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County Economic Trends

Barton County

Kansas Center for Community Economic Development

Institute for Public Policy and Business Research
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County Economic Trends

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County Economic Trends: Barton County

INTRODUCTION

The use of data in economic development is important because it assists a community in "taking stock" and understanding its current situation across several different areas of economic and demographic performance. However, data by itself does not lead to a well-founded understanding of the community. Data must be analyzed and interpreted, taking into account the intuition of those within the community about what the overall trends really mean. In other words, data serves as the foundation for an analysis which concludes: 1) what is happening in the community relative to other regions over time, and 2) what potential impacts or consequences are suggested from the data.

From 1991-92, Barton County engaged in a strategic planning process for economic development. At that time, extensive data analyses were conducted for the county, both by the Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University and by the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research at the University of Kansas. The following data analysis, commissioned by the Mid-Kansas Economic Development Commission, is an update of selected data in order to assess any change in trends or progress made in the last few years. This update report will look at the following key demographic and economic variables: population, employment, agriculture and oil production, and personal income.

POPULATION

Population size and economic activity are closely related. Changes in population size are directly linked to employment opportunities, wage differentials between regions, and a community's overall economic conditions and quality of life. Generally, areas of population growth are also areas of economic growth, whereas areas of population loss suffered previous economic decline and restructuring.

Communities with growing populations are generally regarded to be more able to adapt to a changing economic environment due to the opportunities presented by new residents as additional consumers, taxpayers and suppliers of labor. Without population growth, communities face problems of a tightening labor market, lack of new customers for businesses, a shrinking tax base, and an overall decline in economic activity.

Population characteristics are regarded as indicators of a region's economic conditions and economic potential. The level of Barton County's population relative to the state's population reflects the county's overall level of competitiveness with respect to other regions within the state. A minimum population is necessary to sustain a basic level of public and private services and facilities. Past and projected population change is indicative of community economic trends and can be compared to other counties and the statewide and

national averages. Migration is linked to job opportunities and demand as well as wage differentials between regions. Counties with low rates of job creation and low wages will face higher worker mobility due to a "push" factor (lack of opportunity) or a "pull" phenomenon by urban areas with higher wages, better job opportunities, and a perceived better quality of life. Other determinants of regional migration are age and education. Generally, there is a life cycle pattern to migration with the population aged 18 to 45 being the most mobile age group. The effect of education on migration is reflected by the movement of well-educated workers toward better job matches for themselves and their spouses and their attempts to raise their income levels by migrating to areas with employment opportunities.

The following section consists of the population tables, figures and/or maps on: population totals from 1890 to 1994, rates of population change from 1930 to 1990, population growth rates from 1950 to 2020, population rankings, percent population change from 1980 to 1990, and percent net migration from 1980 to 1990.

Key Findings: Population

- From 1900 to 1960, Barton County experienced population growth that exceeded the population growth of the State of Kansas (Table 1).

- Between 1960 and 1990, Barton County experienced population decline. Barton County's population fell from 32,368 in 1960, to 29,382 in 1990, a decrease of 10 percent (Table 1).

- Barton County's estimated population loss, since 1990, has begun to level off with a loss of 486 persons over the last 4 years. This is an average of 121 per year compared with an average yearly loss between 1980 and 1990, of 196 (Table 1).

- Barton County's rate of population change, since 1980, mirrors that of Reno County and the counties in the surrounding trade area. The only area county that has experienced a noticeable increase in population is Ford County (Figure 1).

- Barton County, like the counties surrounding it, experienced out migration during the decade of the 1980s (Map 2).

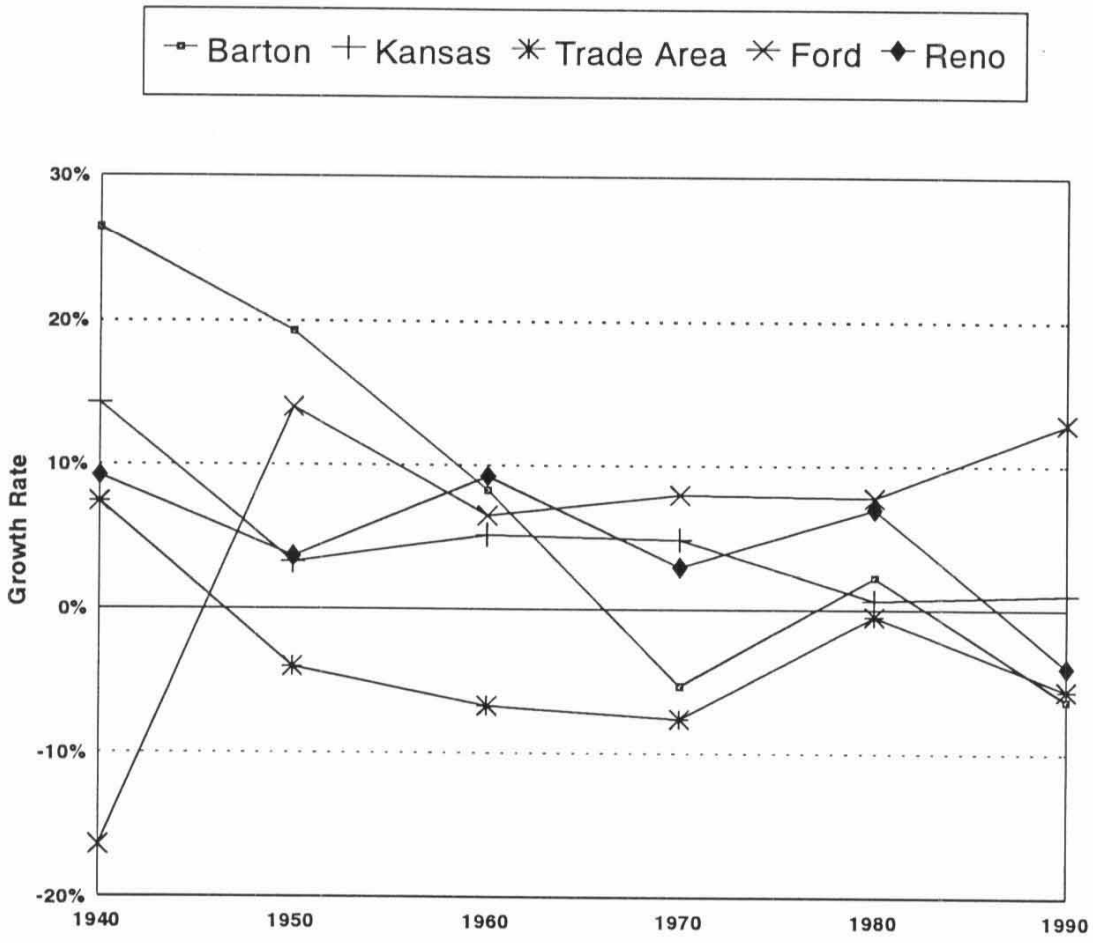
Table 1
Population Totals, Growth Rates, Rank & Share
Actual 1900-1990, Estimates 1991-1994, Projections 2000-2020

Year	Barton County Population Total	Growth Rate	Kansas Population Total	Growth Rate	Rank	Share (%)	Barton:KS Growth Index+
1890	13,172		1,427,096		51	0.92	
1900	13,784	4.6	1,470,495	3.0	50	0.92	1.53
1910	17,876	29.7	1,690,949	15.0	35	1.06	1.98
1920	18,422	3.1	1,769,257	4.6	32	1.04	0.66
1930	19,766	7.3	1,880,999	6.3	31	1.05	1.16
1940	25,010	26.5	1,801,028	-4.3	17	1.69	-6.23
1950	29,909	19.6	1,905,299	5.8	14	1.57	3.38
1960	32,368	8.2	2,178,611	14.3	14	1.49	0.57
1970	30,663	-5.3	2,249,071	3.2	15	1.36	-1.63
1980	31,343	2.2	2,364,236	5.1	15	1.33	0.43
1990	29,382	-6.3	2,477,574	4.8	18	1.19	-1.30
1991*	29,201	-0.6	2,491,659	0.6	18	1.17	-1.08
1992*	29,283	0.3	2,517,791	1.0	18	1.16	0.27
1993*	28,978	-1.0	2,535,097	0.7	n/a	1.14	-1.52
1994*	28,896	-0.3	2,554,047	0.7	n/a	1.13	-0.38

\+ Barton County Growth Rate divided by Kansas Growth Rate (=1 when county and state growth rates are equal)
* Estimation

Source: Population Totals: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol..1; "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants; 1980 Census of Population", Vol. 1, Chapter A, Part 18; "1990 Decennial Census", mimeographed sheet; Population Projection: Floerchinger, Teresa D.,"Kansas Population Projections 1990-2030", Kansas Division of the Budget, September 1992; Population Estimates, and Population Distribution Branches, US Bureau of the Census; 1994 Population Estimates for Counties, Population Estimates Branch, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Figure 1
Rates of Population Change: 1930-1990
Barton, Selected Counties, and Kansas



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Vol. 1;" "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants, Final Report;" "1980 Census of Population, Vol. 1, Chapter A, Part 18, "1990 Census of Population," STF1-A. Population Projections: Floerchinger, Teresa D., "Kansas Population Projections, 1990-2030, "Kansas Division of the Budget, September, 1992. Calculations: IPPBR.

