United We GROW

# Regional Economic Development
# Strategic Plan

Prepared For:
The City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Prepared by:
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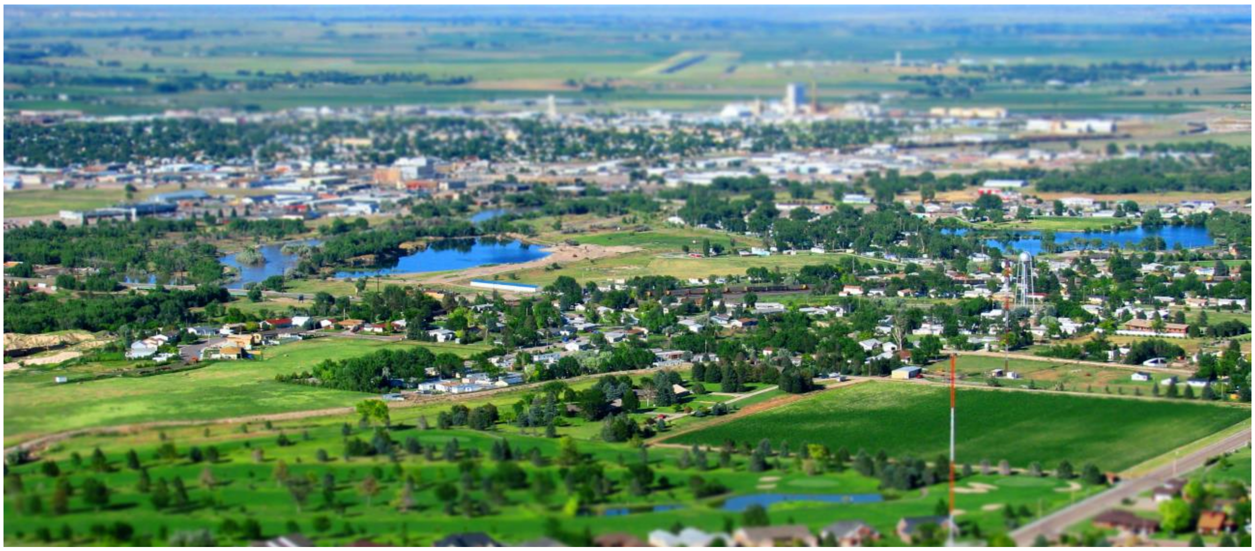
With Support From:
Foote Consulting Group, LLC



***"United in vision, strength, and leadership for the growth of the region's economy and workforce."***

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# Executive Summary

In its continued pursuit of economic and workforce excellence, the region of Scottsbluff, Nebraska engaged Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) and Foote Consulting Group, to provide target industry analytics, strategic planning, community assessments, as well as recommendations for site selection and improvements to current economic development processes. Throughout the strategic planning process, TPMA focused on planning for a regional approach to economic development, and encompassed input and analyses from Gering, Terrytown, and the rest of Scotts Bluff County. This strategic plan is a product of interviews and conversations with public, private, civic, and institutional stakeholders to identify issues, clarify perceptions, and pinpoint opportunities. Ultimately, the region's partners and stakeholders guided the process to define priorities and actions for plan implementation that included research and analysis of quantitative data, interviews and public forums with community members, and facilitated discussions with City Staff, City Council, a Steering Committee, and other institutional stakeholders involved in economic and workforce development.

The Scottsbluff Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan is a dynamic document that builds upon the communities' strong existing foundation. With the planning process completed, the communities' stakeholders should capitalize on the momentum and begin implementation of the recommendations. The Strategic Plan's core recommendations are:

- **Build a Consensus Coalition**
- **Convene to Encourage Tourism Collaboration**
- **Forge the Scottsbluff – Gering Highway Initiative**
- **Focus Business Attraction on Targeted Industries**
- **Expand Current Business Retention and Expansion Program**
- **Grow Entrepreneurism and Small Business Development**
- **Revitalize TCD Board Development**
- **Cultivate Existing Talent**
- **Drive Talent Attraction**
- **Establish a Talent Pipeline**

Recommendations include identified partners, roles, and responsibilities with background and rationale for its relevance. Additionally, comprehensive data reports are provided to support the Scottsbluff – Gering Region's marketing and outreach efforts.

# Introduction

## Project Framework

April 2014, the City of Scottsbluff engaged Thomas P. Miller and Associates and Foote Consulting Group to develop a regional economic development strategic plan. The approach focused initially on the evaluation of its existing workforce, education, economic development process, current industries, and available sites for development. Furthermore, the planning process and analysis sought to identify strategies that would enable the region to build on its strong foundation and boost its vitality. In order to accomplish these objectives, the TPMA team's approach included stakeholder interviews, quantitative data analysis on targeted industries and the labor force, evaluation of workforce and economic development processes, and an assessment of developable sites.

## Interviews

During on-site visits in May and August 2014, TPMA and Foote Consulting Group conducted over sixty (60) interviews, as well as a community input session targeting a broad range of individuals and organizations

involved in economic development, workforce development, and civic initiatives. The purpose for these interviews and events was to identify regional strengths and challenges, as well as future opportunities. The interviews also collected information on perceptions and issues that would impact the development process. These interviews served as a tremendous source of information, and this strategy could not have been developed without the input of the many individuals involved[1]. A full list of interviewees is located in Appendix I.

## Open House

TPMA conducted a Community Open House allowing the general public to have a channel in which they could have their voices heard. More than sixty (60) community members attended and participated in the event. At the open house, participants were presented with several "Big Ideas" for enhancing economic development within the Scottsbluff region. TPMA then facilitated an activity in which each participant was given 10 dots representing money that could be invested in these big ideas and were encouraged to allocate their 'money' to the concepts. Participants could allocate the 'money' in any dispersion they thought appropriate– all on one poster (one idea), balanced throughout the ideas, or another dispersion they saw as appropriate. The activity allowed the public to prioritize funding for the "Big Ideas." TPMA has ranked the ideas based on the amount of money the community proposed to spend on them with "Quality of Place" first and "Strengthen Tourism" last.

[1] See Appendix A for full list of interviewees

## 1. Quality of Place

Related to the quality of life of a community is the quality of place. Quality of place refers to how the community looks, what cultural activities are available, and what options are available for entertainment and recreation. To improve quality of place, TPMA has outlined the following considerations:

- Enhance the outdoor recreation and adventure activity options available in the region
- Build on the successes of Scottsbluff and Gering downtown revitalization efforts to further enhance authentic and unique community spaces
- Promote succession planning for key businesses in the community
- Increase opportunities for young professionals to start their own businesses
- Identify special character districts and protect/enhance their assets

**Public comments**:
It was readily identified that more public spaces attractive to young professionals were necessary to draw in and retain a greater share of this demographic. Also noted was the need for aesthetic landscaping, as well as more small businesses to encourage development.

## 2. Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support

Most communities in the USA are well schooled in the necessity of conducting business attraction as a part of their economic development effort. Less understood among regions is the importance of integrating their efforts to support the expansion and retention of existing businesses, and to provide assistance to small businesses and new business startups.  Topics presented towards entrepreneurship and small business support included:

- Provide support and assistance to small business startups or early stage companies via an incubation or accelerator strategy
- Determine the  needs within the existing business base and ensure those needs are met
- Attract early stage companies to the region and target companies whose owners have  ties to the community
- Ensure Western Nebraska Community College business incubator and major higher education institutions in Nebraska are integrated into this effort

**Public comments**:
Many participants were concerned about the viability of small businesses, specifically noting that businesses locating in the region must be ones that will be sustainable. Education was also identified as a considerable barrier, as well as the need for more programs available that support small businesses.

## 3. More and Better Jobs

Targeting economic development efforts on several specific industries will help bring focus to the type of businesses and jobs desired in the region. Specific industries presented for gaining more and better jobs included:

- Food Processing/Agricultural Products
- Data Centers
- Oils/Gas/Mining Industrial Equipment
- Warehouse Distribution
- Industrial Machinery/Metal Fabrication & Recycling
- Plastics Products
- Electronics Assembly
- Call Centers (Higher-end tech support inbound call centers)
- Healthcare

**Public comments**:
The need for higher-paying jobs was the most common comment in the discussion of job growth.

## 4. Regional Collaboration

Through the many sessions, it was clear that there was a distinct, competitive divide between neighboring communities in Scotts Bluff County. While regional competition is not always a negative factor, it often does more to hinder the possibility of development on a larger scale due to a lack of cooperation between communities. Ideas presented to combat this competition and promote collaboration included:

- Form a consensus committee with representation from all communities, governments, regional organizations and associations that would:
  - Establish regional funding priorities for state investments
  - Identify and foster opportunities to achieve efficiencies where possible
- Support the development of regional assets, no matter where in the region they are located
- Build and support a regional identity for external business attraction, while maintaining individual community identities within the region

**Public Comments**:
The common theme of the public comments requested representation from all communities, so that all have an equal voice in the growth and development of the region. This includes the promotion of local business development and the execution of future strategic plans.

## 5. Workforce Quality

In order to attract better industries and higher quality jobs, it is necessary to develop and improve the quality of the existing workforce. Ideas presented to achieve this goal included:

- Support efforts like Career Academies in the secondary schools to prepare young people for the jobs of today and tomorrow
- Engage the public workforce system, community college, public schools, and businesses in a regular dialogue to identify needed skills, and tie curriculum to those needs
- Establish a joint venture between Twin Cities Development Corporation, the Harm Center and the Western Nebraska Community College to focus on a "skill up" effort to meet the needs of business
- Develop a method to measure and demonstrate skills attainment of the community to businesses and developers

**Public comments**: None

## 6. Strengthen the Urban Core

A successful community needs a strong core at its center. Recent revitalization projects in downtown Scottsbluff and Gering can be catalysts for building an even stronger foundation for the region's urban core. Ideas presented to develop this foundation included:

- Design a mixed-use corridor, including such things as higher-density residential, professional services, hospitality, recreation, restaurants and retail
- Create a viewshed (or places along the corridor) to highlight the spectacular views and proximity of the Scotts Bluff National Monument
- Redevelop the corridor in such a manner as to link the two downtown districts in a way that will support, not compete with the individual revitalization efforts

**Public Comments**:
The public comments were often aimed at focusing on areas outside of downtown, as well as developing a recreational path system between Scottsbluff and Gering.

## 7. Certified Development Sites

When selecting a site for a new facility, most businesses have some common criteria that drive its location decision. Many states have adopted these criteria and offer a certification for sites that meet the "shovel-ready" requirements of most of these industries. Nebraska does not have a certification program, but the region could lead the way by developing its own assurance to business and industry for sites that meet this criteria.

**Public Comments**: None

## 8. Quality of Life

Quality of life is defined as the general well-being of individuals and societies. One can measure the quality of life in a region by examining the cost of living, commuting times, crime rates, walkability, environmental planning sensitivity, or proximity to cultural arts amenities. Ideas presented to improve the quality of life within this area included:

- Create attractive and economic housing opportunities for young professionals
- Encourage a strategic approach to the innovation of ideas and businesses within the region
- Promote regional assets such as the health of citizens, low crime rates, educational excellence, and short commuting time

**Public Comments**:
Many comments were made about improving housing options for families and young professionals, as well as developing more and better assisted and independent living facilities for senior citizens.

## 9. Strengthen Tourism

Scotts Bluff County and the City of Gering both fund tourism promotion efforts and have organizations engaged in supporting tourism in a variety of ways. Increasing tourism as a means of supporting economic growth could involve building on these successes to create a more robust regional effort with all of the region's communities contributing to the investment. Opportunities to strengthen tourism include:

- Enhance the quality and variety of attractions to appeal to different markets (History, Adventure Tourism, Agro-Tourism, etc.)
- Regionalize tourism funding to support unified marketing and administration
- Create a world-class regional visitors center

**Public Comments**:
A common comment was the location of the Gering City Landfill and its proximity to the Scotts Bluff National Monument, noting that such a facility should not be within eyeshot of the landmark.

Based on the feedback obtained during the interviews and open house, TPMA identified the community priorities. TPMA analyzed the results and conducted quantitative data analyses on industries and the labor market to develop the recommendations included in this Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan.

## Regional Target Industry Analysis

In coordination with the interviews and open house, the TPMA project team conducted a Target Industry Analysis focusing on the economic and workforce strengths of the Scotts Bluff County Labor Shed. According to the U.S. Cluster Mapping Project[2], an industry cluster is "a regional concentration of related industries in a particular location…making regions uniquely competitive for jobs and private investment. They consist of companies, suppliers, and service providers, as well as government agencies and other institutions that provide specialized training and education, information, research, and technical support." For continuity purposes, we have identified the Labor Shed region as the "Scottsbluff-Gering Region" throughout the strategic plan.

An analysis of a region's existing industries is essential for future economic and workforce development activities. Recruiting new industries and growing existing industries to strengthen the local economy is a serious undertaking, requiring a significant commitment of time and resources. Target industry analysis involves identifying industries that are both desirable and appropriate for a region, and that are most likely to respond positively to a recruiting/marketing plan for the region.

Based on this analysis, Thomas P. Miller and Associates and Foote Consulting Group recommend that the Scottsbluff – Gering Region focuses on four strong regional industry clusters and two aspirational industry clusters. The four strong regional industry clusters contain a high number of current and projected regional industry jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantages (shift share). The two aspirational industries aim to either attract businesses that do not currently have a strong industry presence, or to supply industries not currently within the region. The aspirational industries can be future target industries for the County to consider. In addition, within each target industry are supporting industries (ranked 1- 10), identified to be the most likely to grow within the region. For reasons of brevity, TPMA has provided a synopsis below of the target industry analysis for the Region. TPMA encourages readers to access the full Target Industry Analysis report found in Appendix III.

[2] U.S. Cluster Mapping Project, http://www.clustermapping.us/content/clusters-101

## Strong Regional Industries

For industries with a strong regional presence, cluster industry definitions were identified using nationally recognized industry cluster definitions from StatsAmerica[3], coupled with location specific definitions from the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice Nebraska Report (2010)[4]. Clusters defined within the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) 2014 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)[5] also used StatsAmerica cluster definitions, and so are considered in the methodology developed within this analysis. All Industry NAICS code definitions are included in the comprehensive Target Industry Analysis report found in Appendix III.

**Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology** | *Defined by the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology StataAmerica cluster and the Agricultural Machinery and the Agriculture & Food Processing clusters from Battelle*

**Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals** | *Defined by sub-sections of the Manufacturing Supercluster from StatsAmerica and the Precision Metals Mfg. cluster from Battelle*

**Plastics and Chemicals** | *Defined by the Chemicals and Chemical-Based Products StatsAmerica cluster*

**Health Services** | *Defined by the Health Services cluster from Battelle*

Using the cluster definitions described above, quantitative data were retrieved for each 6-digit NAICS code, including current and projected jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantage (shift share). Industries with over 10 jobs in 2014 and projected for 2023 were then chosen to comprise the specific target industry clusters.

## Aspirational Industries

Understanding that the identified aspirational industries aim either to attract businesses that do not currently have a strong industry presence, or to supply industries not currently within the Scottsbluff – Gering Region, customized methodology was developed for both Data Centers and Oil and Gas Support Industries.

**Data Centers** | *Data Centers are defined as Data Process, Hosting, and Related Services. Because this industry does not currently exist within the Scottsbluff – Gering Region, this report uses the specific Data Center cluster definition from the Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013)[6] to identify NAICS code cluster definitions. The data for this cluster are then highlighted as present or not present within the region – providing*

[3] http://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/reports/detailed_cluster_definitions.pdf

[4] http://www.neded.org/files/businessdevelopment/battelle/Main_Report_NE_CompetitiveAdvantageAssessment_v8a.pdf

[5] http://www.nepadd.com/CEDS_Final_Draft_2_2.pdf

[6] http://www.bigskyeconomicdevelopment.org/siteadmin/images/announcements/FINAL-Industry-Cluster-Analysis-and-Marketing-Plan.pdf

*an opportunity for the County to engage in targeted business attraction efforts to attract and support a Data Center.*

**Oil and Gas Support Industries** *Due to a strong transportation cluster and access to highway and railroad lines, Scotts Bluff and the greater region have opportunities to support the oil and gas industries within these neighboring states. Focusing on the upstream and midstream definition of the oil and gas cluster, as defined by the Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013), supporting industries to the oil and gas clusters in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana were identified. The data for this cluster are then highlighted as present or not present within the Scottsbluff – Gering Region – providing an opportunity for the region to engage in targeted business attraction and expansion efforts.*

Information on Strong Regional Industry and Aspirational Industry clusters are presented below.

## Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology

Due to its prominence in the regional economy and culture, agriculture has been called the backbone of the Scottsbluff – Gering Region by its citizens and leaders. The agribusiness, food processing, and technology cluster is important to the entire state, but because of its concentration in the Scottsbluff – Gering Region, it has significant importance. Due to both proximity to raw materials and a strong west coast customer base, the region is a notable place for this industry cluster to prosper.

Contributing to the regional success of this industry cluster is research conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension (UN-L Extension) into the creation and deployment of technology and crops for the future; such work assists with the retention, export growth, and development of the industry cluster. Included in TPMA's are:

- Crop Production and Animal Production account for 56% of the top 16 industries in this cluster
- There is a strong industry concentration and regional competitive advantage in Beet Sugar Manufacturing
- There is a high earning potential in Postharvest Crop Activities, Other Animal Food Manufacturing, Veterinary Services, Farm and Garden Machinery, and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers
- There are a high number of jobs currently available for individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent

There is ample opportunity for attracting manufacturing businesses into the Scottsbluff – Gering Region based on TPMA's findings for this industry cluster. In addition, there are opportunities to build on the current transportation and trucking industries.

## Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals

Advanced manufacturing and precision metals is an important industry cluster in the United States, responsible for over $2 trillion of output into the economy in 2013.[7] In many states, including Nebraska, this industry is a top attraction and the focus of many expansion initiatives. Due to the prominence of existing companies, this industry cluster has significant impact on the regional economy. The Scottsbluff – Gering Region also has good potential for many types of manufacturing operations, particularly those tied to agriculture, mining/drilling, and possibly renewable wind energy-related manufacturing (e.g., nacelle units, gearbox, generator and transformer components, and blade assembly). Markets for the steel building industry are mostly international, making the growth and retention of manufacturing activity and cutting-edge products paramount to this region. More specialized technical training will help to ensure the future success of this industry cluster in the region. Prior research by TPMA shows:

- All sub-industries under Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals are strongly concentrated within the Scottsbluff – Gering Region. Each shows a very high earning potential
- All industries except Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing have a regional competitive advantage
- All Advanced Manufacturing sub-industries are projected to have positive growth within the next decade
- Most sub-industries require only a high school diploma or equivalent

[7] National Association of Manufacturers

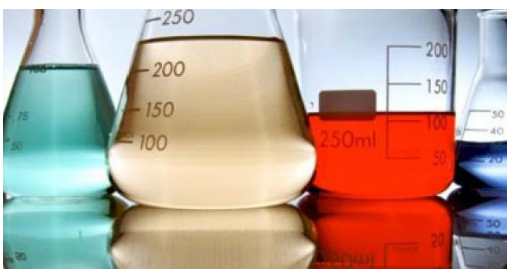
## Plastics and Chemicals

Plastics represent a major industry for the United States. In 2012, the U.S. plastics industry employed 892,000 workers at 15,949 facilities and invested $9.6 billion in new capital equipment – an increase of nearly $1 billion over 2011. Currently, chemicals rank second in Nebraska's manufacturing sectors. Nebraska produces more than $1.3 billion in output from chemicals such as fertilizer, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals, while the Scottsbluff – Gering Region Shed shows a proportional intensification of the industry.[8] Likewise, plastics make up a large part of the region's manufacturing sector.

**Data show a favorable environment for continued success in the Plastics and Chemicals industry due to a very strong regional concentration when compared to that of the United States**

In the Scottsbluff – Gering Region, this industry cluster is successful due to low transportation costs associated with direct access to the market. Labor costs for this industry are also low in the region, with a large pool of the necessary unskilled and semiskilled workers available in the region. However, for continued success in and advancement of this industry cluster, the region will need more skilled labor, as well as a more developed rail system to make transportation more efficient.

- Of the four key industries within Plastics and Chemicals, Rubber and Plastics Hoses and Belting Manufacturing account for approximately 60% of the total jobs, and has the largest projected growth
- All sub-industries within this cluster have very high earning potential
- All occupations in this industry cluster are forecasted to experience positive job growth



Overall, there are compelling opportunities for manufacturing attraction of supporting industries in the Plastics and Chemicals industries. In one example, BioPlastics -- an Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology industries, Crop Production sub-industry -- is a supply industry for the Plastics and Chemicals industry cluster.

## Health Services

Health Services is a widely spread industry cluster, though not yet highly specialized in any regional grouping of Nebraska. It is identified as the number six primary cluster driving Nebraska's economy, according to Battelle's Competitive Advantage Assessment for Nebraska (2010). Both the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Nebraska Labor Market Information Office project the strong recent growth in health services to continue with above-average employment gains through 2018. These projections are consistent with past employment trends within this sector and highlight a continued need for healthcare.

[8] *Nebraska Manufacturing Facts*. Rep. National Association of Manufacturers, n.d. Web.

Regional West is one of just three Level II Trauma Centers in the state of Nebraska, as verified by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma and designated by the State of Nebraska Health and Human Services Department. The clinical quality of this Center attracts patients from outside the region and serves to enhance the overall quality of life within the region.

Overall, data shows that there is a positive increase in jobs for all occupations in this industry projected between 2014 and 2023, which is consistent with national workforce trends. The National Center for Healthcare Workforce Analysis[9] has identified three major drivers of future demand for healthcare professionals:

- Demographics—nationally, the population segment aged 65 to 74 is expected to increase by 50 percent between 2008 and 2050. As people age, they consume more healthcare—particularly high-intensity services in the most expensive settings (hospitals and nursing homes.)
- Expanded health insurance coverage, largely as a result of the Affordable Care Act, will reduce access barriers for a previously uninsured population, and increase the demand for services.
- Rising chronic disease prevalence (such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer) in the general population will continue to require labor-intensive disease prevention and treatment services.

Specifically, there is a large volume of jobs for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses. An increase in the demand for healthcare services due to the reasons above also impacts various medical care support professions. The occupational data does not reflect a significant volume of jobs for the allied health professional positions of health educators and healthcare social workers (although positive growth is still observed). However, the changing dynamics of the health services marketplace, including the ways in which healthcare is delivered, may cause these occupations to grow at a faster rate than projected.

The insurance industry is closely related to the health services industry cluster, and occupational and staffing dynamics will shift over the next several years as more individuals gain access to private health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Regional Care, Inc. (RCI), based in Scottsbluff, is an independent third-party insurance administrator, processing claims and employee benefit plans for clients throughout the United States. RCI and other insurance-related companies may experience additional growth in the coming years.

[9] National Center for Healthcare Workforce Analysis (2013). Projecting the supply and demand for primary care practitioners through 2020. Available at http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/supplydemand/usworkforce/primarycare/

## Data Centers (Aspirational)

Data Centers is a target industry with great potential in the Scottsbluff – Gering Region. In particular, the exceptionally low cost of power and available dark fiber access within the region are assets that provide a tremendous advantage for this industry. Additionally, there are specialized state incentives that make this industry appealing. The available incentives include state corporate income tax rates, sales taxes, and personal property taxes. Although infrastructure improvements would need to be completed in order to be fully operational, a potential future for a data center site exists in the region. The following industries define the Data Centers industry cluster within the Scottsbluff – Gering Region:

- Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
- Computer Facilities Management Services
- Computer Systems Design Services
- Custom Computer Programming Services
- Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services
- Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals
- Other Computer Related Services
- Software Publishers

Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services specifically represents data centers, and other data hosting/processing services, within the region. All other industries within this target industry cluster are used to support the start-up and development of data centers.

## Oil and Gas Support Industries (Aspirational)

Oil and Gas Support Industries serve as an opportunity to support the shale gas/oil play and mining regions of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming. When examining these surrounding oil and gas industries, strong potential subsectors include: pipe, frac sand, mining/industrial equipment, chemicals, and trucking/hauling.

By serving more than one nearby region, there may be significant transportation savings available – although regional success in this industry may demand a better developed rail system to service the surrounding states. The low cost and reliable electric power in the region also contribute to the potential success of this industry cluster.

The Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster in the Scottsbluff – Gering region is defined by industries that are required to support oil and gas mining and extraction in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana. The industries identified for Scotts Bluff to target in this supporting cluster are industries needed by the surrounding states, but not heavily concentrated within the states themselves.[10] These industries fall into three main categories:

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[10] Key export industries were examined for North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana using the following approach: (1) Identified supply industries for the oil and gas industry in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana using the Upstream and Midstream NAICS definitions from Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013); (2) Removed all industries with less than $10,000,000 amount for North Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado and less than $5,000,000 for Montana; (3) Removed industries with 50% or higher presence within the state; (4) Identified industries with medium/high mobility; (5) Removed

- Services
- Transportation/Logistics
- Manufacturing

As the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster is aspirational, not all industries within the cluster are currently present within the region. In addition, projected employment in all industries within the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster are based on past trends. However, job projections adjust and change as new industries enter into the regional market.

## Industry Crossover

To better understand how Scottsbluff could target their recruitment and retention efforts around the Oil and Gas Aspirational Industry, TPMA analyzed the connections between the identified Oil and Gas Support Industries and the Supply Industries for Scottsbluff's strong regional industries.[11] When identifying industry crossover, in-region purchasing percentages paired with the amount of goods/services a target industry cluster purchases from each Oil and Gas Aspirational Industry were considered.[12]

As expected, most of the Oil and Gas Support Industries with a stronger regional presence[13] were also those that had the highest level of industry crossover.[14] Crossover is especially present within the Oil and Gas Transportation/Logistics Support Industries and the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster. This cluster purchases a total of $14.3 million from three Transportation/Logistics industries,[15] and spends on-average 38% of this total (or $5.4 million) within the region. This signals a strong and healthy foundation of transportation/logistics within the region, which can be built upon to better support key target industry clusters, such as Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology.

When examining single-industry impacts, the Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing industry is especially important within the Plastics and Chemicals target industry cluster. This cluster purchases 86% of their $1.6 million in Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing from within the region – totaling $1.4 million of in-region spending. 86% is the highest in-region purchasing percentage within the supply industry-support industry crossover.

## Fiber Assets

Supporting these strong regional target industries and aspirational industries are very low electric power costs and the wide availability of fiber access in the region. The 100% fiber optic network ranks the Scottsbluff-Gering Region in the top 5% of the "most wired" areas of the country, and includes a 750-mile

duplicate industries across North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana; (6) Incorporated data for the Region for each NAICS code; (7) Sorted by industry presence within the Region; (8) Sorted by industry type

[11] Strong regional industries, as identified with the Target Industry report for Scottsbluff, include: Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; and Health Services.

[12] Industries with least 35% in-region (e.g. a target industry cluster purchased at least 35% of the cluster's goods in a particular industry from within the region) and over X in supply spending (the amount of money spent by the target industry cluster to purchase goods and services from other support industries) were considered as significant within the analysis.

[13] A stronger regional presence is defined by employing more than 10 employees within the region.

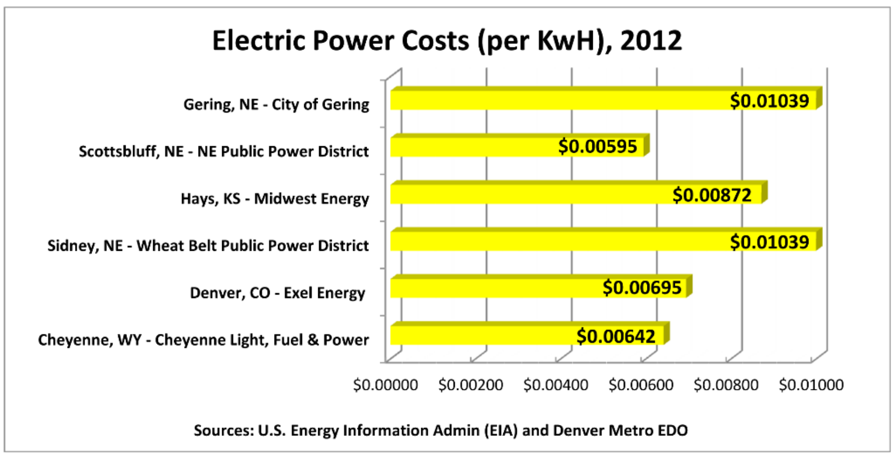
[14] Higher in-region percentages.

[15] The three industries include: General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload (484121); General Freight Trucking, Local (484110); and General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less than Truckload (484122).

cable connecting to Denver and national research networks. This superior infrastructure means that businesses will not be limited by connectivity options. Due to the global economy, being connected physically and through information technology is vital to the region's economic competitiveness. According to one community leader, forty-eight (48) commercial fibers are available for businesses to access. TPMA recommends TCD facilitate a discussion on how to best utilize this fiber network in order to attract business in target industries.

## Electric Power

In addition, as electric power costs and reliability are critical site selection factors, the Scottsbluff-Gering region demonstrates redundant, plentiful, reliable, and affordable electric power. Recourse mix is diverse and includes renewable and green energy options. The Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) serving Scottsbluff now offers one of the lowest electric power costs in the county. The City of Gering have a municipal power system with slightly higher rates.



## Moving Forward

Based on this analysis, Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) recommends the Scottsbluff–Gering Region focus on industries that are most likely to positively respond to marketing in the region. The four strong regional industry clusters to focus on include: Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; and Health Services. These industries are strong targets for the Scottsbluff – Gering Region based on a high number of both current and projected industry jobs, earnings, concentration, and competitive advantage.

The two aspirational industry clusters that are identified to have strong potential in the Scottsbluff – Gering Region include Data Centers and Oil and Gas Support Industries. Due to the close proximity to shale gas/oil and mining regions of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming, and the low cost of reliable energy in the Scottsbluff – Gering Region, Oil and Gas Support Industries could prove to be a lucrative and beneficial target industry for the region. Similarly, the Data Center industry cluster is a feasible contender due to the region's affordable energy and current infrastructure.

> In moving ahead, it is critical that Scotts Bluff continues including and engaging regional stakeholders, building community input and collaboration that will benefit both current and future industries attractions.

As developing existing industries or recruiting new ones is a serious undertaking, the Scottsbluff-Gering region will need to decide on which of the recommended industries to focus their attention. Once identified, the TPMA team will help the region aggressively market the industries; bridging the gap between elected officials, the business community, and schools. TPMA will work with the region in strategizing and then acting to develop the region's currently underutilized assets for alternative use, growth opportunities, and improved workforce wages.

## Regional Labor Market Assessment

In addition to the interviews, open house, community forum, and Target Industry Analysis, the TPMA team compiled a Labor Market Assessment through research conducted for the Scottsbluff   Gering Region. This Labor Market Assessment examines characteristics and indicators for Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska that provide insight into the state of the residents, workers, and overall needs of the county. In the full assessment, TPMA compared data from Scotts Bluff County to the United States, the state of Nebraska, and the Scottsbluff – Gering Region. After reviewing the data, TPMA compressed the findings into the five primary areas of Demographics, Labor Force, Employment, Unemployment, and Human Capital. The following outlines the key findings within each area:

- **Demographics:** studying the population of Scotts Bluff County, identifying age and ethnicity breakdowns, income levels, and migration trends:
  - Scotts Bluff County is home to around 37,500 residents, most of whom are living in the cities of Scottsbluff and Gering
  - In the past 10 years, the population of Scotts Bluff County has increased by 2.2%
  - Around 40% of the population of Scotts Bluff County is under the age of 29
  - 74.2% of Scotts Bluff County residents identify as white, with the next largest ethnicity group being Hispanic at 22.2%
    - Of the population 29 and under, 62.8% identify as White, 32.3% are Hispanic, and all other ethnicities account for a just under 5% of the population within this age range
  - In 2011, Scotts Bluff County experienced a net gain of 432 people due to domestic migration, and a net increase of 925 individuals in the region

- **Labor Force:** examining the County's increasing labor force level and participation rate, as well as the commuting patterns of the greater Scottsbluff – Gering Region
  - At approximately 19,300 individuals, Scotts Bluff County accounts for 54.3% of the labor force of the entire region
  - From 2004 to 2014, Scotts Bluff County had a 2.2% increase in its labor force, and the region had a 4.4% increase
  - Scotts Bluff County claims the second highest participation rate within the region at 67.7%, illustrating that its large labor force is also quite active.

