



Preparing for a Healthy Recovery

An economic and demographic summary for Wabaunsee County, Kansas

Introduction

The Institute for Policy & Social Research (IPSR) at the University of Kansas prepared this report to assist Wabaunsee County with their effort to allocate their Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) dollars. Economic and demographic analysis helps to understand the impact of the public health disaster on the region's economy and those affected, particularly vulnerable populations. This report provides data on population trends and characteristics, housing, workforce, and broadband as well as the impacts of COVID-19 on employment, families, businesses, and jobs. The following data will help identify the weaknesses and resiliencies in the local economy and help the community prepare for a healthy recovery.

Population Trends

Wabaunsee County had strong population growth in the late 1800s and population peaked in 1900 with a population of 12,813 (Figure 1). From 1900 to 1960, Wabaunsee County lost roughly half of its population and has remained relatively stable since 1960. The 2019 population is estimated to be 6,913, a 1.7% decrease since 2010 (Table 1). Current projections show continued stable population over the next two decades.

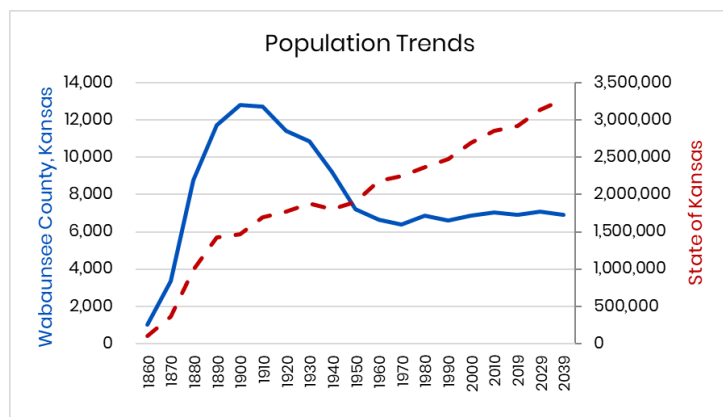


Figure 1. Population in Wabaunsee County and State of Kansas, 1860-2039 (U.S. Census Bureau & Wichita State University).

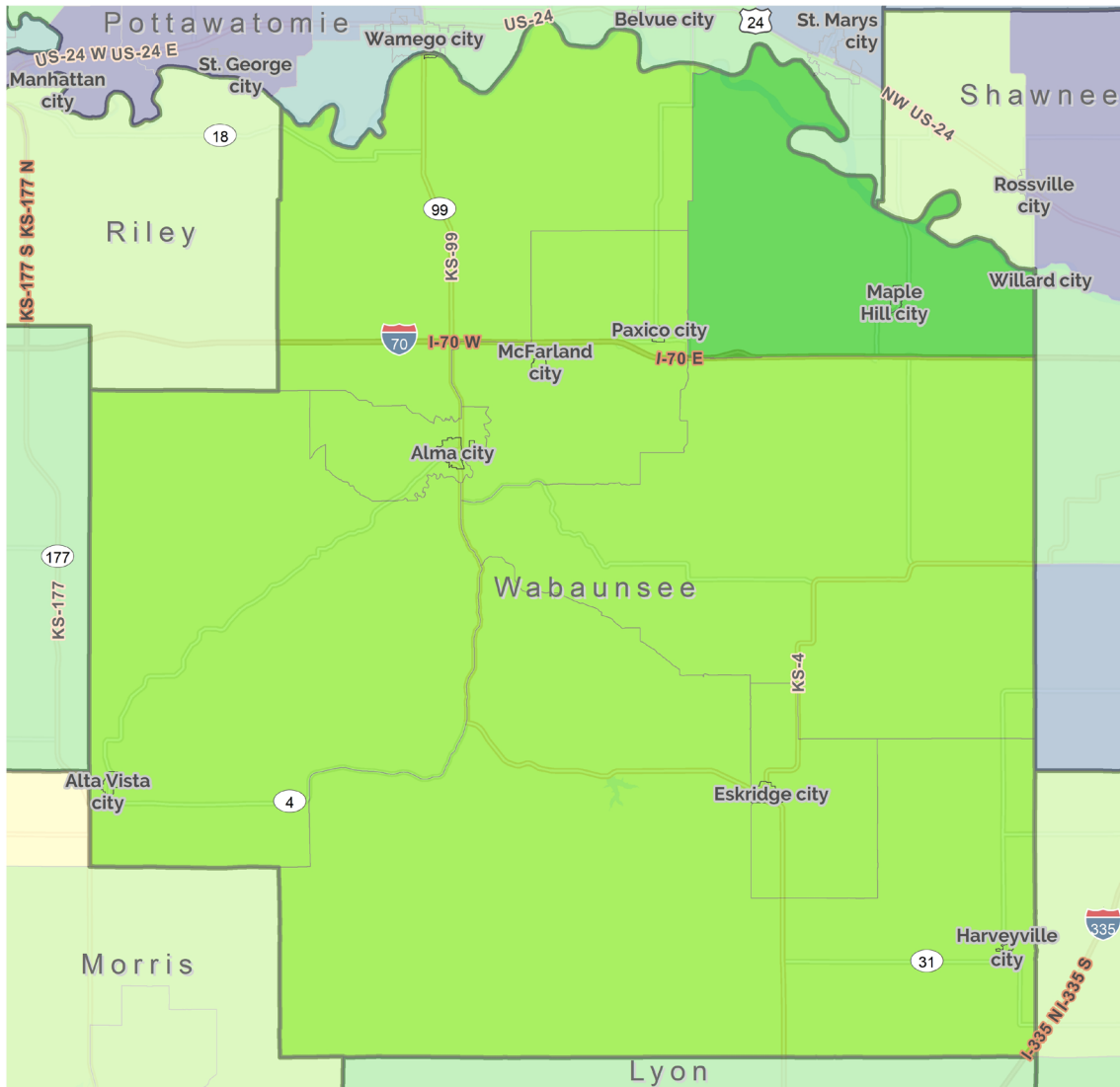
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Table 1 shows the population for the cities in Wabaunsee County from 1990 to 2019. Maple Hill and St. Marys have seen the largest population gains since 1990 and population has decreased for all cities except St. Marys since 2010. Figure 2 illustrates population by Census block group and shows that the county's population evenly spread with a slight concentration in the northeast corner of the county.

City	1990	2000	2010	2019
Alma	871	797	832	780
Alta Vista	477	442	444	424
Eskridge	518	589	534	505
Harveyville	267	267	236	248
McFarland	224	271	256	248
Maple Hill	406	469	620	606
Paxico	174	211	221	215
St. Marys ¹	1,791	2,198	2,627	2,658
Wabaunsee Co.	6,603	6,885	7,053	6,931
¹ The city of St. Marys is located in both Wabaunsee and Pottawatomie counties.				

Table 1. Population in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau).

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Population by Block Group (2018)

0 - 500 501 - 1,000 1,001 - 1,500 1,501 - 2,000 2,001 - 2,500 2,501 - 19,582

Figure 2. Population by block group in Wabaunsee County, 2018 (ESRI).

Characteristics of the Population

"White alone, not Hispanic" make up about 93 percent of the county's population (Table 2). The county is a mostly dependent population (Figure 3) with one-third of the population in the prime working age category (age 25-54).

Population by Race & Ethnicity	Number
White	6,613
Black	32
American Indian and Alaskan Native	37
Asian	51
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0
Some Other Race	18
Two or More Races	137
Hispanic or Latino	247
White alone, not Hispanic	6,374
Percent Diversity	7.46%

Table 2. Population by race and ethnicity in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Figure 3 displays a breakdown of the population in Wabaunsee County by age and gender and shows forty-five percent of the population are either under age 20 or over age 64. The county has forty-seven children under age 20 and thirty-seven people over age 64 for every 100 people age 20 to 64. This leads to a high reliance on child and elder care. Wabaunsee County has 15 licensed child care facilities with a combined capacity for 303 children (Table 3). There are 398 children under the age of 5 in the county leaving nearly one in four children without licensed child care.

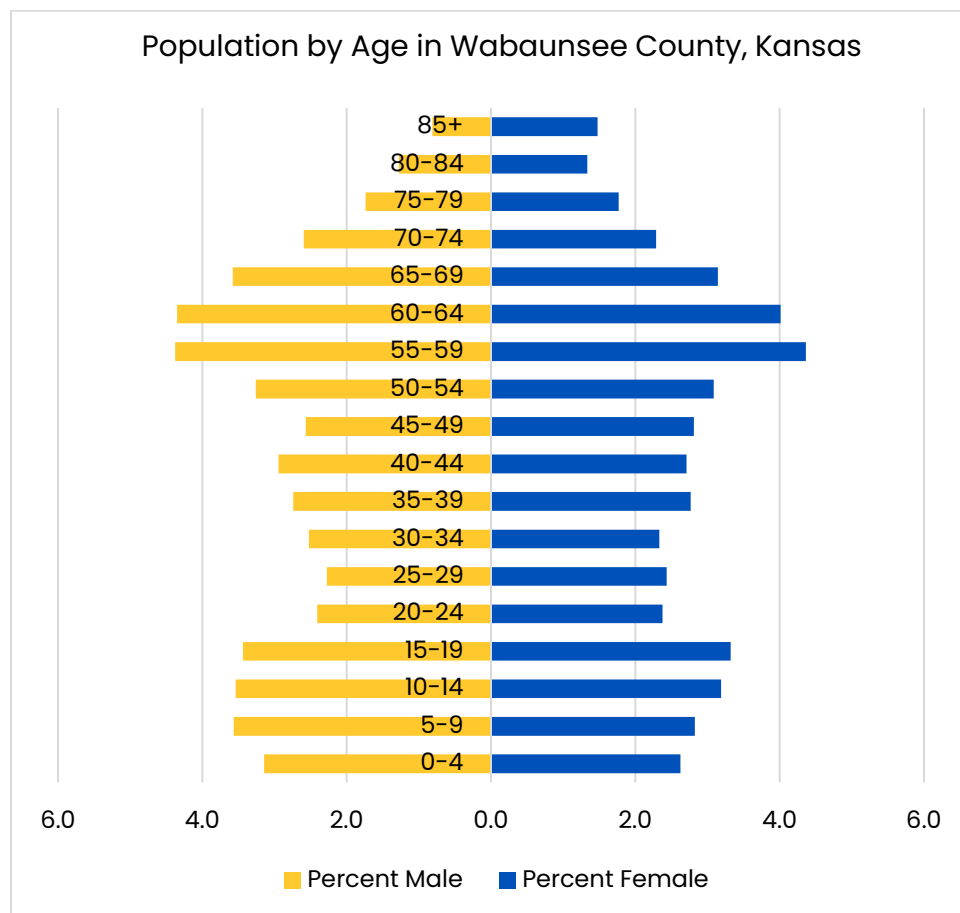


Figure 3. Population by age and gender in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 Population Estimates).

