disaster. Equipment purchased through Homeland Security continues to be used around the State to fill gaps including the use of trailers being used for COVID testing and vaccinations in most of our regions.




REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH

IMPROVING AND PROTECTING HEALTH

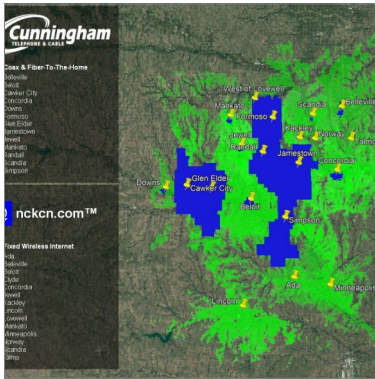
NCRPC continued to work with **13 local health departments** through the North Central Kansas Public Health Initiative (NCKPHI) to improve and protect the health of their communities. The NCRPC provides administrative, fiscal and support services through the regional public health emergency preparedness and response grant.



 Learn more about NCRPC services at:
ncrpc.org/services

NORTH CENTRAL KANSAS COMMUNITY NETWORK CO.

CONNECTING RURAL HOUSEHOLDS AND BUSINESSES



NCKCN (a NCRPC affiliate) connects rural households and businesses to the Internet by providing high speed fixed wireless Internet at **14 locations within 6 counties**. With speeds up to 50Mbps download for all its service locations and up to 100Mbps download to select locations, NCKCN (along with its partner Cunningham Telephone & Cable, also known as CTC) are paving the way towards the next generation (x5G) of Internet access throughout North Central Kansas.

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NCKCN and CTC also provides free Internet at public locations within their service areas. Since 2015, this free service has been known as **NCK-WiFi and is available at 20 locations within 9 communities** with more hotspots expected

to come soon. For more about NCKCN's service plans and coverage, visit: www.nckcn.com/service/internet/ and www.nckcn.com/coverage/.

2021 SPECIAL PROJECTS

SUPPORTING A RESILIENT NORTH CENTRAL KANSAS

- An EDA CARES Act grant award has allowed the NCRPC to offer ongoing business and non-profit trainings throughout 2021. With the help of consultant Laura Leite, **NCRPC offered 20 free trainings in 2021 to North Central Kansas residents, businesses and nonprofits with more scheduled through June 2022**. To view the training calendar or to sign up for trainings, visit: <https://www.ncrpc.org/resources/trainings/>.
- Additionally, during the late spring and early summer of 2021, NCRPC, along with consultant Deb Ohlde, hosted round table discussions with stakeholders in the primary 12-county service area to determine ongoing impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific focus was on the concept of **resiliency**. Information gathered from these discussions was utilized to develop a **NCK Pandemic Recovery and Resiliency Plan**. This plan can be seen here: https://www.ncrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/resiliencyplan_2021.pdf
- NCRPC is currently working with Marvin Planning Associates to develop new county comprehensive strategic plans for Ellsworth and Lincoln Counties, as well as to update the Clay County comprehensive plan. These plans are expected to be completed in January 2022. The comprehensive planning effort was made possible through a partnership with the Flint Hills Regional Council and grant funding from the Department of Defense FY 2020 Community Economic Adjustment Assistance for Compatible Use and Joint Land Use Studies.
- Finally, beginning in 2020 through 2021, NCRPC **administered SPARK funding** for Mitchell, Ottawa and Washington Counties. Additionally, the NCRPC is currently working with Mitchell and Washington Counties to administer their **ARPA funds**.

CONTACT US

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