- **Employment:** exploring employment trends, top industries and occupations, and important imports and exports for the region
  - Scotts Bluff County companies employ more than 18,500 people, or 54% of the total region's employment
  - Employment in Scotts Bluff County has increased by 4% over the last decade
  - Scotts Bluff County is nearly back to its peak employment of 18,971 in 2007
  - Scotts Bluff County employment and labor force rates have both increased, suggesting a thriving economy with potential to continue to grow

- **Unemployment:** highlighting Scotts Bluff County's declining unemployment rates as compared to the County's employment levels and labor force participation
    - Scotts Bluff County had an unemployment rate of 4.1% at the start of 2014, slightly higher than the state rate of 3.6%
    - Morrill County claimed the lowest unemployment rate of the region at 3.3% in January of 2014

- **Human Capital:** looking at education indicators, levels, and opportunities within Scotts Bluff County
    - Scottsbluff Public High School claimed the third-lowest high school graduation rate of the region at 71.4%
    - Scotts Bluff County has a regional brain drain issue identified in the Labor Market Assessment
    - Only 31.4% of adults over 18 have at least an Associate's degree in Scotts Bluff County.

With these findings[16], TPMA identified the primary barriers to improving the labor market within Scotts Bluff County and the region. These barriers can be traced back to low educational attainment levels and regional brain drain. To combat these impediments, the TPMA team recommends for the Scottsbluff – Gering Region to consider providing more experiential learning opportunities via internships and career apprenticeships, as well as incentivized programs through higher education facilities like Western Nebraska Community College. Furthermore, attracting and growing businesses in targeted industries that require skilled labor will help to retain more educated individuals while also having the potential to encourage more individuals to increase their education and training.

The Labor Market Assessment provides a baseline analysis upon which interviews and other qualitative data can build upon to form an action plan focused on economic and workforce growth. Using this foundational data, TPMA provides clear recommendations for heightened economic and workforce development.

In conclusion, the Regional Target Industry Analysis and Regional Labor Market Assessment provide an evaluation of the existing workforce and industry conditions of the Scottsbluff – Gering Region with anticipated trends of which the region can focus their efforts and grow its economy. Because both assessments provide in-depth analyses, comprehensive reporting of the data can be found in Appendix II and Appendix III.

[16] See Appendix B for detailed breakdown of TPMA findings

# United We Grow our Regional Identity

The significance of working together as a region cannot be underestimated. Visitors, site selectors, and businesses care little, if at all about city limits and county lines. Their interests are more focused on other important aspects of the community. Visitors seek quality experiences, updated facilities, and easy to locate and use information. Site selectors and businesses are looking for skilled workers, great locations, dependable infrastructure, low costs, and other variables which enable them to compete successfully in the global economy.

The Scottsbluff-Gering Region has an opportunity to retain the intercity rivalries on the football field and basketball court while coming together as one to improve the economic outlook and employment prospects for everyone in the region. There are a number of previous successes in the region which can serve as models to move the region forward, namely TCD and its partners.

This regionalism section is divided into three components: Regional Organization, The Tourism Opportunity, and The Regional Core. Each section has observations and recommendations from the TPMA team.

1. **Regional Organization**
   A. Build a Consensus Coalition
2. **Spotlight Tourism Opportunity**
   A. Convene Discussions to Encourage Tourism Collaboration
3. **The Regional Core**
   A. Forge the Scottsbluff – Terrytown - Gering Highway Steering Committee

## Regional Organization

### Current Observations

TCD's approach to unified marketing efforts to attract businesses to the region regardless of jurisdiction is indicative of an understanding on the part of many elected officials and local opinion leaders that some essential elements of community prosperity cross imaginary boundaries. Other critical partners with services that cross city boundaries include the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD), Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC), the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Extension, and Community Connection, among many others, who focus on various development initiatives within the region. Community stakeholders voiced some concern on the status of distressed unification on regional economic development projects.

### Recommendations

#### A. Build a Consensus Coalition

In order to cultivate and promote consensus on capital investments, the region should consider developing a coalition of government and organizational entities. The Coalition would not replace the TCD

Board nor the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD), but rather provide a new regional group to strengthen the regional approach to development and establish a stronger position for the region with legislative and administrative leaders in the capitol. Instead of individual communities lobbying for investments and capital projects on their own, the entire region will be brought together as one unified chorus of voices.

Regional economic development agencies, community leaders, or partners are recommended to facilitate the Consensus Coalition. Fundamentally, the Coalition should develop a set of criteria to prioritize projects, rank the projects based on this criteria, and work together to attain funding to implement the projects, regardless of where each project is located in the region.

***Consensus Coalition Example: Northern Kentucky***

Though the board structure of PADD is similar, the recommended Consensus Coalition model provides a more comprehensive composition to include education institutions, not-for-profits, business associations, etc. This model has produced significant results in other parts of the country, including Northern Kentucky. The following organizational formula is used by Northern Kentucky to build their “Consensus Coalition”:

**County Representation:**

- County Official or Commissioner
- Chamber of Commerce Representative – could include the chairman of the board, president, or staff representative
- Local Government Representatives(s)

The government representatives from each county will be the mayor(s) or mayor’s designee of the largest cities in descending order of population until the formula is satisfied.

**Legislative District Representation:**

- One business person will be appointed by the legislator that represents that district

At-large groups with one representative include:

**Education:**

- University/College
- University Extension Partners
- Community College
- Public School Superintendents
- Career and Technical Education Directors

**Regional Business Associations:**

- Homebuilders’ Association
- Association of Realtors
- Apartment Association

**Other Development and Non-Profit Organizations:**

- Airport Authority

- Downtown merchants association
- Community development organizations
- Convention & Visitor's Bureau
- Utilities
- United Way/Social Services

Establishing a Consensus Coalition would further improve collaboration and develop consensus among community stakeholders and opinion leaders. Having all partners involved in education, economic development, and workforce development advocating for the regional investment would greatly accelerate growth due to increased collaboration.

## Spotlight Tourism Opportunity

### Current Observations

The region is home to the Scotts Bluff National Monument that is the most prolific identifying element associated with the community outside western Nebraska.

The majority of hotels in the region are located within the city of Scottsbluff, a fantastic meeting and conference facility is located adjacent to downtown Gering, and the Scotts Bluff National Monument looms over the entire community as both a landmark and source of community pride. Other amenities such as trails and the North Platte River appeal to adventure tourists. Adventure tourism is the hottest market in today's tourism sector, with active and affluent individuals, couples, and families seeking spectacular locations for rock climbing, hiking, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, and other outdoor experiences.

Gering and Scotts Bluff County support tourism with local funding while Scottsbluff currently does not provide funding support. The Panhandle Area Development District promotes tourism activities through its Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition (WNTC) with advertisements in the *Journey* magazine, WNTC website, and joint marketing and brochure distribution.

### Recommendations

#### A. Convene Discussions to Encourage Tourism Collaboration

Representatives from Scotts Bluff County and Gering's existing tourism agencies, along with administration and elected officials from the City of Scottsbluff, City of Gering, and Scotts Bluff County should convene a high-level discussion to explore the concept of merging existing staff, programming, and funding streams into a single regional entity with responsibilities generally associated with a typical convention and visitors' bureau. In addition to the merger of existing assets, the group should also focus on new funding opportunities and sources, including local government funding, hospitality taxes, and grants, etc. Formation of a regional board to oversee the development and operation of the new bureau should be appointed with representation from key stakeholder groups, including local government and the hospitality industry.

The community should develop a regional visitors' center with facilities to highlight the unique amenities in the region, such as the Scotts Bluff National Monument and the plethora of outdoor adventure activities. This center would promote local attractions, restaurants, and hotels and provide cultural amenities for local residents. The Wyoming Welcome Center with its sculpture garden, historic displays, and knowledgeable staff (located near the Colorado border on I-25) is a great example of a mixed-use approach that provides a venue for area artists, information for visitors, and a symbol of pride for the people of Wyoming. Such a facility in the Scottsbluff-Gering Region might also incorporate the arts, both indoors and outdoors, highlight views of the scenic wonders in the area, connect to new and existing trails, and provide trailhead facilities (e.g. parking, restrooms, bike repair tools, kiosks with maps, etc.) for local residents and visiting hiking/cycling enthusiasts. If located in the Scottsbluff-Gering Highway corridor on a former industrial site, such a facility to could serve as an anchor, encouraging the redevelopment of other parcels for tourist-related commercial uses.

Although not one of the top identified target industries in this study, tourism-related businesses offer opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially in the adventure market, such as canoe liveries, horseback riding stables, outdoor clothing and equipment, cycling equipment, etc. and should be encouraged. In addition, more traditional hospitality businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues offer employment opportunities for youth seeking early work experiences and provide the community with additional amenities which help attract other businesses and improve the quality of life for residents.

## The Regional Core

### Current Observations

The core of the Scottsbluff-Gering Region are the downtown districts and the relatively short corridor connecting these two historic business districts and touching the edge of Terrytown. A healthy core is critical to the economic well-being of a region, and the core area of this region is in a unique position to transform the economic vitality of all three cities, as well as the larger area.

Current and recent revitalization projects in downtown Gering and downtown Scottsbluff signify a renewed interest in the urban heart of the region on the part of municipal governments, business and property owners, and community-based organizations. While some storefronts and upper floors remain vacant, the vast majority of buildings in both downtowns are occupied with service, retail, and professional businesses, residents, and entertainment venues.

Downtown districts are the traditional centers of culture where theaters, nightlife, fine dining, convention centers, museums, and other cultural facilities are typically located. Scottsbluff and Gering have many such facilities located within their downtown zones and appear to complement, rather than compete, with each other.

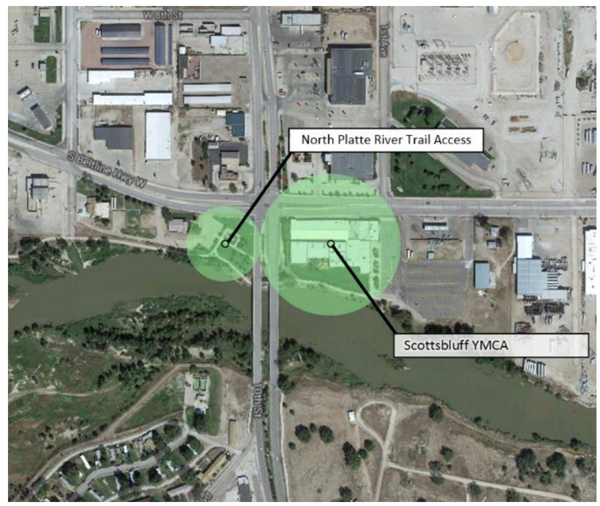
Among young adults, downtown living in industrial lofts and other unique and urbane housing are popular in cities of all sizes. Gering and Scottsbluff have identified a goal to both retain and attract young adults, and each location has several examples of successful downtown residential options though more opportunities for development exist. The continued revitalization of these districts is addressed in the Economic Development chapter and the focus of this section is the corridor connecting those downtowns.

While all three cities have jurisdiction within the corridor with Gering having the largest amount of land within the district, few—if any—visitors, shoppers, diners, or patrons of professional services have any regard for which city the product or service they are seeking is located.

The corridor area has numerous assets which could serve as catalysts for redevelopment of this critical regional economic opportunity:

- A high traffic count with residents and visitors commuting among the cities
- Existing utility and transportation infrastructure
- Viewsheds of significant natural features
- Access to North Platte River
- Close proximity to trails and other potential recreational features (water features, etc.)
- Available and underutilized/underdeveloped properties
- Locally owned existing businesses and land owners

Several sites along the corridor, especially in the northern portion, have been redeveloped with highway-style commercial businesses, such as fast food drive-thru restaurants. The region's largest YMCA facility and access to a trail along the North Platte River is also located here.




The Scotts Bluff National Monument is the most recognized iconic symbol beyond the region and the demolition of several existing structures within the corridor have opened up viewsheds of this natural wonder, inspiring imaginations for what may be possible.

A significant water feature located in Terrytown is in close proximity to the corridor and could provide the city with a significant economic opportunity for mixed-use commercial and residential uses.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings listed above, TPMA makes the following recommendations to the cities of Scottsbluff, Gering and Terrytown related to the Scottsbluff-Terrytown-Gering Highway economic development opportunity:

## A. Forge the Scottsbluff – Gering Highway Initiative

### 1. Form an Energized Scottsbluff- Gering Highway Steering Committee

The mayors of all three cities should collaborate to appoint members to a Steering Committee to guide a redevelopment plan which will provide comprehensive and cohesive direction for the redevelopment of the corridor. Membership of this committee should be limited to a reasonable number (9-12 individuals) capable of making bold decisions and enlisting the support of local governments, community organizations, property owners, and developers. Representation should come from government, business, residents, property owners, and opinion leaders in the region. Young professionals, cultural advocates, and real estate experts should also be considered for membership. Collaboration and mutual agreement for the appointments is critical in order to assure appropriate stakeholder representation without growing the group to an onerous size. The mayors should focus their appointments on individuals who embrace a regional approach rather than parochial concerns.

TPMA recommends that a fiscal agent be designated for the Steering Committee in order to transact business on behalf of the committee and provide legal authority for contracting and other critical tasks. This fiscal agent may be one of the municipal governments or an incorporated regional or local community-based organization.

### 2. Create a Charge for the Steering Committee

TPMA recommends the Steering Committee be charged with transforming the existing Scottsbluff - Gering Highway into a center of regional economic and social activity that links the cities through an imaginative redevelopment strategy, innovative design principles, and with an outlook of inspiring future generations to continue to invest their time, energy, creativity, and financial resources in the region. Upon acceptance of the plan by the Steering Committee and adoption by the Terrytown, Scottsbluff, and Gering city councils, the Steering Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the recommended strategies.

### 3. Create an Inspired Corridor Redevelopment Strategy

The Steering Committee should issue a request for proposals and contract for services to provide a corridor redevelopment plan for the study area (shown in Exhibit 1) which is bounded by 8$^{th}$ Street in Scottsbluff on the north, the railroad in Gering to the south, 7th Street in Gering to the east, and Avenue 8 in Scottsbluff to the west. The strategy should include both narrative and visual elements which address the following aspects of the opportunity:

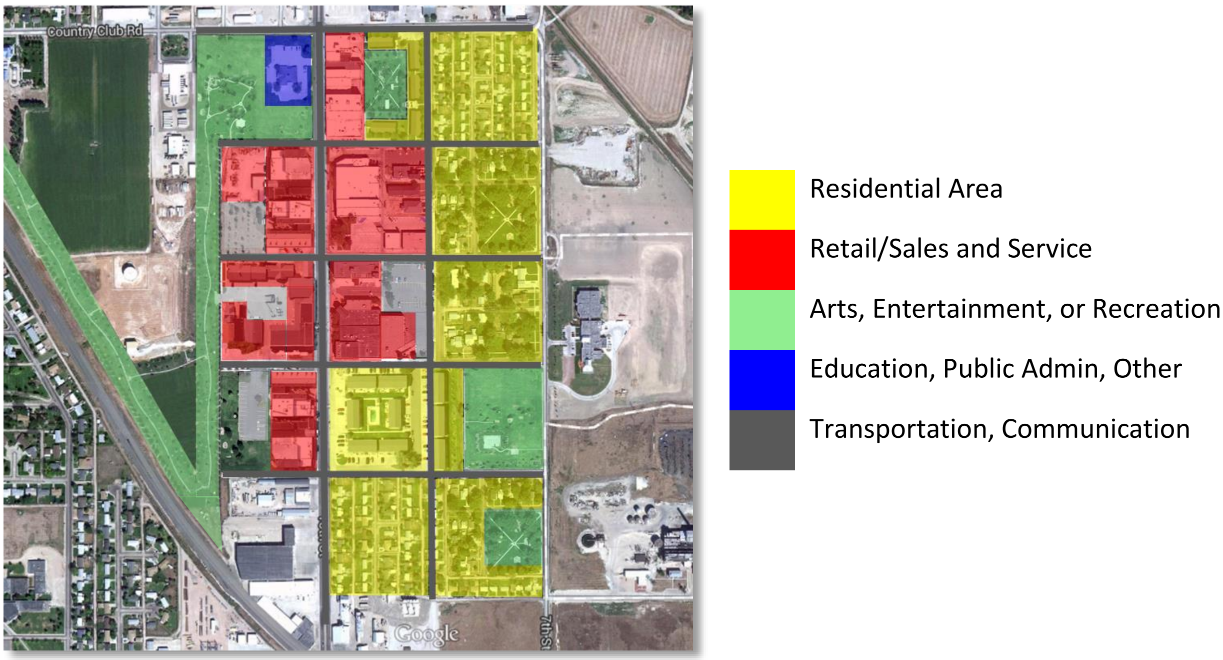
- Community engagement/input
- Vision (innovative, aspirational, creative, and exciting)
- Transportation
- Streetscape/public spaces/aesthetics/urban design/parks
- Trails and recreation
- Design guidelines and standards
- Land use and zoning:

    - Housing (varieties, location, types of ownership, markets)
    - Commercial and mixed use developments
    - Existing uses
- Development anchors/catalysts
- Public facilities and visitor amenities
- Ownership/acquisition
- Transition/transformation from existing to new uses
- Implementation oversight
- Sustainability of both the organization and the development projects
- Funding opportunities

# Components of the Corridor Redevelopment Strategy

## Realigning the Grid

In some areas of the corridor, there exists what may have once been an effective grid layout for the roadways. With a little work, this grid can be realigned and provide ease of navigation, and improved aesthetics and functionality for pedestrians. Through aligning this grid, it is also possible to clearly define and zone the usage and purpose of the facilities, as outlined below.





Before

After

## Visitor's Center and Trail Head

These renderings show how a regional visitor's center could create a synergistic development anchor for the area while taking advantage of the spectacular view and providing other amenities for the community such as a sculpture garden, trailhead, and office space for community-based organizations.


## Urban Development




The southern section of the corridor provides a canvas in which to develop a highly functional, mixed-use urban zone. By re-aligning the grid and updating roads with pronounced bike lanes, large medians with vegetation, and establishing retail and restaurant facilities, this area can do much to attract prominent businesses and fill new and updated residential locations. TPMA's recommendations include incorporating defined street-corner facilities such as a craft brewery and robust retailers; improve the aesthetics and functionality of the roadways by installing large medians with vegetation and defined bike lanes; and develop single-family residential facilities and rentals.

# United We Grow our Economy

## Programming and Organizational Review and Recommendations

Centrally, Twin Cities Development Association's groundwork and support of regional economic development provide a robust springboard for enhanced growth. TPMA reviewed the Scottsbluff-Gering Region's economic development activities and relationships, and the following section provides observations and recommendations to improve delivery of services in order to boost the community's economic development efforts.

## Current Observations

Twin Cities Development Association, Inc. (TCD) is a not-for-profit economic development organization providing services for the communities of Scottsbluff, Gering, Bayard, Bridgeport and Terrytown. TCD provides assistance to companies looking to locate or expand in the region, including state and local incentives, procedural guidance, site selection, grant opportunities, workforce development and recruitment, and other support. TCD is a great model for regional economic development, focusing on a multitude of crucial economic development initiatives to encourage economic growth and workforce development.

Currently, the TCD Board of Directors consists of nine (9) private sector ambassadors from local businesses and the local community college, while government representatives and the regional chamber of commerce serve as ex-officio members. Utility companies and primary or secondary education institutions are not currently represented.

Since 2002, TCD and its Board have supported numerous retention, expansion, and attraction projects and have helped facilitate a diverse array of economic development programs. From the expansion of local businesses, both large and small, to the development of grants for agriculture, new businesses, and housing initiatives, TCD has worked intently to strengthen the region's business climate and overall quality of life. TCD's list of accomplishments over the past 12 years tells a compelling story of the organization's impact, drive, and vitality.

The TPMA team interviewed local business leaders, community organizations, and educational institutions, and found that other constituents identified a perceived competition between Scottsbluff and Gering for attracting business, events, and residents. In TPMA's experience, it is not unusual for closely aligned communities to compete for resources or have perceptions of favoritism. Because industry locations and resources are disproportionate among Scottsbluff, Terrytown, and Gering, some citizens interviewed believe favoritism is shown to Scottsbluff on economic development projects. Furthermore, the perception of favoritism could be exasperated because LB840 funds for economic development are used distinctly and differently within each community, and because each community's funding levels differ drastically.

Discussions with current and former board members, city officials, and other community stakeholders indicate that the direction provided by the TCD Board to the Executive Director could be more consistently visible when working on business attraction, retention, or expansion economic development projects. This perceived lack of visibility has been most noticeable during some community and media events for TCD, though some board members do attend such events. The lack of recognized and pronounced board representation in the community likely contributes to the opinion that the Executive Director solely decides which economic development projects are reviewed and receive incentives, creating a feeling of inequity among some regional partners.

Furthermore, due to the recent economic recession causing a decrease in public and private funding to the organization, TCD adapted and focused its efforts to find other funding streams. Currently, TCD cultivates housing development projects and grant opportunities, among several other things, for the organization's funding. While both activities are integral to economic development, the prevalent visibility of these efforts has created the perception that business attraction, retention, and expansion are secondary activities.

In regards to existing business, TCD follows a predesigned business retention and expansion program (BRE) from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. TCD conducts interviews with existing companies to assist with business planning, identifying expansion possibilities, assessing current business challenges, and determining the local economic climate. The program assists with long-term planning, including identifying common issues and trends, strategic planning, and policy articulation.

TCD's current workforce development efforts focus primarily on attracting talent for existing companies from outside the region. Collaboration with the public workforce system is usually initiated on an as needed basis for a specific objective or project.

In summary, the City of Scottsbluff, the City of Gering, TCD, and other partner organizations work diligently on a variety of important initiatives that benefit the region's economy and workforce. Overall, TCD is the best economic development model for the region, as its history of successful projects indicates. Based on our observations and data gathering, the TPMA team will next provide recommendations for a few enhancements to the region's economic development programming and organization.

# Recommendations

The TPMA team recommends the focal point of TCD's strategy be the following: business attraction, retention, and expansion; entrepreneurism and small business development; and workforce development. In order to do this effectively, the TPMA team recommends the following programs and organization for the community, TCD Board of Directors, and TCD staff:

A. **Focus Business Attraction on Targeted Industries**
   1. Supply Chain Analysis
   2. Business Attraction Marketing
   3. Site Assessment and Preparation for Site Readiness

B. **Expand Current Business Retention and Expansion Program**

C. **Grow Entrepreneurism and Small Business Development**

D. **Revitalize TCD Board Development**
   1. Board Organization
   2. Defined Responsibilities

## A. Focus Business Attraction on Targeted Industries

One of the most important areas for successful economic development is a focused business attraction effort of the region's target industries. The TPMA teams advises the region to conduct a supply chain analysis, a business attraction marketing effort, and a site readiness process for developable regional sites.

### 1. Supply Chain Analysis

The TPMA team proposes that the Scottsbluff - Gering Region conduct a deeper evaluation of its supply sector opportunities. One potential opportunity includes a partnership with the University of Nebraska – Lincoln Innovation Campus initiatives on agriculture, food, and health. In addition, an evaluation of specific regional opportunities in emerging fields related to the Aspirational Industries and an assessment of convergence opportunities for the Strong Regional Industries is suggested. Strong Regional Industries and Aspirational Industries include the following:

### Strong Regional Industries:

- Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals
- Plastics and Chemicals
- Health Services

### Aspirational Industries:

- Data Centers
- Oil and Gas Support Industries

## 2. Business Attraction Marketing

In addition, the TPMA team recommends that the community create a marketing initiative focused on the identified strong regional industries and aspirational industries. Stakeholder interviews and the TPMA team's evaluation of current funding, staff capacity, and marketing expertise at TCD indicate a need for the organization and the community to expand its business attraction marketing initiatives. TPMA and Foote Consulting Group (FCG) provide the following recommendations for targeted business attraction marketing:

- Aggressively pursue attracting the target industries
- Develop reuse concepts for buildings that are strategic assets of the region
- Attend select Trade Shows and Site Selection Guild Conferences
    - Possible opportunities are listed in Appendix IV
- Develop research materials on prospective targets
    - i.e., Lead Lists, Cost Comparison Reports, freight/logistics modeling, and in-depth workforce analyses
- Conduct Prospecting Missions
    - Denver and Cheyenne (each 2x per year, minimum), Dallas, Chicago, and Des Moines
- Partner with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) on economic development opportunities**,** and regularly attend International Asset Management Council (IAMC) and CORENET meetings

## 3. Site Assessment and Preparation for Site Readiness

Excellent product--sites and buildings-- must be available in order to attract viable and sustainable economic development projects. Two out of three site searches begin with a building inventory inquiry. However, the majority of prospects end up constructing a new building due to the lack of availability of useable existing spaces.

The Scottsbluff-Gering Region has a number of existing potential industrial sites available, though most sites need some improvements. FCG toured the potential sites and conducted detailed inspection and analysis of the existing infrastructure.

One of the hottest trends in site selection today is the identification of "certified or shovel-ready" sites and buildings. Certified or shovel-ready sites and buildings have passed a rigorous professional site selector inspection and analysis, and is qualified as ready for development. Certified sites and buildings are deemed the best locations available or the "cream of the crop" and often are the first products requested and shown in a site selection search. Criteria for certified sites include the following:

- Acreage (10 acres; minimum levels)
- All utilities available at the site or a formal plan exists to extend to the site
- Asking price available from a willing seller
- Certification by a professional site selection firm
- Minimized risk factors for development
- No environmental liabilities
- Outside known flood-prone areas
- Permitting process, timeline, and fees are defined
- Property boundary survey and topographic maps are completed
- Report of comprehensive site information from a site selector's viewpoint
- Truck quality road access
- Zoning established or an expedited rezoning plan exists

FCG has identified the top seven sites—three are located in Scottsbluff and four are located in Gering—and carried out an initial certification review from a site selector's viewpoint (see details in the Appendix). During this analysis, FCG conducted *"intake form"* assessment, determining the best sites that are recommended for certification.

Speculative ("Spec") buildings may be a good fit for the community, as well. As previously mentioned, existing buildings draw more prospects to the region due to the fact that about 80% of all site selection searches begin with building searches.

The best sites are identified below with maps and *Intake Forms* available in Appendix IV:

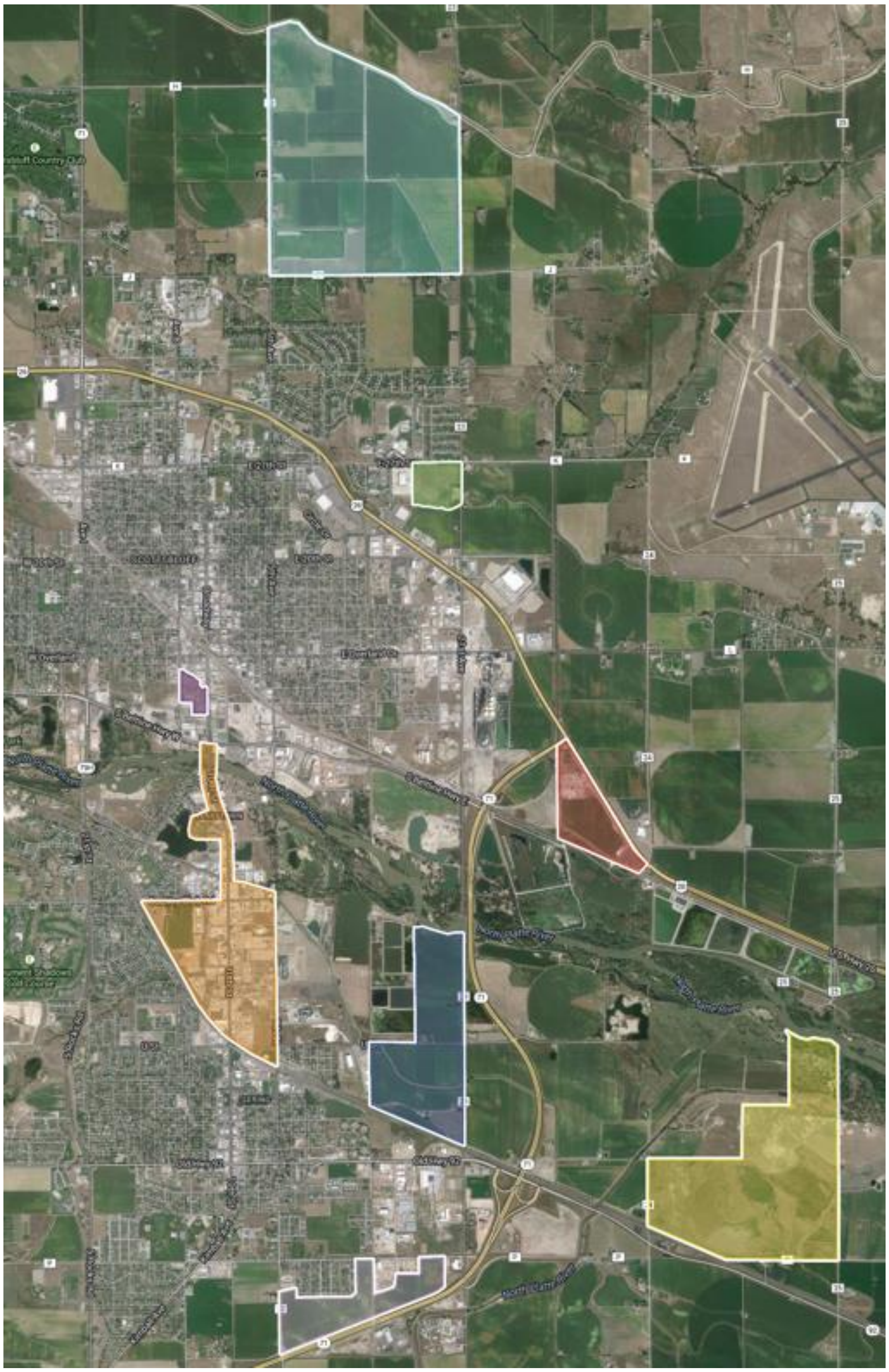
## Scottsbluff

1. **Scottsbluff City Site** (43 acres; city-owned)*
2. **42nd Street Data Center Site** (200-300 acres)
3. **Nationstar East Site** (40-50 acres)*
4. **Shane Site (13 acres)***

## Gering

5. **Gering Hill East Site** (land fill site; 225 acres; city-optioned)
6. **Sugar Factory Sites** (80-200 acres)
7. **Expressway Site** (140 acres)

**Key Conclusions:** The Scottsbluff - Gering Region has a number of attractive industrial sites that will attract industrial development with new and intentional infrastructure improvements. Sites with an asterisk (*) identify locations closest to certified site status with existing infrastructure which are ready for development. The region is in need of developable sites with rail access. Many industrial and warehouse/distribution companies will require rail for inbound and outbound services, including the target industries: Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; and Oil and Gas Supporting Industries.



FOOTE CONSULTING GROUP, LLC

- Site #1 - Scottsbluff City Site
- Site #2 - 42nd Street Data Center
- Site #3 - Nationstar East Site
- Site #4 - Gering Hill East Site
- Site #5 - Sugar Factory Site
- Site #6 - Shane Site
- Site #7 - Expressway Site
- Corridor Development Area

### Steps to Site Readiness

Providing a completed intake form is the first step in qualifying for site readiness. Please refer to Appendix IV for the detailed intake forms for the seven key site locations that were selected.

Using the site assessment data gathered, TPMA and FCG recommend the following actions to attract target industries:

- **Certify seven industrial sites (3 in Scottsbluff and 4 in Gering).** A professional site selector-led certified sites process will assure improved industrial site availability. Prospects and site selectors seek certified sites to ensure availability, ready status (all permits in place), and speed to market—all which save time and money.
- **Conduct a "Spec" building analysis and plan**. This analysis will be tied to the site or building needs of the target industries. Generally, an industrial spec building is recommended to have the following:
  - 40,000 to 60,000 square feet
  - 10% square feet of office
  - 28' to 32' ceiling heights
  - 1-2 dock doors; one overhead door
  - Full sprinkler system
  - Located in an industrial park

## BUSINESS RESOURCE NETWORK

The primary activities to replicate the BRN model will include:

•Formalize partnerships for coordinated outreach to businesses through the workforce system, economic development, and education

•Utilize technology to facilitate cooperation and create transparency among partners

•Strategically and proactively target businesses using data and other intelligence

•Incorporate a step-by-step process to ensure consistency of experience and overall model

•Provide business customers with a single-point-of-contact

•Package collective services tailored to each business' specific challenges and opportunities

•Provide services that have been prioritized by the businesses

•Coordinate industry partnerships to align employment/ training with common sector needs

•Facilitate peer learning

## B. Expand Current Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program

Economic Development research shows that a successful business retention and expansion (BRE) program does the following:

- Increases sustainable job creation and new business development
- Boosts the overall regional business climate
- Establishes an early warning system for at-risk companies
- Promotes the availability of business resources
- Advances a collaborative environment, building partnerships among the business community, economic development leaders, and public officials
- Increases communication and awareness for economic development professionals and public officials on the business community's strengths and weaknesses

The TPMA team advises that TCD and its partners expand the current BRE program to be more effective for the region by blending the Nebraska Department of Economic Development's existing program template and the Business Resource Network, a best practice defined below, and customizing it to fit the region's needs. In addition, the TPMA team proposes the TCD Board of Directors and elected officials from represented communities provide strong vision and direction for TCD's staff on the BRE program. To be successful, it is crucial for the organization and its staff to be viewed as a business partner within the communities. Staff members need the expertise and proper tools in order to provide regulatory and training assistance, awareness of available resources, new business leads for local companies, and data and analysis on competing regions; thus, training and development for staff is critical.