Licensed Child Care Facilities and Capacity in Wabaunsee County		
Type of Facility	Facilities	Capacity
Child Care Center	5	199
Group Day Care Home	2	24
Head Start Child Care Center	0	0
Licensed Day Care Home	8	80
Preschool	0	0
Total	15	303

Table 3. Licensed child care facilities and capacity in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Health & Environment, 2018).

Wabaunsee County has two nursing homes with a combined capacity for 105 people and one assisted living facility with a capacity of 28 (Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services). As Table 4 details, there are 252 people with an independent living difficulty in Wabaunsee County.

Disability by Type and Age	Under 18	Age 18 - 64	Age 65 and over	Total	Percent
People with a disability	100	526	454	1,080	15.9
With a hearing difficulty	1	163	227	391	5.8
With a vision difficulty	10	102	63	175	2.6
With a cognitive difficulty	89	158	114	361	5.3
With an ambulatory difficulty	0	250	239	489	7.2
With a self-care difficulty	5	34	43	82	1.2
With an independent living difficulty	-	117	135	252	3.7

Table 4. Disability by type and age in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Figure 4 compares educational attainment in Wabaunsee County to all Kansas counties. It shows that most of the county's residents (95.2%) have a high school degree or higher. It also shows that 23.3% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, putting the county in the second quartile of the counties in Kansas.

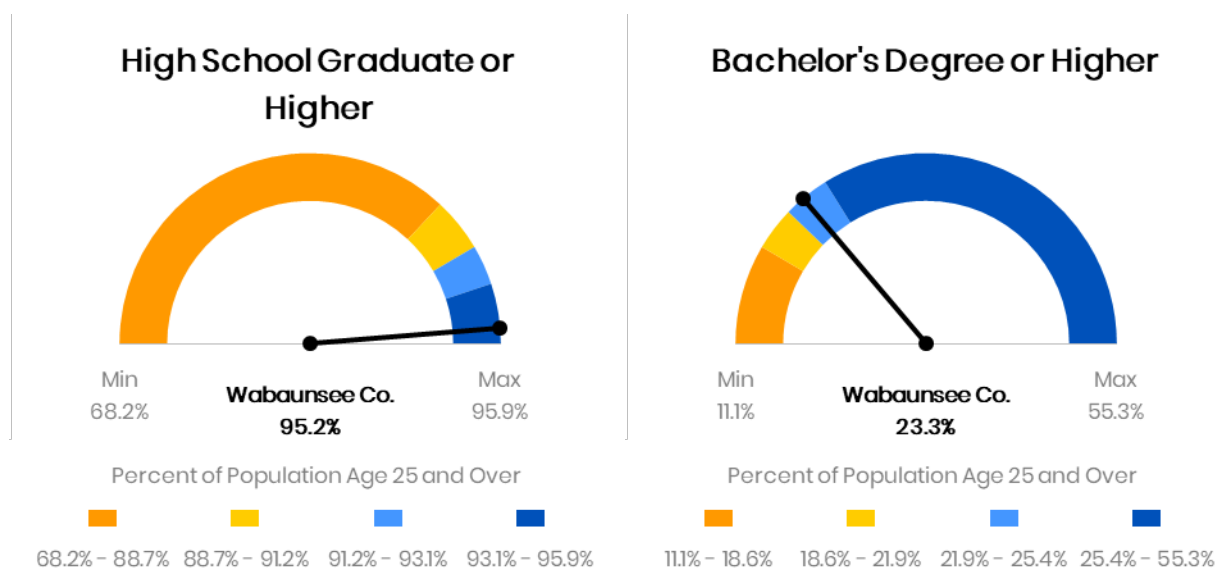


Figure 4. Educational attainment in Wabaunsee County compared to all Kansas counties (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Housing Characteristics

Wabaunsee County has 3,297 total housing units with the majority (92%) single family (Table 5).



Housing Units by Type of Unit	Number
Single family home, detached	2,939
Single family home, attached	81
Duplex units	42
Tri- or Quadplex units	15
Apartments, 5-19 units	65
Apartments, 20 or more units	6
Mobile home	149
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0
Total Housing Units	3,297

Table 5. Housing units by type in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Housing Units by Tenure	Number	Percent
Occupied housing units	2,749	83.4%
Owner-occupied	2,346	71.2%
Renter-occupied	403	12.2%
Vacant units	548	16.6%

Table 6. Housing units by tenure in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

About 83% of the housing units in Wabaunsee County are occupied (Table 6). Wabaunsee County has a low vacancy rate at 1.6% for homeowners though a high rate of 9.6% for rentals (U.S. Census, ACS).

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Wabaunsee County is strategically located between three state universities (K-State, KU, and Emporia State), Fort Riley, and Topeka. This makes the county an ideal place to settle for families that work in different communities. Figure 5 illustrates housing costs in Wabaunsee County compared to all Kansas counties and shows moderate gross rents and a median value of owner-occupied housing in the highest quartile for the state. Median gross rent for the county is \$691 and median value of a home is \$129,100 (Table 7). Median household income for Wabaunsee County is \$60,450 compared to \$57,422 for Kansas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

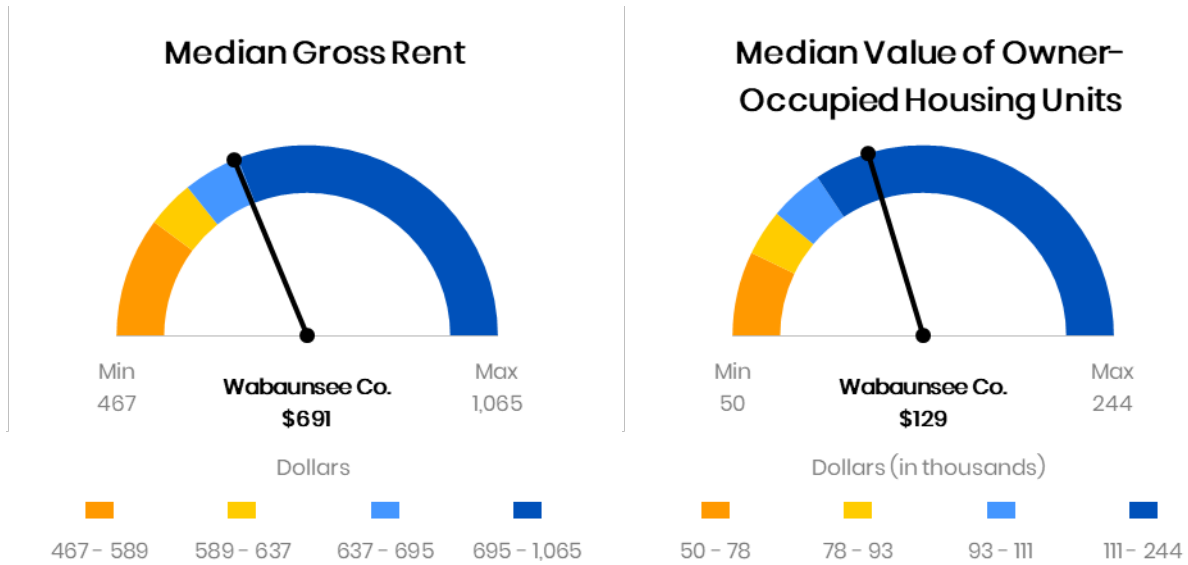


Figure 5. Housing costs in Wabaunsee County as compared to all Kansas Counties (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Housing Costs and Income	Amount
Median Gross Rent	\$ 691
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units	\$ 129,100
Median Household Income	\$ 60,450

Table 7. Housing costs and income in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Wabaunsee County has a homeownership rate of 85.3; this is considerably higher than the Kansas rate of 66.3 (U.S. Census Bureau, ACS). With an average renter wage of \$12.56 per hour and a median gross rent of \$691 per month, only one in five rental households have housing costs that are 30 percent or more of their income (Figure 6). In comparison, only 16.2% of owner-occupied units have the same level of financial burden. Wabaunsee County has considerably fewer households experiencing housing insecurity than neighboring counties.

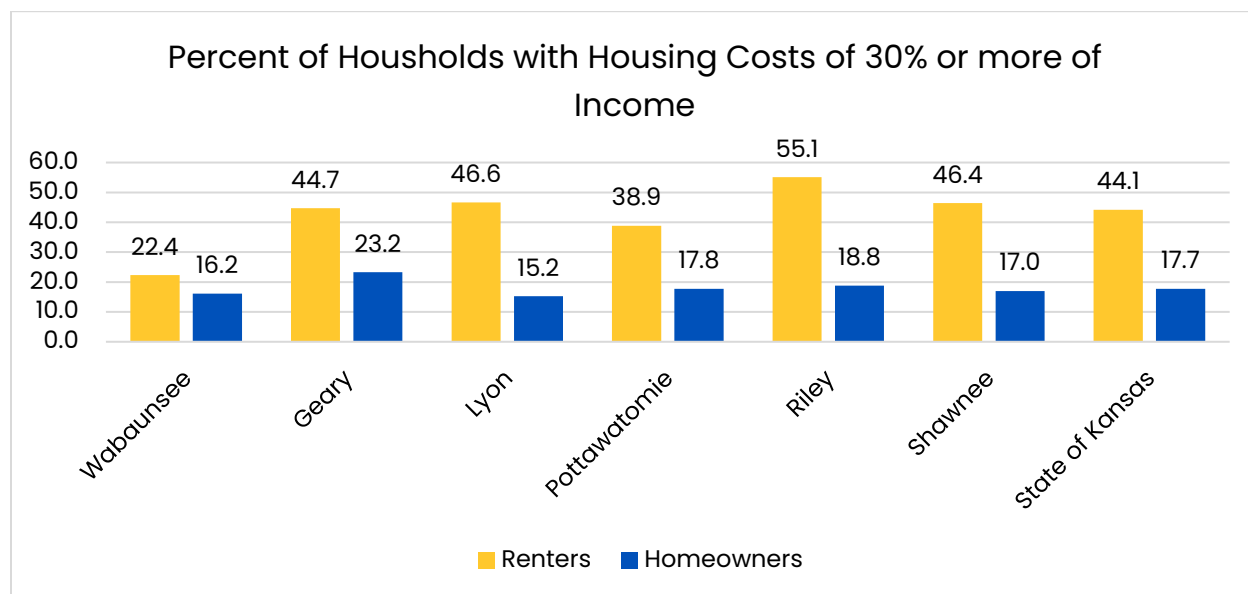


Figure 6. Percent of households with excessive housing costs in Wabaunsee County, neighboring counties, and the State of Kansas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Workforce Characteristics

Of the workers in Wabaunsee County, 672 live and work in the county; 2,788 live in the county and work outside the county; and 599 live outside the county and work in the county (Figure 7). Workers that are leaving the county are commuting most frequently to Topeka and Manhattan.