Table 2
Population Growth Rates, 1950-2020
Barton, Neighboring Counties, Kansas, and United States

	1930-1940	1940-1950	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990
Barton	26.5%	19.6%	8.2%	-5.3%	2.2%	-6.3%
Ellis	10.1	8.8	11.7	16.3	5.5	-0.4
Ellsworth	-2.7	-14.1	-9.3	-19.9	8.0	-0.8
Pawnee	-2.0	7.2	-7.1	-17.3	-4.9	-6.3
Rice	24.7	-9.2	-11.0	-11.4	-3.4	-10.8
Rush	-9.2	-12.4	-14.8	-16.9	-11.7	-14.9
Russell	21.9	-0.4	-15.4	-16.9	-5.9	-11.6
Stafford	0.3	-15.9	-15.5	-20.2	-4.2	-5.8
Trade Area	7.6	-4.0	-6.7	-7.6	-0.5	-5.6
Ford	-16.4	14.0	6.4	7.9	7.7	12.9
Reno	9.2	3.6	9.2	2.9	6.9	-4.0
Kansas	-4.3	5.8	14.3	3.2	5.1	4.8
United States	7.2	14.9	18.5	13.4	11.4	9.8

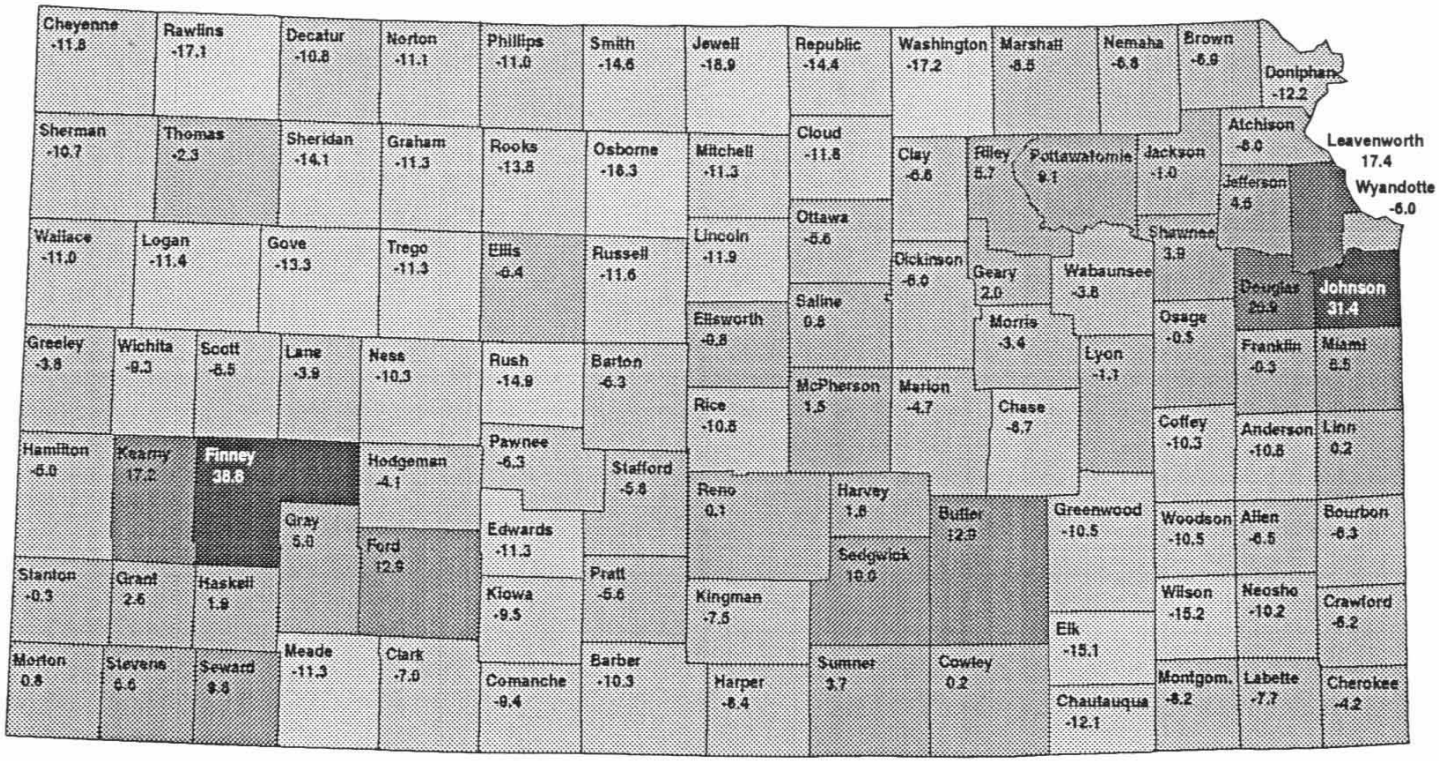
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants", Final Report: "1980 Census of Population", PC90-1-A-18; "1990 Decennial Census". Population Projections: Floerchinger, Teresa D., "Kansas Population Projections, 1990-2030, "Kansas Division of the Budget, September, 1992. Calculations: IPPBR.

Table 3
Population of Top Ranking Kansas Counties
(in Thousands)

	1940			1990	
1	Wyandotte	145	1	Sedgwick	403
2	Sedgwick	143	2	Johnson	355
3	Shawnee	91	3	Wyandotte	162
4	Reno	52	4	Shawnee	161
5	Montgomery	49	5	Douglas	82
6	Crawford	45	6	Riley	67
7	Leavenworth	41	7	Leavenworth	64
8	Cowley	38	8	Reno	62
9	Johnson	33	9	Butler	51
10	Butler	32	10	Saline	49
11	Labette	30	11	Montgomery	39
12	Cherokee	30	12	Cowley	37
13	Saline	30	13	Crawford	36
14	Lyon	26	14	Lyon	35
15	Sumner	26	15	Finney	35
16	Douglas	25	16	Harvey	31
17	**Barton**	**25**	17	Geary	30
18	McPherson	24	**18**	**Barton**	**29**
19	Dickinson	23	19	Ford	27
20	Atchison	22	20	McPherson	27

