

# Kiowa County



## 2017 CEDS

Prepared by Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF)  
For the benefit of  
Southern Colorado Economic Development District  
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Pueblo, CO 81003  
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## **SUMMARY BACKGROUND**

Established in 1889, Kiowa County took its name from the Kiowa Indians who lived in Eastern Colorado. Much of Kiowa County developed along with the expansion of the railroads at the beginning of the last century. Adjoining the Kansas border, this region's open plains are connected to major markets and distribution centers, yet retain the flavor of small town life.

A large part of Kiowa County's economy comes from the area's natural resources. More than 120 wells in the area tap Colorado's fossil fuel deposits. A number of local businesses support these oil and gas drilling operations.

Covering close to one million acres, Kiowa County farms grow wheat, millet, grain sorghum, sunflowers and corn and raise cattle, goats, sheep, horses and swine. Area granaries have the capacity to store up to five million bushels of grain.

Residents and visitors also enjoy investigating the county's recreation areas. The five reservoirs draw birdwatchers, boaters, fisherman, wildlife enthusiasts and hunters from across the state.

Kiowa County encompasses the following towns and municipalities, with their following respective populations:

Arlington	14
Brandon	21
Eads	597
Haswell	67
Sheridan Lake	86
Towner	22
Unincorporated	584

Kiowa County provides opportunities for cultural discovery and reflection, as well. A National Historic Site commemorates the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre. This deadly dawn attack on a Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment marked a tragic low point in relations between the military and Native Americans during the settlement of the frontier. Other chapters in county history can be explored at the Kiowa County Museum and Woelk Park.

The County is densely populated, with its mainstay in farming and ranching. Kiowa County is designated as a Ports-to-Plains trade corridor route.