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2017
All Workers

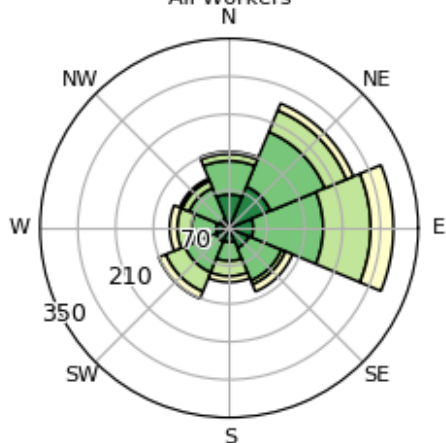
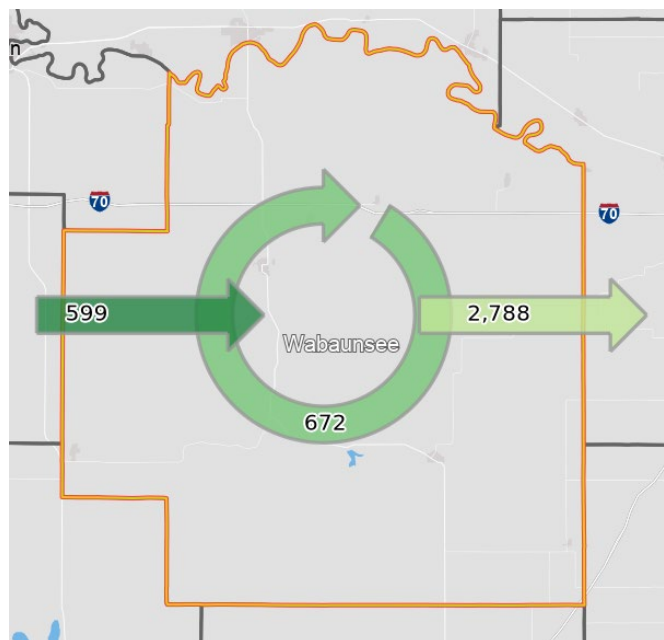
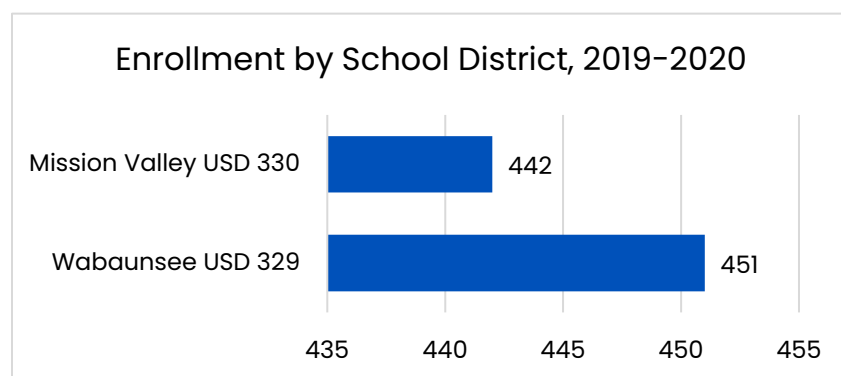


Figure 7. The direction and scale of the commuters in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau).



Broadband & Schools

Enrollment data for school districts are not available by county of students enrolled. While the two main school districts in Wabaunsee County are included in Figure 8, it is important to consider all children in Wabaunsee County. More than one in four households in Wabaunsee County are family households with one or more children under 18.



27% of the 2,749 households in Wabaunsee County are family households with one or more children under 18.

Figure 8. Enrollment in selected school districts in Wabaunsee County (Kansas State Department of Education) and households with children (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

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Broadband access is not readily available to all residents of Wabaunsee County. Northern parts of the county appear to have ready access to high speed internet, while other more rural areas of the county are lacking broadband access (Figure 9). This has implications for the delivery of online education as well as remote working. Areas without broadband access rely on cell phone coverage and devices.

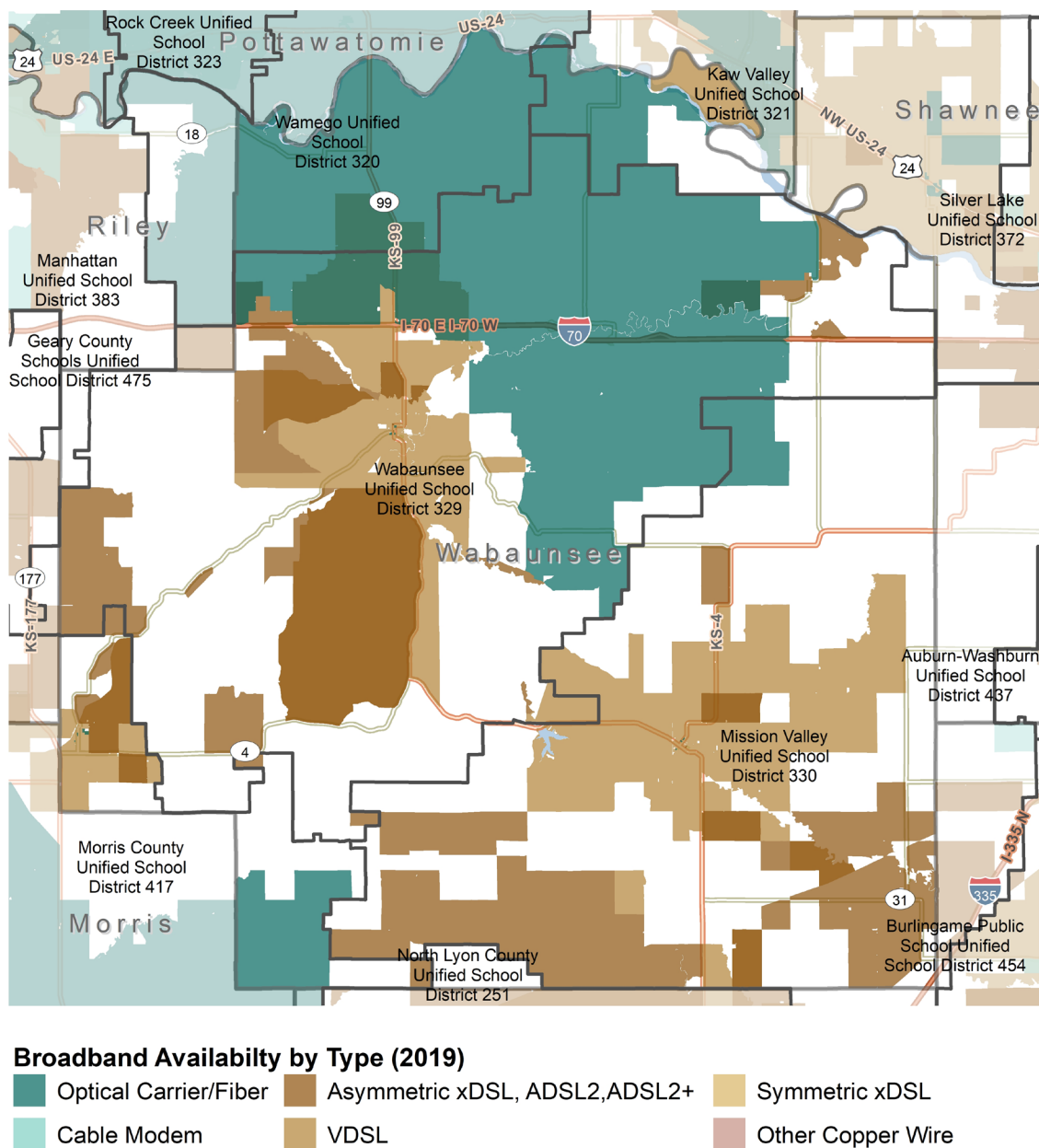


Figure 9. Gaps in broadband coverage in Wabaunsee County with school district boundaries (Federal Communications Commission, June 2019 and State of Kansas GIS Data Access & Support Center, 2019).

Figure 10 also shows a breakdown by county and school district for internet access and devices in households. Seventeen percent of the households in the county have no computer or smart phone and nearly one in four are without an internet subscription. The breakdown by school district shows similar access to devices and the internet, which are critical for remote learning.