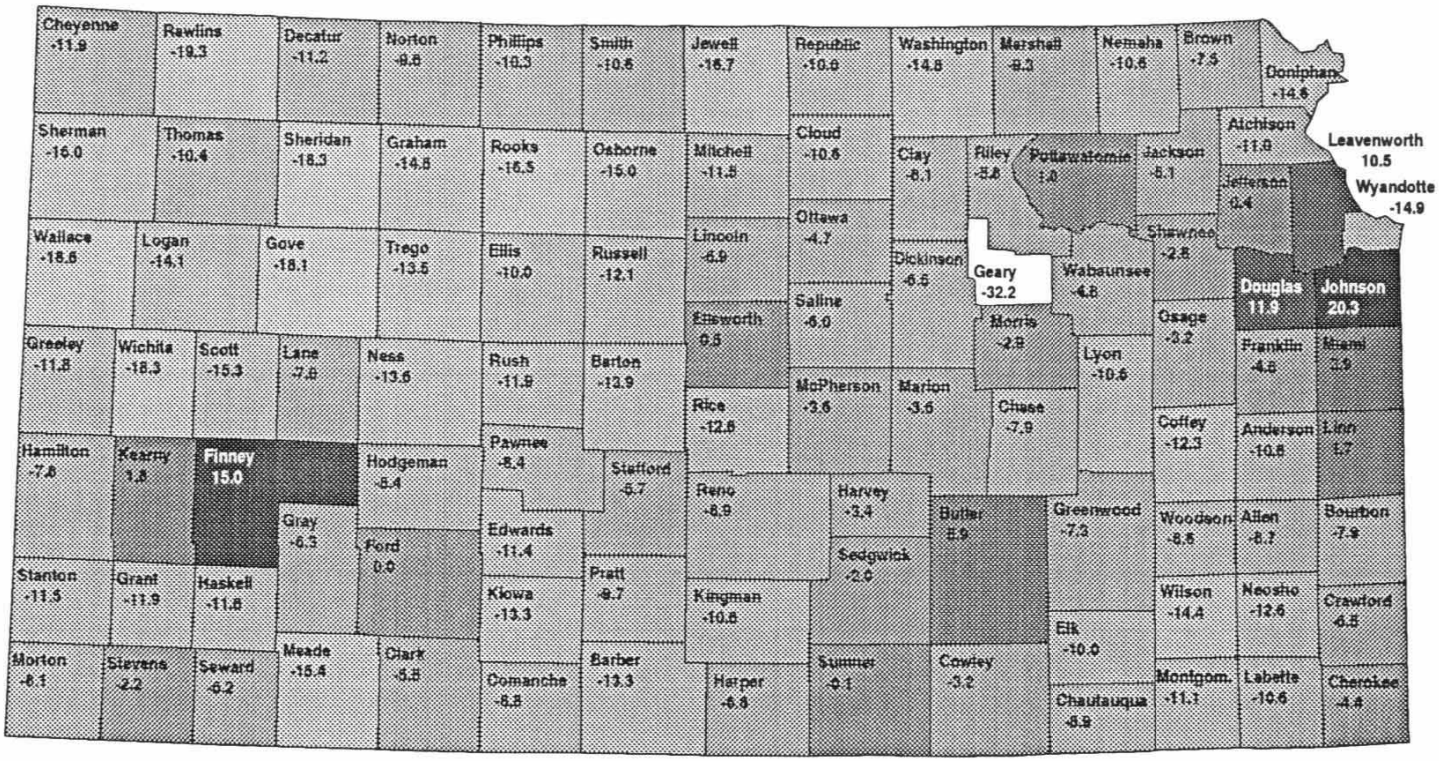
Source: University of Kansas, Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, "Kansas Statistical Abstract", 1992-1993, "Population of Kansas Counties, 1890-1980; U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol. 1"; "Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants"; "1980 Census of Population, Vol. 1, Chapter A, Part 18"; "1990 Decennial Census". Population Projections: Floerchinger, Teresa D., "Kansas Population Projections, 1990-2030, "Kansas Division of the Budget, September, 1992. Calculations: IPPBR.

Map 1. Percent Population Change, 1980 to 1990



Source: Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, University of Kansas, using data from U. S. Census.

Map 2. Percent Net Migration, 1980 to 1990



Source: Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, University of Kansas, using data from U.S. Census.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment levels are an important measure of a community's economic vitality. The size of the labor force shows the number of people who are either working or willing to work. The size of the labor force is influences not only by population but also by the perceptions of individuals that suitable job opportunities exist. Diverse, healthy economies tend to offer the widest variety of job opportunities and there attract a large number of job-seekers, which increases the size of the labor force. The level of unemployment reflects the amount of economic activity within an area and how well the local market is able to match the supply and demand for labor. Job creation rates (net change in average annual employment) reflect the growth in employment levels and the range of employment opportunities. As some jobs are lost in a community due to changing economic circumstances, they may be replaced by new jobs. Net job creation reflects the net gain or net loss in jobs over a given period of time.

The following tables, figures and maps are included in the employment section: employment growth rates from 1983 to 1992, number of firms by number employed, percentage distribution of firms by number of employees, employment levels by industry, change in employment by industry, population and job growth rates, 1990 labor force participation, 1994 unemployment rates, and job growth from 1989 to 1994.

Key Findings: Employment

- Barton County experienced a 12 percent loss in the number of jobs between 1983 and 1989 (Table 4).

- Employment growth, in Barton County, between 1989 and 1992, was 5.6 percent. This amount of job growth was greater than that of Ford and Reno Counties, the State of Kansas, and the United States. The trade area counties' job growth was larger than that of Barton County's. The trade area's large job growth was fueled by job growth in Stafford and Ellis Counties (Figure 2 and Table 4).

- Between 1980 and 1992, Barton County had little growth, only 0.1 percent, in the total number of firms located within the county (Figure 3 and Table 5).

- The number of employed person living in Barton County, since 1988, has increased more rapidly than the population growth. This suggests that the number of job opportunities in Barton County are increasing and may cause population growth in Barton County to stabilize or slightly increase (Figure 4 and Table 8).

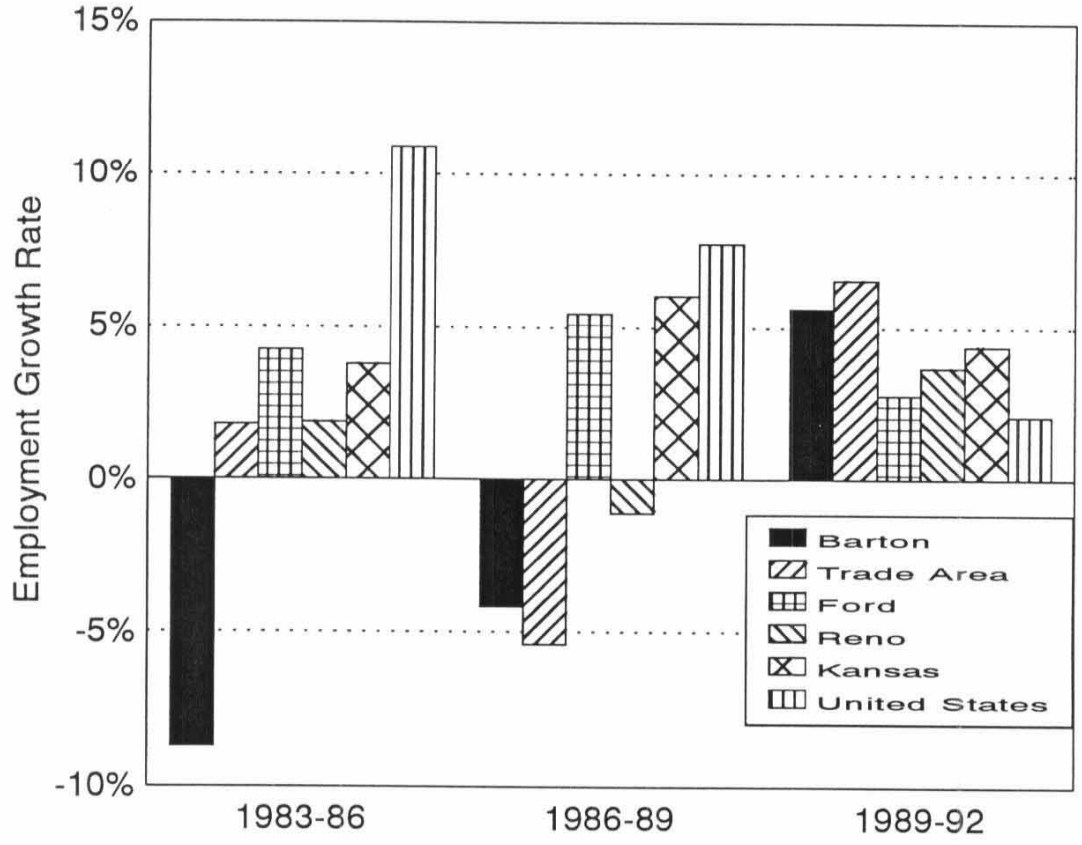
- Barton County, like the State of Kansas and the United States, is experiencing a shift from a manufacturing based economy to a more service based economy (Figure 5 and Table 7).