### **County Commissioners:**

Richard Scott  
Cindy McLoud  
Donald Oswald

### **Legislative Districts:**

Congressional District: 4  
Senate District: 4  
House District: 64

**County Seat:** Eads

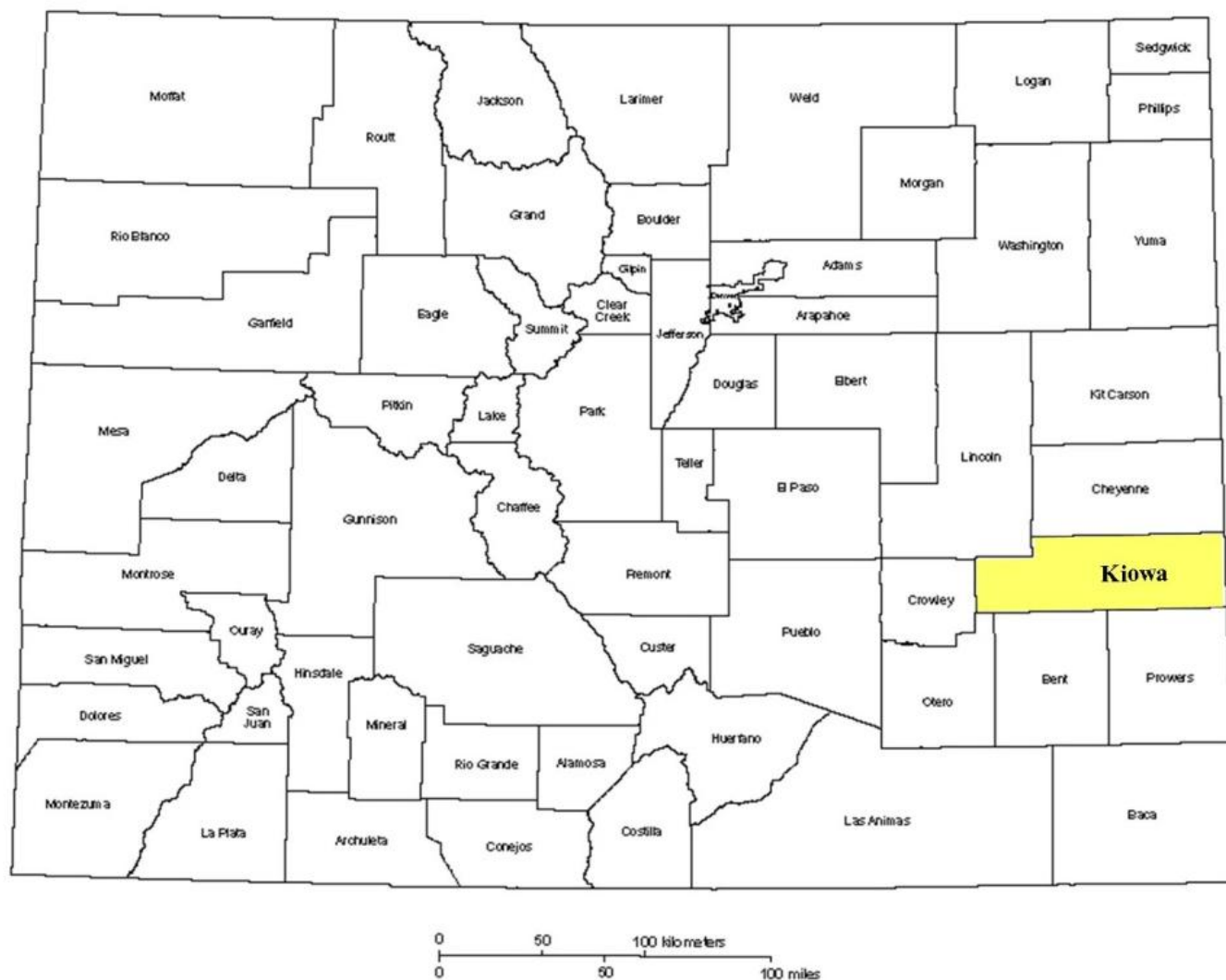
## ENVIRONMENTAL, GEOGRAPHIC, CLIMATIC & CULTURAL INFORMATION

### Environmental

A great place to live and work, Kiowa County's air quality index is 48.2, ranked 18<sup>th</sup> among the 64 counties in Colorado. Kiowa County has NO known environmental interests (radiation, toxic, hazardous waste, air, water or other) that have potential to generate releases that affect the environment.

### Geographic

Kiowa County is located in the Southeastern edge of Colorado, bordered by Kansas. The county is 1,786 square miles with an average elevation of 4,300 feet. Kiowa County boasts wide open, scenic spaces and is the home of the Great Plains Reservoirs bearing Cheyenne Indian names. Neesopah, Neegronda, Neenoshe, and Neeskah, located just to the south of Eads. These are part of the Queens State Wildlife Area. South of Haswell is Adobe Creek Reservoir or 'Blue Lake'. There is also an 8 acre fishing pond in the Kiowa Creek Natural Area,  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile south of Eads.



## Climatic

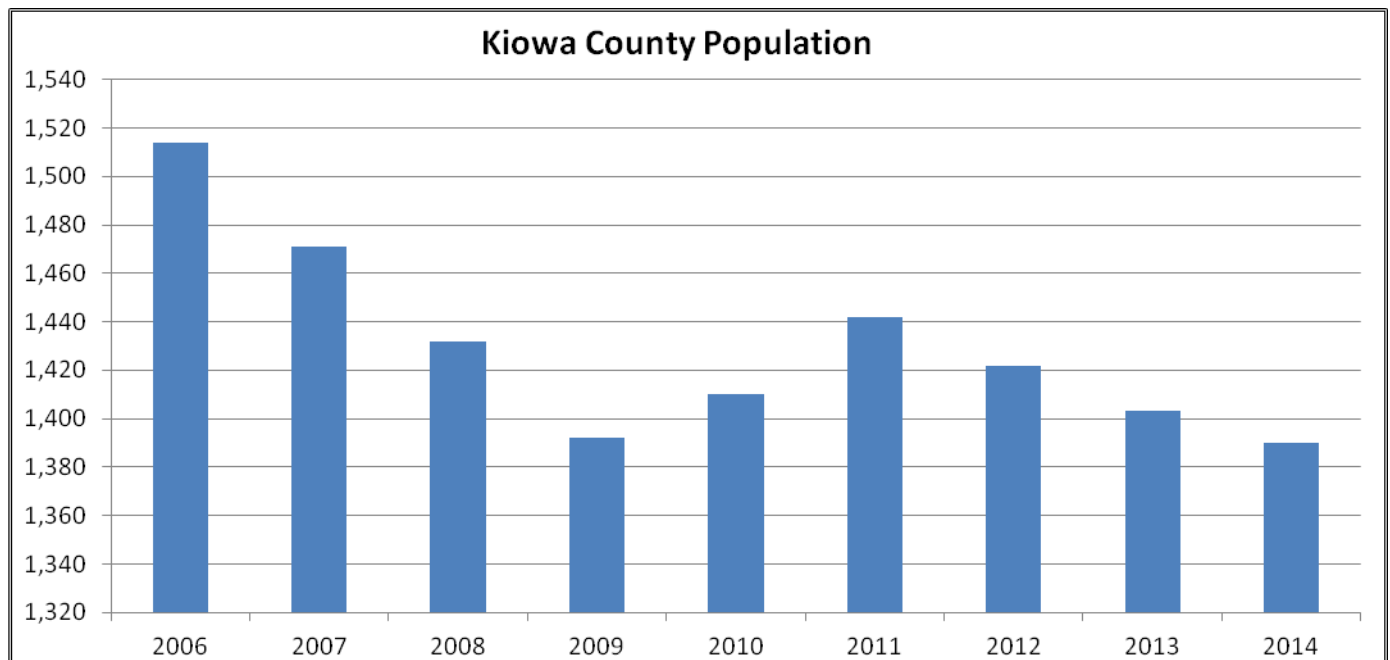
The average temperature of Kiowa County is 51.84°F, which is much higher than the Colorado average temperature of 46.26°F and is lower than the national average temperature of 54.45°F. The average high temperature during summer months is 93°F compared to average low temperature during winter of 14.8°F. The risk of tornado damage in Kiowa County is about the same as Colorado average and is lower than the national average. The chance of earthquake damage in Kiowa County is lower than Colorado average and is much lower than the national average.