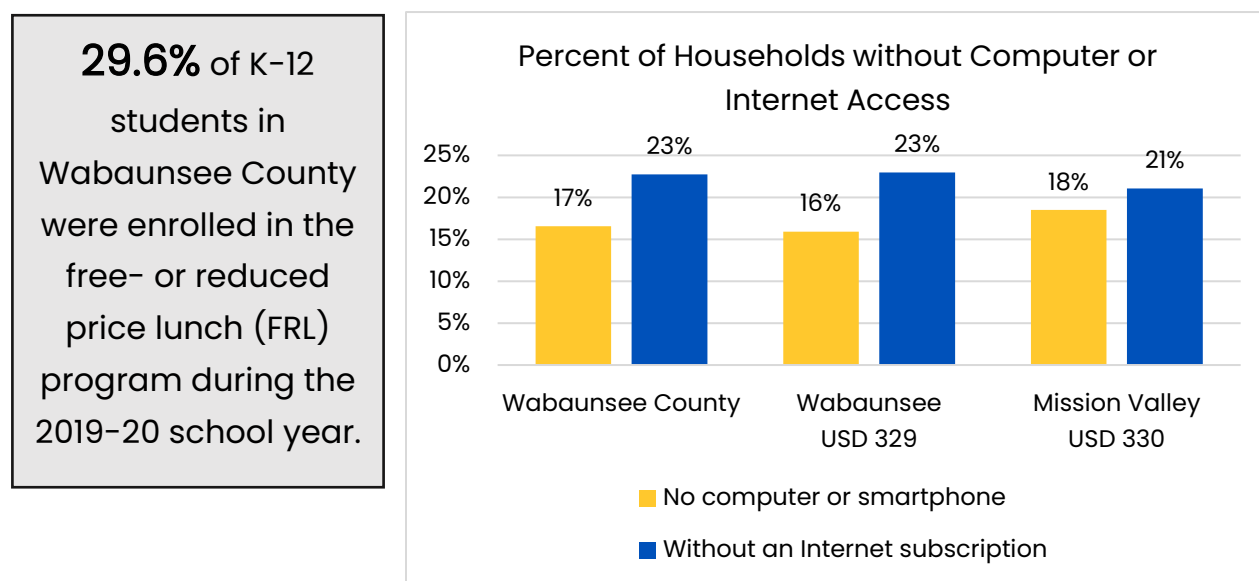


Figure 10. Households without a computer or internet access in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Almost 30 percent of students in Wabaunsee County were enrolled in free- and reduced-lunch program during the 2019-2020 school year (Kansas State Department of Education). The free- or reduced-price lunch program is an indicator for vulnerability and can be used to identify households where broadband affordability and remote learning access needs to be addressed by the school districts. At 30%, 273 children in the county could have affordability and access issues for remote learning.

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Table 8 provides more detail about computer and internet access for households and is most helpful in understanding the number and kinds of devices as well as internet subscriptions needed to give all students access.

Computer and Internet Access	Wabaunsee County	Wabaunsee USD 329	Mission Valley USD 330
Total Households	2,749	1,434	1,239
<i>Computer Access:</i>			
Has desktop or laptop computer	1,991	1,019	904
No computer or smartphone	455	228	229
<i>Internet Access:</i>			
Cellular data plan with no other type of Internet subscription	316	177	205
Broadband such as cable, fiber optic or DSL	1,387	722	462
Satellite Internet service	416	151	346
Without an Internet subscription	625	329	261

Table 8. Computer and Internet access for households in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-18 ACS).

Impacts of COVID-19

As of August 9, 2020, there were 6.18 newly reported COVID-19 cases in Wabaunsee County per 100,000 people. Figure 11 illustrates the timeline of cases for the county and charts the various policy decisions (school closings, stimulus payments, stay-at-home orders, and re-openings).

In **Wabaunsee County**, on August 09 2020, there were **6.18** newly reported COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people.

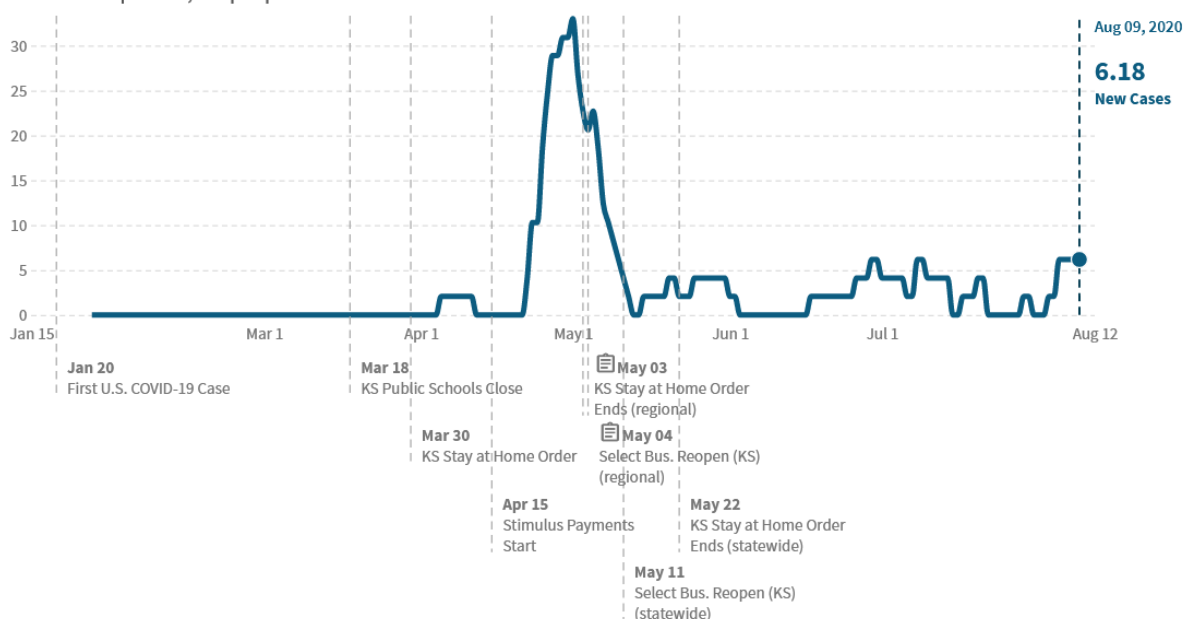


Figure 11. Newly reported COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people in Wabaunsee County (Opportunity Insights, Economic Tracker).

Unemployment

In late 2019, Wabaunsee County had an unemployment rate below 3% (Figure 12). The unemployment rate spiked to 7.6 in April 2020. From March 21 through August 1, 539 Wabaunsee County residents filed initial unemployment claims (Figure 13). The June 2020 unemployment rate was 5.2%; lower than most neighboring counties (Figure 14).

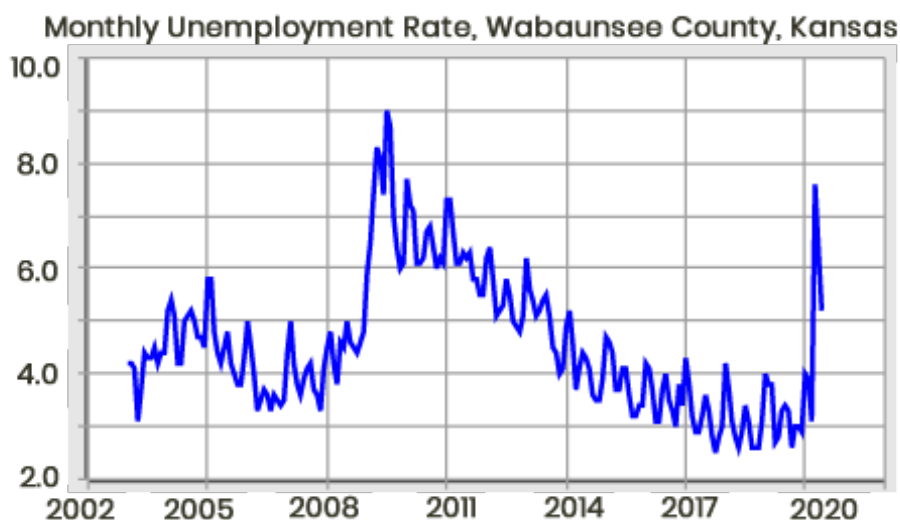


Figure 12. Monthly unemployment rate in Wabaunsee County (BLS).

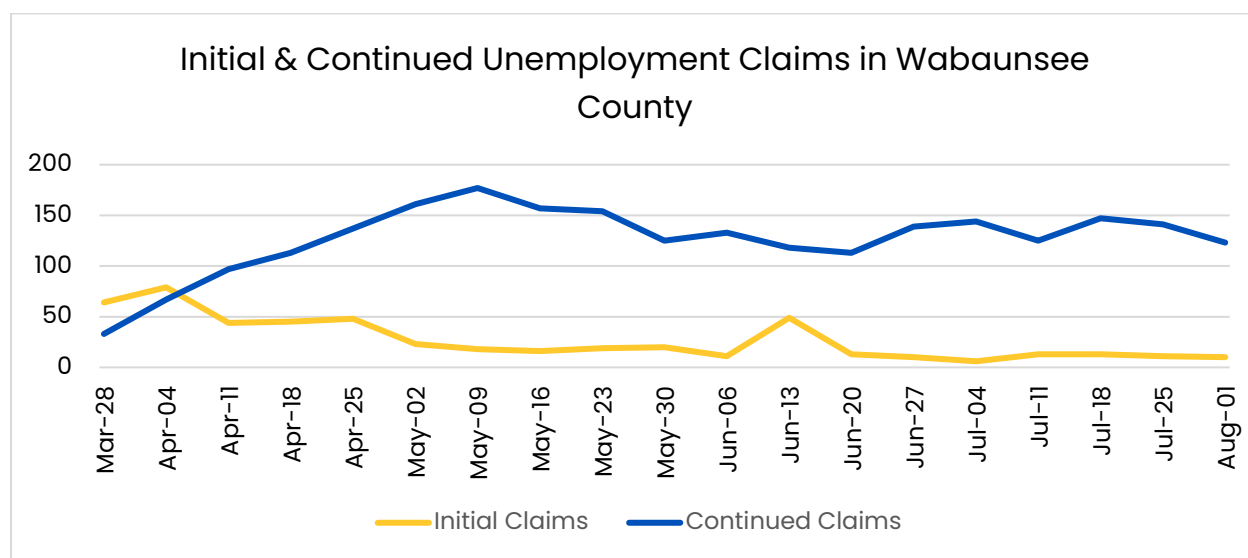
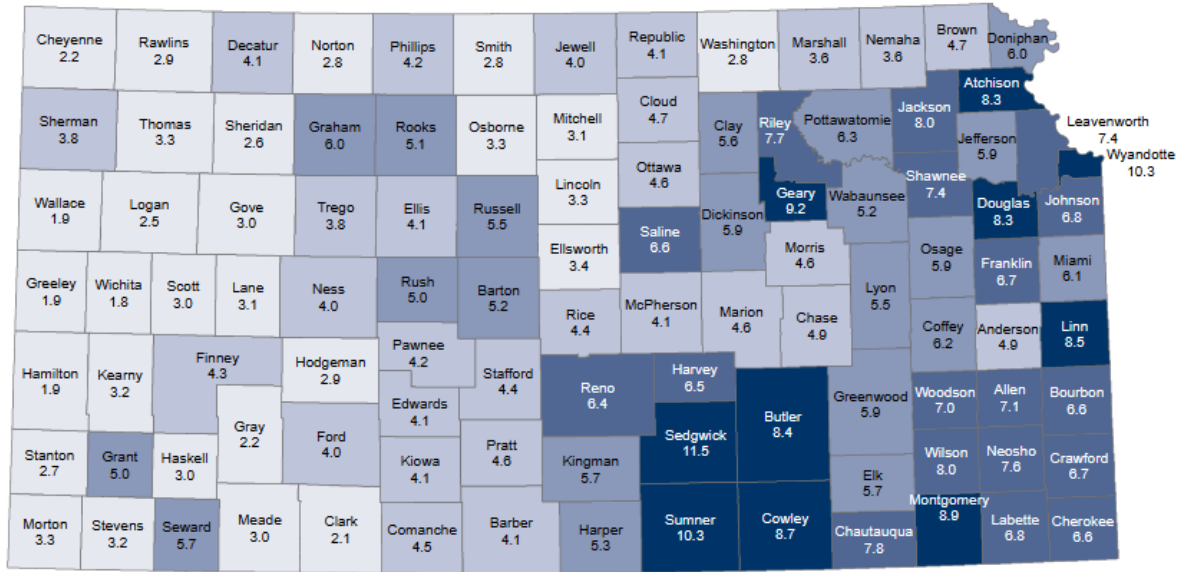


Figure 13. Initial and continued unemployment claims in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Labor).