Table 4
Employment Growth Rates: 1983-1992
Barton, Selected Counties, and Kansas

	Avg. Annual Emp. (Thousands)				% Emp. Growth		
	1983	1986	1989	1992	83-86	86-89	89-92
Barton	21.1	19.2	18.4	19.4	-8.7	-4.2	5.6
Ellis	17.9	17.2	16.6	18.6	-4.1	-3.3	12.1
Ellsworth	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.8	-0.3	0.7	5.9
Pawnee	4.7	4.4	4.6	4.9	-5.7	4.5	6.1
Rice	6.3	6.0	5.4	5.4	-5.1	-9.6	-0.1
Rush	2.5	2.3	2.2	2.3	-10.9	-3.4	4.9
Russell	7.4	6.3	5.4	5.5	-15.1	-14.1	0.7
Stafford	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.1	-11.3	0.8	8.8
Trade Area	42.4	43.2	40.8	43.5	1.8	-5.4	6.5
Ford	21.1	19.2	18.4	19.4	4.2	5.4	2.8
Reno	34.3	34.9	34.5	35.8	1.9	-1.1	3.7
Kansas	1,324.0	1,374.9	1,457.9	1,522.4	3.8	6.0	4.4
United States	114,146.5	126,616.4	136,413.8	139,289.1	10.9	7.7	2.1

Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Kansas County Profile, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Figure 2
Employment Growth Rates: 1983-1992
Barton, Selected Counties, and Kansas



Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Kansas County Profile, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Table 5
Number of Firms
by Number of Employees
Barton County and Kansas: 1980, 1992

Employees	Barton 1980	Barton 1992	Barton Chg.	Kansas 1980	Kansas 1992	Kansas Chg.
0-19	958	968	1.0%	48,394	59,240	22.4%
20-99	113	102	-9.7	5,689	7,171	26.1
100-499	7	8	14.3	842	1,102	30.9
500+	1	2	100.0	96	117	21.9
Total	1079	1080	0.1	55,021	67,630	22.9

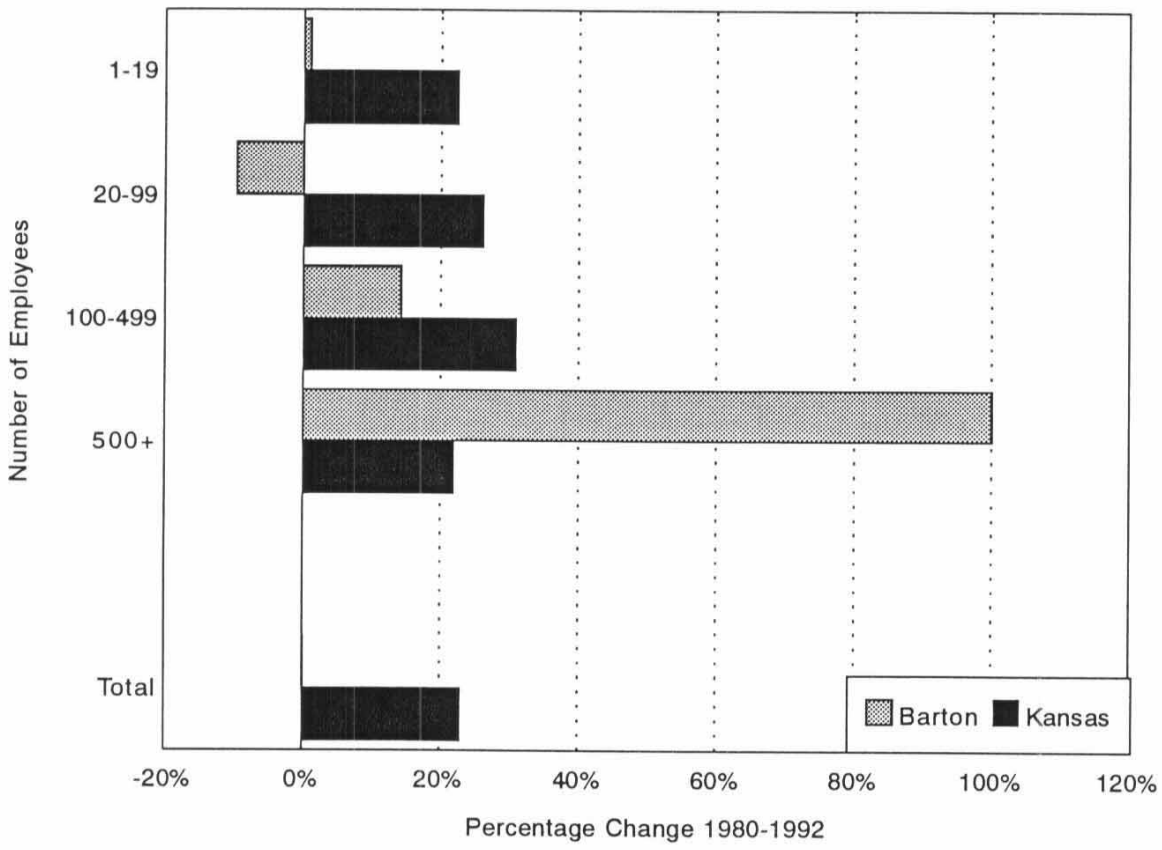
Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns", Kansas County Profile for Barton County, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Table 6
Percentage Distribution of Firms
by Number of Employees
Barton County and Kansas: 1980, 1992

Employees	Barton 1980	Barton 1992	Kansas 1980	Kansas 1992
0-19	88.8%	89.6%	88.0%	87.6%
20-99	10.5	9.4	10.3	10.6
100-499	0.6	0.7	1.5	1.6
500+	0.1	0.2	.2	.2

Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns", Kansas County Profile for Barton County, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Figure 3
Number of Firms by Number Employed
Rates of Growth, Barton & Kansas



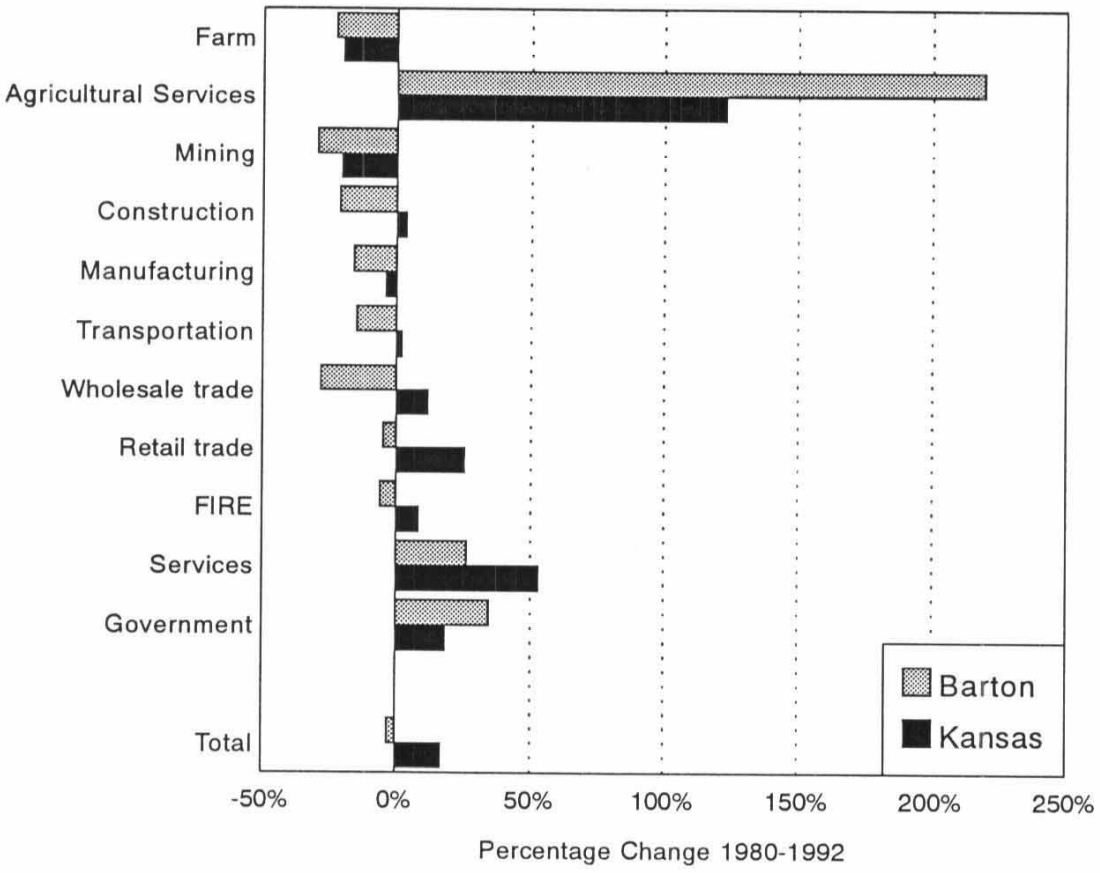
Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "County Business Patterns", Kansas County Profile for Barton County, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Table 7
Employment Levels by Industry
Barton County and Kansas: 1980 and 1992
(in Thousands)