One model—Ohio's ***Business Resource Network*** (BRN)—identified as a best practice by the Workforce Innovation Fund can be replicated for the Scottsbluff - Gering region.

The primary goal of the BRN is to connect workforce development, economic development, and education in a collaborative, seamless, and customer-focused partnership structure to deliver more effective and efficient business services. Through the BRN, partners will develop proactive, strategic employer outreach. The BRN also will develop and demonstrate meaningful business service performance measures and results and evaluate the overall impact of the BRN model.

The BRN is a collaborative and systematic process to provide individual businesses with a single point of contact in order to address challenges and opportunities, and tap into the collective resources of workforce, economic development, and education partners. It also creates a mechanism for ongoing dialogue to identify and understand common industry challenges and trends and create shared solutions.

The desired outcomes for the BRN include stronger cooperation among workforce development, economic development, and education, creating increased efficiencies through alignment, reduced partner duplication and an expanded, collective reach to businesses. It is anticipated that the BRN will lead to expanded collective reach to businesses, additional retention and expansion projects from the business community, increased use of the public workforce system by employers for hiring and on-the-job training, increased quality of job listings with more high-wage positions, and increased utilization of partner services.

In the Scottsbluff - Gering region, establishing a program like BRN would help address employers' needs in relation to workforce training, environmental regulations, grants, loans, supplier needs, and other areas. The BRN model for the region works best when including partners consisting of local, regional, and state organizations, such as the Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce, Nebraska Department of Labor, TCD, WNCC, and PADD, among others. The business client would only interact with one point of contact and would be asked general questions about their Product/Services, Market Sector, Industry, Management, Workforce, Technology, and Utility Service. Generally, proprietary information is not requested, but the client can decline to answer any question asked to them. In addition, it is recommended that all representatives from the BRN partner organizations signed a confidentiality agreement, and the company should not be discussed with anyone who is not part of the BRN. In summary, the best ideas from the BRN partners will be gathered and then presented to the company with a comprehensive package of customized solutions that are most responsive to the client's needs. The client can choose which programs and services they wish to pursue and implement. The BRN representative will manage and coordinate the programs and services the company selects from the BRN package and identify new ways to assist the client over time.

In order to achieve these BRE goals, the agency's Board of Directors, city government officials, and other funders should increase funding for an additional staff member or a contractor to be dedicated to the initiatives described above and receive training on how to customize its programming.

## C. Grow Entrepreneurism and Small Business Development

In addition to boosting the region's business attraction, retention, and expansion programs, creating a strategic plan for an entrepreneurship and small business development program would strengthen the overall business climate in the region. Currently, several organizations in the region, including the Western Nebraska Community College Harms Advanced Technology Center, the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD), the Scottsbluff Business Masterminds, and the Scottsbluff Small Business Development Center, provide a range of services to entrepreneurs and small businesses. Stakeholders described these initiatives as lacking coordination and collaboration, lacking marketing outreach efforts to the business community, and lacking a community "champion" to facilitate the coordinated effort. In order for entrepreneurism and small businesses to flourish, the region needs to create an ecosystem of innovation that fosters collaboration.

The TPMA team suggests an economic development partner agency dedicate a staff member or contractor to accelerate the launch of an entrepreneurism/incubator initiative, including the establishment of an Innovation Alliance. The Innovation Alliance will lead the following tasks:

- Create an asset map of all regional entities involved in entrepreneurship and create plan for streamlined access to resources
- Analyze the environment and capacity for startups and small business by conducting a SWOT analysis, assessing funding gaps, and identify best practices
- Research tech transfer opportunities that exist with the University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension and the Nebraska Innovation Campus and associated grant options
- Determine training and business development opportunities aimed at export markets in target industries (i.e. agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and plastics and chemicals)
- Research evolving crowdfunding legislation to understand how it can be used to support entrepreneurship, small business development, and job creation
- Utilize entrepreneurship development best practice models, such as the Northern Kentucky E-Zone Incubator and the Grow Garden County initiative in Nebraska

### E-ZONE INCUBATOR

E-Zone partners are organizations from the local and state community that provide critical resources for entrepreneurs, and consist of public entities, the local chamber of commerce, the local economic development corporation, and the local education institutions. All partners play crucial roles within the E-Zone: Northern Kentucky University assists in recruitment, training and hosting seminars; Kentucky Innovation Network provides funding; the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce provides promotion, sponsors events, and gives chamber memberships to entrepreneurs; and the economic development corporation provides advising, promotion, and various resources as needed. Each partner's contribution benefits not only entrepreneurs, but all the community as a whole.

**Director**: Casey Barach
**Website**: www.northernkentuckyezone.com/nkytriedezone.aspx
**Partners**: Kentucky Innovation Network, State of Kentucky, Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation, Northern Kentucky University

The Innovation Alliance's purpose is to establish an ecosystem in partnership with Western Nebraska Community College Harms Advanced Technology Center, the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD), the Scottsbluff Business Masterminds entrepreneur group, and the Scottsbluff Small Business Development Center and TCD. Using the Northern Kentucky example, the TPMA team recommends that the incubator locate in a central location between Scottsbluff and Gering, in an environment that inspires innovation, networking, and collaboration. In addition, the TPMA team proposes two main conditions of agreement for incentives with the start-ups. First, companies who locate in the incubator will have a defined timeframe for receiving services. Second, after the companies graduate from the incubator, the start-up must locate in the region for a period of 3-5 years and hire a certain number of individuals from the area (to be determined by the community and the Innovation Alliance). One best practice model for the region to consider is the Northern KY E-Zone incubator located in Covington, Kentucky.

The E-Zone Incubator is a division of Northern Kentucky's Tri-County Economic Development Corporation designed to identify, enhance, and support high-tech entrepreneurs. The E-Zone's mission is to be a single point of service for entrepreneurs and new or existing businesses. The E-Zone provides business incubation, mentorship, and financing strategies for high technology small businesses. Entrepreneurs that enter the incubator are required to make a commitment that they will stay located within the community for up to two years after graduation from the incubator.

The E-Zone's key specialized service is provided by the UP Tech incubator, a business technology incubator that recruits entrepreneurs with assistance from partners associated with the E-Zone. Entrepreneurs are recruited to the incubator using a series of press releases, referrals from Northern Kentucky University, and from local business promotion.

The E-Zone and UP Tech incubator are unique examples of how a community like the Scottsbluff region can work with partners to support small businesses and entrepreneurs. Furthermore, Covington is an example of a community making focused investments in a targeted industry field of entrepreneurship which will yield future economic development rewards. The Scottsbluff region can adapt this example to their community's entrepreneurial base, especially in a targeted sector that is strong within the region, such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, or agriculture.

## D. Revitalize TCD Board Development

Based on the observations listed above, the TPMA team believes that the agency can improve perceptions of regional equity and bolster its influence with other economic development-related organizations by expanding and developing its board in a strategic manner. The TPMA team proposes that the agency's board composition consist of a representation of business, government and other organizations important to regional economic development, economic vitality, and quality of life.

In order to assure the agency board's vision is effectively communicated and understood, appearances and presentations of board activities should be shared consistently and frequently to the media, community groups, and other pertinent organizations. TPMA's recommendations for the agency's organization and its board are intended to unite regional partners, streamline the economic development processes, promote its impressive work done throughout the community, and take the organization and the community to the next level.

### 1. Board Organization

Though the board has always been representative of the region, the membership formula is based on sector representation. For example, the following sectors currently make up the nine (9) Board positions:

- Agriculture/Value-Added Agriculture
- Community College Institution
- Industrial Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Logistics
- Retail
- Services

The agency has called for an additional board member to represent the Health Services industry. Board members serve three-year terms and can serve a maximum of 2 terms.

As previously mentioned, issues concerning a perception of favoritism exist; thus, re-organizing and expanding the board using a new formula is recommended.

The TPMA team recommends the following board structure:

- One government representative from each jurisdiction (Scottsbluff, Gering, Terrytown, Bayard, Bridgeport, and Scotts Bluff County); all representatives would have voting status
- Nine representatives from the business community
- One representative (President or administration) from the Western Nebraska Community College
- One representative from the Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce (Executive Director or Board Chairperson)
- One representative each from Scottsbluff and Gering K-12 educational institutions (Superintendent)
- One representative from the Utility company (Regional executive)

With the additional members, it may be beneficial to form subcommittees that meet more frequently and feed information to an executive committee that would meet less frequently, but regularly.

## 2. Defined Responsibilities

In addition to utilizing a new formula for electing board members, the TPMA team advises a new design of seamless and transparent responsibilities for the agency's Board, Executive Director, and staff. The matrix and outline below describes the proposed new configuration including which participant (i.e. Board, Executive Director, Workforce Specialist, etc.) is advised to lead or support specific tasks. Business retention, expansion, and attraction should be the top objectives for the agency's Board and staff, while other important activities, such as housing development and grant writing, are supportive tasks.

| Recommendations | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Economic Development Activities** | ***Board*** | ***Executive Director*** | ***Workforce Specialist*** | ***Project Manager*** | ***Consultant/Other*** |
| Attraction Marketing | | | | | X |
| Board Development | X | | | | |
| BRE (business retention and expansion) | | X | | | |
| Business Attraction | | X (Leader) | | X (Support) | |
| Entrepreneurship/Small Buisness Development | | | | | X |
| Establish Criteria for Incentives | X | | | | |
| Events (i.e. ribbon cuttings, etc.) | X (Leader) | X (Support) | | | |
| Fundraising | X | | | | |
| General Marketing | | | | X | |
| Grant Writing | | | | | X |
| Housing - Tactical | | | | | X |
| Housing Development- Strategy and Facilitation | X (Leader) | X (Support) | | | |
| Investor relations (i.e. Council meetings, one-on-one meetings) | X (Leader) | X (Support) | | | |
| Media | X | | | | |
| Ombudsman | | | | X | |
| Staff Development | X (Leader) | X (Support) | | | |
| Strategic Acting (active role in overseeing staff activities to implement strategic plan) | X | | | | |
| Strategic Planning | X (Leader) | X (Support) | | | |
| Workforce - Existing Talent Development | | | X | | |
| Workforce - Talent Attraction | | | X | | |

**Board of Directors**:
- Board of Directors professional development
- Establish criteria for providing incentives
- Attend events—*Leader* (i.e. Ribbon cuttings, open house events, etc.)
- Fundraising
- Housing development: Strategy and Facilitation—*Leader*
- Investor relations—*Leader* (i.e. Council meetings, individual stakeholder meetings, etc.)
- Media relations (Board Chairperson or another designee)
- Staff development—*Leader*
- Strategic planning and implementation oversight—*Leader*

**TCD Executive Director**:
- Business attraction—*Leader*
- Business retention and expansion—*Leader*
- Attend events—*Support* (i.e. Ribbon cuttings, open house events, etc.)
- Housing development: Strategy and facilitation—*Support*
- Investor relations—*Support* (i.e. Council meetings, individual stakeholder meetings, etc.)
- Staff development—*Support*
- Strategic planning—*Support*

**Workforce Specialist**:
- Existing Talent Development
- Talent Attraction

**Project Manager**:
- Business attraction—*Support*
- Business retention and expansion—*Support*
- General marketing
- Ombudsman

**Outsourced Contractor**:
- Business attraction marketing
- Entrepreneurism and Small Business Development*
- Grant writing
- Housing development—tactical

**Note*: In TPMA's assessment of the entrepreneurism and small business development mission, it is advised for the community to either dedicate an agency staff member to the entrepreneurship/small business initiative or to outsource the responsibility to a reputable consultant.

In conclusion, the listed recommendations provide a pathway for the region to build upon its strong economic development foundation established by TCD and community leaders. The proposed initiatives and associated funding aim to help TCD and other agencies further elevate its impact on the community. In order for the community to perform at optimum efficiency and with supreme effectiveness, investment in the initiatives outlined is necessary when the goal is to be the best region in attracting business.

# United We Grow our Talent Pipeline

As with economic development, the region's workforce is vital to increased growth and vitality for the Scottsbluff – Gering Region. As education, workforce, and economic development organizations continue to drive strategic growth together, the region will be able to raise far above any competition.

## Current Observations

Many organizations in the Scottsbluff-Gering region provide workforce development resources and programming to improve the skills and education attainment levels for their constituents. Some of the groups integral to the success of the region's workforce include Scottsbluff Public Schools, Gering Public Schools, Western Nebraska Communication College (WNCC), the Nebraska Department of Labor, and the Twin Cities Development Association, Inc. (TCD).

One of the most significant initiatives underway is the development of several high school Career Academies, in order to align with Rule 47 (Career Academy Program) from the Nebraska Legislature. As defined by the American Youth Policy Forum, a career academy is a smaller learning community within a larger high school setting (Brand, 2009). Scottsbluff High School is working to build such a facility for its career academies and to expand existing activities to align with Rule 47 guidelines. Currently, almost all of Scottsbluff High School's students are involved in related programs where the student is either a Career Participant (enrolled in one career education course) or a Career Concentrator (enrolled in two or more courses in the same career pathway). In order to align the career-focused initiatives at Scottsbluff High School to Rule 47, administrators are launching the following activities:

- A career exploration course offered in $8^{th}$ and $9^{th}$ grades
- An introductory course to a specific career field, aligned with identified career clusters, for all $9^{th}$ and $10^{th}$ grade students
- A career education course bearing 2 credits within a chosen career pathway
- One core academic course that ties specifically to the career pathway (e.g.: anatomy and physiology for nursing students)
- A personal learning plan for every student that includes work-based opportunities for job shadowing, career aptitude testing, industry tours, internships, and resume preparation
- Intensive academic counseling aligned with career guidance
- Career student organizations tied to the specific Career Academy (e.g.: DECA - Distributive Education Clubs of America for business students and FFA - Future Farmers of America for agriculture students)
- An advisory committee for each Career Academy includes industry representatives that meet at least twice per year to discuss internships, job shadowing, curriculum, industry needs, and guest speaking opportunities

The Scottsbluff High School administrators and WNCC are currently working diligently to align the effort into official Career Academies (as defined by the state), with many components of these activities ready to be implemented. Plans for expanded Career Academies are centered on the institution's identified career clusters, such as Business Marketing and Management; Human Science and Education; Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Skilled and Technical Sciences; Communication and Information Systems;

and Health Sciences. These career clusters align well with the identified target industries in the Target Industry Analysis (i.e. Agriculture, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; Health Services; Data Centers; and Oil/Gas Support Industries). Plans also entail continued collaboration with WNCC on dual credits, industry tours, and other educational benefits. Gering High School plans to establish a Career Academies initiative with WNCC in the near future.

The Career Academies have strong partnerships with the business community, which provide job shadowing opportunities, internships, industry tours, and participants for an advisory council. Key stakeholders such as educators from WNCC, Scottsbluff Public Schools, and Gering Public Schools anticipate that the development of robust, systematic Career Academies will drive the coordination and advancement of Career and Technical Education (CTE) activities across the region.

While the public schools focus on advancing K-12 education, WNCC is the keystone to the region's education attainment level advancement and strong workforce development. Currently, WNCC offers dual credit for several general studies courses, along with automotive body, automotive technology, and welding. In addition, Western Nebraska Community College offers customized training for industry, facility access, blended learning opportunities, and on-site employer-based training. The business-education committee focuses on a training consortia, but representatives from WNCC have identified opportunities for building public-private partnerships around direct training and insourcing projects.

The key stakeholders interviewed also contend that one challenge to educational institutions' efforts to develop the workforce is that the regional culture is not one which has traditionally supported post-secondary education, certifications, and degrees. They validate this contention by reporting that students often choose classes based on how much they like the teacher instead of choosing classes that further their career objectives. Additionally, community stakeholders share a major concern regarding the shortage of workers with adequate soft skills, work ethic, workplace skills, and 21st Century skills.

With respect to the public workforce system led by the Nebraska Department of Labor, the regional Career Center One-Stop in Scottsbluff offers employment and training related services for workers, youth, and businesses. The services are provided by a small staff focused on Unemployment Insurance (UI), Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP), and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and covers an 11-county region. The strain of resources hinders the Career Center from effectively providing standard One-Stop services, including the delivery of on-the-job training (OJT) and specialized youth programs. The staff indicated there are no eligible recipients for the Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRAA) program. Currently, staff visit approximately 50-75 businesses per year with typical outcomes of creating job postings and obtaining referrals to other businesses for business services opportunities.

The workforce system collaborates with TCD on initiatives such as business and industry tours with the Scottsbluff and Gering High Schools. The workforce system regional manager believes the impact of service delivery to companies and individuals in the region could be increased by strengthening the partnership with TCD.

TCD also conducts several workforce development programs focused solely on attracting talent to the Scottsbluff-Gering region. Such programs include: implementing a marketing campaign to encourage local high school alumni to return to the region; operating a job board on the TCD website; and partnering with the State of Nebraska to incentivize military veterans to move to the region.

## Recommendations

To boost the quality of the region's workforce, the TPMA team recommends that regional organizations collaborate effectively on existing talent development, talent attraction, and the creation of a talent pipeline. Specific action steps include:

**A. Cultivate Existing Talent**
1. Talent Coalition
2. Targeted Industry Workforce Training
3. Business Resource Network (BRN)

**B. Drive Talent Attraction**
1. "Talent Ready" Dashboard
2. Expand TCD Activities

**C. Establish a Talent Pipeline**
1. Career Academies
2. Career Awareness Series

## A. Cultivate Existing Talent

The TPMA team recommends the establishment of a Talent Coalition, alignment of workforce training to the demands of identified targeted industries (i.e. Agriculture, Food Processing and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; Health Services; Data Centers; and Oil and Gas Support Industries), and implementation of the Business Resource Network model.

### 1. Talent Coalition

Regional organizations should elevate and formalize as a Talent Coalition to ensure business and industry skills needs, both soft skills and technical skills, are identified and communicated to education and training partners. Other responsibilities should include establishing a certified workforce, developing brain drain mitigation tactics, and addressing low educational attainment levels. The Talent Coalition should include TCD, the Nebraska Department of Labor, Scottsbluff and Gering Public Schools, Aim for Brilliance, target industry representatives, and other stakeholder groups. Effectively, a regional agency partner should facilitate the effort to bring all of the necessary partners together.

### 2. Targeted Industry Workforce Training

In order to enhance the skills of the existing labor force in the region, a regional agency partner and the Talent Coalition are recommended to facilitate expansion of existing and development of new internship and apprenticeship programs with the targeted industries. Additionally, the Talent Coalition should identify needs and encourage development of new or enhanced education and training programs.

Though TCD's workforce initiative is currently focused on talent attraction, TCD is uniquely positioned to engage businesses that have connections to pertinent services outlined in the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The TPMA team recommends that TCD build a stronger partnership with regional representatives from the Nebraska Department of Labor to ensure effective existing talent development in the region.

### 3. Business Resource Network (BRN)

Outlined previously in this report, the Business Resource Network model connects economic development, workforce development, and education partners to address employers' needs in a variety of areas. If the community extends its workforce development initiative to include existing talent development, a Business Resource Network is an essential tool for the Talent Coalition and its partners in order to identify the source of workforce issues and work collaboratively in the region to devise solutions.

## B. Drive Talent Attraction

Because the community's main workforce initiative is centered on attracting talent to the region, the TPMA team recommends creating a new marketing tool, a Talent Ready Dashboard, to boost the region's workforce spotlight and magnify current workforce development activities. The community should also enhance their current workforce activities, increasing the program's audience and boosting its quality.

### 1. Talent Ready Dashboard

In partnership with WNCC and Scottsbluff and Gering Public Schools, the TPMA team proposes the community create a Talent Ready Dashboard: a marketing effort to promote the education and skills of the region's workforce. The Talent Ready Dashboard will provide pertinent workforce metrics for companies and site selection consultants researching the optimal location for a business for their operations. Such metrics can include:

- Educational attainment levels
- High school graduation rate
- Certificate holder figures
- Labor force participation rate
- Soft Skills participation

### SOFT SKILLS CERTIFICATION

A soft skills certification program in the secondary education system can help senior high school students prepare for the transition from school to work and life beyond the classroom. Ensuring that students are acquiring the needed work ethic in order to obtain and secure successful employment is one of the main missions of the program. Graduates with the certification have an advantage when seeking employment as it identifies candidates with a demonstrated work ethic. Furthermore, soft skill certification is valuable for students applying to post-secondary institutions, as it shows that the student has learned the value of active participation in school, good attendance, and a hard work ethic. Certification programs should include the following:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Critical Thinking

The Talent Ready Dashboard metrics are encouraged to be added to the TCD and other regional agencies' websites and collateral material to be easily accessed by companies and site selection consultants. The Dashboard is just one tool that can be used to recruit workers to the Scottsbluff-Gering Region. Other workforce marketing tactics should be included in the Talent Coalition's mission.

### 2. Enhancement of Current Community Workforce Operations

The TPMA team endorses the expansion of the community's workforce activities to include talent attraction, as described above, as well as the amplification of current programs. TCD has developed and continues to maintain several strong tools that bring value to their talent attraction efforts, which includes growing Career Link, the marketing campaign aimed to draw alumni back to the region, and a newer initiative focused on attracting military veterans. Increased funding and staff would enable further development of these workforce development initiatives.

## C. Establish a Talent Pipeline

While existing talent development and talent attraction are vital pieces to the workforce development puzzle, creating a pipeline of talent for industry is the third integral element. For successful creation of the talent pipeline, the expansion of Career Academies and the creation of a Career Awareness Summit are essential.

### 1. Career Academies

Scottsbluff Public Schools have outlined detailed plans for alignment with the State of Nebraska's Rule 47, including an expansion of its current programming. In addition, Gering Public Schools have plans to initiate their own Career Academies in collaboration with WNCC, and should focus its programs on target industries (i.e. Agriculture, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemical; Health Services; Data Centers; and Oil and Gas Support Industries). As previously described above, the Career Academies should have a special focus on work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships and internships, for students.

One supplemental service from the advisory council to help guide the Career Academies is an employer needs assessment effort. The initiative – the Employer Learning Network (ELN) — will assess the needs of various segments of the employer base within the Scottsbluff-Gering region to determine common challenges many businesses face. Essentially, the ELN is an industry, post-secondary, and community college partnership whose mission is to build academic programs to meet specific job needs.

### 2. Career Awareness Summit

Building from the Industry Tour series, in which local businesses provide tours and career information to high school students, the TPMA team urges the Talent Coalition to launch a Career Awareness Summit. The Summit would focus on the skills and knowledge required for youth and adults to take advantage of career opportunities obtainable in the targeted industry sectors. Industry leaders and workforce development practitioners would present on the needed skills, possible occupations, growing careers, and effectively communicating the current status and future needs of the region's workforce. Students should also present on their experience in the Career Academies, essentially acting as ambassadors to their peers with the goal of persuading other students to pursue further education and training in targeted industries.

Prior to each year' Summit, both education and technical education teachers should have the opportunity to participate in "field trips" to the region's major employers in order to learn how the curricula relates to real world examples. In addition, the local newspaper could run a series of articles addressing specific issues to be discussed at the summit in addition to the Talent Coalition offering a workforce "report card".

In summary, the region's workforce partners have established creative and effective programs. The Scottsbluff and Gering Public Schools, WNCC, Nebraska Department of Labor, and TCD have all built a strong foundation upon which these recommendations would take development to the next level. Cultivating existing talent, boosting talent attraction efforts, and establishing a talent pipeline is critical to growing existing industries and attracting new businesses within the identified target industries.

# Summary

In summary, the Scottsbluff Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan provides an examination of the current initiatives and relationships and builds recommendations for increased economic and workforce growth. This Economic Development Strategic Plan represents a great opportunity for the region to reinvigorate, to reengage, and to rise together. This plan is a product of interviews and conversations with community members, City Staff, City Councils, a Steering Committee, and institutional stakeholders. To recap, the core recommendations are:

- Build a Consensus Coalition
- Convene to Encourage Tourism Collaboration
- Forge the Scottsbluff – Terrytown – Gering Highway Initiative
- Focus Business Attraction on Targeted Industries
- Expand Current Business Retention and Expansion Program
- Grow Entrepreneurism and Small Business Development
- Revitalize TCD Board Development
- Cultivate Existing Talent
- Drive Talent Attraction
- Establish a Talent Pipeline

Now that the planning process is complete, it is urged that implementation begin right away. The communities' unification in vision, strength, and leadership for the growth of the region's economy and workforce can propel impact of the proposed initiatives. Within the implementation phase of executing this strategic plan, specific tasks for increased attraction, retention, and enhancement of workers will be outlined.

# Appendices

## Appendix I: Interviewee List

| Name | Title, Organization |
|---|---|
| Aulick Leasing | Local Business |
| Bob Hastings | Superintendent, Gering Public Schools |
| Bob Pile | Director, Panhandle Co-op |
| Brian Vassa | NPPD |
| Chuck Karpf | Director, Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) |
| Craig Landers | Allo Communications |
| Dan Dickinson | Commercial Broker |
| Dan Morton | Gering Regional Services Master Plan Consultant |
| Daniel Bennett | Planner, Panhandle Area Development District |
| Darla Heggem | Workforce Recruiter, Twin Cities Development |
| Darwin Skelton | Airport Authority |
| Dave Schaff | Owner, M.C. Schaff and Associates |
| David Griffiths | Regional West Medical Center |
| Dick Bosn | Fixed Base Operator at Airport |
| Don Christensen | President, Gering City Council |
| Doug Leafgreen | Board Member and former Mayor, City of Gering |
| Ed Mayo | Mayor, City of Gering |
| Evan Ellis | Gering Regional Services Master Plan Consultant |
| Gary Hergert | Director, Panhandle Research and Extension Center |
| Hod Kosman | President, Platte Valley Bank |
| Jan Fitts | Director, Community Action Partnership |
| Jeanne McKerrigan | US Bank |
| Jerry Crable | Accountant and Personnel Director, Scotts Bluff County |
| Jessica Johnson | Educator, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension |
| Jim Holland | Editor, Star Herald |
| Jim Trumbull | Interview Panelist; Local Businessman; Scottsbluff Financial Incentives Committee Chair; LB840 Committee; Application Review Committee |
| Joe Schon | Local Entrepreneur |
| John Harms | State Senator |
| John Stinner | President Valley Bank |
| Karen Anderson | Executive Director, Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce |
| Karla Neidan-Streeks | Director, Gering Convention and Visitors Bureau |
| Kelley Strey | B&C Steel |
| Kent Greenwaldt | Mayor, Terrytown |
| Kent Hadenfelt | Board Chair, Gering Convention and Visitors Bureau |
| Kristen Wiebe | Executive Committee Member, Community Connections Group |
| Lane Danielzuk | Administrator, City of Gering |
| Lee Glenn | Financial Manager; Member of LB840 Application Review Committee; Kelley Bean |
| Liz Hilyard | Council Member, City of Scottsbluff |
| Mark Masterton | Board Chairman, Scotts Bluff County |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mark Gillam | Floyd's Truck Center, Inc. |
| Master Minds | Local Business |
| Nationstar | Local Business |
| Next Young Professionals | Local Business |
| Pat Comfort | Nebraska Department of Labor |
| Phil Mosstellar | Progress Rail |
| Randy Meininger | Mayor, City of Scottsbluff |
| Rawnda Pierce | Twin Cities Development Association |
| Raymond Gonzales | Council Member, City of Scottsbluff; TCD Board Ex-Officio Rep, City of Scottsbluff; Employed with Kelley Bean |
| Rick Ediger | Works in local Attorney's office; Legal counsel, LB840 Committee |
| Rick Kuckkahn | City Manager, City of Scottsbluff |
| Rick Myles | Superintendent, Scottsbluff Public Schools |
| Scott Shaver | Council Member; TCD Board Ex-Officio Rep, City of Scottsbluff |
| Star Lehl | Nebraska Department of Economic Development |
| Stateline Bean | Producer's Co-op |
| Steve Reisig | Former President, TCD |
| Terry Gaalswyk | Executive Vice President, Western Nebraska Community College |
| Terry Rajewich | Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) |
| Todd Holcomb | President, Western Nebraska Community College |
| Vertex | Local Business |
| Western Sugar | Local Business |
| TCD Board of Directors: | Karen Palm, 21st Century Equipment<br>Matt Larsen, Vistabeam and Inventive Media<br>Grant Hinze, Simon Contractors<br>Phil Brooker, Fremont Motors<br>Phillip Holliday, Nebraska Transport Co.<br>Chris Kelley, Kelley Bean<br>Vinc Aulick, Aulick Industries |

# Appendix II: Labor Market Assessment

## Labor Market Assessment

This Labor Market Assessment examines characteristics and indicators for Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska that provide insight into the state of the residents, workers, and overall needs of the county. The assessment compares the data from Scotts Bluff County to the United States, the state of Nebraska, and the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed. In order to provide alignment with existing data and reports, TPMA reviewed data and analysis compiled for the American Community Surveys conducted by the University of Nebraska—Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research. Within this Labor Market Assessment, the analyzed data falls into five main sections:

- **Demographics:** studying the growing population of Scotts Bluff County, identifying age and ethnicity breakdowns, income levels, and migration trends
- **Labor Force:** examining the County's increasing labor force level and participation rate, as well as the commuting patterns of the greater Scotts Bluff Labor Shed
- **Employment:** exploring employment trends, top industries and occupations, and important imports and exports for the region
- **Unemployment:** highlighting Scotts Bluff County's declining unemployment rates as compared to the County's employment levels and labor force participation
- **Human Capital:** looking at education indicators, levels, and opportunities within Scotts Bluff County

In the following pages, we highlight strengths as well as challenges for the future of Scotts Bluff County's economic and workforce development. One key finding presents a distinctive opportunity to keep the labor force within the region by expanding existing initiatives and adding new pathways to tackle "brain drain," as well as the following features of the analysis.

### Education

Educational attainment levels of Scotts Bluff County are significantly less than the State and National levels

Western Nebraska Community College Career Academy provides Panhandle high school students with opportunities to explore career fields

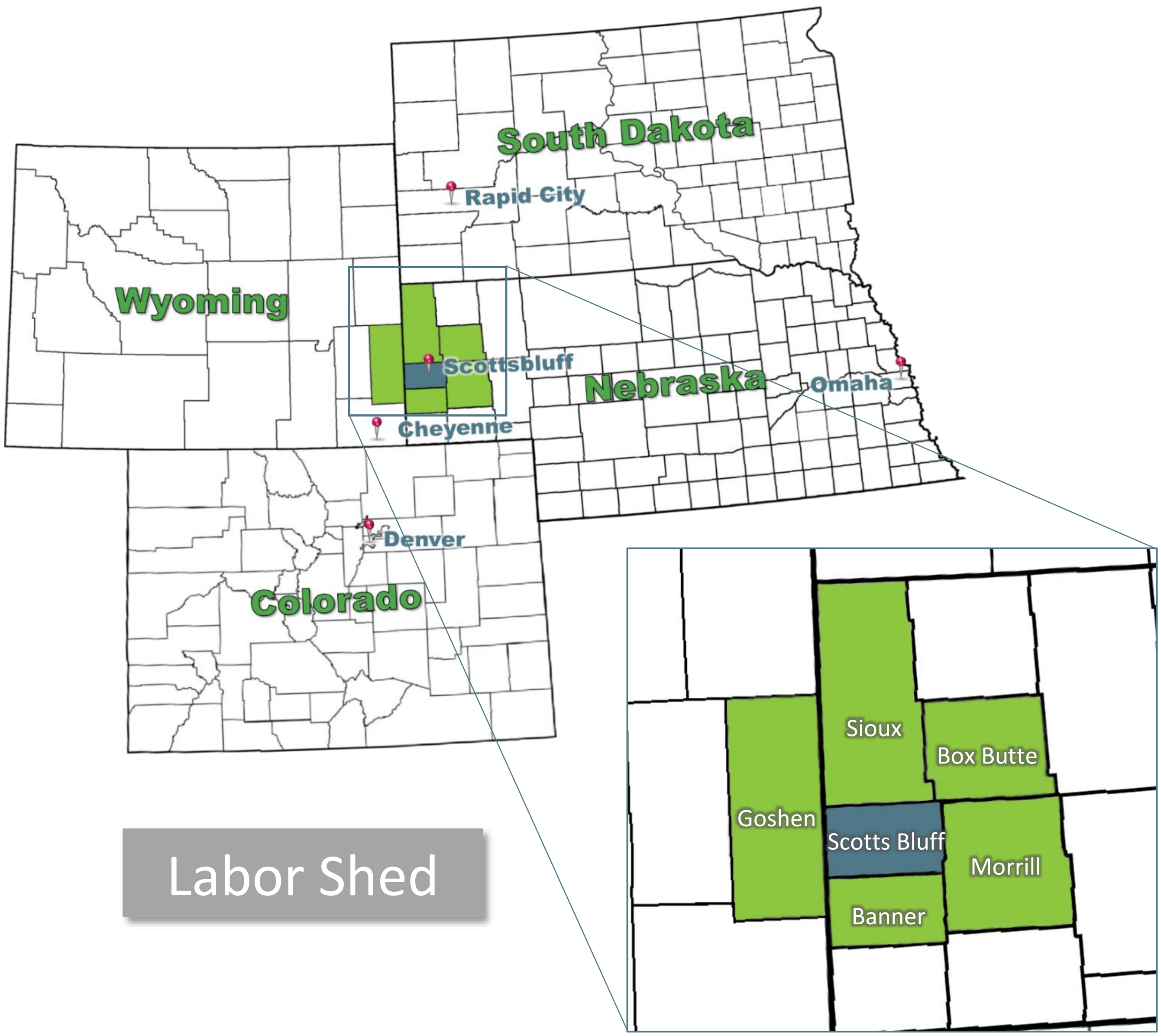
### Employment

Scotts Bluff County accounts for 54.3% of the labor force in the contiguous county labor shed.