## Cultural

Demographic information demonstrates that the most common race in Kiowa County is White, followed by few Hispanics. Other than English, the most common non-English language is German, followed by Spanish and Japanese.

## DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIOECONOMIC DATA

The Department of Local Affairs estimates the 2015 population of Kiowa County at 1,391, which is approximately .03% of the State's population. Kiowa County's population has been declining since the mid-1990s. Census population data is showing a steady decrease over the last several years. The county's population peaked in 1993 with over 1,700 residents. The 2010 Census reports an 18% decrease in populations since 1993.



Data retrieved from State Demography Office-DOLA  
<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov> 12/21/2016

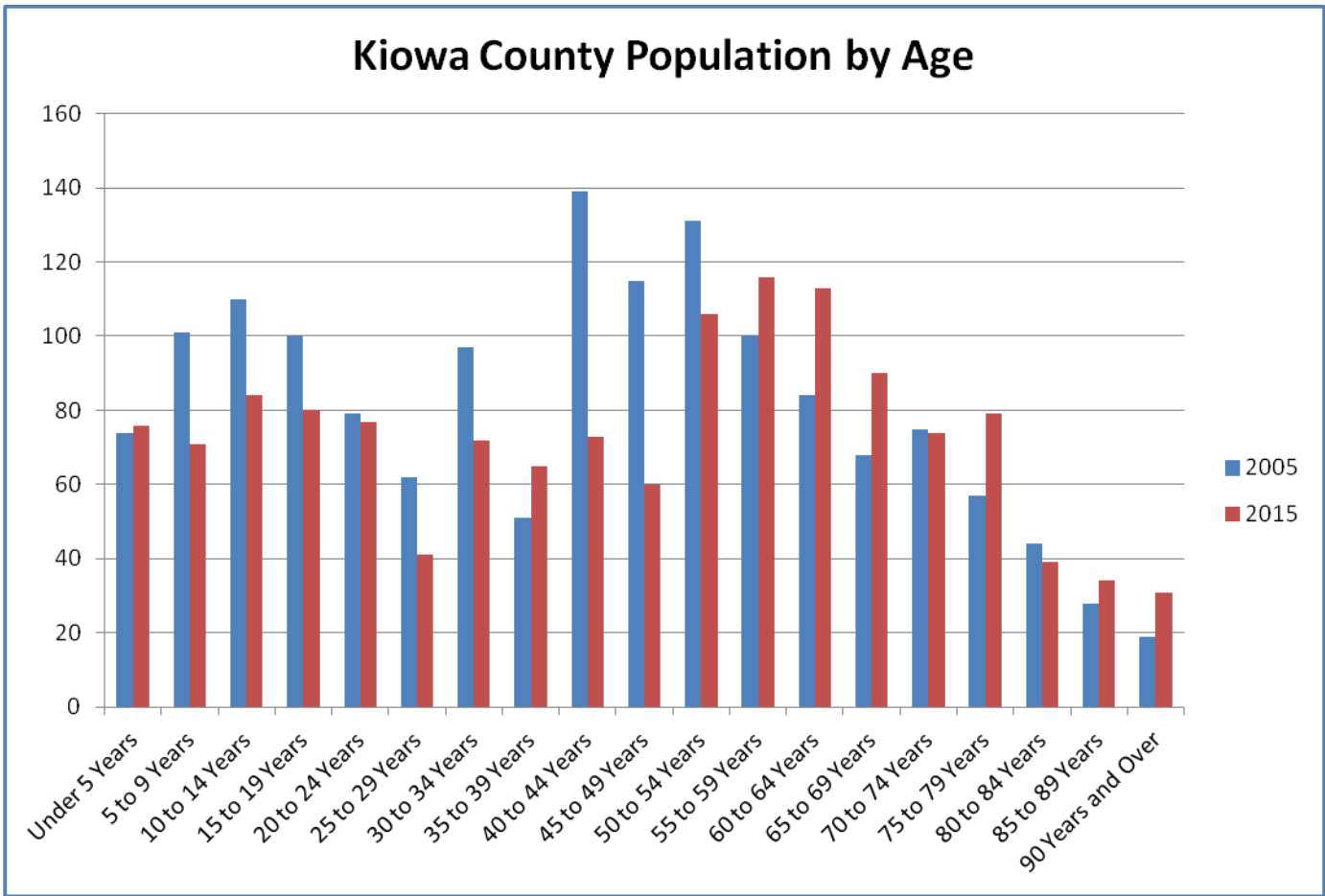
In the last five years, Kiowa County's population has decreased approximately 5.8%, while the state saw a 5% increase. The recent decline in population has been due to job losses combined