Industry	Barton 1980	Barton 1992	Barton Chg.	Kansas 1980	Kansas 1992	Kansas Chg.
Ag. Services	0.1	0.3	219.3%	7.6	17.0	122.8%
Mining	3.3	2.3	-29.5	35.0	27.8	-20.7
Construction	1.0	0.8	-21.3	65.3	67.6	3.8
Manufacturing	2.1	1.8	-15.9	195.2	187.2	-4.1
Transportation	1.0	0.8	-14.9	73.5	74.9	1.9
Wholesale	1.5	1.1	-28.1	68.6	76.6	11.6
Retail	3.4	3.2	-4.9	198.9	249.4	25.4
F.I.R.E.	1.0	1.0	-6.0	88.4	95.7	8.2
Services	3.4	4.3	26.2	245.9	376.9	53.3
Gov't & Gov't Services	1.9	2.6	34.5	227.1	268.5	18.2
Subtotal--Non-Farm	18.9	18.3	-3.1	1,205.4	1,441.5	19.6
Farm Employment	1.5	1.1	-22.7	101.3	80.9	-20.1
Total Employment	20.4	19.4	-4.5	1,306.7	1,522.4	16.5

Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Table CA5, Kansas County Profile for Barton County, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Figure 4
Change in Employment by Industry: 1980-1992
Barton County and Kansas



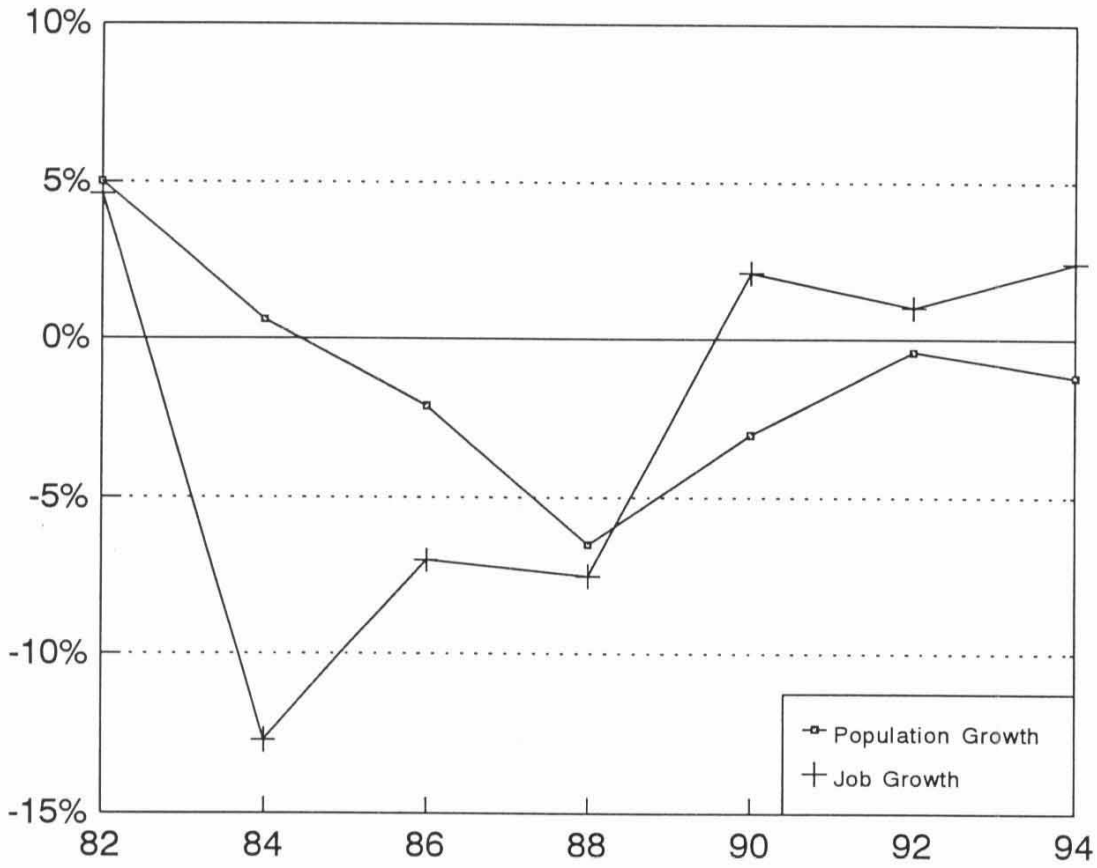
Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of work.
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Table CA5, Kansas County Profile for Barton County, KCCED/IPPBR, University of Kansas.

Table 8
Population and Job Growth Rates
Barton County

	80-82	82-84	84-86	86-88	88-90	90-92	92-94
Job Growth	5.0%	0.6%	-2.1%	-6.5%	-3.0%	-0.4%	-1.2%
Population Growth	4.6%	-12.7%	-7.0%	-7.5%	2.1%	1.0%	2.4%

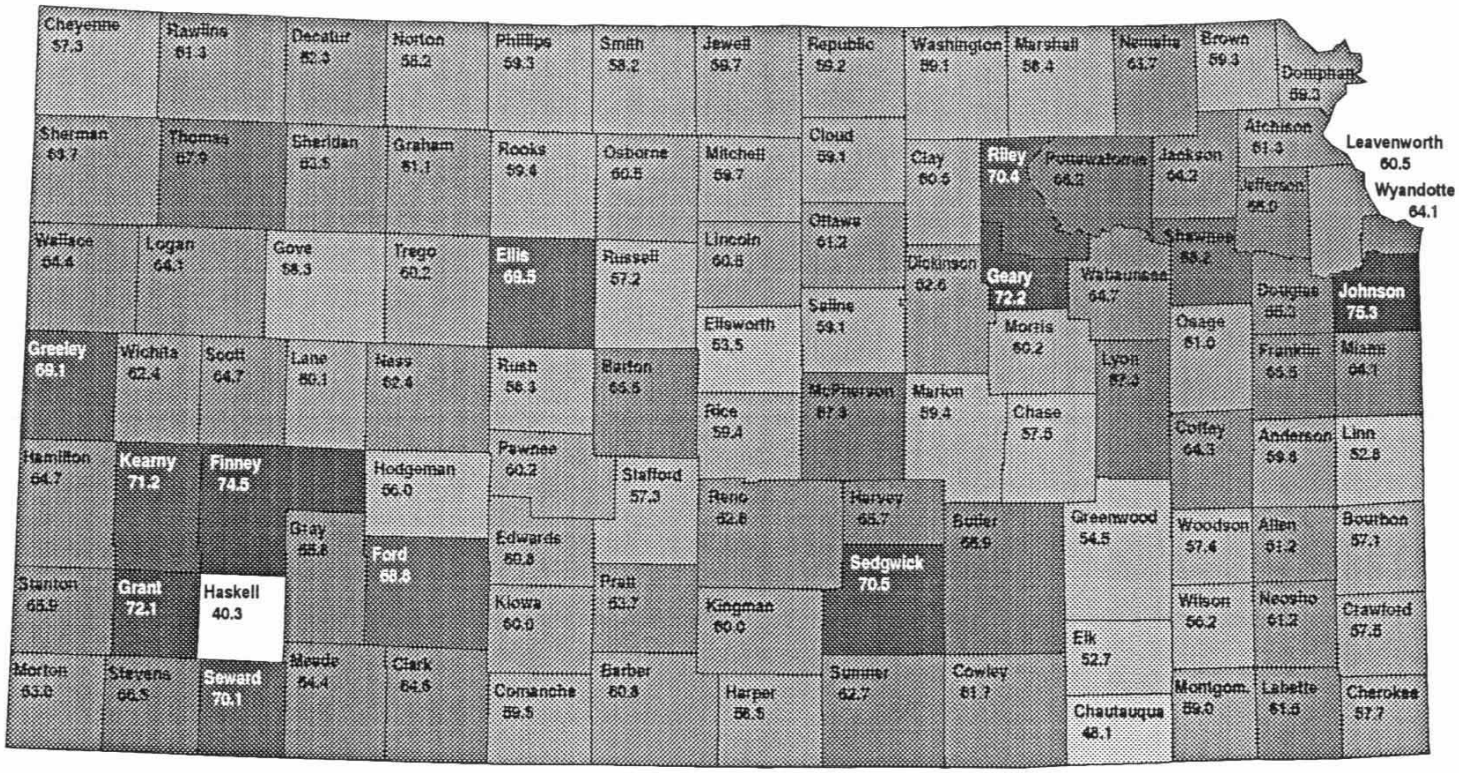
Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
Source: Kansas Statistical Abstract 1992-93, IPPBR, University of Kansas; Kansas Department of Human Resources; and, 1994 Population Estimates Branch, U. S. Bureau of the Census.