Unemployment Rate in Kansas, by County June 2020



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas;
data from Kansas Department of Labor.

Unemployment Rate

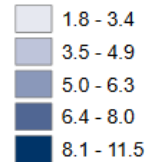
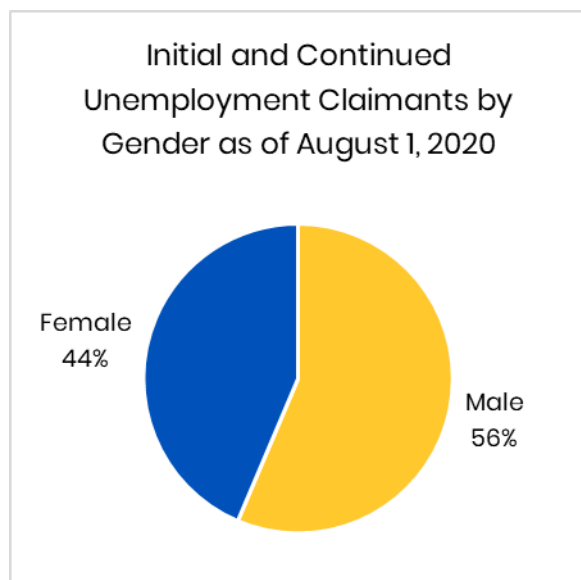


Figure 14. Map of unemployment rates by county in Kansas (Kansas Department of Labor).

Characteristics of the Unemployed



As of August 1, 2020, Wabaunsee County had more male than female claimants for unemployment, 56% compared to 44% (Figure 15). More than half of the claimants are age 45-64 (Figure 16). More males with a high school diploma/GED have filed than females with the same education while more females with some college or a college degree have filed compared to males (Figure 17).

Figure 15. Unemployment claimants by gender in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Labor).

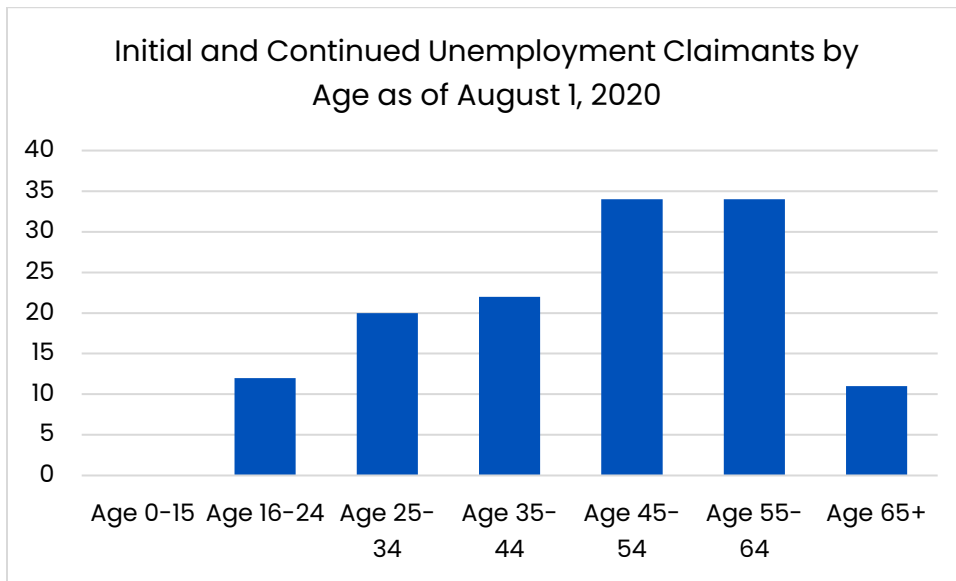


Figure 16. Unemployment claimants by age in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Labor).

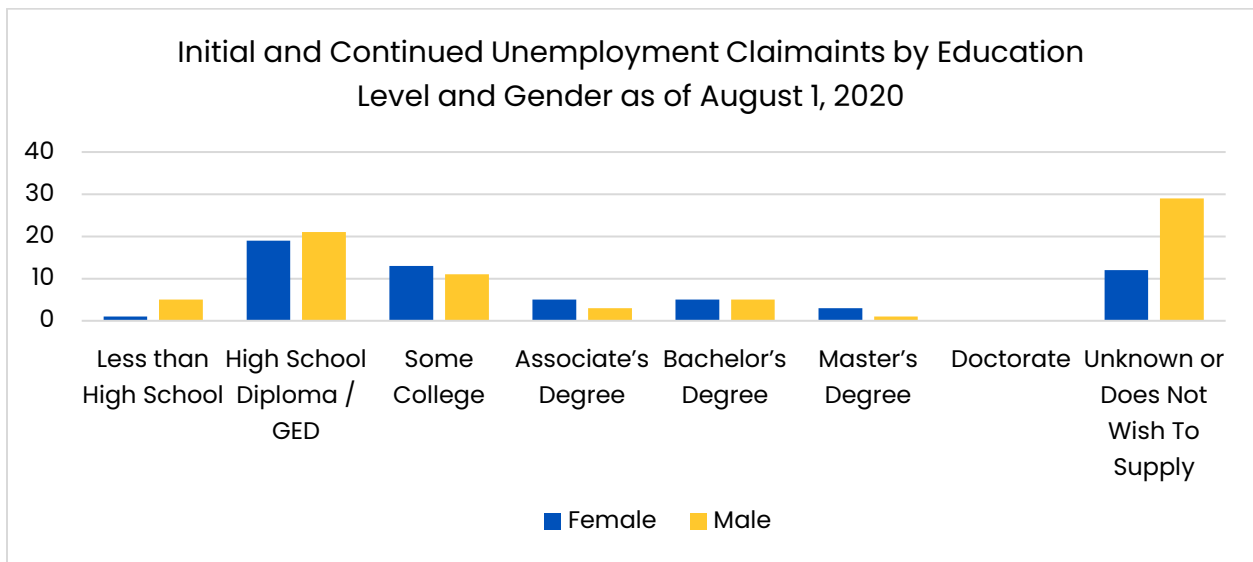


Figure 17. Unemployment claimants by education and gender in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Labor).

Preparing for a Healthy Recovery: Wabaunsee County

Figure 18 shows initial and continued unemployment claimants by industry for Wabaunsee County. Industries considered most vulnerable to the pandemic are health care & social assistance, manufacturing, accommodation & food services, retail trade, and other services. For Wabaunsee County, wholesale trade has been the hardest hit with more than 20% of the total unemployment claimants from that industry (Figure 18).

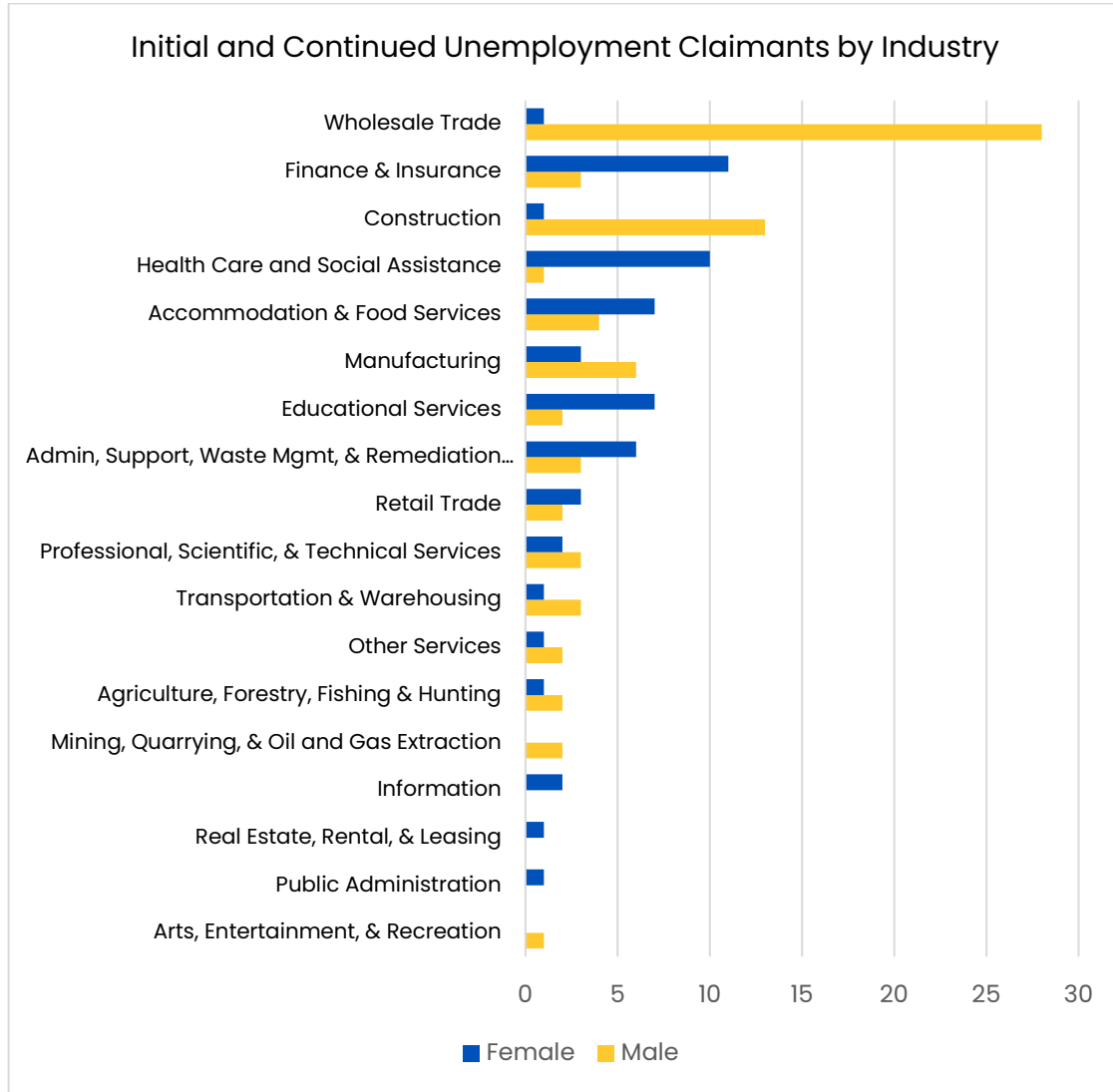


Figure 18. Unemployment claimants by industry and gender in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Labor).