90% of the residents of Scotts Bluff County are also employed within the county.

# Geographic Overview

Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, is located on the Western border of Nebraska. The county's largest municipality is the City of Scottsbluff, NE. Scotts Bluff County's Labor Shed ("Labor Shed") is the area from which the county's employers draw most of their commuting workers. This area is made up of five counties, in addition to Scotts Bluff, that either border or are within close proximity to it. Four of these counties are located in Nebraska: Sioux, Banner, Box Butte, and Morrill. An additional county in the Labor Shed is Goshen County in Wyoming.



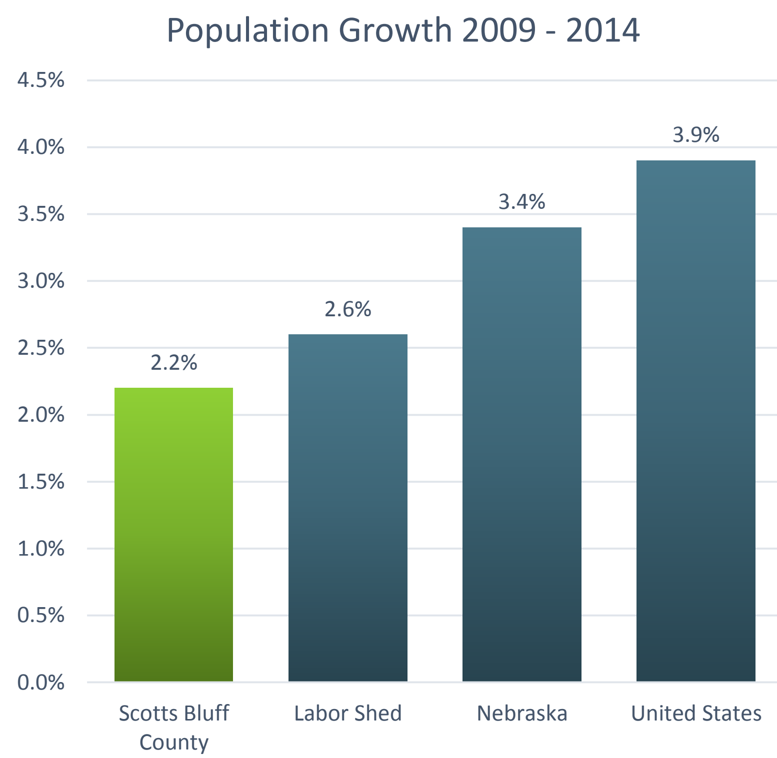
# Demographics

## Population Growth/Change

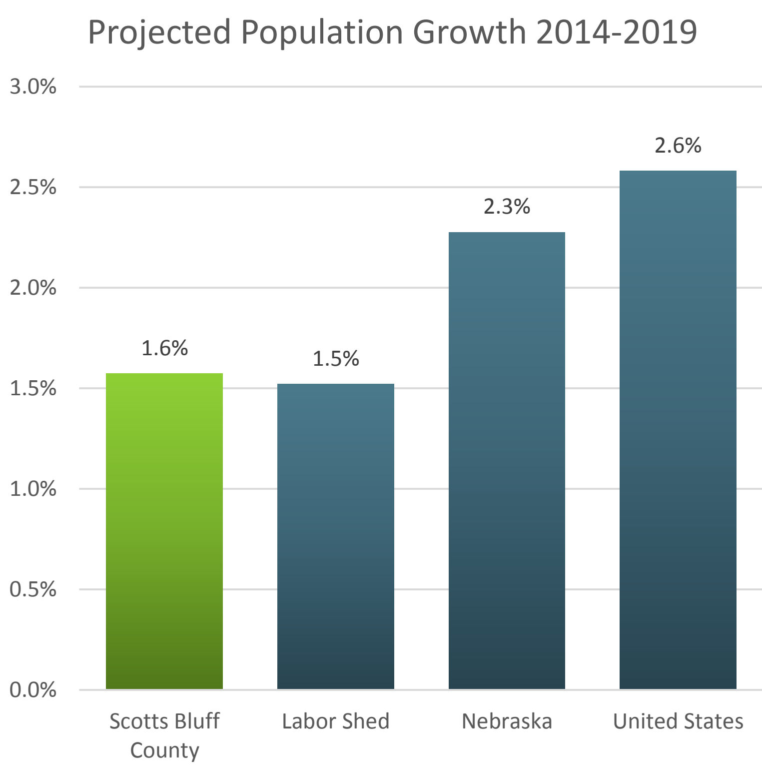
Scotts Bluff County is home to around 37,514 residents, over half of whom live in the County's two largest towns, Scottsbluff, with a population of 15,062, and Gering, with a population of 8,491.

Approximately 69,850 people reside in Scotts Bluff County's Labor Shed, which includes Scotts Bluff County plus its neighboring counties.

In the past 10 years, the population of Scotts Bluff County has increased by 2.2%, a rate that is less than that of the Labor Shed, Nebraska, and the US, but still displays a similar growth pattern.




*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*



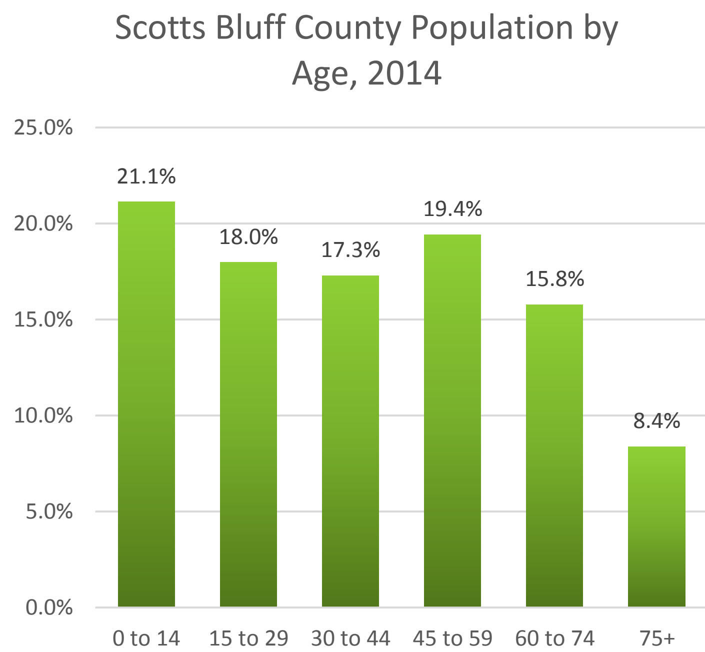

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

In the next five years, Scotts Bluff County is projected to continue to grow, yet at a slower rate. This statistic is also projected to hold true for that of the Labor Shed, State, and National regions as well. Of the four regions, Scotts Bluff County will experience less of a decline in growth rate than the others, but all will still continue to grow.

## Population by Age Group

The median age of Scotts Bluff County is 38.7 years, which again falls near the National average of 37.2 and the slightly younger state average of 36.3 years. This is attributed to the heavy youth population, as nearly 40% of the total population is under the age of 29. This trend is offset by the second largest population group of individuals between 45 and 59 years old at just under 20% of the total population.

Over the past decade, individuals above the age of 45 years old experienced the largest population increase with a net gain of 839 individuals. This breaks down into the age groups of 45-64 years, with a net gain of 435; and 65 and older, with a net gain of 404. The age group with the next highest increase was 20-29 year olds, of which experienced a net gain of 249 individuals. None of the age groups had a change of greater than 1% of the total population.



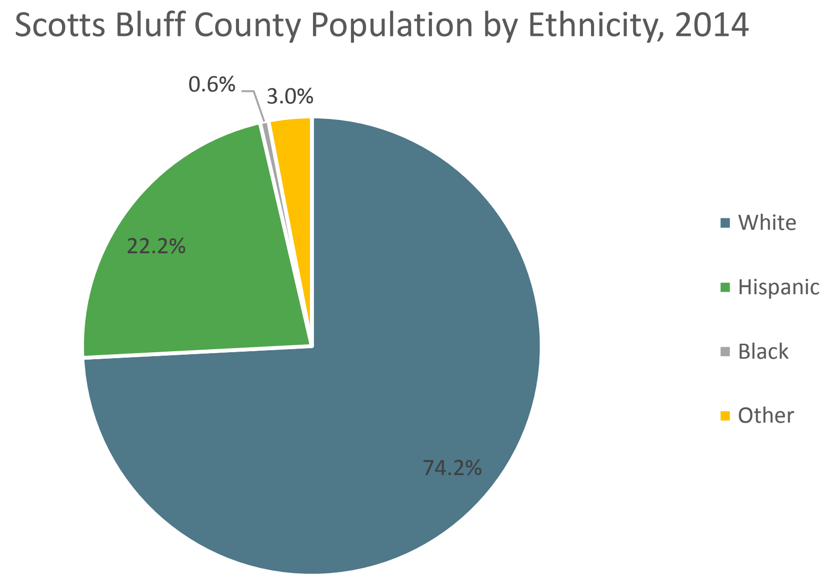

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

In the last 5 years, Scotts Bluff County has experienced the largest increase in population for individuals 30-44 years old, with a net increase of 423. The next highest increase is that of individuals above 65 years of age, with a net increase of 377. The two age ranges to experience a decrease is individuals 5-19 years of age, with a loss of 61, and 45-64 years of age, with a loss of 77 individuals.

Age distribution statistics shows a number possibilities in regards to Scotts Bluff's incoming workforce. If the county can retain its residents, it can expect a significant increase in their labor force, depending on residents' post-high school actions.

## Diversity

Around 74.2% of Scotts Bluff County residents are identified as White, Non-Hispanic. The next largest group by percentage of total population is identified as Hispanic at 22.2%. All other ethnicities combined account for less than 4% of the population. This trend remains reasonably consistent not only in the Labor Shed, but in Nebraska as a whole.

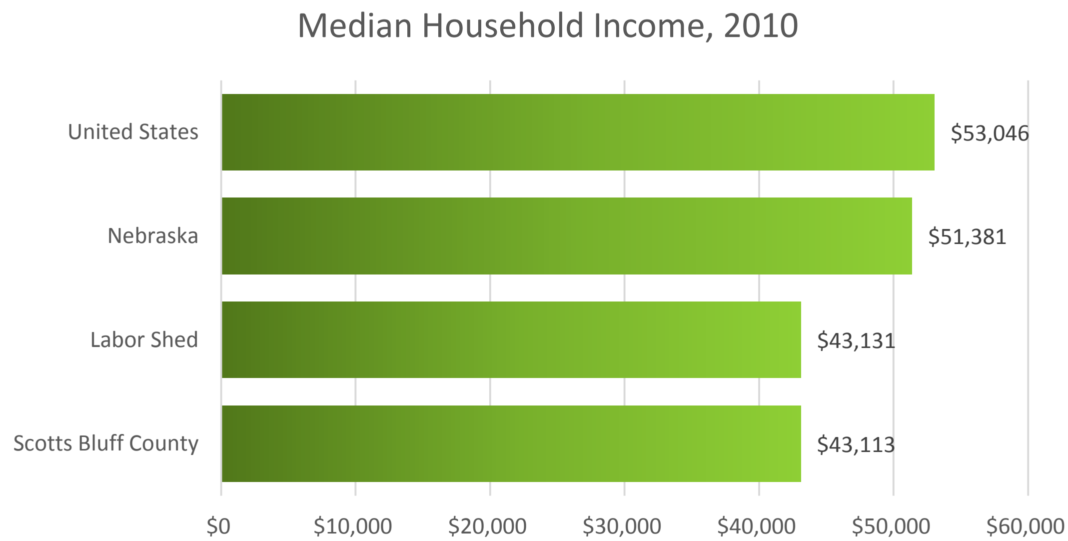



*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

Residents of Scotts Bluff County display more diversity in the 29 and under age range than in the population as a whole. The white population under the age of 29 accounts for 63.8% of the youth population, less than the total population of which whites make up 74.2%. Furthermore, the Hispanic population under the age of 29 has a considerably larger presence, representing 32.3% of this group. In fact, all demographic groups except whites represent a larger portion of the 29 and under age range than they do of the total population.

## Household Income

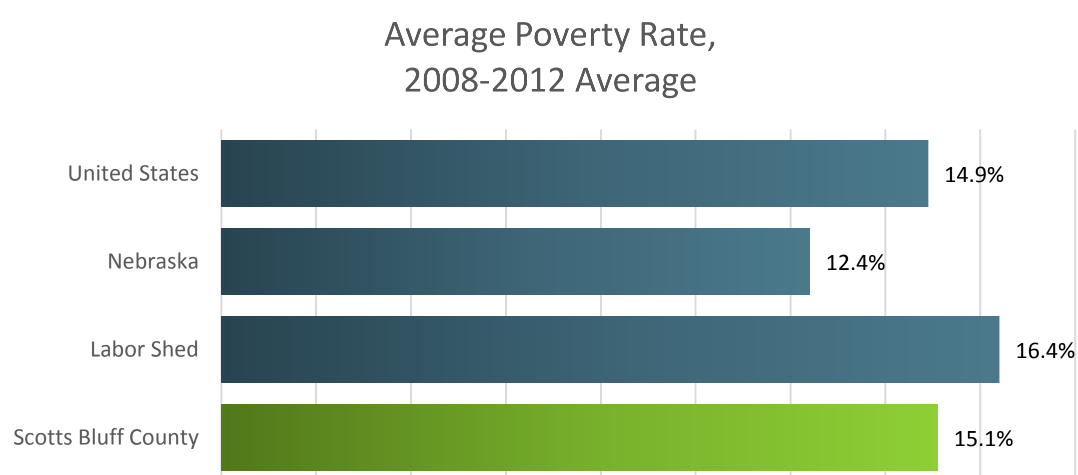
The median household income for Scotts Bluff County is $43,113. This is approximately 81% of the national median and about 84% of Nebraska's median. Of the six counties in the Labor Shed, Scotts Bluff ranks fourth, trailing behind Box Butte and Sioux counties of Nebraska, and Goshen County, Wyoming.




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 5year ACS 2009-2014*

## Poverty Rate

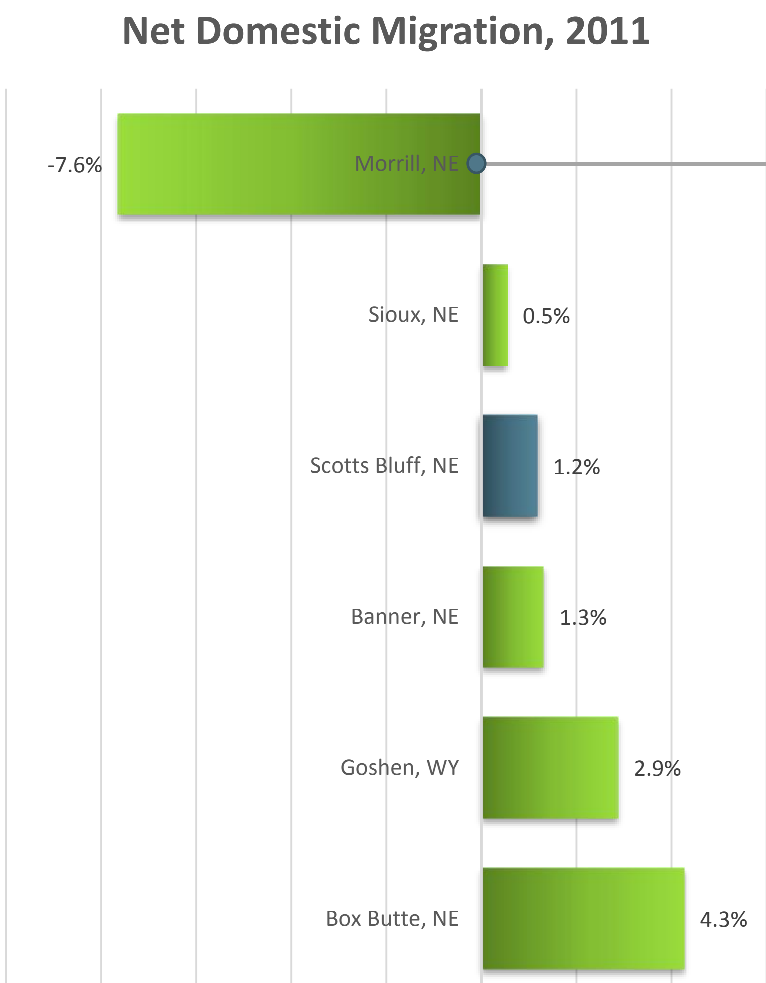
At 15.1%, the average poverty rate between 2008 and 2012, Scotts Bluff was 0.2% higher than the national average and 2.7% higher than the state average. Scotts Bluff County had the third lowest poverty rate in the labor shed.




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 5year ACS 2009-2014*

## Migration

In 2011, Scotts Bluff County experienced a net gain of 432 people due to domestic migration, meaning more people moved into the county than those that moved out. With the exception of Morrill County, all counties within the labor shed experienced net increase in population, with a total net increase of 925 to the Labor Shed.




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 1-year ACS 2011*

| Net Domestic Migration, 2011 | |
|---|---|
| **County** | **Migration** |
| Scotts Bluff, NE | 432 |
| Banner, NE | 9 |
| Sioux, NE | 7 |
| Morrill, NE | -385 |
| Goshen, WY | 380 |
| Box Butte, NE | 482 |

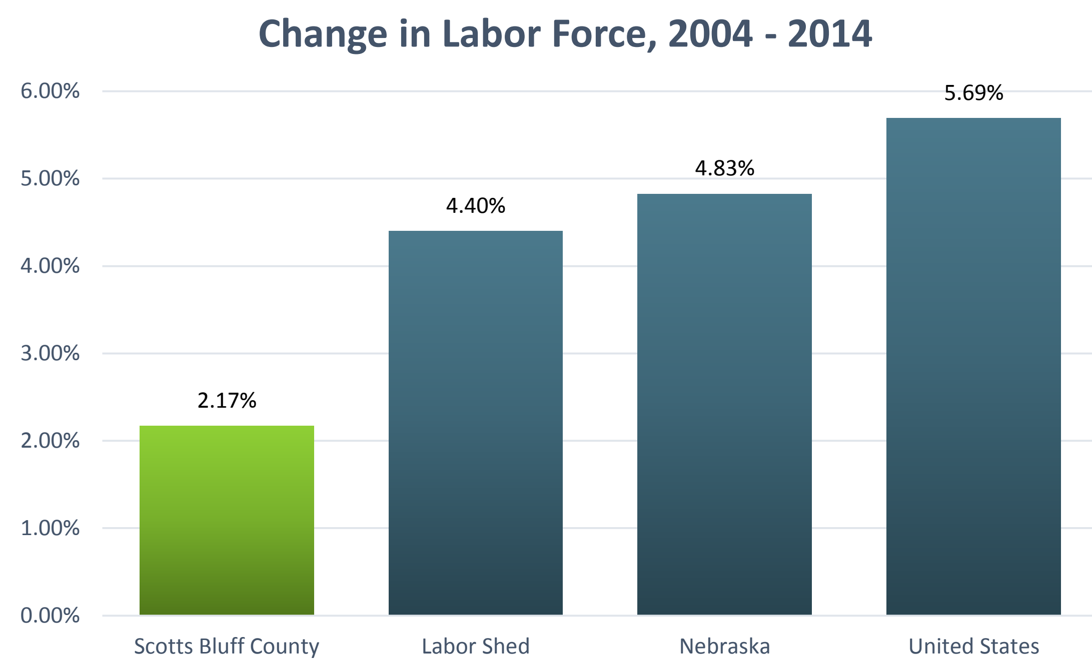
After looking into migration patterns of Morrill County, it was determined that 29.7% of migrants leaving the county stay within the Labor Shed, specifically relocating to Scotts Bluff and Box Butte counties. The other two highest places of relocation were in South Dakota at 31.3%, and Texas, at 20.7%.

# Labor Force

As of 2014, Scotts Bluff County's labor force totals over 19,300, which accounts for 54.3% of the labor force of the Labor Shed.

## Labor Force Growth

Scotts Bluff County is following the same trend, albeit slower, as the state and national labor force, all of which have experienced an increase within the past decade. The most notable increases in labor force are that of Goshen, WY and Morrill, NE, boasting increases of 15.3% and 7.7% respectively. This is an interesting detail to consider, given that Morrill has experienced a net decrease in population overall. However, the total population figure represents individuals of all ages, and not only individuals within the labor force. Furthermore, total population plays a large factor in this statistic in a different respect, as Morrill's labor force experienced a total gain of about half the size of the growth in Scotts Bluff.

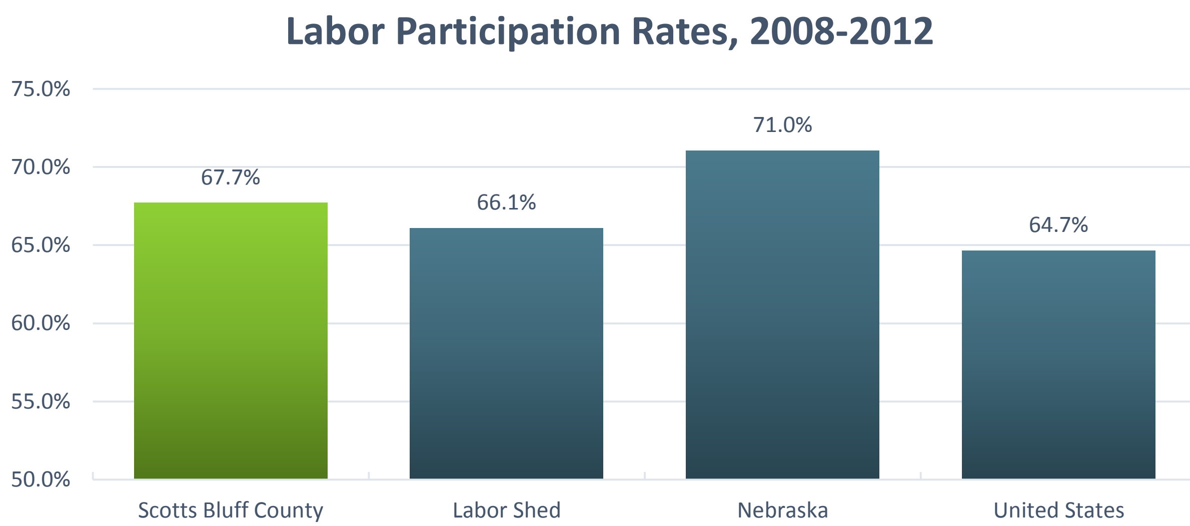



| Labor Force Growth, 2004-2014 | 2004 | 2014 | Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scotts Bluff County | 18,968 | 19,389 | 2.2% |
| Labor Shed | 34,089 | 35,658 | 4.4% |
| Nebraska | 973,404 | 1,022,764 | 4.8% |
| United States | 145,593,283 | 154,380,629 | 5.7% |

*TPMA Analysis of US BLS 2014*

## Labor Force Participation

The labor force participation rate represents the percent of the population that is over 16 and in the labor force (either employed or unemployed). This percentage demonstrates the portion of workers in the region who are either working or actively looking for work. In Scotts Bluff County, nearly 68% of adults choose to participate in the labor force, a rate surpassed only by that of the state labor force participation rate of 71.0%.



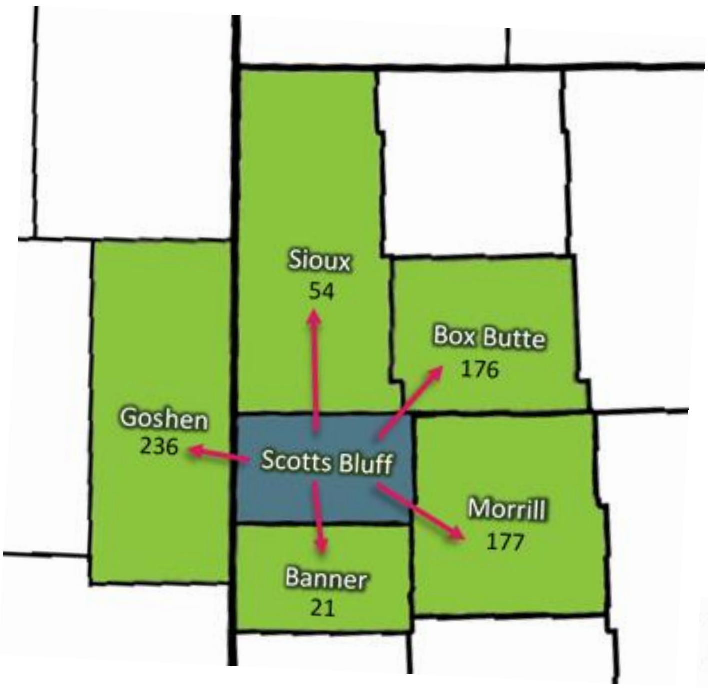

*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 5year ACS 2008-2012*

Scotts Bluff County claims the second highest participation rate within the labor shed. This is also quite significant when weighing Scotts Bluff's large labor force population as well. This suggests a very active labor force within Scotts Bluff, as well as an economy that can host such a force. At 67.7%, Scotts Bluff County's labor participation rate is 3% greater than the national average, but falls behind the state average of 71%.

## Commuting

Out of the total Labor Shed labor force, approximately 50% work within Scotts Bluff County. This is comprised of individuals that live and work within Scotts Bluff County and those who live elsewhere and commute. On any given work day, Scotts Bluff County will host a net gain of 583 workers.

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of people who live AND work in Scotts Bluff County | 16,346 |
| Number of people who live elsewhere but work in Scotts Bluff County | 1,605 |
| Number of people who live in Scotts Bluff County but work elsewhere | 1,022 |

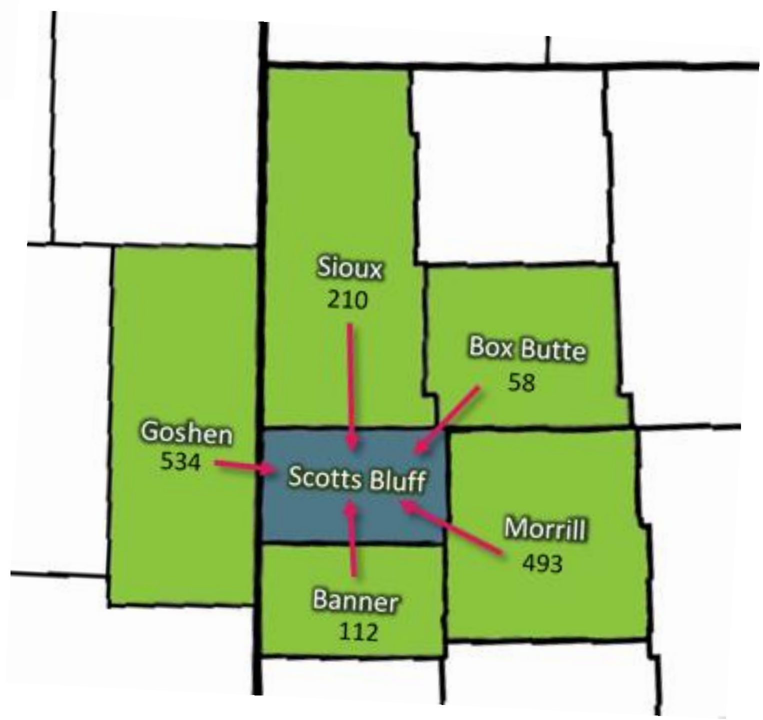



# Scotts Bluff County

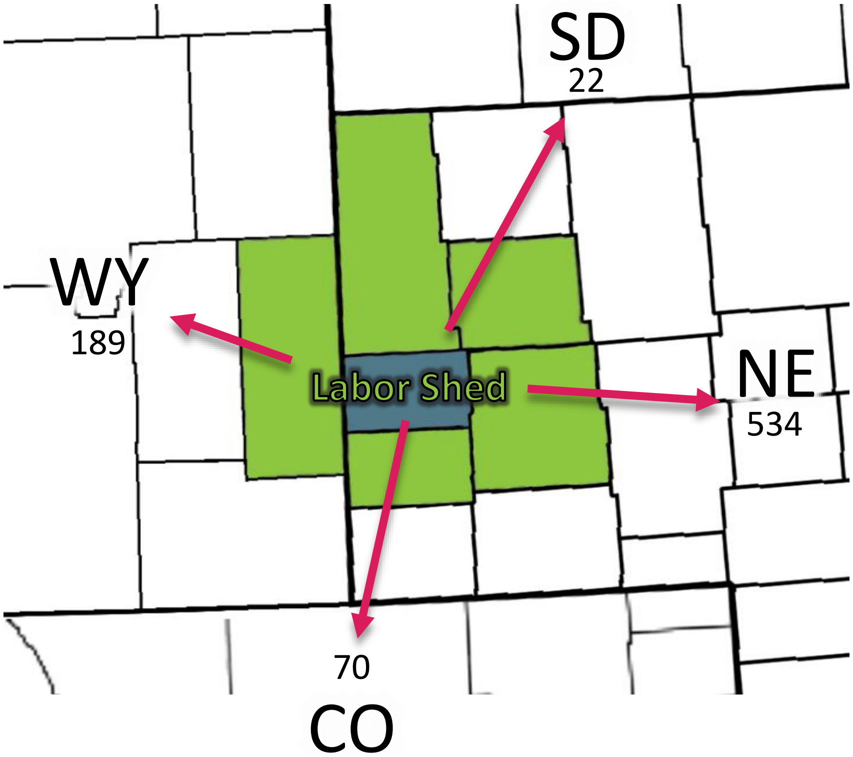
More than 600 Scotts Bluff county commuters stay within the Labor Shed counties, with Goshen County, WY, attracting the largest amount of workers/commuters at around 36% of the total.

Of the 1,407 workers commuting to Scotts Bluff County from the labor shed, 73% come from either Morrill County, or Goshen, WY. This putts Scotts Bluff County at a net gain of 743 workers from the labor shed on any given work day.

Over 90% of Scotts Bluff residents in the workforce also work within Scotts Bluff County, rather than commute outside of the county for work.