Figure 5
Job Growth vs. Population Growth: 1982-1994
Barton County



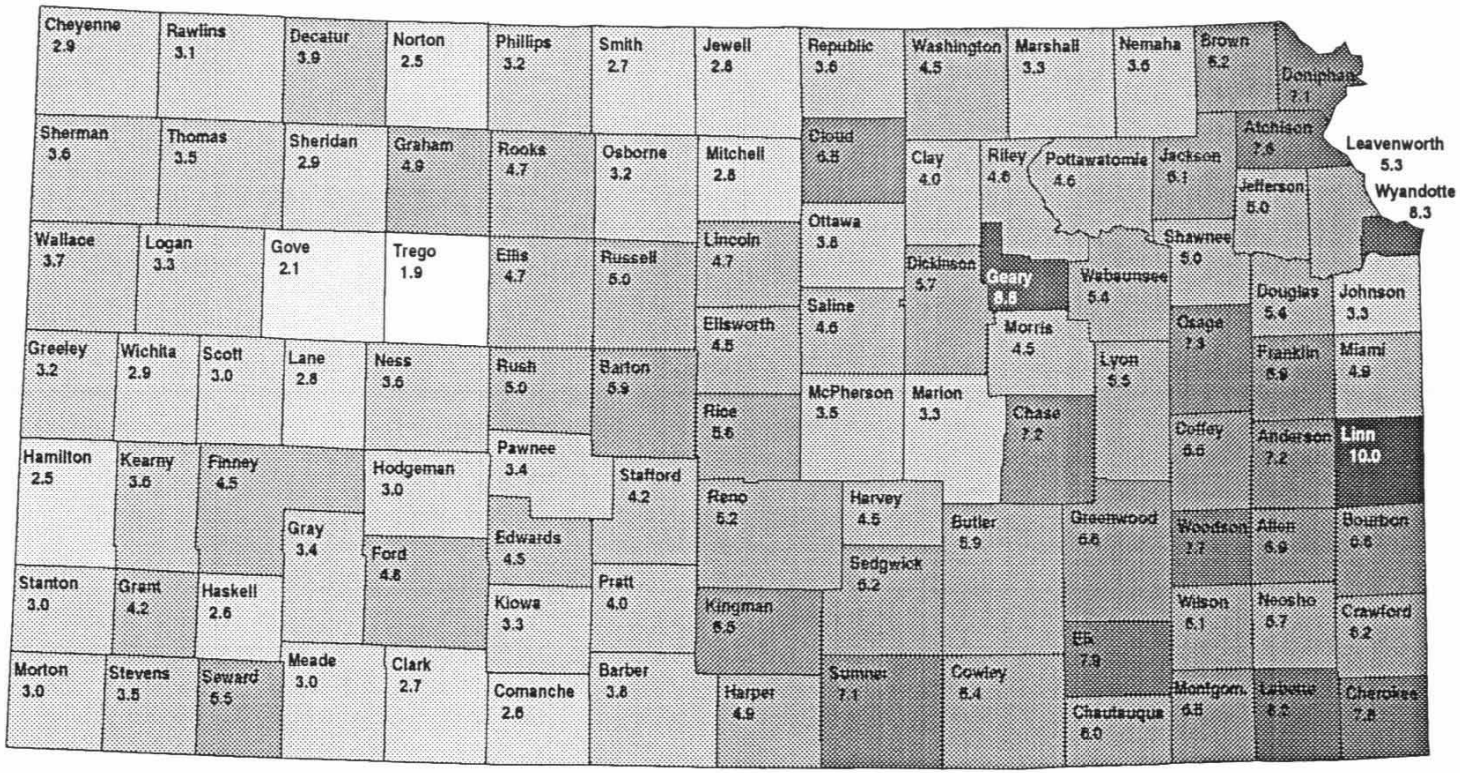
Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
Source: Kansas Labor Force Estimates Annual Average 1994, Kansas Department of Human Resources; 1994 Population Estimates for Counties, Population Estimates Branch, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Map 3. 1990 Labor Force Participation



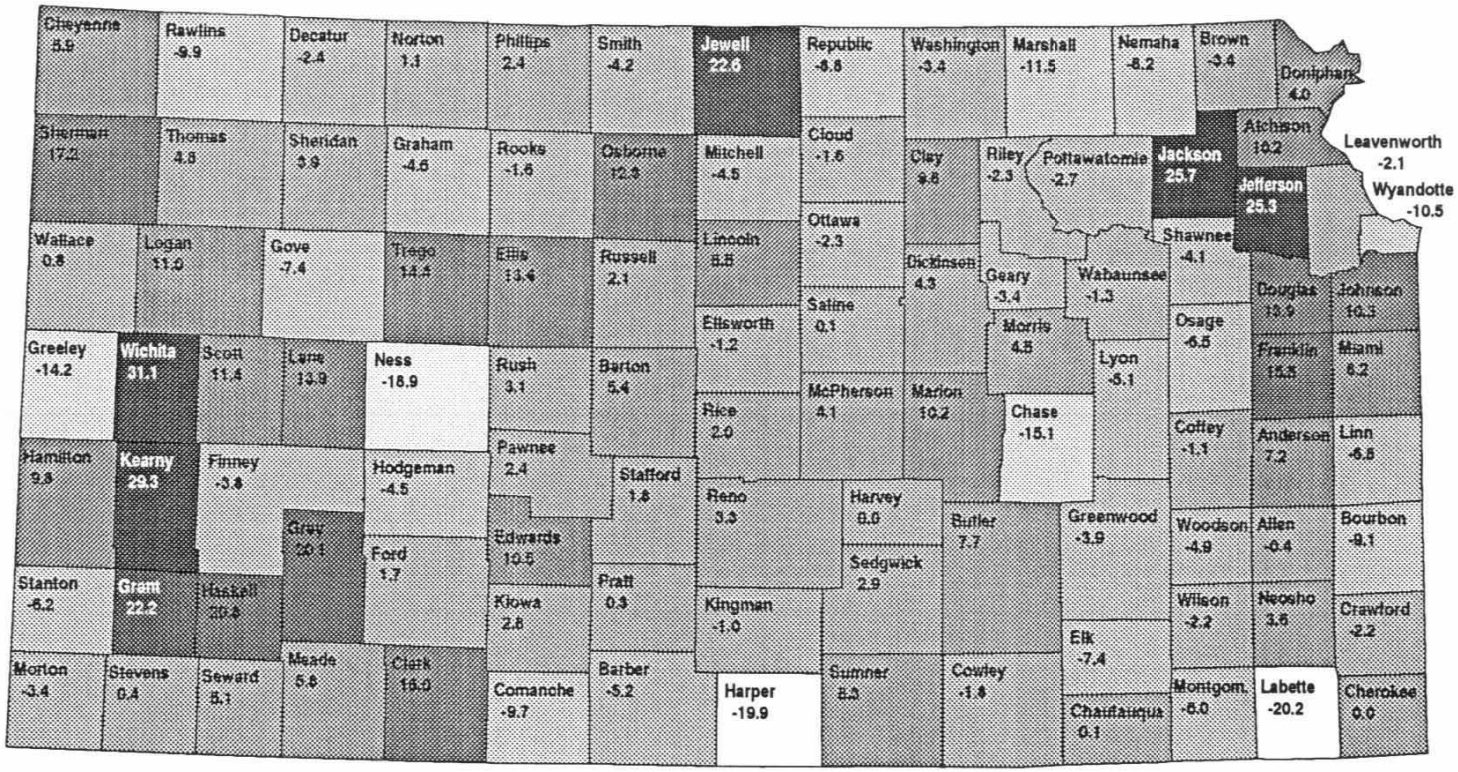
Source: 1990 Census.

Map 4. 1994 Unemployment Rates



Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
Source: Kansas Labor Force Estimates Annual Average 1994, Kansas Department of Human Resources.

Map 5. Job Growth From 1989 to 1994



Note: Employment data are based on an individual's place of residence.
Source: 1989 Kansas Statistical Abstract, IPPBR, University of Kansas; Kansas Labor Force Estimates Annual Average 1994, Kansas Department of Human Resources.