Family and Social Assistance

The pandemic has resulted in an increased reliance on social programs. Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Child Care Assistance programs have increased. Wabaunsee County had a 26% increase in people benefiting from the SNAP program and a 171% increase in people receiving TANF benefits from June 2019 to June 2020 (Figure 19). Child care assistance served 21.4% more children over the same time period.

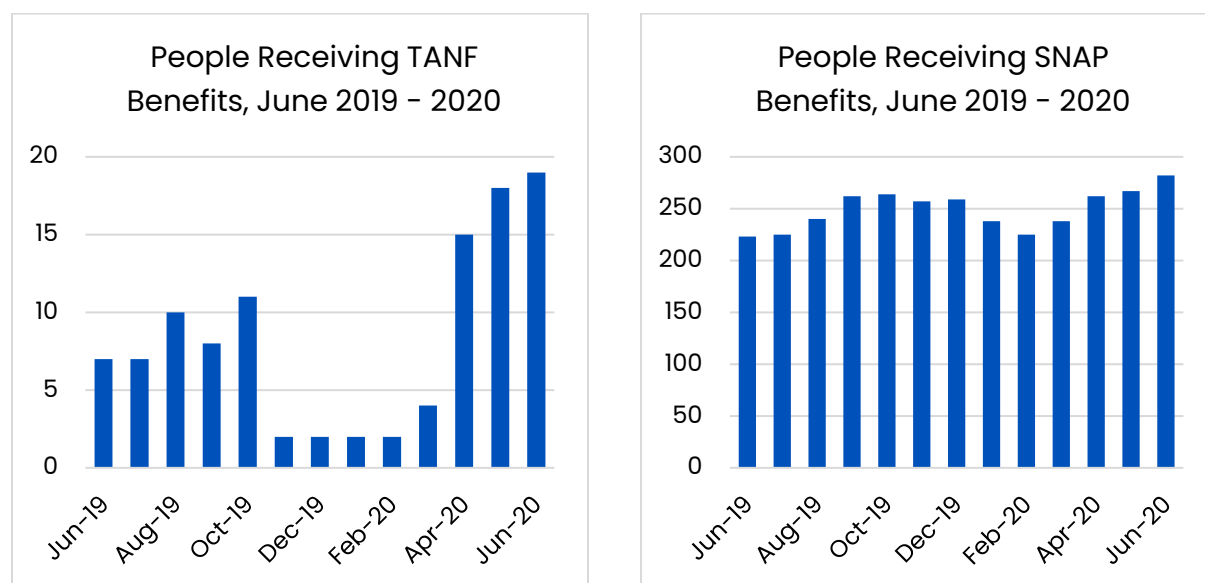


Figure 19. Wabaunsee County participants in TANF and SNAP (Kansas Department for Children and Families).

Figure 20 illustrates the percent of people in living poverty in Wabaunsee County relative to other counties in Kansas. With less than 6% of the people in Wabaunsee County in poverty and 7% of the children, the county is in the lowest quartile of counties for percent of people and children in poverty

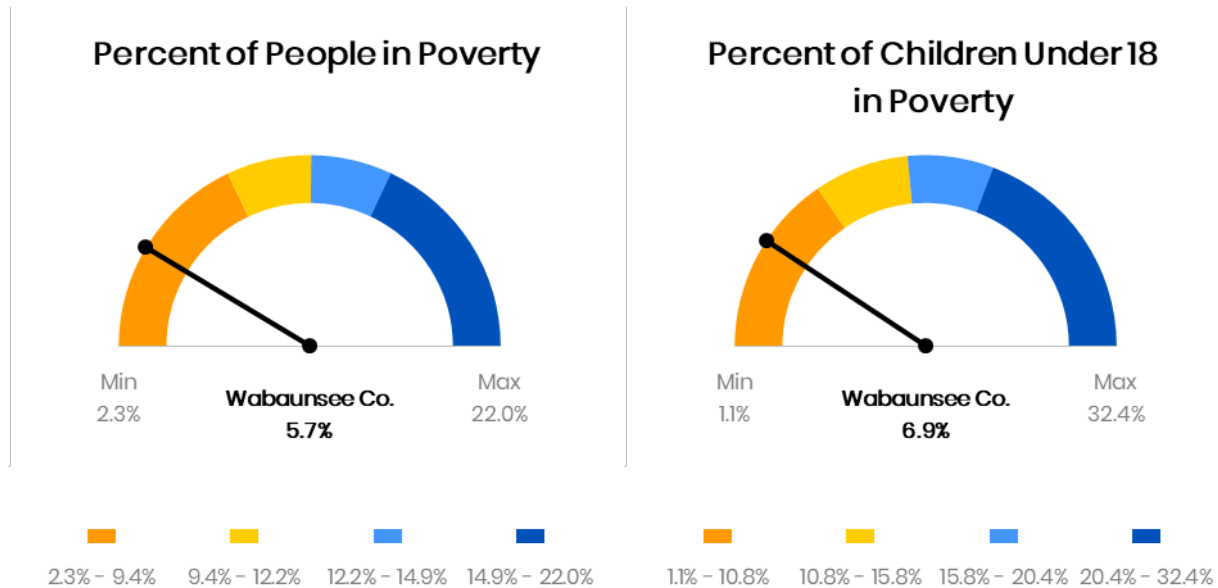


Figure 20. Poverty rates in Wabaunsee County compared to all Kansas counties (U.S. Census Bureau. 2014-18 ACS).

The Economic Policy Institute estimates the cost of a family of four to live in Wabaunsee County is \$80,437 (Figure 21). Transportation, health care, and child care account for over half of a family's budget.

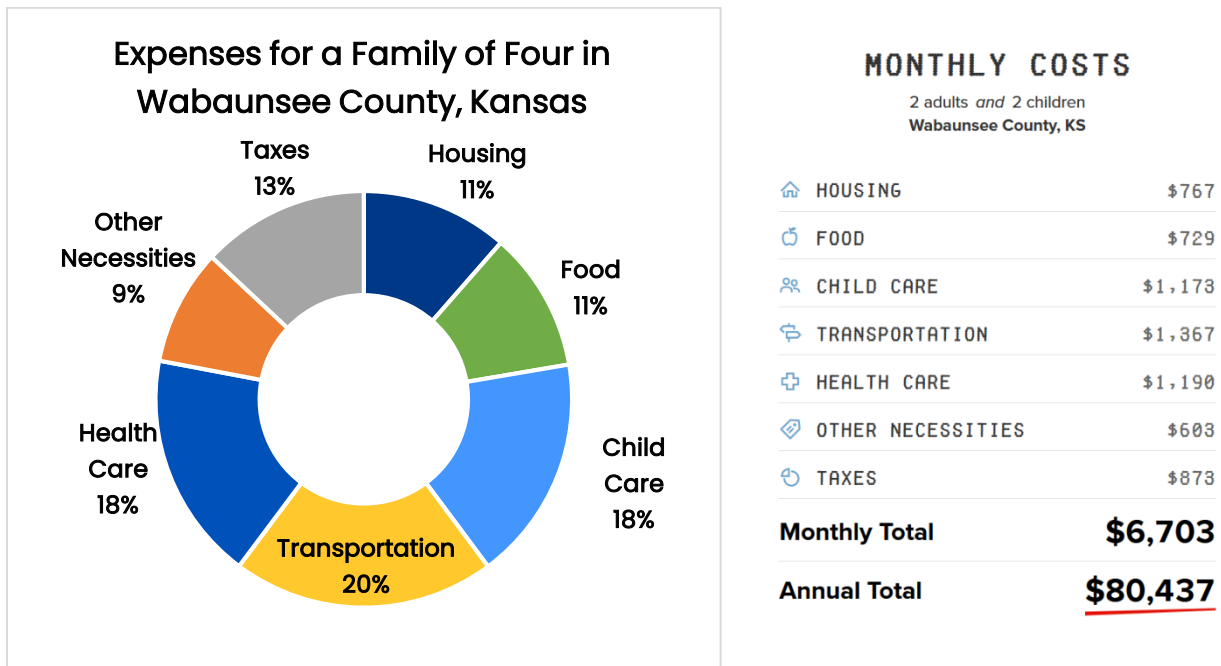


Figure 21. Household expenses for a family of four in Wabaunsee County (Economic Policy Institute).

Impacts on Businesses

Figure 22 plots industry in Wabaunsee County using Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data. Location quotients for average annual employment (x-axis) is plotted against average annual pay (y-axis) for industries in the county in which the data exist and are not suppressed. Location quotients compare the concentration of an industry with a specific area to the concentration of that industry nationwide. If an LQ=1, then the industry has the same share of its area employment (or pay) as it does in the nation. Figure 22 shows the dependence of the county on local government, manufacturing, and construction industries.