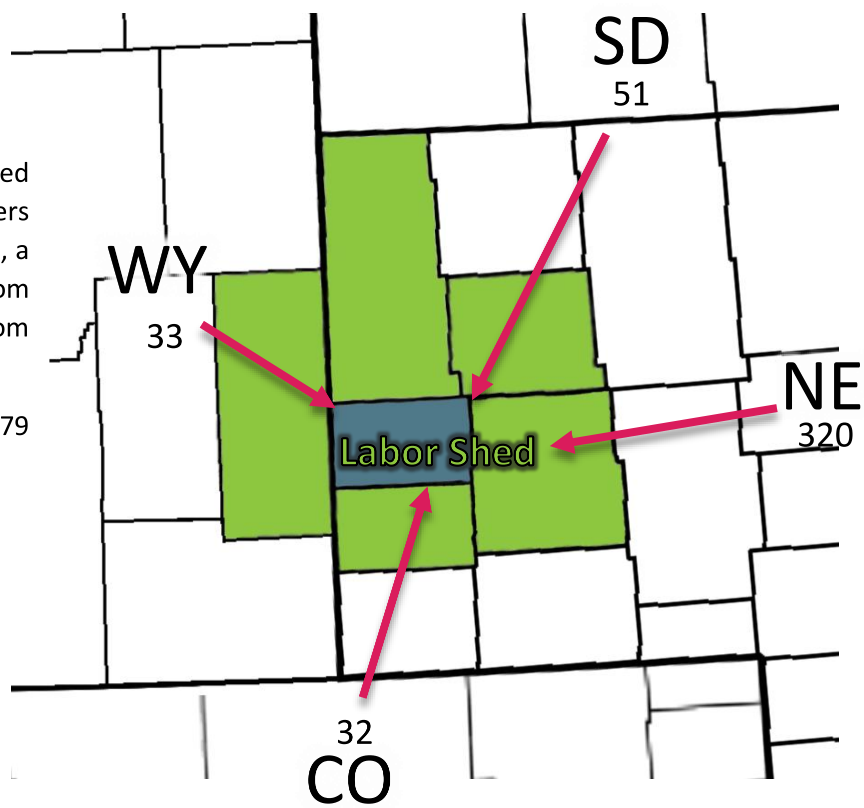

*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 1-year ACS 2011*




Most workers in the Labor Shed counties stay within the Labor Shed for their commute. However, some do commute beyond the Labor Shed and cross state boarders. Though most stay within Nebraska (65.5%), 189 workers travel to Wyoming, 70 to Colorado, and 22 travel to South Dakota.

On any given work day, the Labor Shed counties will receive 436 commuting workers from outside the contiguous counties. Again, a majority of these commuters come from Nebraska, but 36.2% of commuters come from Wyoming, South Dakota, and Colorado.

Overall, the Labor Shed faces a net loss of 379 workers across state boarders.




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 1-year ACS 2011*

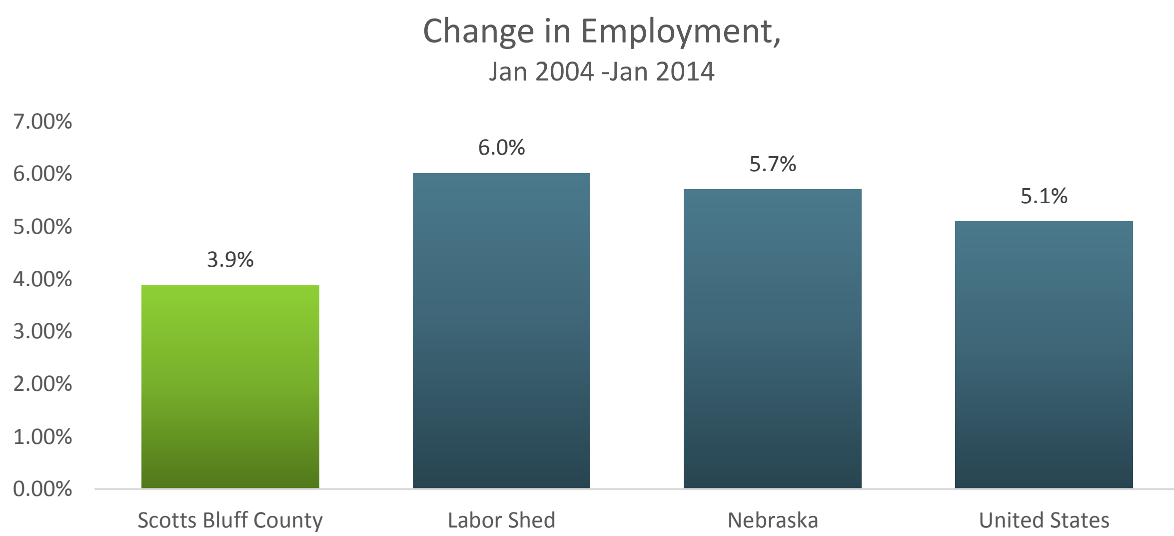
# Employment

Scotts Bluff County companies employ more than 18,500 people. This represents 54% of the total Labor Shed employment. The Nebraska counties within the Labor Shed make up 3% of Nebraska's total employment, consistent with its total population, which represents 3% of Nebraska's total population.

| Employment, January 2014 (Most recent Data) | |
|---|---|
| Scotts Bluff County | 18,585 |
| Labor Shed | 34,187 |
| Nebraska | 922,446 |
| United States | 143,526,015 |

*TPMA Analysis of US BLS 2014*

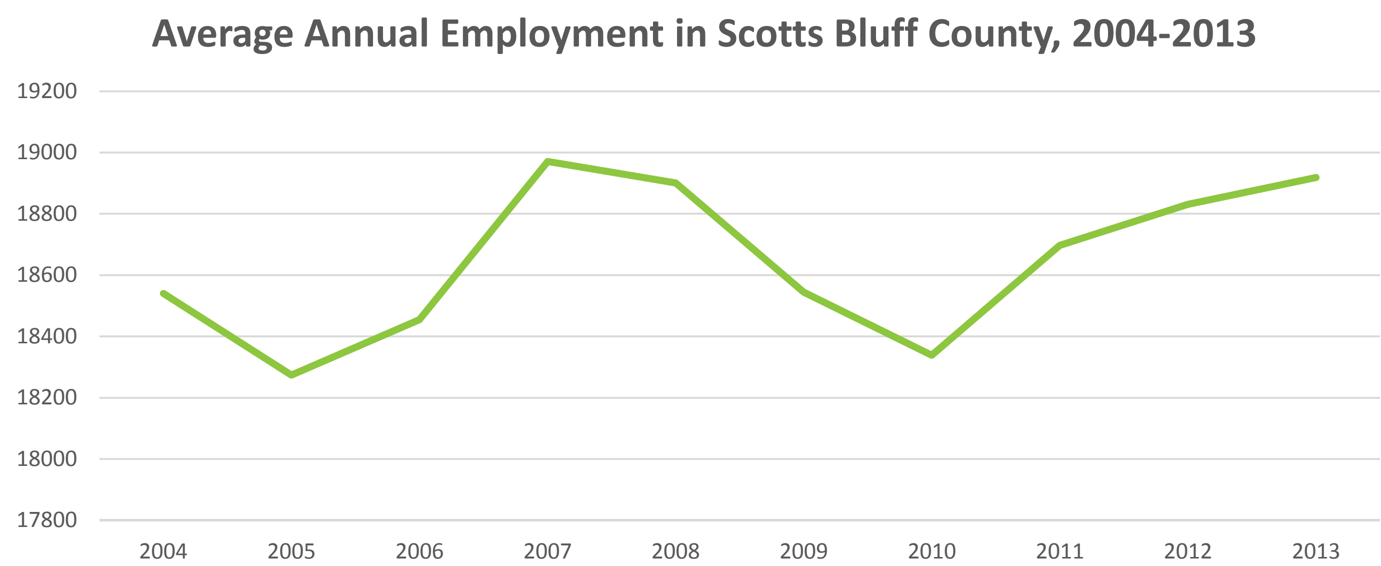
In the past ten years, employment levels in Scotts Bluff County have increased by nearly 4%. This is a lower rate than that of the Labor Shed, state, and national levels, but still signifies a positive growth pattern across the board.




As Scotts Bluff County's employment rate has risen, its labor force has increased as well, making this data particularly notable. This data indicates that not only are more people entering the labor force, but that these individuals are entering into employment. Often times, an increase in overall labor force leads to a saturation of available workers in an area, which can lower the employment rate. This is significant for Scotts Bluff County because the increase in both vectors indicate a thriving community that still has potential to grow.

## Trends

In raw numbers, Scotts Bluff's average annual employment has fluctuated moderately within the past decade, experiencing a decline during the recession around 2005, and again in 2010. However, employment levels have continued to increase since then, and is nearly back to its 2007 peak of 18,971.




*TPMA Analysis of US BLS 2014*

## Peak and Trough Employment

Though the Labor Shed and Nebraska's peak employment occurred in recent years, Scotts Bluff County displayed a trend similar to the US average, peaking in employment for the last decade in 2007. However, Scotts Bluff County has a much higher percentage gap between its peak and current employment rates than that of the other benchmarking regions.

**Current Employment versus Peak and Trough, January 2004 - April 2014***

| | Month of Trough Employment | Month of Peak Employment | Change: Peak to April 2014* | Change: Trough to April 2014* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scotts Bluff | Sep-05 | Jun-07 | -2.6% | 5.3% |
| Labor Shed | Jan-04 | Oct-12 | -1.4% | 6.9% |
| Nebraska | Jan-05 | Jul-13 | -0.4% | 7.9% |
| United States | Jan-04 | Jul-07 | -0.8% | 8.2% |

**Most recent employment data*

*TPMA Analysis of US BLS 2014*

# Employment by Industry

Scotts Bluff County's top 5 industries account for approximately 61% of the County's total employment and include:

| Scotts Bluff County Top Industries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sector** | **2014 Employment** | **% Employment** | **Average Wage** |
| Government | 3,519 | 17.9% | $48,698 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 3,423 | 17.4% | $51,471 |
| Retail Trade | 2,377 | 12.1% | $28,638 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 1,525 | 7.7% | $15,730 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 1,175 | 6.0% | $68,240 |

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

Three of the top five industries of employment boast average wages above the median income of Scotts Bluff County. This is an indicator that many of the smaller industries have average wages falling beneath the median income amount.

| Labor Shed Top Industries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sector** | **2014 Employment** | **% Employment** | **Average Wage** |
| Government | 7,092 | 20.4% | $49,494 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 4,893 | 14.1% | $46,947 |
| Retail Trade | 3,503 | 10.1% | $28,023 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 2,996 | 8.6% | $75,622 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 2,772 | 8.0% | $29,189 |

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

Both Scotts Bluff County and the Labor Shed boast Government, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade as their top 3 industries, in that respective order. Something to note about these industries, however is their variation in average wages as well as percentage of individuals employed. Health Care and Social Assistance industry workers make approximately $4,500 more annually on average than the average for the Labor Shed as a whole. This could be a result of more specialized services offered within Scotts Bluff County in the area of Health Care. Retail Trade is slightly higher in Scotts Bluff County than in the Labor Shed, but Government workers earn slightly less on average.

## Fastest Growing Industries

The five fastest growing and declining industries in Scotts Bluff County by increase or decrease in number of jobs are shown below for two time periods – 2004-2014, to show trends over the past decade, and 2009-2014, to display most recent trends over the past five years:

| Scotts Bluff County Fastest Growing Industries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2004-2014 | | 2009-2014 | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 441 | Health Care and Social Assistance | 252 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 271 | Government | 106 |
| Government | 227 | Other Services (except Public Administration) | 96 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 219 | Manufacturing | 73 |
| Wholesale Trade | 101 | Wholesale Trade | 72 |

| Scotts Bluff County Fastest Declining Industries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2004-2014 | | 2009-2014 | |
| Manufacturing | (261) | Construction | (205) |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (260) | Finance and Insurance | (177) |
| Construction | (227) | Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (139) |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | (221) | Retail Trade | (101) |
| Retail Trade | (135) | Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | (79) |

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

Note that Manufacturing has been identified as the fastest declining industry for Scotts Bluff County within the past 10 years, yet within the past 5 years it is in the top 5 fastest growing industries. This is something that should be taken into consideration, as it could illustrate a rebounding industry poised for success.

When comparing data on the County and Labor Shed levels, it was apparent that most of the growing industries in the Labor Shed were experiencing a majority of their growth from Scotts Bluff County. This is yet another indicator of Scotts Bluff County as the flagship of the Labor Shed, from an employment and economic standpoint.

## Major Import Industries

Of all the major imports to Scotts Bluff County, nearly 44% came from the Manufacturing and Government sectors for a combined $889 million. Finance, Real Estate, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services were the only other sectors to break the $100 million mark and were valued at a combined $409.6 million.

| 2012 Imports (millions) | |
|---|---|
| Manufacturing | $446.2 |
| Government | $442.8 |
| Finance and Insurance | $175.3 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | $121.8 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | $112.5 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014*

## Major Export Industries

Government is the largest export sector, as well as the only to break $300 million dollars. Government exports account for nearly 18% of all the County's exports, with the other top five industries accounting for nearly 70% of total exports at approximately $1.3 billion. A government's operational structure plays a role in this large volume of exports, as a government may export a budget or grant proposal, while in turn receiving outside money into the region.

| 2012 Exports (millions) | |
|---|---|
| Government | $331.2 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | $292.2 |
| Manufacturing | $285.4 |
| Finance and Insurance | $189.7 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | $188.1 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014*

# Employment by Occupation

The top five occupations for workers in Scotts Bluff County include:

| Top Occupations<br>Sector | 2014 Jobs | % Employment |
|---|---|---|
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 3,194 | 16.2% |
| Sales and Related Occupations | 2,242 | 11.4% |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 1,696 | 8.6% |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 1,590 | 8.1% |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 1,365 | 6.9% |

*TPMA Analysis of EMSI Analyst 2014*

The highest employed occupation in Scotts Bluff County is that of Office and Administrative Support occupations, employing over 3,000 individuals at 16.2% of the work force. Office and Administrative Support occupations receive a median wage of $12.19, which is 23% lower than the average median earnings for all occupations.

## Fastest Growing Occupations

The five fastest growing occupations in Scotts Bluff County assessed by increase in employment are shown below for two time periods – 2004-2014 and 2009-2014:

| Fastest Growing Occupations<br>2004-2014 | | 2009-2014 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 175 | Personal Care and Service Occupations | 88 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 155 | Community and Social Service Occupations | 72 |
| Community and Social Service Occupations | 139 | Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations | 61 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 122 | Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 59 |
| Healthcare Support Occupations | 99 | Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 54 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014*

The only occupations that are consistent between these two time frames are Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, and Community and Social Service Occupations. Approximately 52% of the growth in Community and Social Service Occupations in the past decade occurred within the last 5 years, where Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations' growth slowed tremendously, experiencing just 34% of its decade growth in the past five years.

## Fastest Declining Occupations

The five fastest declining occupations in Scotts Bluff County assessed by decrease in employment are shown below for two time periods – 2004-2014 and 2009-2014:

| Fastest Declining Occupations | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2004-2014 | | 2009-2014 | |
| Management Occupations | (257) | Construction and Extraction Occupations | (123) |
| Production Occupations | (219) | Management Occupations | (120) |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (135) | Office and Administrative Support Occupations | (105) |
| Computer and Mathematical Occupations | (80) | Sales and Related Occupations | (95) |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (50) | Business and Financial Operations Occupations | (59) |

*EMSI Analyst 2014*

Although Office and Administrative Support Occupations are still the top ranking occupation group in Scotts Bluff County by volume of employment, it ranked in the top 5 fastest declining occupations within the past 5 years. Although this number is only 3.3% of its total employment, it could signal a trend toward an increasing rate in which these occupations are declining in employment.

Another notable occupation group that has experienced interesting unemployment trends is that of Construction and Extraction Occupations, a group in which 89% of the net job loss within the past decade occurred in the last 5 years. At a median income of $15.32, this occupation group sits just $0.45 below the average median income across all occupations.

# Unemployment

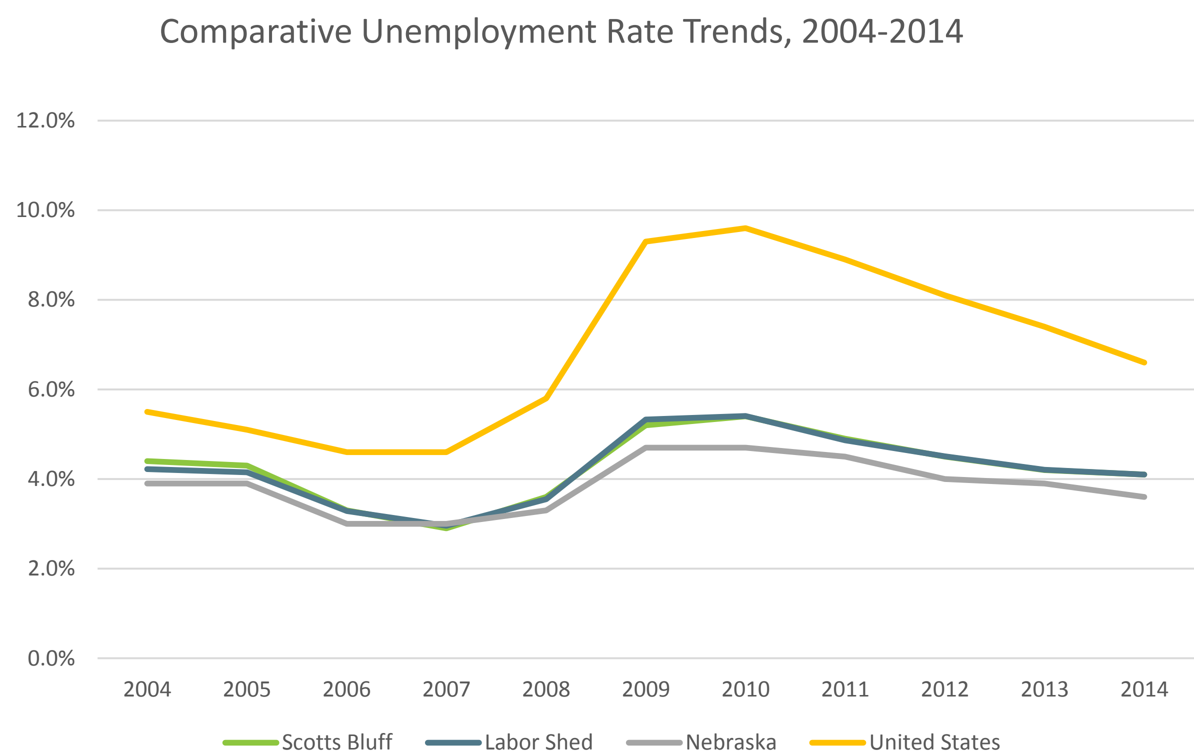
As of January 2014, Scotts Bluff County had an unemployment rate of 4.1%, which is the second highest of all six counties in its Labor Shed and slightly higher than the state unemployment rate of 3.6%. However, Scotts Bluff was still well below the national average of 6.6% in January 2014.

| Comparative Unemployment Rates, January 2014 | |
|---|---|
| Morrill, NE | 3.3% |
| Banner, NE | 3.4% |
| Sioux, NE | 3.7% |
| Box Butte, NE | 4.0% |
| Scotts Bluff, NE | 4.1% |
| Goshen, WY | 4.6% |

*US BLS 2014*

## Unemployment Trends

Since 2004, Scotts Bluff County's average annual unemployment rates have been consistently lower than the national averages, but almost always slightly higher than that of the state average, having only dipped to 2.9% in 2007. Employment rates on all levels have generally been in decline for the past 4 years.




*TPMA Analysis of US BLS 2014*

# Human Capital

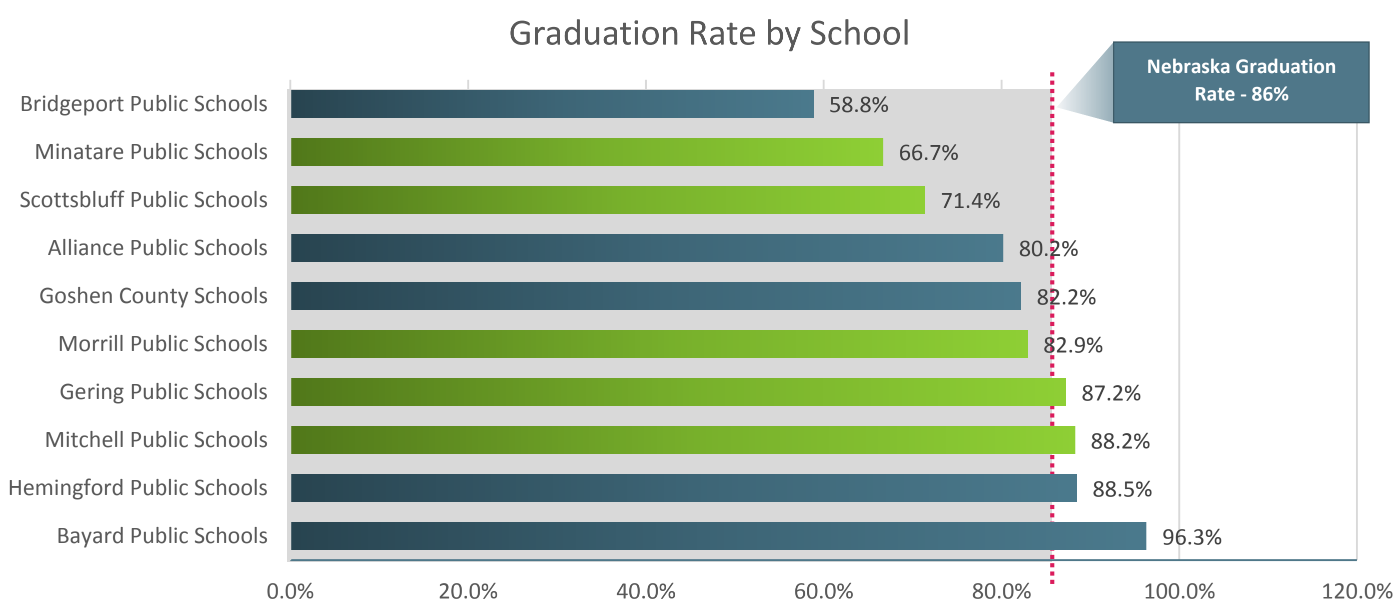
Scottsbluff and Gering high schools graduated 71.4% and 87.2% respectively. This graduation rate for Scottsbluff is significantly below the Labor Shed average.

The Nebraska average high school graduation rate for the 2010-2011 academic school year was at 86%, which is consistent with most of the schools within the labor shed. The lowest graduation rate was Bridgeport High School in Morrill County at a rate of 58.8%, contrasted by the highest rate being Bayard High School within the same county at 96.3%.[17]

**Labor Shed High School Graduation Rates 2011**

| County | District | 2011 Rate |
|---|---|---|
| Banner | Banner County Public Schools | N/A |
| Box Butte | Alliance Public Schools | 80.2% |
| | Hemingford Public Schools | 88.5% |
| Morrill | Bayard Public Schools | 96.3% |
| | Bridgeport Public Schools | 58.8% |
| Scotts Bluff | Gering Public Schools | 87.2% |
| | Minatare Public Schools | 66.7% |
| | Mitchell Public Schools | 88.2% |
| | Morrill Public Schools | 82.9% |
| | Scottsbluff Public Schools | 71.4% |
| Sioux | Sioux County High School | N/A |
| Goshen | Goshen County Schools | 82.2% |

*Nebraska Department of Education, 2011*




## CHOICES Program

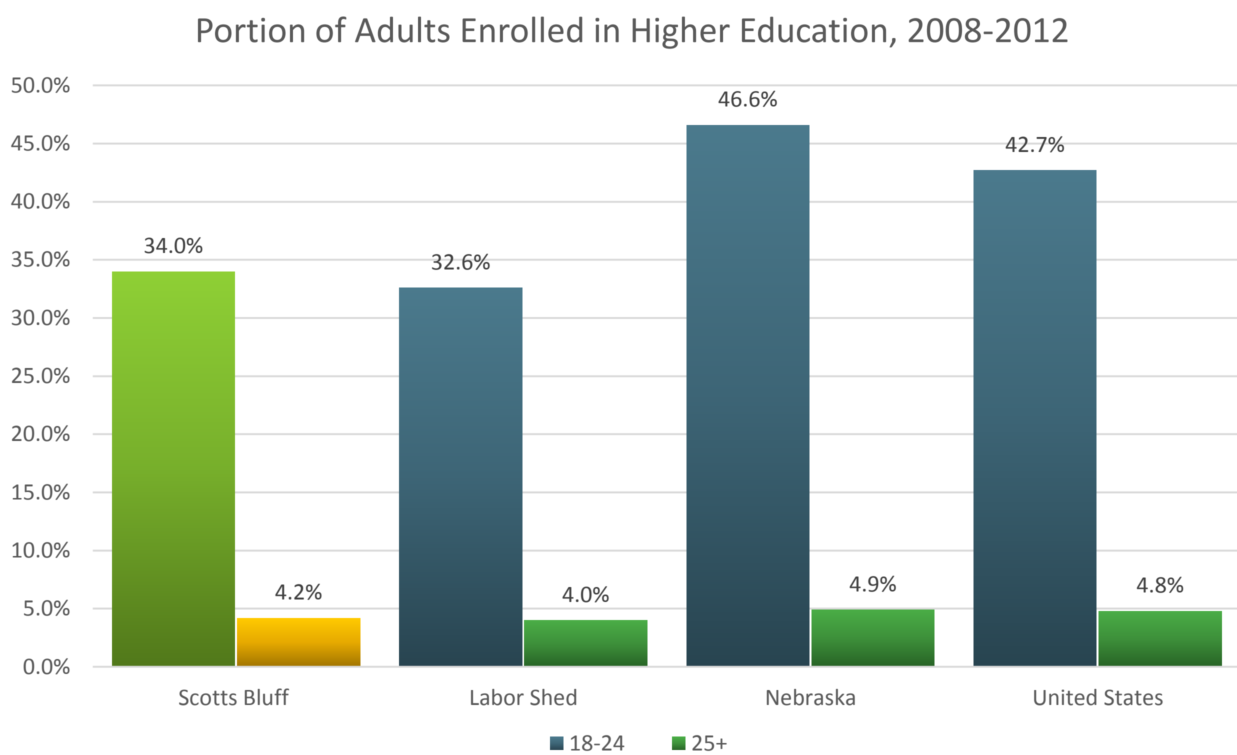
Scottsbluff High School has a community-based career path program called CHOICES in which students are free to explore various career pathways through service learning, job shadowing and internship programs. The program is interdisciplinary in nature and is aligned with state standards.

[17] Bayard High School high graduation rate may be attributed to its small student population totaling 135 high school students, as well as a specific program aimed to increased graduation rates. This incentive program allows failing students an opportunity to stay after regular schools hours to fulfill credit requirements and pass courses. While this helps students complete necessary graduation requirements, it also pushes course completion for students through who otherwise would have failed. Source: http://www.bayardpublicschools.org/vnews/display.v/ART/50d0bdb73096d and Nebraska Department of Education

## Education Enrollment (Higher Education)

On average between 2008 and 2012, 1,113 adults aged 18-24 (34%) and 1,022 adults over 25 (4.2%) in Scotts Bluff County were enrolled in a post-secondary education program.

Scotts Bluff County's averages in this area are consistent with that of its Labor Shed, but both are notably lower than state and nationwide averages. Because of the fairly reasonable access to higher education programs within the City of Scottsbluff itself, this could potentially be attributed to regional brain drain in which graduates relocate to other regions after receiving a degree or certification.




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 5year ACS 2008-2012*

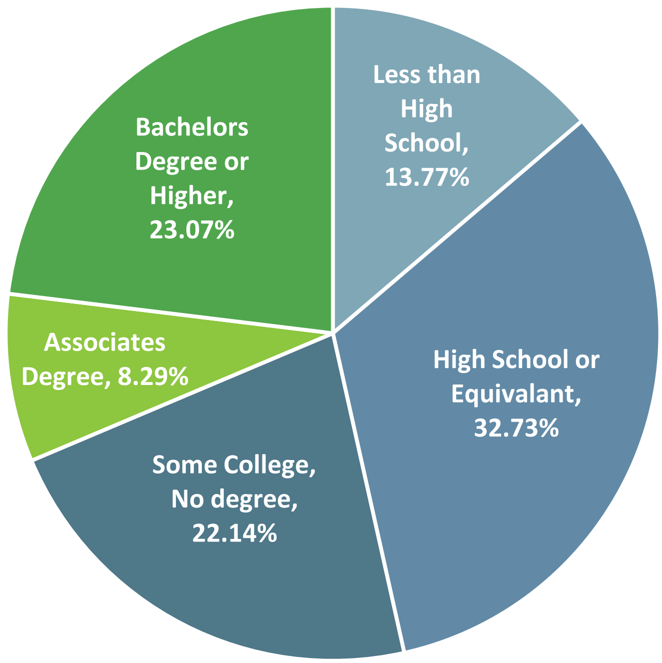
### Western Nebraska Community College Career Academies

WNCC is providing career academy programs for the greater panhandle area, and working directly with Scottsbluff schools to provide programs in Criminal Justice, Early Childhood, Emergency Medical Technician, Health Aide, Health Informatics, Information Technology, and Phlebotomy

## Educational Attainment (Higher Education)

Just over 75% of the adult population of Scotts Bluff County has at least a high school degree or equivalency, with only 13.77% having less than high school level education. Over half of the population attends college, and about 1/3 of the population has at least an Associate's Degree, with 23% of the population claiming a Bachelor's Degree or above.