Agriculture and Oil Production

The data on agriculture and oil production will help determine whether or not the overall importance of these two sectors in the county has been increasing or decreasing and how this compares with other counties and the state as a whole. The economic well-being of Barton County in the past was highly dependant on the strength of these two industry sectors and it is important to look at the level of activity in agriculture and oil production and how the character of those two industries are changing in the county. The agriculture and oil production section contains tables and figures on the total value of field crops from 1988 to 1993, the total value of livestock and poultry from 1988 to 1993, and oil production growth rates from 1980 to 1993.

Key Findings: Agriculture and Oil Production

- The average total value of field crops, in Barton County, for the years 1988 to 1990 was $46 million. This figure fell 8.2 percent to an average of $45 million for the years 1991 to 1993 (Table 9).

- Barton County's drop in field crop value of 8.2 percent exceeded the crop price index fall of 6.4 percent which occurred during the same time period (Table 9).

- The State of Kansas and the trade area of Barton County both experienced increases in field crop values (Table 9).

- During this time period Barton County's value of livestock and poultry declined 5.7 percent. For the same time period the value of livestock and poultry for Kansas increased by 3.5 percent and the trade area experienced no change in livestock and poultry values (Table 10).

- The State of Kansas and Barton County experienced a large drop in oil production from 1984 to 1993. This drop coincides with the collapse of the domestic oil market (Table 11).

- Barton County experienced a 43.6 percent decrease in oil production from 1980 to 1993. This was the second largest decrease in oil production for the surrounding area (Table 11).

- The decrease in farm goods value and the decrease in oil production are probably the biggest factors in Barton County's population loss and decrease in per capita income. If the trend of lower farm and oil production continues, Barton County will need to continue looking at other industries to provide jobs and income (Tables 9, 10, and 11).

Table 9
Total Value of Field Crops*: 1988-1993
Barton, Neighboring Counties and Kansas

	Value of Field Crops ($ millions)						Annual Avg.		
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	88-90	91-93	Chg
Kansas	2,860	2,310	2,728	2,579	2,988	3,014	2,633	2,860	8.6%
Barton	55	49	45	45	44	45	49	45	-8.2
Ellis	17	7	18	13	15	23	14	17	21.4
Ellsworth	15	6	14	8	10	10	12	10	-17.1
Pawnee	39	25	24	24	21	43	33	36	10.2
Rice	35	21	32	31	32	36	29	33	12.5
Rush	19	7	20	19	7	7	15	11	-28.3
Russell	18	6	18	10	11	10	14	10	-26.2
Stafford	42	27	40	44	28	47	36	43	18.3
Trade Area	185	99	176	160	144	176	153	160	4.3
Ford	95	91	97	88	87	63	94	79	-15.9
Reno	63	37	51	55	55	56	50	55	9.9
Crop Price Index+	138	155	129	124	140	131**	141	132	-6.4

*Does not include any government program payments, value of sugar beets, or cotton acreage value, until 1991, then only government program payments are not included.
+1977 prices = 100
** preliminary figure

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, Kansas Farm Facts; IPPBR calculations.

Table 10
Total Value of Livestock and Poultry: 1988-1993
Barton, Neighboring Counties and Kansas

	Value of Livestock and Poultry ($ millions)						Annual Avg.		
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	88-90	91-93	Chg
Kansas	2,625	2,652	2,929	2,857	2,759	2,874	2,735	2,830	3.5%
Barton	95	91	97	89	87	91	94	89	-5.7
Ellis	21	23	25	22	22	23	23	22	-2.9
Ellsworth	11	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	-6.5
Pawnee	34	35	37	37	42	33	35	37	5.7
Rice	35	32	31	33	32	34	33	33	1.0
Rush	9	7	7	6	7	7	8	7	-13.0
Russell	11	10	10	10	11	10	10	10	0.0
Stafford	31	25	25	27	25	26	27	26	-3.7
Trade Area	121	117	120	118	123	117	119	119	0.0
Ford	95	91	97	89	87	91	94	89	-5.7
Reno	41	42	49	45	43	43	44	44	-0.8
Livestock & Products Price Index+	186	192	205	196	193	199**	194	196	0.9

+1977 prices = 100
** preliminary figure

Source: Kansas Agricultural Statistics, Kansas Farm Facts; IPPBR calculations.

Table 11
Oil Production Growth Rates: 1980-1993
Barton, Neighboring Counties and Kansas

	Oil Production Growth Rates						
	80-82	82-84	84-86	86-88	88-90	90-93	80-93
Kansas	13.9%	12.3%	-11.8%	-12.7%	-3.8%	-13.2%	-17.8%
Barton	5.3	20.9	-24.8	-16.6	-5.6	-25.1	-43.6
Ellis	17.8	1.1	-22.9	-9.5	0.5	-17.4	-31.0
Ellsworth	13.7	9.2	-24.5	-6.0	-16.8	-19.3	-40.8
Pawnee	17.5	-5.0	-24.5	-24.2	17.6	-34.1	-50.5
Rice	18.9	12.5	1.6	-30.6	-9.0	-21.2	-32.4
Rush	24.1	9.5	-12.2	-11.3	9.8	-23.2	-10.6
Russell	4.3	5.4	-9.8	-16.1	-2.6	-15.5	-31.5
Stafford	9.5	14.8	-15.9	-8.2	3.8	-16.6	-16.1
Trade Area	12.8	6.0	-15.1	-14.6	-1.0	-18.0	-29.7
Ford	2.7	2.9	-8.7	-17.5	7.7	7.9	-7.5
Reno	153.3	176.3	-36.2	134.3	-29.3	5.4	680.0

Source: Kansas Geological Survey, Oil and Gas Production in Kansas, Kansas Statistical Abstract KCCED.

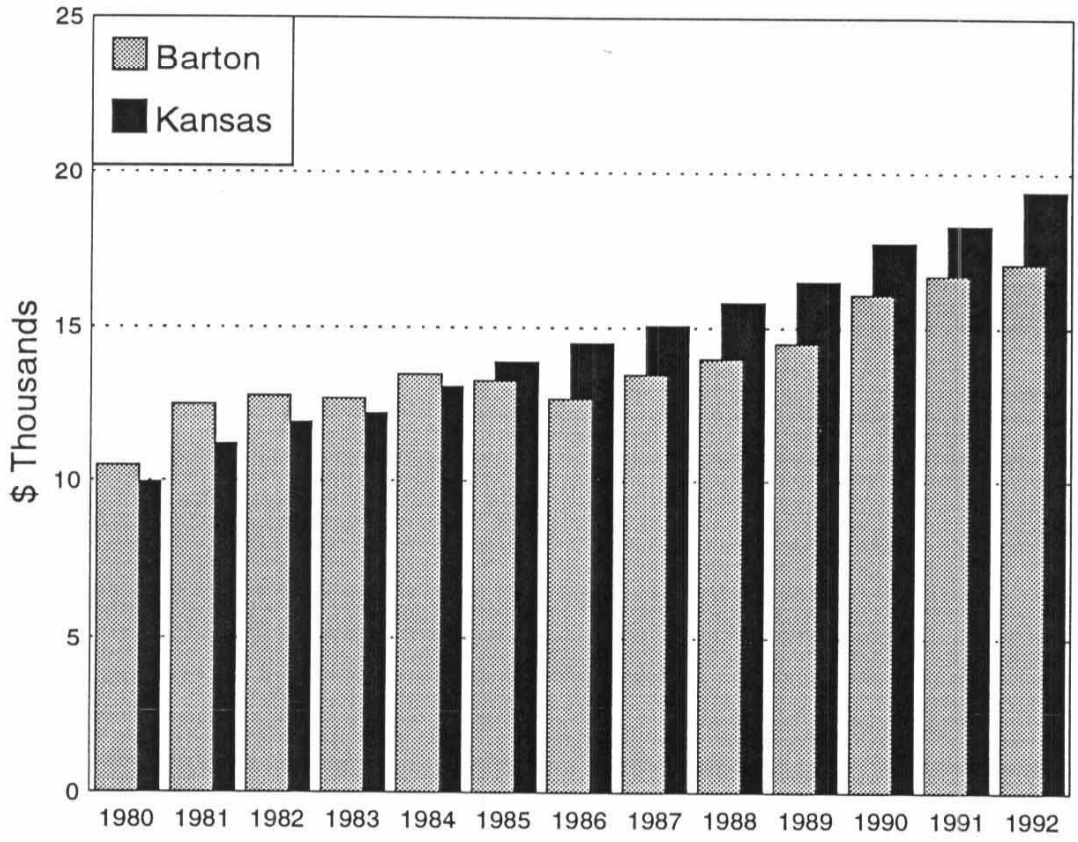
INCOME

Per capita personal income indicates the relative wealth of the area compared to the state. As the productivity of business and industry increase, personal per capita income also rises. Decreasing or stable rates may be the result of mature or declining industry. The following income section contains data on: per capita personal income on Barton County and Kansas from 1980 to 1992 and per capita personal income for all counties in 1991.