Wabaunsee County

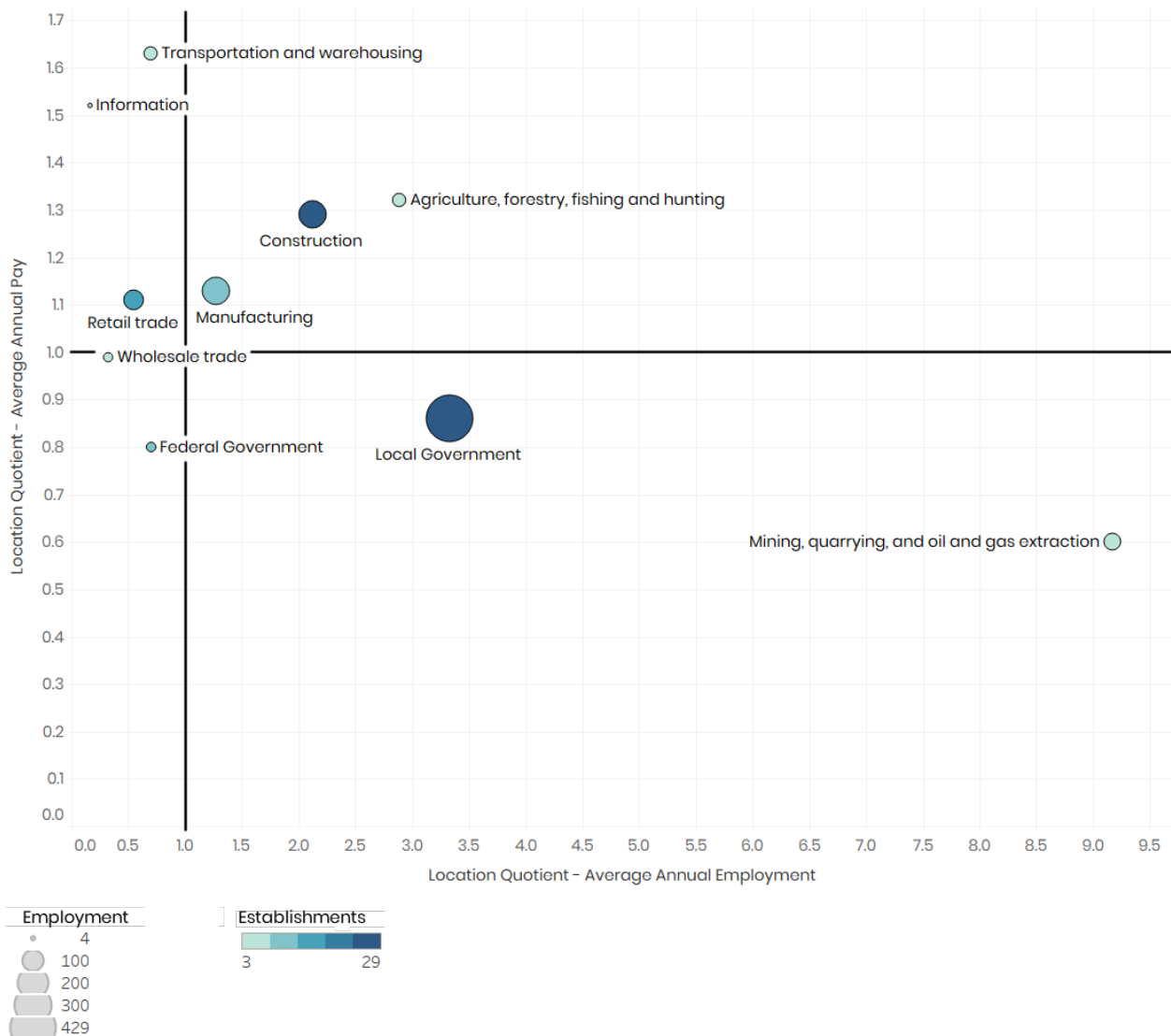


Figure 22. Industry in Wabaunsee County, 2019 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW).

Preparing for a Healthy Recovery: Wabaunsee County

Forty percent of the small businesses in Wabaunsee County are considered **vulnerable** to the impact of COVID-19 (Figure 23). These industries are highlighted in blue in Table 9.

Industry	Total Establishments with Employees	Small Businesses		
		Establishments with fewer than 500 Employees	Nonemployer Establishments	Total Small Businesses
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1	1	21	22
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	2	2	4	6
Utilities	0	0	0	0
Construction	25	25	62	87
Manufacturing	6	6	8	14
Wholesale Trade	5	5	16	21
Retail Trade	21	21	89	110
Transportation and Warehousing	5	5	21	26
Information	3	3	4	7
Finance & Insurance	10	10	11	21
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3	3	38	41
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4	4	46	50
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	7	7	44	-
Educational Services	1	1	6	7
Health Care and Social Assistance	9	9	22	31
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3	3	19	22
Accommodation and Food Services	10	10	6	16
Other Services (except Public Administration)	17	17	54	71
Total	132	132	471	552

Table 9. Small businesses in Wabaunsee County by industry (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 County Business Patterns & 2017 Nonemployer Statistics).

Preparing for a Healthy Recovery: Wabaunsee County

Small Businesses Vulnerable to COVID-19 as a Percent of Total Businesses in Kansas, by County, 2016-17

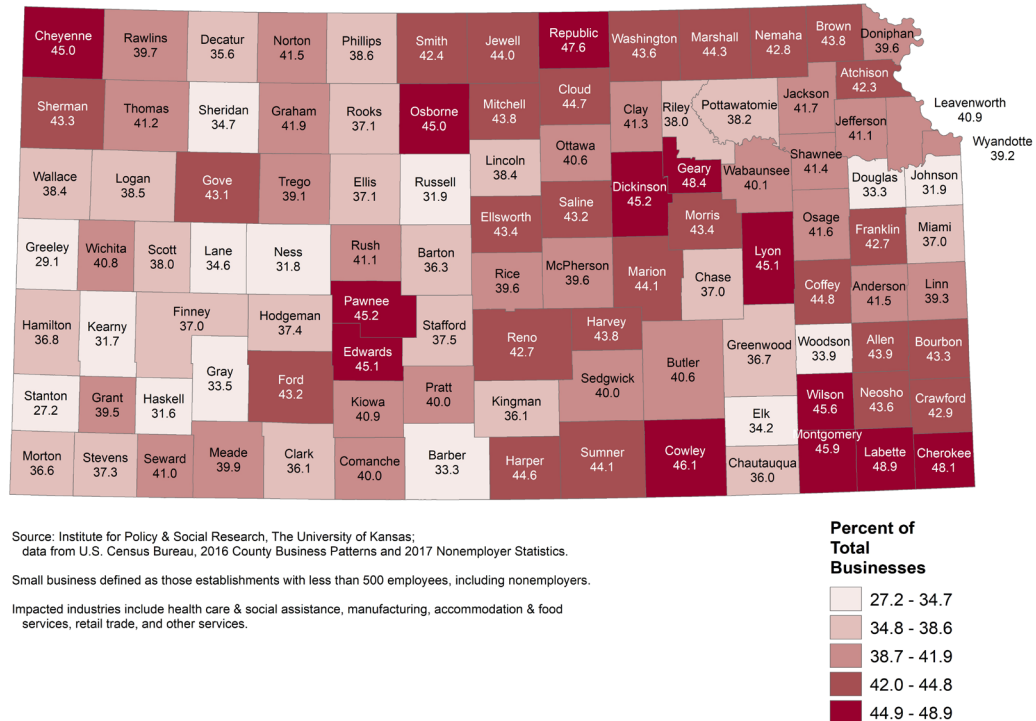


Figure 23. Percent of small businesses vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19 by county (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 County Business Patterns & 2017 Nonemployer Statistics).

Wabaunsee County imposes a 1.5% county sales tax. Figure 24 shows the per capita taxable retail sales for Wabaunsee County and the state of Kansas from January 2019 through April 2020. Wabaunsee had a 3.1% increase in taxable retail sales from April 2019 to April 2020 (Figure 25). During this same period, taxable sales were down 12.7% statewide. Sales typically made in the areas where residents work were made inside the county while residents were staying home. With stay-at-home orders in effect in April 2020, some communities saw local sales increase.

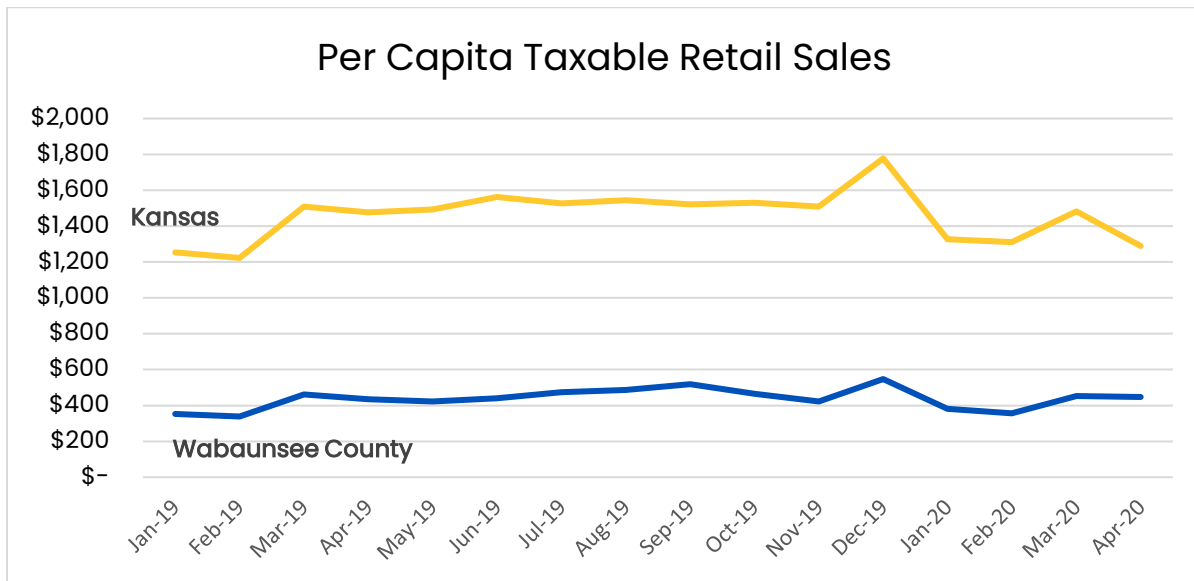
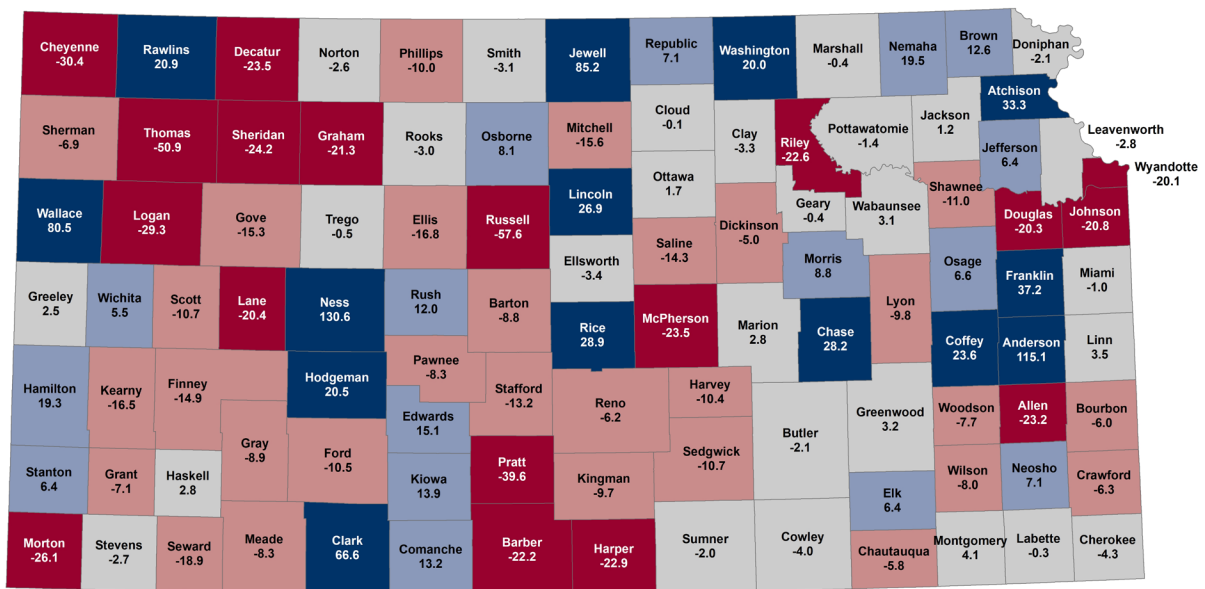