Educational Attainment of Adults over 18, 2008-2012




*TPMA Analysis of US Census Bureau 5year ACS 2008-2012*

## National Perspective

### Percentage of Adults 25-34 with an Associate Degree or Higher

| Nebraska | | United States |
|---|---|---|
| | 69% | District of Columbia |
| | 55% | Massachusetts |
| | 51% | Minnesota |
| | 50% | North Dakota, New York |
| | 48% | New Jersey |
| | 47% | Iowa, Connecticut |
| | 46% | New Hampshire, Maryland, Illinois, Virginia |
| Nebraska | 45% | Vermont, Colorado |
| | 44% | Pennsylvania |
| | 43% | Rhode Island, South Dakota |
| | 42% | Kansas, Wisconsin, Washington |
| | 41% | Hawaii |
| United States | 40% | Montana, Utah, Missouri |
| | 39% | Ohio, California |
| | 38% | Maine, North Carolina, Oregon, Delaware, Michigan |
| | 37% | Florida, Indiana |
| | 36% | Georgia, South Carolina, Wyoming |
| | 34% | Arizona, Kentucky, Tennessee |
| Scotts Bluff County | 33% | Idaho, Texas |
| | 32% | Alabama, Oklahoma, Alaska, Mississippi |
| Labor Shed | 31% | Louisiana, West Virginia |
| | 30% | New Mexico |
| | 29% | Arkansas, Nevada |

*US Census Bureau 2008-2012 3-year ACS*

## National Perspective

### Percentage of Adults 25-64 with an Associate Degree or Higher

| Nebraska | | United States |
|---|---|---|
| | 57% | District of Columbia |
| | 51% | Massachusetts |
| | 47% | Connecticut, Colorado |
| | 46% | Minnesota, New Hampshire |
| | 45% | Vermont, New Jersey, North Dakota, Maryland, New York |
| | 44% | Virginia |
| | 43% | Washington |
| Nebraska | 42% | Rhode Island, Hawaii, Illinois |
| | 41% | Kansas, Utah |
| | 40% | Iowa, South Dakota |
| United States | 39% | Oregon, Wisconsin, California, Montana, Maine, Pennsylvania |
| | 38% | North Carolina, Delaware |
| | 37% | Florida, Michigan, Georgia |
| | 36% | Wyoming, Alaska, Arizona, Missouri, Ohio |
| | 35% | Idaho, South Carolina |
| | 34% | Texas, New Mexico, Indiana |
| Labor Shed, Scotts Bluff County | 33% | |
| | 32% | Tennessee, Oklahoma, Alabama |
| | 31% | Kentucky |
| | 30% | Nevada, Mississippi |
| | 28% | Louisiana, Arkansas |

# Appendices – Labor Market Assessment

## Appendix A: Data Sources

# EMSI Analyst

EMSI Analyst provides in-depth and current local employment data, updated four times per year. To extrapolate data to the county and ZIP code level where it is otherwise unavailable, EMSI 2014.2 relies on more than 90 data sources, including the following: Bureau of Economic Analysis and U.S. Census Bureau from the U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of Labor Statistics and Employment and Training Administration (ETA) from the U.S. Department of Labor; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); Common Core of Data (CCD); occupational requirements and descriptions from O*Net; and characteristics of Private Schools in the United States from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

# Additional Sources

- Nebraska Department of Education, 2011
- Wyoming Department of Education, 2011
- STATS Nebraska, 2011
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014
- U.S. Census 2014
- U.S. Census Bureau 2012 – 1-year American Community Survey
- U.S. Census Bureau 2010 – 2012 3-year American Community Survey
- U.S. Census Bureau 2008 – 2012 5-year American Community Survey

Appendix B: Industry and Occupation Data

# Fastest Growing Industries

## 2004-2014

| Industry | Jobs Added | Employment, 2014 | Average Annual Salary |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 441 | 3,423 | $51,471 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 271 | 721 | $37,494 |
| Government | 227 | 3,519 | $48,698 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 219 | 1,175 | $68,240 |
| Wholesale Trade | 101 | 884 | $51,669 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Government | 590 | 7,092 | $49,494 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 573 | 4,893 | $46,947 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 325 | 2,996 | $75,622 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 241 | 982 | $34,857 |
| Wholesale Trade | 129 | 1,561 | $52,396 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 20,951 | 128,795 | $47,171 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 9,271 | 49,921 | $69,056 |
| Government | 7,755 | 178,232 | $56,252 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 6,633 | 75,326 | $15,937 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 4,998 | 54,007 | $57,183 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 3,655,327 | 18,754,565 | $53,701 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 1,815,689 | 12,667,824 | $21,130 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 1,504,046 | 9,553,594 | $89,950 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 917,160 | 9,573,417 | $38,989 |
| Educational Services (Private) | 697,903 | 3,822,030 | $43,813 |

| 2009-2014 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Industry | Jobs Added | Employment, 2014 | Average Annual Salary |
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 252 | 3,423 | $51,471 |
| Government | 106 | 3,519 | $48,698 |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | 96 | 878 | $22,618 |
| Manufacturing | 73 | 1,101 | $47,809 |
| Wholesale Trade | 72 | 884 | $51,669 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Government | 397 | 7,092 | $49,494 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 256 | 4,893 | $46,947 |
| Manufacturing | 181 | 1,833 | $47,794 |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | 177 | 1,556 | $21,741 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 156 | 2,366 | $15,117 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 11,280 | 128,795 | $47,171 |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | 5,001 | 50,433 | $24,686 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 4,688 | 75,326 | $15,937 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 4,512 | 50,117 | $35,274 |
| Manufacturing | 3,256 | 97,825 | $56,034 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 1,716,437 | 18,754,565 | $53,701 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 1,488,878 | 9,573,417 | $38,989 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 1,361,804 | 12,667,824 | $21,130 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 765,264 | 9,553,594 | $89,950 |
| Retail Trade | 705,106 | 15,966,632 | $33,199 |

# Fastest Declining Industries

| 2004-2014 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Industry | Jobs Lost | Employment, 2014 | Average Annual Salary |
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Manufacturing | (261) | 1,101 | $47,809 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (260) | 680 | $27,863 |
| Construction | (227) | 1,051 | $41,425 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | (221) | 491 | $52,267 |
| Retail Trade | (135) | 2,377 | $28,638 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (614) | 2,772 | $29,189 |
| Construction | (331) | 1,547 | $38,819 |
| Retail Trade | (229) | 3,503 | $28,023 |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | (145) | 1,556 | $21,741 |
| Manufacturing | (118) | 1,833 | $47,794 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Information | (4,846) | 17,158 | $68,472 |
| Manufacturing | (4,418) | 97,825 | $56,034 |
| Construction | (4,056) | 57,825 | $48,344 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (1,764) | 33,628 | $31,456 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | (1,306) | 10,380 | $42,629 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Manufacturing | (2,285,282) | 12,256,441 | $75,776 |
| Construction | (1,294,506) | 7,897,341 | $54,472 |
| Information | (431,056) | 2,821,946 | $99,827 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | (147,499) | 2,514,848 | $52,322 |
| Finance and Insurance | (90,402) | 6,172,138 | $104,167 |

| 2009-2014 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Industry | Jobs Lost | Employment, 2014 | Average Annual Salary |
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Construction | (205) | 1,051 | $41,425 |
| Finance and Insurance | (177) | 1,022 | $50,160 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (139) | 680 | $27,863 |
| Retail Trade | (101) | 2,377 | $28,638 |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | (79) | 721 | $37,494 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Construction | (462) | 1,547 | $38,819 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (284) | 2,772 | $29,189 |
| Finance and Insurance | (161) | 1,419 | $49,561 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | (124) | 2,996 | $75,622 |
| Retail Trade | (99) | 3,503 | $28,023 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Construction | (1,589) | 57,825 | $48,344 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | (1,099) | 33,628 | $31,456 |
| Information | (752) | 17,158 | $68,472 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | (671) | 10,380 | $42,629 |
| Utilities | (656) | 1,262 | $111,447 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Government | (581,192) | 24,021,502 | $68,301 |
| Construction | (305,973) | 7,897,341 | $54,472 |
| Information | (128,112) | 2,821,946 | $99,827 |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | (80,753) | 7,376,612 | $28,827 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | (37,220) | 2,514,848 | $52,322 |

# Top Imports

| 2012 Industry | Imports[18] |
|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | |
| Manufacturing | $446,222,275 |
| Government | $442,835,447 |
| Finance and Insurance | $175,282,373 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | $121,845,250 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | $112,512,803 |
| **Labor Shed** | |
| Government | $930,610,232 |
| Manufacturing | $929,797,043 |
| Finance and Insurance | $340,832,113 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | $252,414,188 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | $215,457,781 |
| **Nebraska** | |
| Manufacturing | $25,285,503,194 |
| Government | $23,634,989,273 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | $8,038,918,218 |
| Finance and Insurance | $5,010,905,252 |
| Wholesale Trade | $4,758,636,188 |

[18] The amount of money leaving the region to foreign and external domestic sources.

# Top Exports

| 2012 Industry | Imports[19] |
|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | |
| Government | $331,175,223 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | $292,189,312 |
| Manufacturing | $285,428,932 |
| Finance and Insurance | $189,690,551 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | $188,051,029 |
| **Labor Shed** | |
| Transportation and Warehousing | $893,451,310 |
| Government | $796,531,340 |
| Manufacturing | $541,552,201 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | $522,284,142 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | $214,440,214 |
| **Nebraska** | |
| Manufacturing | $31,136,759,831 |
| Government | $22,459,208,668 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | $7,886,266,094 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | $6,919,154,350 |
| Finance and Insurance | $6,125,051,248 |

[19] Money received in the region through foreign and external domestic sources.

# Fastest Growing Occupations

## 2004-2014

| Occupation | Jobs Added | Employment, 2014 | Average Hourly Wage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 175 | 1,365 | $32.02 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 155 | 3,194 | $12.19 |
| Community and Social Service Occupations | 139 | 444 | $16.55 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 122 | 1,590 | $15.49 |
| Healthcare Support Occupations | 99 | 751 | $12.53 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 305 | 2,012 | $30.85 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 222 | 3,250 | $17.93 |
| Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 171 | 2,481 | $20.13 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 167 | 4,916 | $12.48 |
| Community and Social Service Occupations | 162 | 764 | $16.91 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 7,794 | 82,228 | $9.21 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 7,062 | 57,739 | $30.34 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 6,456 | 87,578 | $14.94 |
| Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 6,286 | 63,101 | $19.93 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 5,649 | 165,305 | $14.13 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 1,792,190 | 12,486,337 | $9.61 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 1,143,505 | 8,189,178 | $34.51 |
| Personal Care and Service Occupations | 950,369 | 5,868,502 | $10.19 |
| Healthcare Support Occupations | 820,270 | 4,361,387 | $12.75 |
| Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 586,018 | 8,798,716 | $22.26 |

# Fastest Declining Occupations

## 2009-2014

| Occupation | Jobs Added | Employment, 2014 | Average Hourly Wage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Personal Care and Service Occupations | 88 | 685 | $9.22 |
| Community and Social Service Occupations | 72 | 444 | $16.55 |
| Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations | 61 | 873 | $16.76 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 59 | 1,365 | $32.02 |
| Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 54 | 1,297 | $19.80 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Education, Training, and Library Occupations | 168 | 2,481 | $20.13 |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 145 | 2,760 | $9.42 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 127 | 2,012 | $30.85 |
| Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations | 102 | 941 | $10.95 |
| Production Occupations | 102 | 1,597 | $15.51 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 5,198 | 82,228 | $9.21 |
| Production Occupations | 4,533 | 80,513 | $15.24 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 3,657 | 87,578 | $14.94 |
| Personal Care and Service Occupations | 3,653 | 37,767 | $9.60 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 3,209 | 57,739 | $30.34 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations | 1,280,244 | 12,486,337 | $9.61 |
| Transportation and Material Moving Occupations | 633,041 | 9,691,140 | $14.83 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | 631,526 | 23,426,634 | $15.72 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | 533,592 | 15,907,634 | $15.70 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations | 497,255 | 8,189,178 | $34.51 |

## 2004-2014

| Occupation | Jobs Lost | Employment, 2014 | Average Hourly Wage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Management Occupations | (257) | 975 | $24.12 |
| Production Occupations | (219) | 931 | $14.55 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (135) | 933 | $15.32 |
| Computer and Mathematical Occupations | (80) | 145 | $25.82 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (50) | 2,242 | $11.82 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Management Occupations | (753) | 2,658 | $19.92 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (193) | 1,546 | $15.49 |
| Production Occupations | (143) | 1,597 | $15.51 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (114) | 3,332 | $12.17 |
| Computer and Mathematical Occupations | (70) | 241 | $26.28 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Management Occupations | (4,079) | 55,394 | $29.56 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (2,977) | 49,169 | $17.23 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (2,711) | 109,498 | $14.46 |
| Military occupations | (1,700) | 13,098 | $20.03 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Production Occupations | (1,180,829) | 9,128,149 | $15.62 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (756,216) | 6,781,744 | $18.52 |
| Military occupations | (86,033) | 1,995,966 | $15.67 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (38,471) | 15,907,634 | $15.70 |

| 2009-2014 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Occupation | Jobs Lost | Employment, 2014 | Average Hourly Wage |
| **Scotts Bluff County** | | | |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (123) | 933 | $15.32 |
| Management Occupations | (120) | 975 | $24.12 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | (105) | 3,194 | $12.19 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (95) | 2,242 | $11.82 |
| Business and Financial Operations Occupations | (59) | 594 | $22.73 |
| **Labor Shed** | | | |
| Management Occupations | (400) | 2,658 | $19.92 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (291) | 1,546 | $15.49 |
| Office and Administrative Support Occupations | (89) | 4,916 | $12.48 |
| Sales and Related Occupations | (54) | 3,332 | $12.17 |
| Business and Financial Operations Occupations | (50) | 911 | $22.79 |
| **Nebraska** | | | |
| Management Occupations | (2,133) | 55,394 | $29.56 |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (916) | 49,169 | $17.23 |
| Military occupations | (654) | 13,098 | $20.03 |
| **United States** | | | |
| Construction and Extraction Occupations | (101,733) | 6,781,744 | $18.52 |
| Military occupations | (96,034) | 1,995,966 | $15.67 |

# Appendix III: Target Industry Assessment

## Executive Summary

This target industry analysis focuses on the economic and workforce strengths of the Scotts Bluff County Labor Shed ("Labor Shed"). The Labor Shed is the area from which the County's employers draw most of their commuting workers. This area is made up of Scotts Bluff and five contiguous counties including Sioux, Banner, Box Butte, and Morrill Counties in Nebraska, and Goshen County in Wyoming.

### Target Industries

Recruiting new industries and growing existing industries to strengthen the local economy is a serious undertaking, requiring a significant commitment of time and resources. Target industry analysis involves identifying industries that are both desirable and appropriate for a region, and that are most likely to respond positively to a recruiting/marketing plan for the region.

Based on this analysis, Thomas P. Miller and Associates and Foote Consulting Group (the Project Team) recommends that Scotts Bluff, as a region, focus on four strong regional industry clusters and two aspirational industry clusters. The four strong regional industry clusters contain a high number of current and projected industry jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantages (shift share). The two aspirational industries aim to either attract businesses that do not currently have a strong industry presence, or to supply industries not currently within the Labor Shed, and can be future target industries for the County to consider:

### Strong Regional Industries

- Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals
- Plastics and Chemicals
- Health Services

### Aspirational Industries

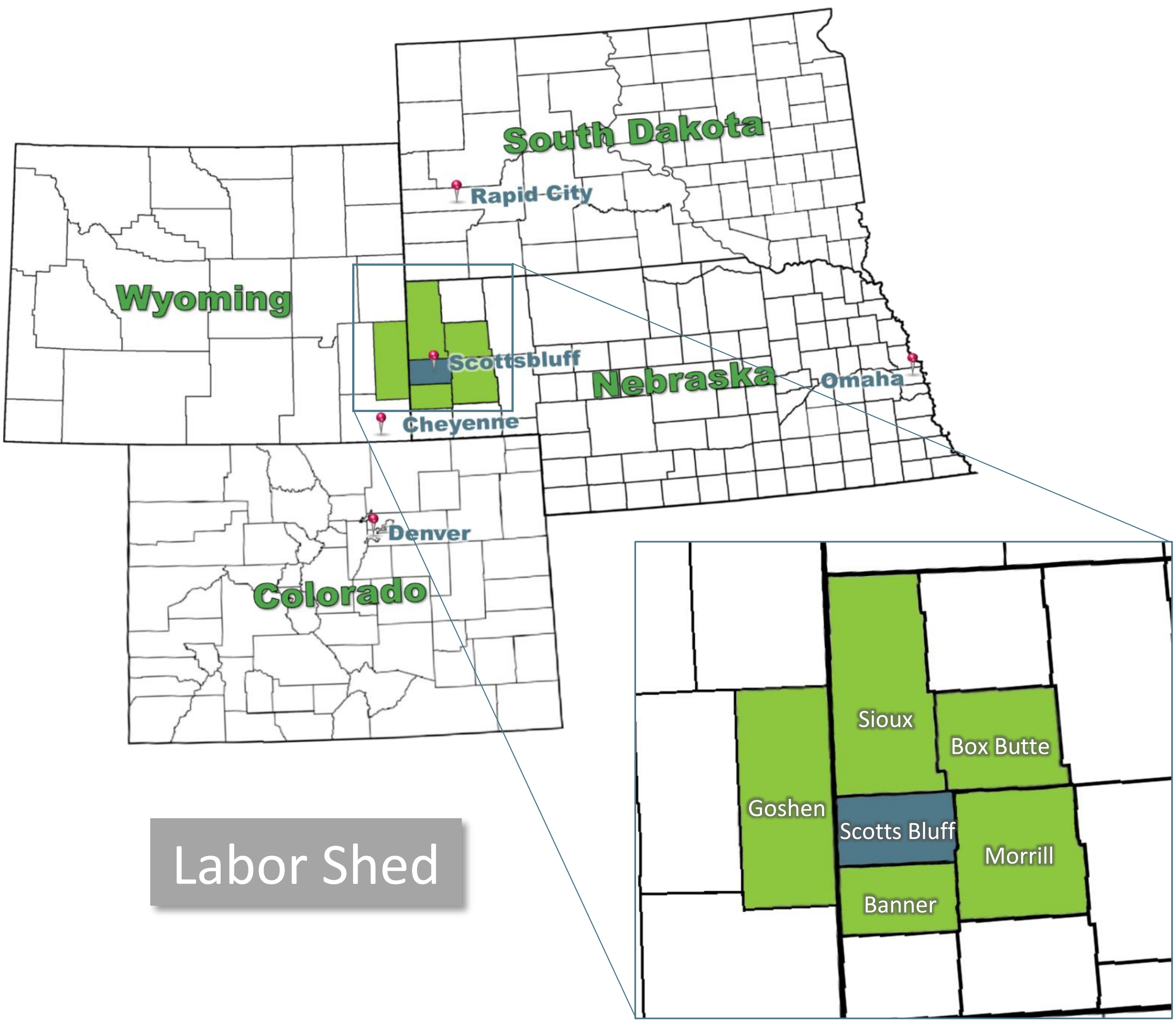
- Data Centers

Oil and Gas Support Industries

For a complete list of NAICS codes by cluster, see the *Appendix A*.

# Introduction

Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, is located in the panhandle on the Western border of Nebraska. The county's largest municipality is the City of Scottsbluff, NE located near Gering, the county seat. The target industry analysis will focus on the economic and workforce strengths of the Scotts Bluff County Labor Shed ("Labor Shed") identified as the area from which the County's employers draw most of their commuting workers. This area is made up of Scotts Bluff and five contiguous counties including Sioux, Banner, Box Butte, and Morrill Counties in Nebraska, and Goshen County in Wyoming.



## Community Engagement

To better understand Scotts Bluff County and the Labor Shed, staff from Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) and Foote Consulting Group (the Project Team) traveled to Scotts Bluff, Nebraska throughout 2014. While on site, the Project Team held a series of interviews with key stakeholders including regional businesses, city officials, economic development officials, the Nebraska Public Power District, and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension. In addition, the team facilitated a series of public forums aimed to heavily engage all members of the community in providing feedback and input into the strategic planning process.

Through this process of community engagement, several themes for target industry clusters emerged. (1) A data center was identified as a potential target and desire by the economic development board/director and community members within the public forum. Recently, the region had a call center in operation. The building is underutilized, providing an ideal location for higher-wage data center operations or other large, high-tech, and unique operations. An important distinction to note is that the region is looking to attract higher-wage, more-stable jobs to the region and so would not be looking to attract another call center. (2) Supporting health services is key as Regional West is one of only three Level II Trauma Centers in the state of Nebraska.[20] Supporting this industry will be important for the overall quality of life and availability of health care services within the region. (3) Through discussions with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, regional strengths in sugar beet production (growing the sugar beet crop), beet sugar (harvesting the sugars from the plant), corn, and ranching were identified as strongholds within the regional agribusiness, food processing, and technology cluster.

## Current Regional Strengths

Supporting the qualitative data gathering, examining quantitative data on current and projected industry jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantage (shift share) led to the identification of current industry cluster strengths. First, employers with over 50 current jobs in industries offering wages of 80% or more than the regional average were identified. These industries were then narrowed down to include only those industries with positive, or less than a 10% decrease in, job change between 2014 and 2023. These industries were then clustered by NAICS codes, with particular attention paid to industry clusters with strong competitive advantages (shift share) and /or high industry concentration (location quotient).

Through this analysis of regional industry strengths several key industry clusters were identified: (1) Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; (2) Advanced Manufacturing (Precision Metals and Plastics); (3) Plastics and Chemicals; and (4) Health Services.

## Multi-State Site-Selection Trends

In addition to analyzing current industry strengths, an analysis was conducted focusing on industry re-location and expansion data, including physical building activity, investment, and jobs. This analysis focused on industry relocation and/or expansion over the past year within a four state region – Nebraska, Colorado, South Dakota, and Wyoming. After examining industry attraction and expansion trends within this larger multi-state region, target industry strengths and weaknesses were analyzed to identify the best

[20] As verified by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma and designated by the State of Nebraska Health and Human Services Department.

fit for target industries for Scotts Bluff to consider. The review lead to the preliminary identification of six (6) promising industry areas in which to consider: (1) data centers; (2) food/agriculture/crushing plants; (3) oil/gas/mining equipment; (4) industrial machinery/fab metals/recycling plants; (5) call centers[21]; and (6) plastics products. Though a few existing companies currently support these categories in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed, the four-state region's strengths in these industries indicate a potential opportunity to expand support.

See *Appendix B* for methodology on Multi-State Site-Selection Trends.

[21] At the start of the Economic Development Plan process, representatives of the Twin Cities Development Corporation, City of Scottsbluff, and other stakeholders on the Steering Committee indicated a desire to position the region to be more selective about the types of businesses and jobs they invest resources to recruit and help expand. While call centers usually generate headlines because of the large number of jobs brought to a community in a relatively short period of time, the wage level is usually in the lower bracket of earnings, employment is relatively unstable due to high turnover, and the jobs require limited skills and offer few opportunities for advancement.
Call centers have come under fire recently because of the relative ease with which they are opened and closed, and the financial incentives used by many communities to attract call center employers with unstable, low paying jobs. Many examples can be cited, including Buffalo, New York's investment in Time Warner Cable, as well as T-Mobile call center operations having closed seven call centers in four US cities after receiving a large amount of incentives for relocation. Scottsbluff itself has witnessed the instability of call center jobs as Nationstar has dramatically reduced its call center staff and plans to move the few remaining jobs to another location in the near future.

# Target Industry Clusters Identified

Target industry analysis involves identifying industries that are both desirable and appropriate for the Scotts Bluff County Labor Shed. To understand the industries that are most likely to add value to the region and to respond positively to marketing/site-selection efforts, three data sources were combined to identify the series of important target industry clusters for the Labor Shed. These sources, described in detail within the previous section, include:

(1) Qualitative data gathered from community engagement through interviews and public forums,
(2) Regional labor market data analyzed for current strengths, and
(3) Recent industry attraction and expansion data.

From these three sources, four strong regional industry clusters and two aspirational industry clusters were identified. The four strong regional industry clusters contain high current and projected industry jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantage (shift share). The two aspirational industries aim either to attract businesses that do not currently have a strong industry presence, or to supply industries not currently within the Labor Shed, and can be future target industries for the County to consider:

## Strong Regional Industries

- Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals
- Plastics and Chemicals
- Health Services

## Aspirational Industries

- Data Centers
- Oil and Gas Support Industries

# Target Industries Defined

After identifying the target industry clusters, each cluster was analyzed to understand the most appropriate and specific (by 6-digit NAICS code definitions) grouping of industries to be considered within the cluster.

## Strong Regional Industries

For industries with a strong regional presence, cluster industry definitions were identified using nationally recognized industry cluster definitions from StatsAmerica[22], coupled with location specific definitions from the Battelle Technology Partnership Practice Nebraska Report (2010)[23]. Clusters defined within the Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) 2014 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)[24] also used StatsAmerica cluster definitions, and so are considered in the methodology developed within this analysis.

**Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology** | *Defined by the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology StataAmerica cluster and the Agricultural Machinery and the Agriculture & Food Processing clusters from Battelle*

**Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals** | *Defined by sub-sections of the Manufacturing Supercluster from StatsAmerica and the Precision Metals Mfg. cluster from Battelle*

**Plastics and Chemicals** | *Defined by the Chemicals and Chemical-Based Products StatsAmerica cluster*

**Health Services** | *Defined by the Health Services cluster from Battelle*

Using the cluster definitions described above, quantitative data measures – including current and projected jobs, earnings, concentration (location quotient), and competitive advantage (shift share) – were pulled for each 6-digit NAICS code. Industries with over 10 jobs in 2014 and 2023 were then chosen to comprise the specific target industry cluster.

## Aspirational Industries

[22] http://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/reports/detailed_cluster_definitions.pdf
[23] http://www.neded.org/files/businessdevelopment/battelle/Main_Report_NE_CompetitiveAdvantageAssessment_v8a.pdf
[24] http://www.nepadd.com/CEDS_Final_Draft_2_2.pdf

Understanding that the identified aspirational industries aim either to attract businesses that do not currently have a strong industry presence, or to supply industries not currently within the Labor Shed, customized methodology was developed for both Data Centers and Oil and Gas Support Industries.

**Data Centers** | *Data Centers are defined by the Data Process, Hosting, and Related Services NAICS code (518210). Because this industry does not currently exist within the Scotts Bluff County Labor Shed, this report uses the specific Data Center cluster definition from the Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013)*[25] *to identify NAICS code cluster definitions. The data for this cluster are then highlighted as present or not present within the Labor Shed – providing an opportunity for the County to engage in targeted business attraction efforts to attract and support a Data Center.*

**Oil and Gas Support Industries** | *At present, pockets of North Dakota and Wyoming are heavily engaged in oil and gas extraction and processing. Due to a strong transportation cluster and access to highway and railroad lines, Scotts Bluff and the greater Labor Shed have opportunities to support the oil and gas industries within these neighboring states. Focusing on the upstream and midstream definition of the oil and gas cluster, as defined by the Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013), supporting industries to the oil and gas clusters in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana were identified. For each state, key supply industries were defined by the following: (1) industries receiving more than $10,000,000 from the oil and gas cluster in North Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado and more than $5,000,000 for Montana; (2) industries with less than 50% presence within the state; (3) industries with medium/high mobility. Taking these definitions for North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana, a duplicated list of NAICS codes was created for the Scotts Bluff Oil and Gas Support Industry Cluster. The data for this cluster are then highlighted as present or not present within the Labor Shed – providing an opportunity for the County to engage in targeted business attraction and expansion efforts.*

For a complete list of NAICS codes by cluster, see the *Appendix A*.

[25] http://www.bigskyeconomicdevelopment.org/siteadmin/images/announcements/FINAL-Industry-Cluster-Analysis-and-Marketing-Plan.pdf

# Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology

Due to its prominence in the economy and culture, agriculture has been called the backbone of the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed by its citizens and leaders. The agribusiness, food processing, and technology cluster is important to the entire state, but because of its concentration in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed, it has significant importance. Due to both proximity to raw materials and strong west coast customer base, the region is a notable place for this industry cluster to prosper.

Contributing to the regional success of this industry cluster is research conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension (UN-L Extension) into the creation and deployment of technology and crops for the future; such work assists with the retention, export growth, and development of the industry cluster.

## Key Industries

The Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Crop Production | 1,445 | (480) | $29,529 |
| Animal Production | 1,039 | (201) | $29,453 |
| Beet Sugar Manufacturing | 490 | (7) | $47,158 |
| Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers | 319 | 27 | $60,976 |
| Grain and Field Bean Merchant Wholesalers | 223 | 8 | $52,460 |
| Farm Supplies Merchant Wholesalers | 215 | (23) | $52,286 |
| Farm Labor Contractors and Crew Leaders | 213 | 24 | $18,947 |
| Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering | 109 | (9) | $37,412 |
| Veterinary Services | 103 | 6 | $63,249 |
| Livestock Merchant Wholesalers | 88 | 12 | $27,147 |
| Other Animal Food Manufacturing | 43 | (9) | $64,662 |
| Tortilla Manufacturing | 32 | 12 | $48,605 |
| Soil Preparation, Planting, and Cultivating | 23 | 3 | $38,116 |
| Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing | 22 | 2 | $39,569 |
| Support Activities for Animal Production | 21 | (1) | $37,376 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Postharvest Crop Activities (except Cotton Ginning) | 18 | 7 | $67,513 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

There is a strong volume of employment in crop and animal production. Together, these industries account for 2,484 jobs. In addition, the data shows a strong industry concentration (when compared to the nation) and regional competitive advantage in Beet Sugar Manufacturing.[26] There is a high earning potential in Postharvest Crop Activities, Other Animal Food Manufacturing, Veterinary Services, Farm and Garden Machinery, and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers.

## Key Occupations

Important occupations that currently comprise the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster include[27]:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians | 133 | 9 | $14.71 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products | 92 | (2) | $18.89 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Packers and Packagers, Hand | 68 | 1 | $13.47 | Less than high school |
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 67 | 1 | $15.87 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks | 64 | (3) | $12.94 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders | 55 | (1) | $12.37 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers | 51 | (4) | $16.20 | Less than high school |

[26] It is important to note that sugar beet production refers to growing the sugar beet crop, while beet sugar refers to harvesting the sugars from the plant. For reference, the Beet Sugar Manufacturing industry refers to sugar harvesting – processing sugar cane and/or refining cane sugar from raw sugar cane. However, both sugar beet production and beet sugar manufacturing are prominent within the region, as sugar beet production is represented in Crop Production.

[27] Occupations chosen represent occupations within the target industry staffing pattern where all the following are true: (1) all occupations have at least 10 workers employed in 2014 and in 2023; (2) all occupations provide median hourly earnings of at least $12/hour; and (3) the minimum educational attainment requirement is at most a bachelor's degree. This methodology is consistent across Key Occupation identification for all Strong Regional Industries within this report.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Industrial Machinery Mechanics | 46 | 3 | $25.35 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive | 42 | 1 | $12.20 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers | 41 | 2 | $20.11 | High school diploma or equivalent |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

There is a high number of jobs currently available for individuals with a high school diploma. Almost thirty-two percent (31.6%) of individuals in the region have earned a high school diploma; 25.3% have attended some college; and 12.8% have earned between a 9th and 12th grade education.[28] While many jobs currently available require at least a high school diploma, there is also a large portion of jobs available for individuals with less than a high school degree. These jobs tend to cluster around the general category of laborers and include: Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop Nursery, and Greenhouse (633 current jobs); Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals (103 current jobs); and Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (100 current jobs). The typical pay for these jobs is $10-12/hour.

## Supporting Industries

Within each target industry cluster exists a network of supporting industries. These industries provide goods and services to the target industry cluster, allowing for the cluster to continue patterns of growth and revenue generation. A region loses money when target industries contract with large portions of supporting industries located outside the region for the provision of vital goods and services instead of keeping money within the region and providing employment to local workers. To better enhance and grow the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster, the Labor Shed may consider targeting the following supporting industries, which have a high out-of-region presence:[29]

**The Scottsbluff Labor Shed has significant market potential to attract supplier industries to the region.**

| Description | Supply Spending[30] | In-Region |
|---|---|---|
| Pesticide and Other Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing | $8,084,994 | 0% |
| General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload | $7,572,612 | 35% |

[28] Based on EMSI demographic data and the American Community Survey

[29] Industries identified represent industries with high volumes of imports, as determined by the amount spent on importing goods and services and percent of these goods and services available within the region. In addition, only industries that were not already within the target industry cluster were identified within the supply industry table, unless specifically noted within the narrative. This methodology will be repeated for each Support Industries grouping for all Strong Regional Industries.

[30] Supply Spending indicates the amount of money spent by the target industry cluster to purchase goods and services from other support industries. For example, the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster spent $8,084,994 on the Pesticide and Other Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing industry, with 0% of this spending staying in region.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Soybean Processing | $5,403,993 | 0% |
| Meat Processed from Carcasses | $3,999,075 | 1% |
| Computer and Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software Merchant Wholesalers | $3,287,142 | 0% |
| General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload | $3,264,083 | 35% |
| Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing | $2,769,241 | 0% |
| Nitrogenous Fertilizer Manufacturing | $2,700,311 | 0% |
| Phosphatic Fertilizer Manufacturing | $2,591,101 | 0% |
| Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing | $2,573,131 | 1% |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

There are high opportunities for manufacturing attraction in the region. There are also strong opportunities to build on the current transportation and trucking industries. Also represented within the supporting industries include opportunities to strengthen current industries within the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster. These include:

| Description | Supply Spending | In-Region |
|---|---|---|
| Crop Production | $137,985,209 | 9% |
| Animal Production | $63,809,900 | 8% |
| Other Animal Food Manufacturing | $37,875,032 | 16% |
| Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering | $4,512,859 | 18% |
| Postharvest Crop Activities (except Cotton Ginning) | $3,197,697 | 20% |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

# Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals

Advanced manufacturing and precision metals is an important industry cluster in the United States, responsible for over $2 trillion of output into the economy in 2013.[31] In many states, including Nebraska, this industry is a top attraction and the focus of many expansion initiatives. Due to the prominence of existing companies, this industry cluster has significant impact on the Scotts Bluff regional economy. The Scotts Bluff Labor Shed also has good potential for many types of manufacturing operations, particularly those tied to agriculture, mining/drilling, and possibly renewable wind energy related manufacturing (nacelle units: gearbox, generator and transformer components & blade assembly). Markets for the steel building industry are mostly international, making the growth and retention of manufacturing activity and cutting-edge products paramount to this region. More specialized technical training in the region will help to ensure the future success of this industry cluster in the region.

## Key Industries

The Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing** | 87 | 58 | $61,059 |
| **Motor Vehicle Body Manufacturing** | 86 | 13 | $44,636 |
| **Truck Trailer Manufacturing** | 62 | 39 | $59,731 |
| **Precision Turned Product Manufacturing** | 60 | 1 | $53,793 |
| **Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing** | 54 | (23) | $56,478 |
| **All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing** | 32 | 22 | $36,414 |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

**Each sub-industry of the Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals category shows a robust earning potential for the available workforce.**

All sub-industries included under the umbrella industry of Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals are strongly concentrated within the Labor Shed, especially when these industries are compared to the rest of the nation. Each industry shows a high earning potential, and this is most notable within Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing and Truck Trailer Manufacturing. In addition, strong job growth exists in Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing industry. All industries except Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing have a regional competitive advantage.

[31] National Association of Manufacturers

## Key Occupations

Important occupations that currently comprise the Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals target industry cluster include:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters** | 25 | 8 | $30.41 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers** | 25 | 11 | $17.52 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other** | 22 | 6 | $22.83 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Team Assemblers** | 21 | 14 | $14.34 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** | 20 | 4 | $25.90 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic** | 14 | 3 | $13.66 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers** | 12 | 1 | $16.71 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters** | 25 | 8 | $30.41 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

There is a positive increase in jobs for all Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals-related occupations projected between 2014 and 2023. In general, within current jobs, there are lower levels of educational attainment required for positions within this industry.

