

HOW CAN WE BE MORE
COMPETITIVE AND PUT KANSAS
ON THE BEST PATH TO CHALLENGE
IN THE **GLOBAL ECONOMY?**





Housing

- Intersection between workforce and housing
 - Companies will build if they know employees can live nearby
 - Prospective workers will stay if housing is available
- Department is working closely with Kansas Housing Resources Corp. (KHRC)
 - Quarterly meetings with stakeholders
 - Must include the industry in these discussions
 - Goal is to produce creative solutions that are workable
- Create solutions in Rural Kansas
 - Expansion of Rural Housing Incentive District (RHID)
 - How to assist with bringing costs down for building
 - Need tailor-made solutions that fit Rural communities
 - Governor's Housing assessment



Lack of Innovation Growth

- Data is clear: Kansas lacks in innovation entrepreneurship
 - No concentration around innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship
 - Must align with partners to achieve progress
- Requires both Tech and Bio-Tech focus
 - Lack of an eco-system remains a problem
 - Angel Investor Tax Credit must be renewed
 - However – the Angel program can only be part of the solution
- This is where the Global economy is headed
 - The world's largest employers started as high-risk, innovative startups
 - If Kansas does not adapt, opportunities will not be here for future generations



Education/Workforce Training

- Commerce must be in sync with our education partners
 - Focus has to go beyond college, to also address needed skillsets
 - Important to have our universities aligned with needs of our companies
 - We need opportunities that allow companies to reach young Kansans at an earlier age to create a workforce pipeline
- Focus on Research
 - Must commercialize
 - Good examples of research triangle in North Carolina or at Iowa State University
- Workforce Training 2.0
 - How do we adapt to, and best move forward with a post-COVID approach to talent needs



We need to think with a Regional mindset

- It's too hard to succeed with 105 different plans
 - While county needs often are similar, sharing assets will make regions more competitive
 - This is a way to achieve pragmatic efficiencies
- Communities and counties can identify priorities to work on together
- Stronger Regions = Stronger Communities = Stronger Statewide economy

We need to add new, sharper tools to our economic development toolkit

- Kansas has great tools, but they do need to be refined and improved
 - STAR Bonds can be more efficient and transparent
 - Growing Angel Investor Tax Credit Program is a priority
 - Time to tweak High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP)
- However, we also need new tools that reflect our current challenges to be competitive
 - Allow for vertical housing on Main Street
 - Promote remote working
 - Create competitive grants to foster innovative growth
 - Promote Research and Development
- Framework For Growth plan is timely
- The conversation must continue

**BACK to
BUSINESS**

Kansas
Department of Commerce