Key Findings: Income

- Prior to 1985, Barton County resident's per capita income was greater than the per capita income for the residents of the State of Kansas (Figure 6 and Table 11).
- Coinciding with the loss in oil production, per capita income in Barton County decreased 5.5 percent, in non-inflation adjusted numbers (if adjusted for inflation the increase would have been greater), between 1984 and 1986 (Table 11).
- Between the years of 1989 and 1990, the per capita income of Barton County resident's increased from 14,458 to 16,118. This represents an increase of 11.5 percent (non-inflation adjusted numbers) (Table 11).
- In 1992, Barton County residents had a per capita income of 17,138 which was less than the per capita income of the residents of the State of Kansas, which was 19,387 in 1992 (Table 11).
- Since, 1989, Barton County resident's per capita income growth has kept pace with the State of Kansas resident's per capita income (Figure 6 and Table 11).

Figure 6
Per Capita Personal Income
Barton County and Kansas



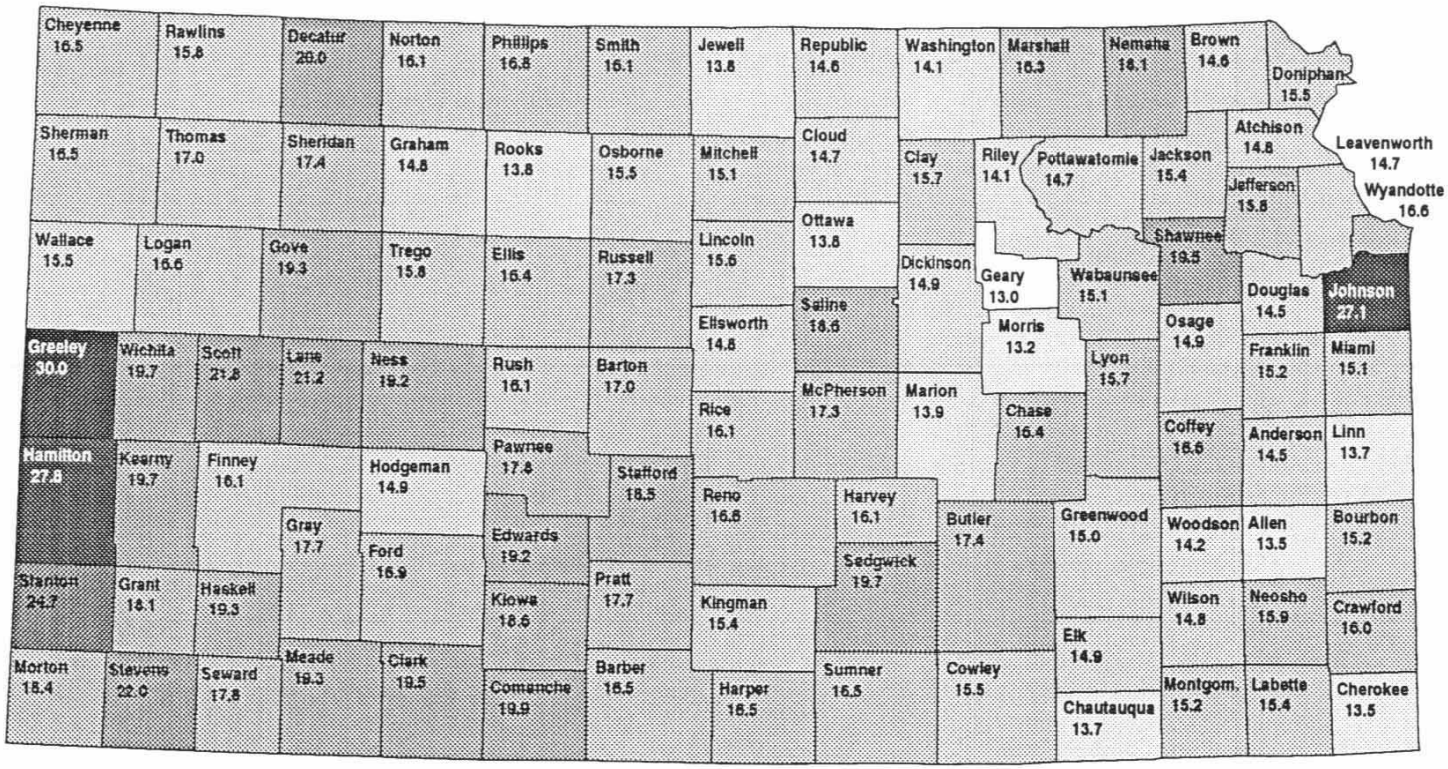
Source: Univ. of Kansas, Kansas Center for Community Economic Development, "Kansas County Profile for Barton, 1994", Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Table CA5.

Table 11
Personal Income Per Capita
Barton County and Kansas: 1980-1991

	Income		Growth Rates		Income Ratio of U.S
	Barton	Kansas	Barton	Kansas	to Kansas
1980	10,466	9,941			1.00
1981	12,484	11,211	19.3%	12.8%	1.01
1982	12,845	11,852	2.9	5.7	1.00
1983	12,665	12,200	-1.4	2.9	1.00
1984	13,483	13,100	6.5	7.4	.98
1985	13,324	13,875	-1.2	5.9	.93
1986	12,741	14,513	-4.4	4.6	.97
1987	13,534	15,087	6.2	4.0	.96
1988	14,016	15,822	3.6	4.9	.95
1989	14,458	16,516	3.2	4.4	.93
1990	16,118	17,768	11.5	7.6	.95
1991	16,651	18,306	3.3	3.0	.96
1992	17,138	19,387	2.9	5.9	.96
Total Change 1980-1992			63.7	84.1	

Source: Univ. of Kansas, Kansas Center for Community Economic Development, "Kansas County Profile for Barton, 1994", Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System, Table CA5; Local Area Personal Income 1969-92, U.S. Department of Commerce, BEA.

Map 6. Per Capita Income: 1991 (Thousands of dollars)



Source: Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, Univ. of Kansas, "Kansas Statistical Abstract 1992-1993"; using data from Bureau of Economic Analysis, "News", October 7, 1993.

CONCLUSION

Barton County's population peaked in 1960 and since that time the county has experienced a population decline. This population decline is related to the decline in the agriculture and oil industries. After 1984, oil production began to drastically decline. This lost in production was mirrored by population lost, job decline, and decreasing income. Barton County during the 1980s had a population lost of over 6 percent. Likewise, job growth between 1983 and 1986 declined by almost 13 percent. It was also during this time, of decreasing oil production, that Barton County resident's per capita income for the first time was lower than the per capita income of the residents of the State of Kansas. Starting with 1985, and continuing on to the present, Barton County resident's per capita income has been lower than the per capita income of the residents of the State of Kansas.

However, the data does show some positive trends for Barton County. The number of jobs in Barton County increased 5.6 percent between 1989 and 1992. In response to losing oil related jobs, Barton County has shifted to a more service oriented job base. The number of jobs in the Services and Government and Government Services industries has increased by 26.2 percent and 34.5 percent, respectively, between 1980 and 1992. As for income, Barton County experienced a 11.5 percent increase in per capita income between 1989 and 1992. Since then, changes in per capita income in Barton County has stayed level with changes in per capita income for the State of Kansas. Since 1990, population decline has begun to slow to an estimated decline of 1.6 percent between 1990 and 1994.

While Barton County is considered a rural county, its future looks brighter than many rural Kansas counties. Barton County weathered the oil bust of the mid-1980s and may be experiencing a reversal of fortunes in the 1990s. Since the oil decline, Barton County has diversified its job base so that there is less reliance on the oil and agricultural industries to provide jobs for county residents. The benefits of this can be seen in the amount of job growth in Barton County between 1989 and 1992, which was a period of national recession. From the data that are presented in this paper, the future of Barton County could be described as one that will see population stabilization with some job and income growth. While Barton County's future is not as bright as some of the urban counties of Kansas, it is brighter than most of the rural counties of Kansas.