## Supporting Industries

Within each target industry cluster exists a network of supporting industries. These industries provide goods and services to the target industry cluster, allowing for the cluster to continue patterns of growth and revenue generation. A region loses money when target industries contract with large portions of supporting industries located outside the region for the provision of vital goods and services instead of keeping money within the region and providing employment to local workers. To better enhance and grow the Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals target industry cluster, the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed may consider targeting the following supporting industries, which have a high out of region presence:

| Description | Supply Spending | In-Region |
|---|---|---|
| **Machine Shops** | $1,191,168 | 11% |
| **Aluminum Sheet, Plate, and Foil Manufacturing** | $918,807 | 0% |
| **Aluminum Extruded Product Manufacturing** | $812,798 | 0% |
| **Iron and Steel Pipe and Tube Manufacturing from Purchased Steel** | $810,590 | 1% |
| **Paint and Coating Manufacturing** | $740,944 | 0% |
| **Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing** | $653,760 | 0% |
| **Bolt, Nut, Screw, Rivet, and Washer Manufacturing** | $484,559 | 0% |
| **Heavy Duty Truck Manufacturing** | $433,938 | 0% |
| **Travel Trailer and Camper Manufacturing** | $380,991 | 0% |
| **Motor Vehicle Transmission and Power Train Parts Manufacturing** | $363,737 | 0% |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | |

There are high opportunities for manufacturing attraction in the region. Additionally, All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing, an industry within the Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals target industry cluster, also appeared within the top supporting industries. A total of $532,265 was spent by the Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals target industry cluster on All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing, with only 2% of this spending staying within the region.

# Plastics and Chemicals

Plastics represent a major industry for the United States. In 2012, the U.S. plastics industry employed 892,000 workers at 15,949 facilities and invested $9.6 billion in new capital equipment – an increase of nearly $1 billion over 2011. Currently, chemicals rank second in Nebraska's manufacturing sectors. With more than $1.3 billion in output, Nebraska produces chemicals like fertilizer, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals in large numbers, while the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed shows a proportional intensification of the industry.[32] Likewise, plastics make up a large part of the region's manufacturing sector. Across the state, many plastic products are manufactured which are sent all over the world.

**Data shows a favorable environment for continued success in the Plastics and Chemicals industry due to a very strong regional concentration when compared to that of the United States.**

In the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed, this industry cluster is successful due to low transportation costs associated with direct access to the market. Labor costs for this industry are low in the region, with a large pool of the necessary unskilled and semiskilled workers available in the Labor Shed. However, for continued success in and advancement of this industry cluster, the region will need more skilled labor, as well as a more developed rail system to make transportation more efficient.

## Key Industries

The Plastics and Chemicals target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rubber and Plastics Hoses and Belting Manufacturing | 234 | 60 | $61,340 |
| Petroleum Bulk Stations and Terminals | 59 | 16 | $57,049 |
| Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing | 58 | 3 | $59,843 |
| Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant Wholesalers (except Bulk Stations and Terminals) | 44 | (11) | $59,905 |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

All industries in this industry cluster are more strongly concentrated in the Labor Shed when compared to these same industries across the nation. There is particularly strong job growth in Rubber and Plastics Hoses and Belting Manufacturing. There is high earning potential in all industries within this cluster. Additionally, Rubber and Plastics Hose and Belting Manufacturing and Petroleum Bulk Stations and Terminals have a regional competitive advantage.

[32] *Nebraska Manufacturing Facts*. Rep. National Association of Manufacturers, n.d. Web.

## Key Occupations

Important occupations that currently comprise the Plastics and Chemicals target industry cluster include:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 30 | 4 | $15.87 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers | 17 | 3 | $25.90 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders | 16 | 5 | $18.08 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 14 | 2 | $13.35 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products | 13 | 1 | $18.89 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders | 13 | 3 | $16.06 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers | 12 | 4 | $16.71 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Industrial Machinery Mechanics | 11 | 2 | $25.35 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, and Kettle Operators and Tenders | 10 | 3 | $17.31 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks | 10 | 1 | $12.94 | High school diploma or equivalent |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

There is a positive increase in jobs for all occupations in this industry projected between 2014 and 2023. In general, there are lower levels of educational attainment required for current jobs within this industry. However, over the next 10 years, new jobs are projected to open in several occupations that require a bachelor's degree including: (1) Material Scientists; (2) Engineers; (3) Purchasing Managers; and (4) Human Resource Managers.

## Supporting Industries

Within each target industry cluster exists a network of supporting industries. These industries provide goods and services to the target industry cluster, allowing for the cluster to continue patterns of growth and revenue generation. A region loses money when target industries contract with large portions of supporting industries located outside the region for the provision of vital goods and services instead of keeping money within the region and providing employment to local workers. To better enhance and grow the Plastics and Chemicals target industry cluster, the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed may consider targeting the following supporting industries, which have a high out-of-region presence:

| Description | Supply Spending | In-Region |
|---|---|---|
| All Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing | $7,332,463 | 0% |
| Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing | $4,996,835 | 0% |
| Synthetic Rubber Manufacturing | $1,591,191 | 0% |
| Other Knit Fabric and Lace Mills | $1,586,536 | 0% |
| Rubber Product Manufacturing for Mechanical Use | $1,165,598 | 0% |
| Weft Knit Fabric Mills | $1,140,761 | 0% |
| Crop Production | $1,005,534 | 7% |
| Wet Corn Milling | $682,308 | 0% |
| All Other Basic Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing | $668,466 | 0% |
| Industrial Gas Manufacturing | $628,038 | 10% |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

Overall, there are compelling opportunities for manufacturing attraction of supporting industries, different than manufacturing opportunities in the agricultural and advanced manufacturing clusters. For example, BioPlastics—one of the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology industries, Crop Production—is a supply industry for the Plastics and Chemicals industry cluster. The nearest Bioplastics facility is located in Laurel, NE.

# Health Services

Health Services is a widely spread industry cluster, though not yet highly specialized in any regional grouping of Nebraska. It is identified as #6 of the top primary clusters driving Nebraska's economy, according to Battelle's Competitive Advantage Assessment for Nebraska (2010). Both the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State of Nebraska Labor Market Information Office project the strong recent growth in health services to continue with above-average employment gains through 2018. These projections are consistent with past employment trends within this sector and highlight a continued need for healthcare.

Regional West is one of just three Level II Trauma Centers in the state of Nebraska, as verified by the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma and designated by the State of Nebraska Health and Human Services Department. The clinical quality of this Center attracts patients from outside the region and serves to enhance the overall quality of life within the Labor Shed.

## Key Industries

The Health Services target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (Private)** | 1,525 | 96 | $51,488 |
| **Nursing Care Facilities** | 530 | (35) | $28,023 |
| **Offices of Physicians (including Mental Health Specialists)** | 427 | 14 | $127,982 |
| **Community Care Facilities for the Elderly** | 403 | 50 | $23,110 |
| **Hospitals (local government)** | 307 | 2 | $65,768 |
| **Offices of Dentists** | 192 | 13 | $53,280 |
| **Other Outpatient Care Centers*** | 118 | 43 | $70,945 |
| **Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities** | 92 | (22) | $30,179 |
| **Offices of Optometrists** | 84 | 5 | $53,280 |
| **Home Health Care Services** | 80 | 13 | $27,281 |
| **Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers** | 65 | 24 | $46,802 |
| **Ambulance Services** | 41 | 4 | $51,281 |
| **Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals (Private)** | 12 | 12 | $37,187 |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

**Including HMO Medical Centers, Kidney Dialysis Centers, Freestanding Ambulatory and Surgical Centers, and All Other Outpatient Care Centers*

The growth rate for this target industry cluster in the Labor Shed is strong and positive overall (5.6 percent between 2014 and 2019), but still lower than the national growth rate for the same cluster (12.2 percent). This is likely due to the fact that the Labor Shed's population is relatively young (less than one-quarter of the population is aged 60 and older), and age of the population is one of the major predictors of demand for healthcare services.

There are high employment numbers in General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (Private), and strong job growth in Other Outpatient Care Centers, a category which includes HMO Medical Centers, Kidney Dialysis

Centers, Freestanding Ambulatory and Surgical Centers, and all other outpatient centers. Many industries in this cluster are more strongly concentrated in the Labor Shed when compared to these same industries across the nation, including: Other Outpatient Care Centers, Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities, and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (Private). Industries with a regional competitive advantage include: Other Outpatient Care Centers, Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers, and Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals. Many industries in this cluster have high earning potential, particularly physicians.

## Key Occupations

Important occupations that currently comprise the Health Services target industry cluster include:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Registered Nurses** | 597 | 46 | $25.75 | Associate's degree |
| **Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses** | 236 | 3 | $18.59 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Medical Assistants** | 100 | 7 | $13.26 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Medical Secretaries** | 76 | 10 | $14.06 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Medical and Health Services Managers** | 69 | 74 | $36.99 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Dental Assistants** | 65 | 2 | $14.10 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Radiologic Technologists** | 58 | 2 | $22.80 | Associate's degree |
| **Home Health Aides** | 55 | 10 | $9.40 | Less than high school |
| **Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists** | 40 | 2 | $24.80 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics** | 28 | 3 | $17.25 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Health Educators** | 12 | 1 | $15.75 | Bachelor’s degree |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

There is a positive increase, or neutral job change, in jobs for all occupations in this industry projected between 2014 and 2023, which is consistent with national workforce trends. The National Center for Healthcare Workforce Analysis[33] has identified three major drivers of future demand for healthcare professionals:

- ***Demographics***—nationally, the population segment aged 65 to 74 is expected to increase by 50 percent between 2008 and 2050. As people age, they consume more healthcare—particularly high-intensity services in the most expensive settings (hospitals and nursing homes.)

[33] National Center for Healthcare Workforce Analysis (2013). Projecting the supply and demand for primary care practitioners through 2020. Available at http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/supplydemand/usworkforce/primarycare/

- ***Expanded health insurance coverage***, largely as a result of the Affordable Care Act, will reduce access barriers for a previously uninsured population, and increase the demand for services.
- ***Rising chronic disease prevalence (such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer) in the general population*** will continue to require labor-intensive disease prevention and treatment services.

Specifically, there is a large volume of jobs for Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses. An increase in the demand for healthcare services due to the reasons above also impacts various medical care support professions. The occupational data does not reflect a significant volume of jobs for the allied health professional positions of health educators and healthcare social workers (although positive growth is still observed). However, the changing dynamics of the health services marketplace, including the ways in which healthcare is delivered, may cause these occupations to grow at a faster rate than projected.

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 authorized pilot healthcare financing and delivery structures, such as Patient-Centered Medical Homes and Accountable Care Organizations, that hold providers responsible for improving patient outcomes and include incentives to reduce the need for the most expensive forms of care. These pilots were authorized through public insurance programs (Medicare and Medicaid) and are currently small in scope. However, in the near future, the national imperative to control healthcare costs will necessitate wider adoption and integration of these models into private care delivery systems as well. As public and private payers and providers enter into these arrangements in an effort to improve chronic disease management, reduce preventable hospitalizations, and ultimately, control costs, the health educator and healthcare social worker roles may become even more important. These allied health professionals guide patients through the healthcare system, facilitate access to resources needed to adhere to treatment regimens and make lifestyle changes, improve patient/doctor communication, help manage medications and therapies, and educate patients and caregivers—ultimately helping them to achieve better outcomes at a lower cost. Recognizing the need for specialized competencies and training to be able to perform these complex functions, some colleges and industry organizations have begun to offer patient advocate/navigator and health coach certifications. These certifications are most closely aligned with the health educator, healthcare social worker, and community health worker standard occupational codes.

Equally important to the Health Services target industry cluster are the occupations requiring a master's, doctoral, or professional degree. These positions tend to earn higher median hourly earnings than occupations requiring lower levels of educational attainment. On average, 34% of adults aged 18-24, and 4.2% of adults over 25 in Scotts Bluff County were enrolled in a post-secondary education program from 2008 to 2012; these numbers are consistent with the Labor Shed, but are significantly lower than the state and national averages. However, only 23% of the adult population in the county currently holds a Bachelor's Degree or higher.[34]

The General and Family Practitioners and All Other Physicians and Surgeons occupations are projected to grow slightly in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed over the next five years. The Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioner occupations are projected to grow as well. If effectively integrated into the primary care system, these professionals can mitigate physician shortages rural areas often face and provide extra capacity for certain healthcare delivery functions.

[34] US Census Bureau 1-year ACS

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Family and General Practitioners** | 51 | 1 | $93.26 | Doctoral or professional degree |
| **Physician Assistants** | 38 | 3 | $50.84 | Master's degree |
| **Physicians and Surgeons, All Other** | 34 | 3 | $104.40 | Doctoral or professional degree |
| **Physical Therapists** | 27 | 2 | $39.12 | Doctoral or professional degree |
| **Pharmacists** | 23 | 3 | $53.73 | Doctoral or professional degree |
| **Mental Health Counselors** | 22 | 1 | $20.16 | Master's degree |
| **Healthcare Social Workers** | 21 | 2 | $18.51 | Master's degree |
| **Dentists** | 20 | 3 | $55.08 | Doctoral or professional degree |
| **Nurse Practitioners** | 18 | 3 | $42.33 | Master's degree |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

## Health Services Insurance Industry

The insurance industry is closely related to the health services industry cluster, and occupational and staffing dynamics will shift over the next several years as more individuals gain access to private health insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Regional Care, Inc. (RCI), based in Scottsbluff, is an independent third-party insurance administrator, processing claims and employee benefit plans for clients throughout the United States. RCI and other insurance-related companies may experience additional growth in the coming years, reflected in the tables below

## Key Industries

The Insurance industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Insurance Agencies and Brokerages** | 251 | 31 | $49,478 |
| **Claims Adjusting** | 44 | 7 | $47,022 |
| **Third Party Administration of Insurance and Pension Funds** | 27 | (2) | $35,554 |
| **All Other Insurance Related Activities** | 20 | 8 | $55476 |

The growth rate for this target industry cluster in the Labor Shed is 12.8 percent between 2014 and 2019, exceeding the national growth rate of 7.4 percent.

## Key Occupations

Important occupations in the industry cluster include the following. While these occupations are not high-paying and generally do not require advanced degrees or training, increased demand for more advanced insurance and claims-related occupations, such as accountants, auditors, and actuaries, may be observed as the private health insurance markets continues to adjust to national and state policy changes.

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Insurance Sales Agents** | 158 | 18 | $18.53 | High school diploma |
| **Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks** | 39 | 44 | $14.44 | High school diploma |
| **Secretaries and Administrative Assistances, Except Legal, Medical and Executive** | 21 | 3 | $12.20 | High school diploma |
| **Customer Service Representatives** | 20 | 4 | $11.86 | High school diploma |
| **Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators** | 16 | 2 | $19.06 | High school diploma |

Due to the fairly reasonable access to higher education programs in the county, this trend of lower educational attainment levels may be attributed to brain drain, in which graduates and skilled workers relocate upon completion of a program or certification. In order to both combat brain drain and fill jobs requiring higher education, the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed will need to increase targeted education programs and retention of graduates from these programs. Additionally, it may need to consider outside recruiting in order to fill these important occupations.

# Data Centers (Aspirational)

Data Centers is a target industry with great potential in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed. The outstanding and improved electric power costs, as well as fiber availability and bandwidth, contribute to the potential success of this industry. In particular, the exceptionally low cost of power and available dark fiber access within the labor shed are assets that provide a tremendous advantage for this industry. Additionally, there are specialized state incentives that make this industry appealing, including incentives in: state corporate income tax rates, sales taxes, and personal property taxes. Although infrastructure improvements would need to be completed in order to be fully operational, a potential future data center site exists in the region.

## Key Industries

The Data Centers target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by the following types of industries:

- Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
- Computer Facilities Management Services
- Computer Systems Design Services
- Custom Computer Programming Services
- Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services
- Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals
- Other Computer Related Services
- Software Publishers

Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services specifically represents data centers, and other data hosting/processing services, within the Labor Shed. All other industries within this target industry cluster are used to support the start-up and development of a data center, or data centers.

As the Data Centers target industry cluster is aspirational, not all industries within the cluster are currently present within the region. In addition, projected employment in all industries within the Data Centers cluster are based on past trends; thus, without previous data center attraction, projected job growth will not appear strong. However, job projections adjust and change as new industries enter into the regional market. At present, there are two industries currently present within the Labor Shed:

## Currently Present

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Computer Systems Design Services | 31 | (20) | $47,603 |
| Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services | 27 | 6 | $44,165 |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

In addition, there are six industries that are not currently present within the Labor Shed. For all eight industries within the Data Centers target industry cluster, but especially for the industries not present or with less than 10 employees, Scotts Bluff may consider strategies for industry attraction targeted towards these industry types and/or identify opportunities for access to these industries outside the region (decreasing barriers to access). It is important to highlight that data centers typically do not provide a high number of jobs, but instead a high level of capital investment and earnings.

### Potential Supplementary Industries Not Present[35]

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Custom Computer Programming Services | <10 | -- | $43,991 |
| Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services | <10 | -- | $80,661 |
| Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals | <10 | -- | $48,362 |
| Computer Facilities Management Services | 0 | 0 | |
| Other Computer Related Services | 0 | 0 | |
| Software Publishers | 0 | 0 | |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

## Key Industries – National Data

When examining data available nationally for these target industries, trends of higher earnings and continued job growth[36] can be identified:

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| Computer Systems Design Services | 881,459 | 321,861 | $118,589 |
| Custom Computer Programming Services | 834,355 | 239,542 | $110,892 |
| Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services | 577,593 | 172,349 | $100,569 |
| Software Publishers | 299,062 | 73,515 | $157,763 |
| Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services | 273,507 | 24,490 | $105,112 |
| Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals | 156,841 | 45,718 | $185,614 |
| Other Computer Related Services | 118,818 | (1,955) | $108,859 |
| Computer Facilities Management Services | 61,093 | 3,186 | $92,017 |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

[35] Industries with fewer than 10 employees are considered "not present" within the Labor Shed.

[36] Trends of continued job growth are identified for most, but not all, industries at the national level.

## Key Occupations – National Data

Important occupations that comprise the Data Centers target industry cluster at the national level include:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Software Developers, Applications | 319,529 | 102,692 | $43.03 | Bachelor's degree |
| Computer Systems Analysts | 203,011 | 53,944 | $37.85 | Bachelor's degree |
| Software Developers, Systems Software | 191,405 | 61,879 | $47.31 | Bachelor's degree |
| Computer Programmers | 179,745 | 31,419 | $35.04 | Bachelor's degree |
| Management Analysts | 168,827 | 39,541 | $35.91 | Bachelor's degree |
| Computer User Support Specialists | 166,885 | 59,361 | $22.32 | Some college, no degree |
| Sales Representatives, Services, All Other | 99,778 | 26,657 | $24.19 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Computer and Information Systems Managers | 98,499 | 27,400 | $57.62 | Bachelor's degree |
| Customer Service Representatives | 89,805 | 22,731 | $14.73 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| Network and Computer Systems Administrators | 86,412 | 21,353 | $34.73 | Bachelor's degree |

***EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed***

There was a positive increase in jobs for all occupations that comprise the Data Centers target industry cluster projected between 2014 and 2023. Most of these occupations require a bachelor's degree.

# Oil and Gas Support Industries (Aspirational)

Oil and Gas Support Industries serve as an opportunity to support the shale gas/oil play and mining regions of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming. When examining these surrounding oil and gas industries, strong potential subsectors include: pipe, frac sand, mining/industrial equipment, chemicals, and trucking/hauling.

By serving more than one nearby region, there may be significant transportation savings available – although regional success in this industry may demand a better developed rail system to service the surrounding states. The low cost and reliable electric power in the region also contribute to the potential success of this industry cluster.

## Key Industries

The Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed is defined by industries that are required to support oil and gas mining and extraction in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana. The industries identified for Scotts Bluff to target in this supporting cluster are industries needed by the surrounding states, but not heavily concentrated within the states themselves.[37] These industries fall into three main categories:

- Services
- Transportation/Logistics
- Manufacturing

As the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster is aspirational, not all industries within the cluster are currently present within the region. In addition, projected employment in all industries within the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster are based on past trends. However, job projections adjust and change as new industries enter into the regional market.

While not all the industries identified within the Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster may be appropriate for Scotts Bluff to focus on attracting, the region may consider targeted efforts to grow currently present industries and attract a few not present industries to the region. In the tables below, the categories highlighted in gray represent those industries not currently present in the region, but that are potentially good targets for supporting industries. **The categories highlighted represent industries that are opportunities for the region to target for business attraction.**

[37] Key export industries were examined for North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana using the following approach: (1) Identified supply industries for the oil and gas industry in North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana using the Upstream and Midstream NAICS definitions from Big Sky Economic Development Authority Report (2013); (2) Removed all industries with less than $10,000,000 amount for North Dakota, Wyoming, and Colorado and less than $5,000,000 for Montana; (3) Removed industries with 50% or higher presence within the state; (4) Identified industries with medium/high mobility; (5) Removed duplicate industries across North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana; (6) Incorporated data for the Labor Shed for each NAICS code; (7) Sorted by industry presence within the Labor Shed; (8) Sorted by industry type

### Services Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Engineering Services** | 87 | 23 | $51,223 |
| **Computer Systems Design Services** | 31 | (20) | $47,603 |
| **Testing Laboratories** | 18 | 10 | $58,810 |
| **Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services** | <10 | -- | $80,661 |
| **Custom Computer Programming Services** | <10 | -- | $43,991 |
| **Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)** | <10 | -- | $31,497 |
| **Research and Development in Biotechnology** | 0 | 0 | |
| **Software Publishers** | 0 | 0 | |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

### Transportation/Logistics Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload** | 192 | (5) | $54,498 |
| **General Freight Trucking, Local** | 131 | 21 | $28,503 |
| **General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload** | 107 | (14) | $45,271 |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

### Manufacturing Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing** | 87 | 58 | $61,059 |
| **Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing** | 58 | 3 | $59,843 |
| **Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing** | 54 | (23) | $56,478 |
| **Machine Shops** | 40 | 1 | $49,326 |
| **All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing** | 32 | 22 | $36,414 |
| **Iron and Steel Pipe and Tube Manufacturing from Purchased Steel** | <10 | -- | $60,506 |
| **Ornamental and Architectural Metal Work Manufacturing** | <10 | -- | $14,194 |
| **Air-Conditioning and Warm Air Heating Equipment and Commercial and Industrial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **All Other Basic Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **All Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | |
| **All Other Miscellaneous Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **All Other Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **All Other Plastics Product Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | |
| **Asphalt Paving Mixture and Block Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Ball and Roller Bearing Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Cement Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Construction Machinery Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Conveyor and Conveying Equipment Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Corrugated and Solid Fiber Box Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Electroplating, Plating, Polishing, Anodizing, and Coloring** | 0 | 0 | |
| **Explosives Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Gasket, Packing, and Sealing Device Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Ground or Treated Mineral and Earth Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Industrial Gas Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Industrial Valve Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Metal Coating, Engraving (except Jewelry and Silverware), and Allied Services to Manufacturers** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Metal Window and Door Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Mining Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Oil and Gas Field Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Other Metal Valve and Pipe Fitting Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Petroleum Lubricating Oil and Grease Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, and Chemical Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Plate Work Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Sheet Metal Work Manufacturing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |
| **Steel Wire Drawing** | 0 | 0 | $0 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

## Key Industries – National Data

Since the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster is aspirational, it does not have an especially strong presence within the Labor Shed. As such, it is important to examine nationally available data for these target industries to better understand trends in current job numbers, job growth, and earnings:

### Services Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Engineering Services** | 970,758 | 170,504 | $100,432 |
| **Computer Systems Design Services** | 881,459 | 321,861 | $118,589 |
| **Custom Computer Programming Services** | 834,355 | 239,542 | $110,892 |
| **Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology)** | 442,145 | 66,135 | $125,563 |
| **Software Publishers** | 299,062 | 73,515 | $157,763 |
| **Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services** | 273,507 | 24,490 | $105,112 |
| **Testing Laboratories** | 169,149 | 33,480 | $80,107 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Research and Development in Biotechnology** | 150,087 | 25,137 | $144,366 |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

Within the service industries, trends of higher earnings and continued job growth can be identified.

## Transportation/Logistics Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload** | 589,081 | 35,181 | $51,013 |
| **General Freight Trucking, Local** | 301,965 | 14,005 | $47,840 |
| **General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload** | 245,637 | 35,454 | $62,074 |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | |

Transportation/logistics industries also show high growth potential on the national scale.

## Manufacturing Industries

| Description | 2014 Jobs | Job Change (2014-2023) | 2014 Earnings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Machine Shops** | 300,486 | 30,943 | $59,297 |
| **All Other Plastics Product Manufacturing** | 274,256 | (16,353) | $56,105 |
| **All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing** | 137,792 | 18,364 | $62,325 |
| **Sheet Metal Work Manufacturing** | 101,178 | 23,758 | $57,576 |
| **Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing** | 90,958 | 16,765 | $61,539 |
| **Corrugated and Solid Fiber Box Manufacturing** | 89,401 | (6,683) | $70,924 |
| **Air-Conditioning and Warm Air Heating Equipment and Commercial and Industrial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing** | 83,360 | (5,229) | $64,441 |
| **Oil and Gas Field Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing** | 81,074 | 14,136 | $102,234 |
| **Construction Machinery Manufacturing** | 71,015 | 230 | $87,841 |
| **Electroplating, Plating, Polishing, Anodizing, and Coloring** | 62,788 | (3,676) | $52,650 |
| **Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing** | 56,894 | 2,468 | $111,588 |
| **Metal Window and Door Manufacturing** | 54,363 | (12,963) | $52,980 |
| **Metal Coating, Engraving (except Jewelry and Silverware), and Allied Services to Manufacturers** | 53,339 | 7,371 | $53,033 |
| **Plate Work Manufacturing** | 48,308 | 12,594 | $64,532 |
| **Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing** | 37,792 | 4,245 | $78,054 |
| **All Other Miscellaneous Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing** | 36,620 | 4,484 | $91,775 |
| **Ornamental and Architectural Metal Work Manufacturing** | 35,037 | 5,261 | $56,726 |
| **All Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing** | 34,338 | 2,371 | $117,271 |
| **Gasket, Packing, and Sealing Device Manufacturing** | 30,524 | (2,145) | $75,122 |
| **Conveyor and Conveying Equipment Manufacturing** | 29,895 | 924 | $73,287 |
| **Industrial Valve Manufacturing** | 28,518 | 4,449 | $77,010 |
| **Ball and Roller Bearing Manufacturing** | 28,450 | (1,030) | $71,596 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **All Other Basic Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing** | 28,088 | (2,284) | $109,377 |
| **Iron and Steel Pipe and Tube Manufacturing from Purchased Steel** | 27,752 | 3,644 | $76,672 |
| **Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing** | 20,466 | (1,893) | $81,115 |
| **Industrial Gas Manufacturing** | 19,467 | (435) | $131,277 |
| **Other Metal Valve and Pipe Fitting Manufacturing** | 16,092 | (3,147) | $68,330 |
| **Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, and Chemical Manufacturing** | 15,167 | (10,188) | $80,980 |
| **Cement Manufacturing** | 13,616 | 3,551 | $91,046 |
| **Mining Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing** | 13,121 | 1,458 | $77,208 |
| **Asphalt Paving Mixture and Block Manufacturing** | 12,292 | (395) | $97,765 |
| **Steel Wire Drawing** | 10,598 | 1,675 | $59,820 |
| **Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing** | 10,114 | 3,100 | $92,605 |
| **Petroleum Lubricating Oil and Grease Manufacturing** | 9,889 | 549 | $114,462 |
| **Ground or Treated Mineral and Earth Manufacturing** | 7,570 | 2,315 | $92,630 |
| **Explosives Manufacturing** | 6,685 | 1,025 | $87,037 |
| **All Other Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing** | 5,334 | 300 | $112,074 |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

## Key Occupations

Important occupations that currently comprise the Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster within the Labor Shed include:

### Service Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Civil Engineers** | 11 | 4 | $29.34 | Bachelor's degree |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

Currently there is only one service industry occupation with 10 jobs or more in the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster within the Labor Shed.

### Transportation/Logistics Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | 319 | 4 | $15.87 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | 22 | 1 | $11.40 | Less than high school |
| **Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers** | 22 | 0 | $11.99 | High school diploma or equivalent |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

Three transportation/logistics industry occupations are present, with 10 or more jobs, within the Labor Shed in the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster.

### Manufacturing Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters** | 18 | 6 | $30.41 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** | 16 | 2 | $25.90 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers** | 11 | 6 | $17.52 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

Similar to the transportation/logistics industry, only three occupations with 10 or more jobs are present within the Labor Shed for manufacturing industries in the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster.

## Key Occupations – National Data

As not all occupations within the Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster are currently present within the Labor Shed, a consideration of national trends within this cluster is important. Important occupations that comprise the Oil and Gas Support Industries target industry cluster at the national level include:

### Service Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Software Developers, Applications** | 302,851 | 97,724 | $43.03 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Software Developers, Systems Software** | 201,177 | 63,411 | $47.31 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Computer Systems Analysts** | 193,236 | 53,871 | $37.85 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Computer Programmers** | 168,979 | 32,005 | $35.04 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Computer User Support Specialists** | 156,307 | 57,710 | $22.32 | Some college, no degree |
| **Civil Engineers** | 140,522 | 33,045 | $37.63 | Bachelor's degree |
| **General and Operations Managers** | 101,591 | 24,863 | $45.68 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Computer and Information Systems Managers** | 93,859 | 25,628 | $57.62 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Network and Computer Systems Administrators** | 86,251 | 21,033 | $34.73 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Sales Representatives, Services, All Other** | 77,341 | 20,850 | $24.19 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

## Transportation/Logistics Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | 746,775 | 52,577 | $18.05 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | 61,197 | 6,244 | $11.57 | Less than high school |
| **Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers** | 43,188 | (37) | $14.08 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists** | 33,442 | 3,605 | $19.93 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance** | 27,615 | 2,818 | $17.15 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators** | 20,717 | 1,977 | $25.54 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Office Clerks, General** | 20,143 | 1,460 | $13.24 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators** | 19,738 | 783 | $14.54 | Less than high school |
| **Customer Service Representatives** | 12,671 | 1,437 | $14.73 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **General and Operations Managers** | 11,388 | 1,196 | $45.68 | Bachelor's degree |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

## Manufacturing Industries

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Machinists** | 134,652 | 18,570 | $18.94 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Team Assemblers** | 134,430 | 8,416 | $13.32 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers** | 83,236 | 8,545 | $17.37 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** | 82,413 | 3,869 | $25.75 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers** | 53,383 | 3,630 | $16.74 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic** | 50,352 | 8,907 | $17.10 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Helpers--Production Workers** | 46,563 | 2,421 | $10.96 | Less than high school |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products** | 40,873 | 1,765 | $25.85 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **General and Operations Managers** | 40,436 | 2,244 | $45.68 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | 40,396 | 1,311 | $11.57 | Less than high school |
| *EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed* | | | | |

In addition to describing manufacturing industries in the Oil and Gas Support Industries cluster by highest levels of employment, the following are manufacturing industries within the cluster by highest volume of job growth between 2014 and 2023. **Occupations highlighted in grey represent quickly growing industries not currently in the top 10 by pure employment size**:

| Occupation | 2014 Employed | Emp. Change (2014-2023) | Median Hourly Earnings | Education Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Machinists** | 134,652 | 18,570 | $18.94 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic** | 50,352 | 8,907 | $17.10 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers** | 83,236 | 8,545 | $17.37 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Team Assemblers** | 134,430 | 8,416 | $13.32 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Industrial Machinery Mechanics** | 30,581 | 5,047 | $22.39 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters** | 33,959 | 4,277 | $17.19 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders** | 16,653 | 4,014 | $16.65 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** | 82,413 | 3,869 | $25.75 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers** | 53,383 | 3,630 | $16.74 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Sheet Metal Workers** | 22,092 | 2,813 | $20.55 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Helpers--Production Workers** | 46,563 | 2,421 | $10.96 | Less than high school |
| **Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic** | 8,345 | 2,407 | $22.08 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **General and Operations Managers** | 40,436 | 2,244 | $45.68 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders** | 27,723 | 2,105 | $14.64 | High school diploma or equivalent |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive** | 17,562 | 1,788 | $15.57 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products** | 40,873 | 1,765 | $25.85 | High school diploma or equivalent |
| **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | 17,766 | 1,633 | $18.05 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| **Industrial Engineers** | 21,280 | 1,333 | $37.92 | Bachelor's degree |
| **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | 40,396 | 1,311 | $11.57 | Less than high school |

*EMSI Analyst 2014.2. QCEW Employees + Non-QCEW Employees + Self-Employed*

## Industry Crossover

To better understand how Scottsbluff could target their recruitment and retention efforts around the Oil and Gas Aspirational Industry, TPMA analyzed the connections between the identified Oil and Gas Support Industries and the Supply Industries for Scottsbluff's strong regional industries.[38] When identifying industry crossover, in-region purchasing percentages paired with the amount of goods/services a target industry cluster purchases from each Oil and Gas Aspirational Industry were considered.[39]

As expected, most of the Oil and Gas Support Industries with a stronger regional presence[40] were also those that had the highest level of industry crossover.[41] Crossover is especially present within the Oil and Gas Transportation/Logistics Support Industries and the Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology target industry cluster. This cluster purchases a total of $14.3 million from three Transportation/logistics industries,[42] and spends on-average 38% of this total (or $5.4 million) within the region. This signals a strong and healthy foundation of transportation/logistics within the region, which can be built upon to better support key target industry clusters, such as Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology.