Figure 24. Per capita taxable retail sales in Wabaunsee County and the State of Kansas (Kansas Department of Revenue).

Percent Change in State Sales Tax Collections in Kansas, by County
April 2019 - April 2020



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas; data from Kansas Department of Revenue.

Percent Change State: -12.7%

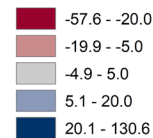


Figure 25. Percent change in state sales and use tax collections (Kansas Department of Revenue).

Six cities in Wabaunsee County impose local sales taxes: Alma (1.0%), Eskridge (1.0%), Maple Hill (0.75%), Paxico (1.0%), St. Marys (1.0%), and Willard (0.75%). Local sales tax distributions are available through July 2020. Table 10 details the local sales and use tax distributions from January-July 2019 and January-July 2020 to illustrate the local impact of spending changes due to COVID-19. Overall, the county saw a 3% increase in sales and use tax distributions in the first half of 2020 compared to 2019. Cities, however, varied widely in their distributions. Paxico and Willard saw steep increases in sales tax distributions where the cities of Maple Hill and St. Marys, that may rely more heavily on sales to out of county residents, saw declines in distributions.

Local Sales and Use Tax Distributions in Wabaunsee County			
City	January - July 2019	January - July 2020	Percent Change
Wabaunsee County	\$ 463,098.12	\$ 477,190.70	3.0%
Alma	\$ 61,954.74	\$ 65,783.19	6.2%
Eskridge ¹	\$ -	\$ 1,330.66	-
Maple Hill	\$ 18,885.44	\$ 16,707.77	-11.5%
Paxico	\$ 8,206.86	\$ 9,566.98	16.6%
Saint Marys	\$ 221,003.54	\$ 202,388.34	-8.4%
Willard	\$ 1,664.75	\$ 2,230.35	34.0%
¹ Eskridge implemented a 1% local sales tax in April 2020.			

Table 10. Local sales and use tax distributions in Wabaunsee County (Kansas Department of Revenue).

Payroll Protection Program (PPP)

Seventy-seven business in Wabaunsee County received PPP loans that are expected to retain 507 jobs (Table 11). Table 11 further details these loans by size of loan and industry.

Industry Description	Loan Range			Total Loans	Jobs Retained
	\$350,000- 1 million	\$150,000- 350,000	less than \$150,000		
Construction		2	17	19	137
Manufacturing	2		3	5	99
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting			16	16	64
Transportation and Warehousing		1	3	4	47
Retail Trade			10	10	46
Accommodation and Food Services			3	3	29
Health Care and Social Assistance			2	2	28
Utilities			1	1	14
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services			2	2	10
Other Services (except Public Administration)			6	6	9
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation			2	2	8
Finance and Insurance			3	3	8
Wholesale Trade			2	2	5
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing			1	1	2
Administrative, Support and Waste Mgmt			1	1	1
Total	2	3	72	77	507

Table 11. PPP loans in Wabaunsee County by industry and size (U.S. Small Business Administration).

Figure 26 illustrates jobs retained by industry and shows that the most loans were made to specialty trade contractors (13 loans) and retained 129 jobs. Two loans to food manufacturers retained 60 jobs.

Jobs Retained by Industry

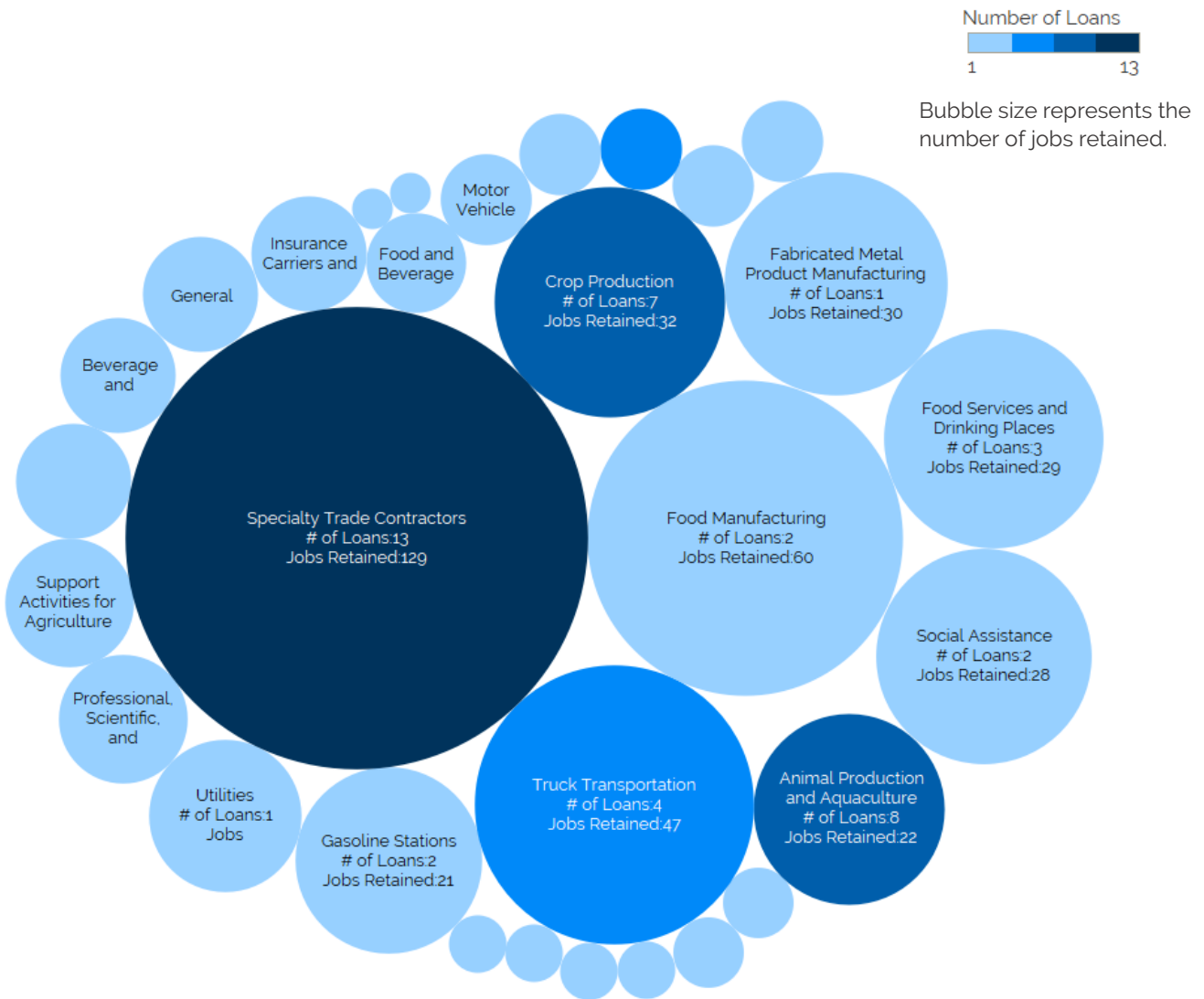


Figure 26. Jobs retained by PPP loans by industry in Wabaunsee County (U.S. Small Business Administration).

Job Postings

Commuting patterns show a strong reliance on area jobs. Table 12 shows the advertised educational requirement in job openings in the Topeka and Manhattan metropolitan areas in June 2020 along with the education level of unemployed people in Wabaunsee County as of August 1st.

Education Level	Job Openings in Surrounding Area	Unemployed Persons in Wabaunsee County
Less than High School	0	6
High School Diploma or Equivalent	883	40
Vocational School Certificate	25	-
Some College/Technical or Vocational School	5	24
Associates Degree	69	8
Bachelor's Degree	257	10
Master's Degree	39	4
Doctorate Degree	19	0
Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	9	0
Total*	902	133*

Table 12. Job postings and unemployed people by education (Kansas Department of Labor).

*Total includes people with less than high school education and those with unknown educational level. Single dash (-) indicates not applicable.

Conclusion

The majority of workers leave Wabaunsee County to work in the Topeka and Manhattan areas. The health of these areas will directly impact the economic health of the county. A lack of access to broadband affects both workers and students in the response to COVID-19 closures. With almost 30% of students enrolled in the FRL program, many families in Wabaunsee County could face challenges as the county moves towards recovery. With almost half the population dependent (under 20 or over 64), the county has a high reliance on child and elder care. About 22% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on rents and these residents, if unemployed/underemployed, are at risk for eviction. PPP Loans preserved 507 small business jobs, of which 236 (47%) were in construction and manufacturing. These two industries contribute significantly to the county's economy along with local government and will be critical to the county's healthy recovery.