

Riley County Community Needs Assessment

ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE FINDINGS

73% of respondents feel that the overall local economy is doing well
BUT

20% of respondents find it **DIFFICULT** to cover typical monthly expenses.

 **38%**

OF RESPONDENTS REPORT NOT EARNING ENOUGH TO SAVE MONEY FOR THE FUTURE.

22%

OF RESPONDENTS SAY THEY DO NOT MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO SUPPORT THE BASIC NEEDS OF THEIR FAMILY.



12% OF RESPONDENTS SAY THEY DO NOT MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO SUPPORT THEIR OWN BASIC NEEDS.

22% OF RESPONDENTS MUST WORK MORE THAN ONE JOB IN ORDER TO EARN ENOUGH MONEY TO MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS.

56% OF RESPONDENTS FEEL THE COMMUNITY LACKS ENOUGH WELL-PAYING JOBS

and

30% reported a lack of variety of jobs available in the community.

65% of respondents feel that **property taxes** are not reasonable.

64% of respondents feel that **sales taxes** are not reasonable.

Top needs in the community:



Jobs that pay a living wage



Availability of jobs



Small business development



Emergency assistance to individuals or families



Workforce development training

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The 2020 Riley County Community Needs Assessment, conducted by Wichita State University Center for Applied Research and Evaluation, included the compilation of selected secondary data, administration of a community survey (n=1,229), key informant interviews, and focus groups with persons who were underrepresented in the survey.

Although Riley County is often seen as a community experiencing a boom in business and economic development, the unemployment rate is slightly higher than the state average (5.5% for Riley County and 5.3% for Manhattan versus 4.4% for Kansas) and the percentage of people below poverty level in Riley County (21.6%) and Manhattan (25.4%) is well above state average (12.4%). Although relatively few people on the survey indicated experiencing significant issues with income (e.g., not being able to cover expenses, lack of optimism about financial future), 37.6% said they do not make enough to save for the future. Additionally, 21.8% said they do not make enough to cover their family's needs, and 21.9% said they need to work more than one job to meet their basic needs.

Selected data from secondary sources

Economics/Personal Finance	Riley County	Kansas	Source
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2014-2018	\$194,800	\$145,400	US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates
Median household income, 2014-2018	\$49,910	\$57,422	US Census ACS 5-Year Estimates
Rate of unemployment, 2014-2018	5.5%	4.4%	US Census Bureau State ACS 5-Year Estimates
Percent of persons (all ages) below federal poverty level, 2014-2018	20.7%	12.0%	Kansas Health Matters via American Community Survey
Retail sales per capita, 2012	\$11,971	\$13,263	US Census, Economic Census

For the full report, go to: www.rileycountycommunityneedsassessment.org