When examining single-industry impacts, the Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing industry is especially important within the Plastics and Chemicals target industry cluster. This cluster purchases 86% of their $1.6 million in Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing from within the region – totaling $1.4 million of in-region spending. 86% is the highest in-region purchasing percentage within the supply industry-support industry crossover.

[38] Strong regional industries, as identified with the Target Industry report for Scottsbluff, include: Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; and Health Services.

[39] Industries with least 35% in-region (e.g. a target industry cluster purchased at least 35% of the cluster's goods in a particular industry from within the region) and over X in supply spending (the amount of money spent by the target industry cluster to purchase goods and services from other support industries) were considered as significant within the analysis.

[40] A stronger regional presence is defined by employing more than 10 employees within the region.

[41] Higher in-region percentages.

[42] The three industries include: General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload (484121); General Freight Trucking, Local (484110); and General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less than Truckload (484122).

# Moving Forward

Based on this analysis, Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) recommends Scotts Bluff, as a region, focus on industries that are most likely to positively respond to marketing in the region. The four strong regional industry clusters to focus on include: Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology; Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals; Plastics and Chemicals; and Health Services. These industries are strong targets for the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed based on a high number of both current and projected industry jobs, earnings, concentration, and competitive advantage.

The two aspirational industry clusters that are identified to have strong potential in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed include Data Centers and Oil and Gas Support Industries. Although these two industries may not currently have a strong presence in the region, they were identified as future industries for the region. Due to the close proximity to shale gas/oil and mining regions of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming, and the low cost of reliable energy in the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed, Oil and Gas Support Industries could prove to be a lucrative and beneficial target industry for the region. Similarly, the Data Center industry cluster is a feasible contender due to the region's affordable energy and current infrastructure.

As developing existing industries or recruiting new ones is a serious undertaking, the Scotts Bluff Labor Shed will need to decide on which of the recommended industries to focus their attention. Once chosen, Foote Consulting will help the region aggressively market the industries; bridging the gap between elected officials, the business community, and schools. TPMA will work with the region in strategizing and then acting to develop the region's currently underutilized assets for alternative use, growth opportunities, and improved workforce wages.

In moving ahead it is critical that Scotts Bluff continue to include and engage regional stakeholders, building community input and collaboration that will benefit both current industries and future attractions.

# Appendix A

**NACS Code and SOC Code Listings for Target Industry Clusters**

## Agribusiness, Food Processing, and Technology

### Key Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **111000** | Crop Production |
| **112000** | Animal Production |
| **311313** | Beet Sugar Manufacturing |
| **423820** | Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers |
| **424510** | Grain and Field Bean Merchant Wholesalers |
| **424910** | Farm Supplies Merchant Wholesalers |
| **115115** | Farm Labor Contractors and Crew Leaders |
| **311611** | Animal (except Poultry) Slaughtering |
| **541940** | Veterinary Services |
| **424520** | Livestock Merchant Wholesalers |
| **311119** | Other Animal Food Manufacturing |
| **311830** | Tortilla Manufacturing |
| **115112** | Soil Preparation, Planting, and Cultivating |
| **333111** | Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing |
| **115210** | Support Activities for Animal Production |
| **115114** | Postharvest Crop Activities (except Cotton Ginning) |

### Key Occupations

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **49-3041** | Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians |
| **41-4012** | Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products |
| **53-7064** | Packers and Packagers, Hand |
| **53-3032** | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers |
| **43-3031** | Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks |
| **51-9111** | Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders |
| **51-3022** | Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers |
| **49-9041** | Industrial Machinery Mechanics |
| **43-6014** | Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive |
| **45-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers |

### Supporting Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **325320** | Pesticide and Other Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing |
| **484121** | General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload |
| **311222** | Soybean Processing |
| **311612** | Meat Processed from Carcasses |
| **423430** | Computer and Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software Merchant Wholesalers |
| **484122** | General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload |
| **325412** | Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing |
| **325311** | Nitrogenous Fertilizer Manufacturing |
| **325312** | Phosphatic Fertilizer Manufacturing |
| **333111** | Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing |

## Advanced Manufacturing and Precision Metals

### Key Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **332312** | Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing |
| **336211** | Motor Vehicle Body Manufacturing |
| **336212** | Truck Trailer Manufacturing |
| **332721** | Precision Turned Product Manufacturing |
| **332912** | Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing |
| **336399** | All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing |

### Key Occupations

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **51-2041** | Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters |
| **51-4121** | Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers |
| **51-2099** | Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other |
| **51-2092** | Team Assemblers |
| **51-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers |
| **51-4031** | Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic |
| **51-9061** | Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers |
| **51-2041** | Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters |

### Supporting Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **332710** | Machine Shops |
| **331315** | Aluminum Sheet, Plate, and Foil Manufacturing |
| **331316** | Aluminum Extruded Product Manufacturing |
| **331210** | Iron and Steel Pipe and Tube Manufacturing from Purchased Steel |
| **325510** | Paint and Coating Manufacturing |
| **331221** | Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing |
| **332722** | Bolt, Nut, Screw, Rivet, and Washer Manufacturing |
| **336120** | Heavy Duty Truck Manufacturing |
| **336214** | Travel Trailer and Camper Manufacturing |
| **336350** | Motor Vehicle Transmission and Power Train Parts Manufacturing |

## Plastics and Chemicals

### Key Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **326220** | Rubber and Plastics Hoses and Belting Manufacturing |
| **424710** | Petroleum Bulk Stations and Terminals |
| **325193** | Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing |
| **424720** | Petroleum and Petroleum Products Merchant Wholesalers (except Bulk Stations and Terminals) |

### Key Occupations

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **53-3032** | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers |
| **51-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers |
| **51-9041** | Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders |
| **49-9071** | Maintenance and Repair Workers, General |
| **41-4012** | Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products |
| **51-9023** | Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders |
| **51-9061** | Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers |
| **49-9041** | Industrial Machinery Mechanics |
| **51-9051** | Furnace, Kiln, Oven, Drier, and Kettle Operators and Tenders |
| **43-3031** | Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks |

### Supporting Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **325199** | All Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing |
| **325211** | Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing |
| **325212** | Synthetic Rubber Manufacturing |
| **313249** | Other Knit Fabric and Lace Mills |
| **326291** | Rubber Product Manufacturing for Mechanical Use |
| **313241** | Weft Knit Fabric Mills |
| **111000** | Crop Production |
| **311221** | Wet Corn Milling |
| **325188** | All Other Basic Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing |
| **325120** | Industrial Gas Manufacturing |

## Health Services

### Key Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **622110** | General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (Private) |
| **623110** | Nursing Care Facilities |
| **623220** | Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities |
| **621498** | All Other Outpatient Care Centers |
| **621610** | Home Health Care Services |
| **621420** | Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers |
| **621910** | Ambulance Services |
| **621493** | Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical and Emergency Centers |
| **621492** | Kidney Dialysis Centers |
| **622310** | Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals (Private) |

### Key Occupations

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **29-1141** | Registered Nurses |
| **29-2061** | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses |
| **11-9111** | Medical and Health Services Managers |
| **29-2034** | Radiologic Technologists |
| **43-4111** | Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan |
| **43-6014** | Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive |
| **29-2011** | Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists |
| **43-6013** | Medical Secretaries |
| **31-9092** | Medical Assistants |
| **29-2041** | Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics |

### Key Occupations – Higher Education Requirements

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **29-1123** | Physical Therapists |
| **21-1014** | Mental Health Counselors |
| **29-1051** | Pharmacists |
| **21-1022** | Healthcare Social Workers |
| **29-1069** | Physicians and Surgeons, All Other |
| **29-1062** | Family and General Practitioners |
| **29-1071** | Physician Assistants |

### Supporting Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **325412** | Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing |
| **325413** | In-Vitro Diagnostic Substance Manufacturing |
| **541611** | Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services |
| **326199** | All Other Plastics Product Manufacturing |
| **339113** | Surgical Appliance and Supplies Manufacturing |
| **339112** | Surgical and Medical Instrument Manufacturing |
| **621491** | HMO Medical Centers |
| **621511** | Medical Laboratories |
| **541690** | Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services |
| **322291** | Sanitary Paper Product Manufacturing |

## Data Centers (Aspirational)

### Key Industries – Currently Present

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| 541512 | Computer Systems Design Services |
| 541611 | Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services |

### Potential Supplementary Industries Not Present[43]

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| 541511 | Custom Computer Programming Services |

[43] Industries with fewer than 10 employees are considered "not present" within the Labor Shed.

| | |
|---|---|
| 518210 | Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services |
| 519130 | Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals |
| 541513 | Computer Facilities Management Services |
| 541519 | Other Computer Related Services |
| 511210 | Software Publishers |

## Key Industries – National Data

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| 541512 | Computer Systems Design Services |
| 541511 | Custom Computer Programming Services |
| 541611 | Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services |
| 511210 | Software Publishers |
| 518210 | Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services |
| 519130 | Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals |
| 541519 | Other Computer Related Services |
| 541513 | Computer Facilities Management Services |

## Key Occupations – National Data

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| 15-1132 | Software Developers, Applications |
| 15-1121 | Computer Systems Analysts |
| 15-1133 | Software Developers, Systems Software |
| 15-1131 | Computer Programmers |
| 13-1111 | Management Analysts |
| 15-1151 | Computer User Support Specialists |
| 41-3099 | Sales Representatives, Services, All Other |
| 11-3021 | Computer and Information Systems Managers |

| | |
|---|---|
| 43-4051 | Customer Service Representatives |
| 15-1142 | Network and Computer Systems Administrators |

## Oil and Gas Support Industries (Aspirational)

### Key Industries – Service Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **541330** | Engineering Services |
| **541512** | Computer Systems Design Services |
| **541380** | Testing Laboratories |
| **518210** | Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services |
| **541511** | Custom Computer Programming Services |
| **541712** | Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Biotechnology) |
| **541711** | Research and Development in Biotechnology |
| **511210** | Software Publishers |

### Key Industries – Transportation/Logistics Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **484121** | General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload |
| **484110** | General Freight Trucking, Local |
| **484122** | General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload |

### Key Industries – Manufacturing Industries

| NAICS Code | Description |
|---|---|
| **332312** | Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing |
| **325193** | Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing |
| **332912** | Fluid Power Valve and Hose Fitting Manufacturing |
| **332710** | Machine Shops |
| **336399** | All Other Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing |
| **331210** | Iron and Steel Pipe and Tube Manufacturing from Purchased Steel |
| **332323** | Ornamental and Architectural Metal Work Manufacturing |
| **333415** | Air-Conditioning and Warm Air Heating Equipment and Commercial and Industrial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing |
| **325188** | All Other Basic Inorganic Chemical Manufacturing |
| **325199** | All Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing |
| **325998** | All Other Miscellaneous Chemical Product and Preparation Manufacturing |
| **324199** | All Other Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing |

| | |
|---|---|
| **326199** | All Other Plastics Product Manufacturing |
| **324121** | Asphalt Paving Mixture and Block Manufacturing |
| **332991** | Ball and Roller Bearing Manufacturing |
| **327310** | Cement Manufacturing |
| **333120** | Construction Machinery Manufacturing |
| **333922** | Conveyor and Conveying Equipment Manufacturing |
| **322211** | Corrugated and Solid Fiber Box Manufacturing |
| **332813** | Electroplating, Plating, Polishing, Anodizing, and Coloring |
| **325920** | Explosives Manufacturing |
| **339991** | Gasket, Packing, and Sealing Device Manufacturing |
| **327992** | Ground or Treated Mineral and Earth Manufacturing |
| **325120** | Industrial Gas Manufacturing |
| **332911** | Industrial Valve Manufacturing |
| **332812** | Metal Coating, Engraving (except Jewelry and Silverware), and Allied Services to Manufacturers |
| **332321** | Metal Window and Door Manufacturing |
| **333131** | Mining Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing |
| **333132** | Oil and Gas Field Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing |
| **332919** | Other Metal Valve and Pipe Fitting Manufacturing |
| **324191** | Petroleum Lubricating Oil and Grease Manufacturing |
| **325992** | Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, and Chemical Manufacturing |
| **325211** | Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing |
| **332313** | Plate Work Manufacturing |
| **331221** | Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing |
| **332322** | Sheet Metal Work Manufacturing |
| **331222** | Steel Wire Drawing |

## Key Occupations – Service Industries

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **17-2051** | Civil Engineers |

## Key Occupations – Transportation/Logistics Industries

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **53-3032** | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers |
| **53-7062** | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand |
| **53-3033** | Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers |

## Key Occupations – Manufacturing Industries

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **51-2041** | Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters |
| **51-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers |
| **51-4121** | Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers |

### Key Occupations – Service Industries – National Data

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **15-1132** | Software Developers, Applications |
| **15-1133** | Software Developers, Systems Software |
| **15-1121** | Computer Systems Analysts |
| **15-1131** | Computer Programmers |
| **15-1151** | Computer User Support Specialists |
| **17-2051** | Civil Engineers |
| **11-1021** | General and Operations Managers |
| **11-3021** | Computer and Information Systems Managers |
| **15-1142** | Network and Computer Systems Administrators |
| **41-3099** | Sales Representatives, Services, All Other |

### Key Occupations – Transportation/Logistics Industries – National Data

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **53-3032** | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers |
| **53-7062** | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand |
| **53-3033** | Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers |
| **49-3031** | Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists |
| **43-5032** | Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance |
| **53-1031** | First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators |
| **43-9061** | Office Clerks, General |
| **53-7051** | Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators |
| **43-4051** | Customer Service Representatives |
| **11-1021** | General and Operations Managers |

### Key Occupations – Manufacturing Industries – National Data by Employment Size

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **51-4041** | Machinists |

| | |
|---|---|
| **51-2092** | Team Assemblers |
| **51-4121** | Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers |
| **51-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers |
| **51-9061** | Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers |
| **51-4011** | Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic |
| **51-9198** | Helpers--Production Workers |
| **41-4012** | Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products |
| **11-1021** | General and Operations Managers |
| **53-7062** | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand |

### Key Occupations – Manufacturing Industries – National Data by Volume of Job Growth

| SOC | Occupation |
|---|---|
| **51-4041** | Machinists |
| **51-4011** | Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic |
| **51-4121** | Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers |
| **51-2092** | Team Assemblers |
| **49-9041** | Industrial Machinery Mechanics |
| **51-2041** | Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters |
| **51-4122** | Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders |
| **51-1011** | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers |
| **51-9061** | Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers |
| **47-2211** | Sheet Metal Workers |
| **51-9198** | Helpers--Production Workers |
| **51-4012** | Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic |
| **11-1021** | General and Operations Managers |
| **51-9121** | Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders |
| **43-6014** | Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive |
| **41-4012** | Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products |
| **53-3032** | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers |
| **17-2112** | Industrial Engineers |
| **53-7062** | Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand |

# Appendix B

**Methodology for Multi-State Site-Selection Trends completed by Foote Consulting**

## Phase I: Preliminary Target Industry Analysis

Foote Consulting Group (FCG) utilized a unique methodology designed to identify the best target industries. FCG maintains a database of actual, major private sector site locations/expansions[44]. For this analysis FCG looked at activity that occurred in 2013.

This database assists FCG in predicting growth trends and FCG utilizes this data for selecting the best initial communities for site location clients. The methodology is sound and proven for the following reasons:

- Locations/expansions are driven by recent market conditions and these conditions will generally continue into the near future.
- Companies (and site selection consultants) select regions first and then communities within these regions with the best business climates. This may mean, for example, a good labor climate, good market proximity, good transportation, and the availability of incentives; all positive business conditions. This will result in clustering, a concentration of like companies due to favorable business conditions.
- Clustering is a "green light" for other similar companies to take a look. But they will only locate if the good business conditions remain. For example, they may find that the labor market for select skills depleted due to too much location/expansion activity. This is why we conduct careful fieldwork interviews with local companies for our site location clients, in order to help them to thoroughly understand the local business conditions.

This methodology is sound for economic development targeting. FCG will review and analyze both regional growth cluster and sector projections in order to help the County to understand which existing (and future) businesses will grow. It will also set the stage for the next portion of this assignment: understanding the needs of the most active, fastest growing company types. Cluster data is excellent for target planning because:

- It represents actual physical building activity (size and type of building).
- It represents actual economic development (both capital investment and jobs).

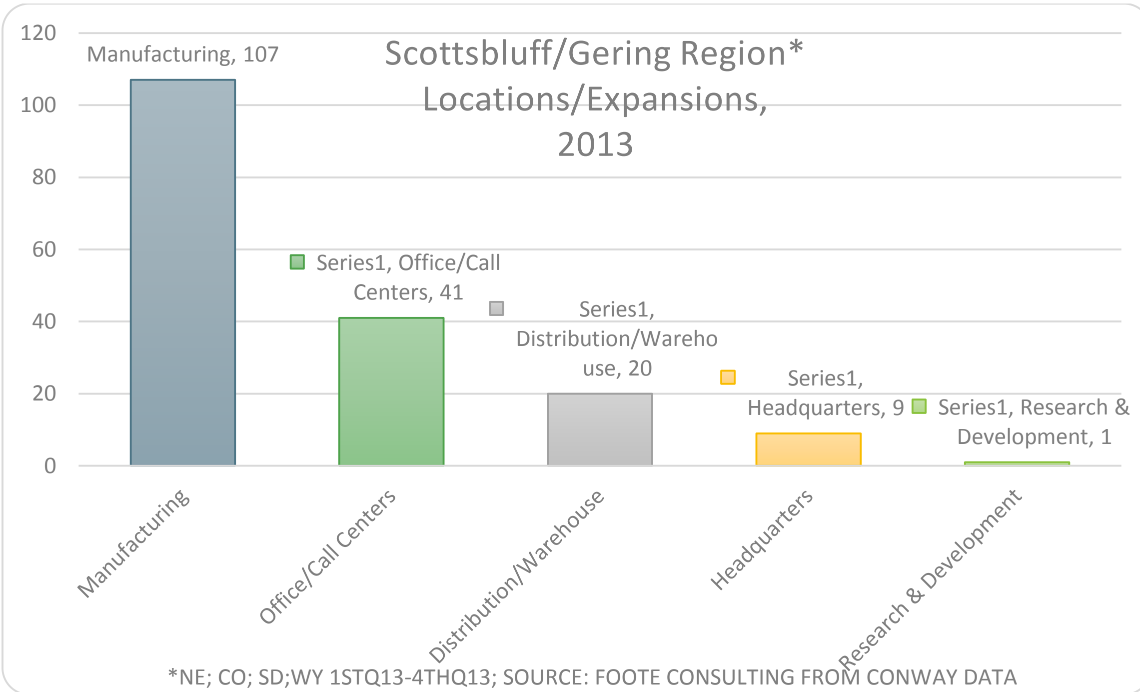
### Multi-State Regional Location/Expansion Activity ("Growth" Clusters)

FCG explored location/expansion trends in Scottsbluff/Gering's four-state region (Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota). The objective of this analysis is to help Scottsbluff/Gering capture "your fair share" of projects in the future.

[44] FCG uses Conway Data information, which tracts major locations and expansions (At least $1 million in capital investment, 50 new jobs or 20,000 square feet).

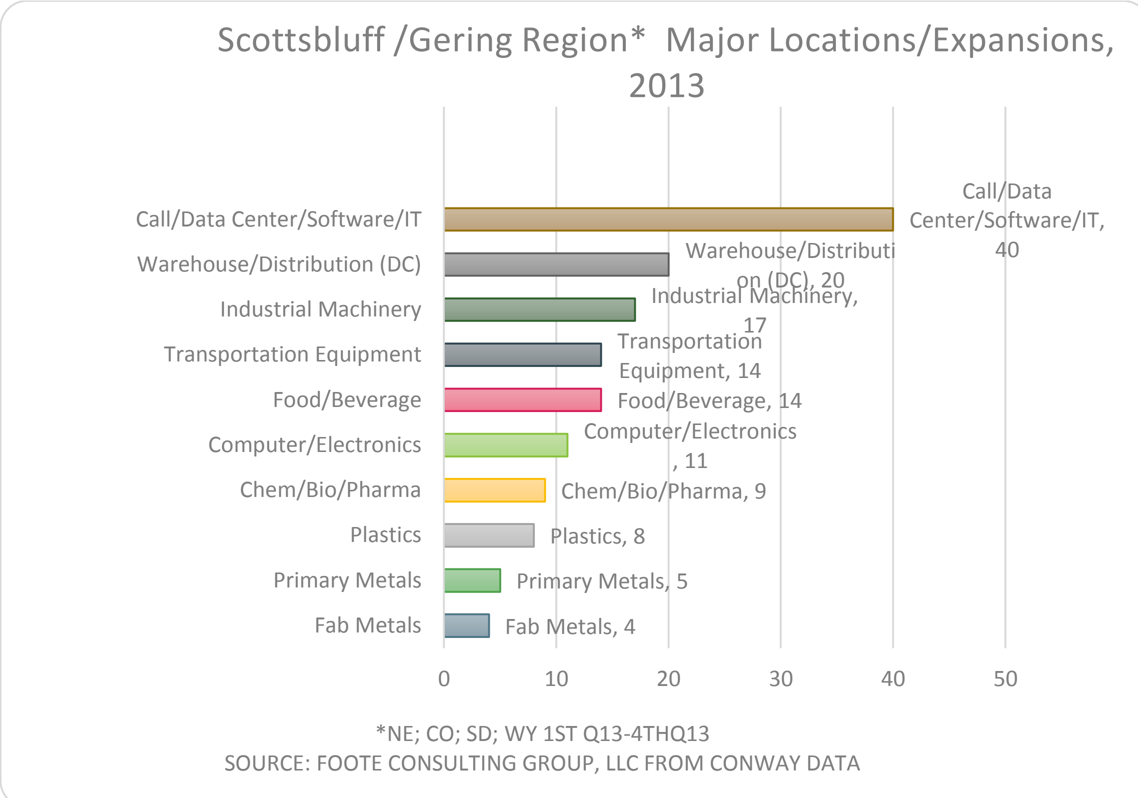
FCG next screened location/expansion data in order to identify which industries (by NAICS Code[45]) located/expanded the most facilities in a multi-state region (Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota) during 2013. FCG defines these as “growth clusters”.

The following two graphs depict this information. The first one shows general industry categories and the second shows individual industry sectors.




- There were a dominate number of manufacturing projects.
- Office/call centers/data centers had a good number of projects.
- Warehouse/distribution (DC) project numbers were quite low.

[45] The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) was formerly the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system.




- The most active sector was Call/Data Centers/Software/IT, which includes many technology, IT, data center and office uses.
- Warehouse/Distribution (DC) was the second most active overall, but numbers were low due to slow retail sales and smaller regional populations. Interstate access and rail service is critical to attract this sector.
- Industrial Machinery and Transportation Equipment were prominent with strong influence from agriculture and oil/gas/mining activity.
- Food/Beverage was dominant and focused on the meat, dairy and grain sectors.
- Other active regional targets include: plastics, metals, chemicals and computer/electronics.

The trend will be toward more locations/expansions in these general categories and industry sectors into the near term. They all, therefore, represent potential targets for the Scottsbluff/Gering Area.

## The Preliminary Targets

Based on the previous analysis where we looked at regional location/expansion activity, we feel that the best preliminary targets for the Scottsbluff/Gering Area include (not by priority):

- Food Processing/Agricultural Products/Crushing Plants
- Data Centers
- Oils/Gas/Mining Industrial Equipment
- Warehouse/Distribution (rail related DCs)

- Industrial Machinery/Fab Metal Products/ Metals recycling (especially ag and oil/gas related)
- Plastics Products
- Electronics Assembly (includes solar fabrication (ingots to wafers)*
- Call Centers (Higher-end tech support inbound call center)

Secondary Target

- Medical

Retail (i.e. restaurants/hotels) should not be considered a primary target industry. Retail will naturally follow the attraction of targets over time.

## Phase II: Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis

In corporate site selection, FCG analyzed communities in order to determine if they possess the attributes most important for Scotts Bluff. The objective in this phase of work is to:

(1) Understand the general location needs of preliminary targets
(2) Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Scottsbluff/Gering Area
(3) Match these strengths with the needs of the preliminary targets
(4) Recognize the weaknesses of the community

## Phase III: Best Fit

FCG determined the "best fit" targets based on these factors and offer target profiles:

- Data Centers
- Food/Agricultural/Crushing Plants
- Oil/Gas/Mining Equipment
- Industrial Machinery/Fab Metals/Recycling Plants
- Call Centers (Higher-end tech support inbound)
- Plastics Products

### Why the "Best Fit" Targets Work

Data Centers

- Outstanding and improved electric power costs push this to the top of the list
- Good potential site in the future
- Good specialized state incentives promote this target
- Lower tax potential
- Outstanding fiber availability & bandwidth

Food/Agricultural/Crushing Plants

- Manufacturing at future rail sites
- Good labor availability, but some skilled labor concerns
- Need for low cost and reliable electric power
- Water and wastewater excess capacities available
- A need for more specialized technical training

Oil/Gas/Mining Equipment & Services

- An opportunity to serve the shale gas/oil play and mining regions of Colorado , Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming and could provide transportation savings for serving more than one region.
- Strong potential subsectors:
  - Pipe
  - Frack sand
  - Mining/industrial equipment
  - Chemicals
  - Trucking/hauling
- Good labor availability, but some skilled labor concerns
- Need for low cost and reliable electric power
- Good sites with rail possible in the future
- A need for more specialized technical training

Industrial Machinery/Metal Fabrication/Recycling

- Good potential for many types of manufacturing operations, particularly tied to agriculture, mining/drilling, and possibly renewable wind energy related manufacturing (nacelle units: gearbox, generator and transformer components & blade assembly)
- Recycling needs are growing
- Good labor availability, but some skilled labor concerns
- Good sites with rail possible in the future
- Need for low cost and reliable electric power
- A need for more specialized technical training

Plastics Products

- Good availability of unskilled workers
- Need for low cost and reliable electric power
- Potential sites with rail for transport of plastic pellets, but no I-80 direct access.

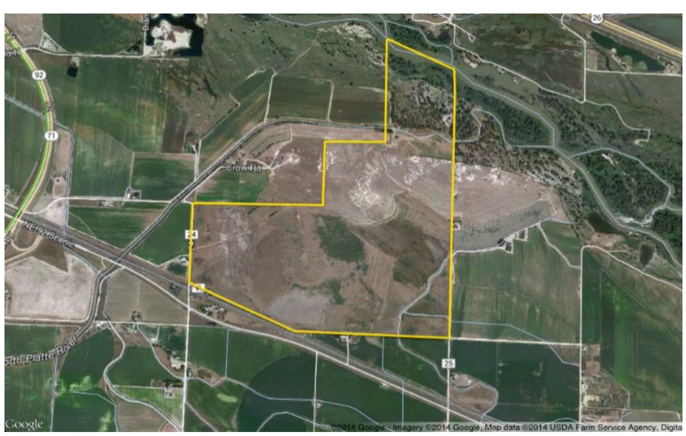
## Appendix IV: Site Assessment

| **Site Name: Scottsbluff City Site** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location (City): *Scottsbluff, NE*** | | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *43 Acres* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *$20,000 per acre* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | *City-owned* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *Adjacent to 4 lane Expressway*<br>*US26 with access road; SR 92; County Road (CR) 24*<br>*BNSF rail spur; must secure right to utilize* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | *Have topography maps on-site*<br>*Has been used for farming, so no previous industry has been located on site* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | *Building site will have to be raised out of floodplain – 0 to 18" (varies)* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

| Site Name: 42nd Street Data Center Site | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Location (City):** ***Scottsbluff, NE*** | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *200-300 acres* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | *City-owned* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *On County Road H (4th Ave); Near County Road 21* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | *Sizable power near site; sewer and dark fiber near; City water tower and water service on west side; City sewer and water run along 42nd Street, but not on the site* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

| Site Name: Nationstar East Site | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location (City):** ***Scottsbluff, NE*** | | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *30 acres below ditch*<br>*30 acres above ditch* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *Family will discuss price and what they want to sell*<br>*Willie Quindt is family representative: 308-631-8937* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *Hwy 26* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

| **Site Name: Gering Hill East Site** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location (City): *Gering, NE*** | | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *225 acres*<br>*Union Pacific rail on south side* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *City of Gering maintains an option*<br>*Price is unknown* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | *City of Gering maintains an option* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *US 92 (scenic) on south; CR 24 on west*<br>*Union Pacific rail line to the south* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | *Electric power*<br>*All others must be extended* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a “Will Serve” letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | *City of Gering maintains an option* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |



| **Site Name: Sugar Factory Site** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location (City): *Gering, NE*** | | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *60-80 acres* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *Price unknown* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *Lockwood Road west of US 92 4-lane* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | *Sanitary sewer – City treatment plant is nearby to the west*<br>*Water and gas is just to west*<br>*Telecommunication at adjacent properties* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | *Need to be mindful that treatment plant is in close proximity* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

| **Site Name: Shane Site**<br>**Location (City): *Scottsbluff, NE*** | | **Comments** |
|---|---|---|
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *13 acres* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *$1.5 million for entire 13 acres, but owner is willing to entertain offers*<br>*Property qualifies for TIF funding*<br>*Owner: Shane Aulick 308-641-2345* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *Direct access to W 12th St., Broadway Ave., W 8th St., and Ave B* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | *Sanitary sewer – City treatment plant is nearby to the west*<br>*Water and gas is just to west*<br>*Telecommunication at adjacent properties* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | *Former cement foundations, etc. on site must be removed*<br>*Was an EPA cleanup site from former refinery* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | *Part of property is in 100 year flood plain* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

| **Site Name: Expressway Site** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Location (City): *Gering, NE*** | | **Comments** |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **10 or more developable acres?** | *Two sites: 80 acres (south side) and 60 acres (north side)* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Willing seller with set asking price?** | *Bob Unzicker owns parcel to East*<br>*Max Miller owns parcel to West*<br>*Price unknown* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Proven alignment with a local city, town, or county?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Dedicated Access?** | *Access to US 92*<br>*Potential access to the Union Pacific rail spur to the northwest* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **All utilities at site? (water, sewer, electric power, telecommunication)** | *Gas, sanitary sewer and water service are on west side (within 500 ft. at residential site)*<br>*Electric power in place*<br>*Telecommunications properties adjacent to site* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **If all utilities are not at site, can a "Will Serve" letter to extend utilities to the site be provided?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Letter of commitment from local government, county, or economic development group?** | |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Do any environmental issues exist?** | *The two sites are divided by a drainage way which may flood* |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Are you in the process of documenting/remediating environmental factors with proper organizations? (e.g. Phase I ESA; Clean Water Act; 100-year assured water supply; endangered species reviews; geotechnical report; air quality designation)** | |
| ☐ Yes<br>☒ No | **Is site outside known flood-prone areas?** | *Above 500 year flood plain levels* |
| ☒ Yes<br>☐ No | **Industrial/office (no retail) zoning or expedited rezoning plan in place?** | |

## Appendix V: Regional Partner Organizations

Listed below are the Regional Partner Organizations involved in TPMA's development of this regional strategic plan.

| Organization | Role | Website |
|---|---|---|
| Twin Cities Development (TCD) | Supports economic development activities that create jobs as well as bring investment into western Nebraska. | http://tcdne.org/ |
| Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) | Engaging and growing the community through business & community education, small business incubator, and the Harms Advanced Technology Center | http://www.wncc.edu/ |
| Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) | Engaged in a wide variety of community and regional activities to improve regional competitiveness, stimulate economic growth, and enhance community vitality. | http://www.nepadd.com/ |
| Scottsbluff/Gering United Chamber of Commerce | Voluntary partnership of businesses and professionals working together to grow and promote a healthy economy. | http://www.scottsbluffgering.net/ |
| Small Business Development Center (SBDC) | Offers one-stop assistance to individuals and small businesses by providing a wide variety of information and guidance. | n/a |
| Department of Labor | Connects workers and employers as well as provides information and services to each in various respects. | http://dol.nebraska.gov/ |
| Community Connection | The mission of the Call to Action effort is to network, enhance, promote and improve the quality of life in Scotts Bluff County through civic involvement to foster all families, businesses and organizations. | n/a |

# Appendix VI: Foote Consulting Group Site Assessment

Attached separately.