with an aging population that encompasses fewer families as well a steady outmigration of college aged population.

**Population by Age**

Kiowa County’s population by age is shown in the chart below for both 2005 (blue bar) and 2015 (red bar). DOLA estimates the median age for the county at 49.2 compared to 37.1 for the state. The average life expectancy for the county is estimated at age 76.8. This is fairly close to the nation’s average of 78.2 but almost 5 years shorter than the state’s average of 81.1.

The largest increase in overall population for the county was in the 60 to 64 year old age group followed by the 65 to 69 age group and 75 to 79 age group, which indicates a need to evaluate aging services – healthcare, assisted living accommodation, nursing home facilities -- in the county. Decreases in most other age groups are consistent with overall population decline. The losses in the 40 to 44 year old group correlate with losses in the population under 18. This correlation supports the idea that families with young children are out-migrating to other areas potentially for employment at a higher wage level.



Data retrieved from State Demography Office-DOLA <https://demography.dola.colorado.gov> 12/21/2016

## Population by Race

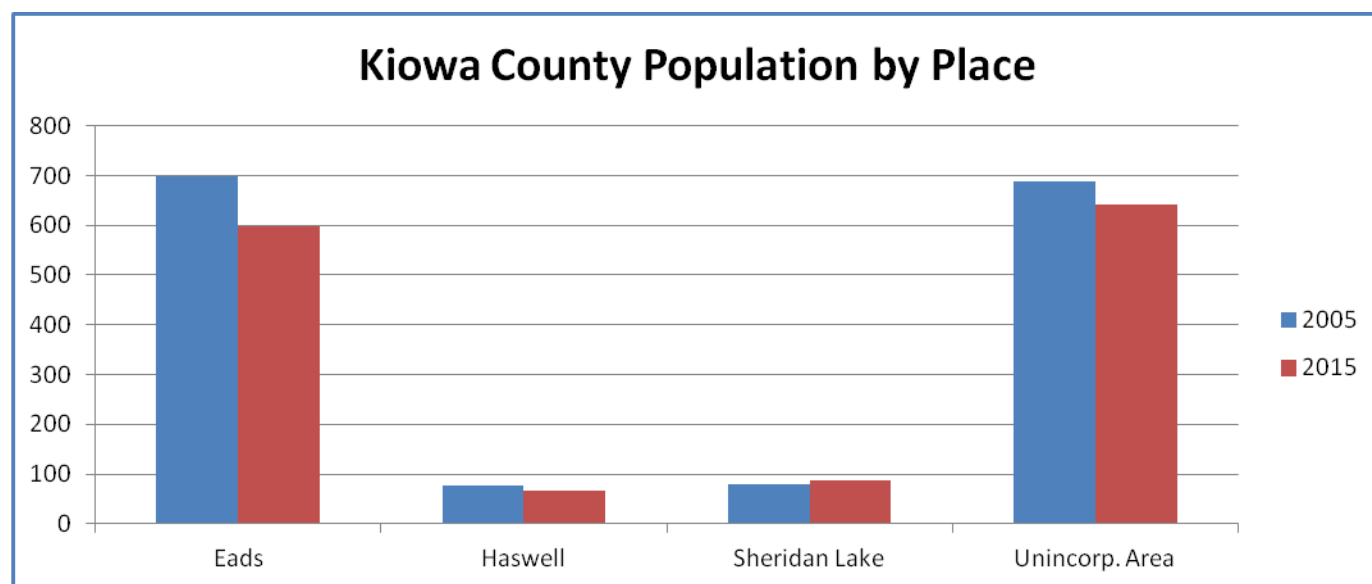
Kiowa County data for population by race demonstrates that 93% of Kiowa County's population is White non-Hispanic, 6% is Hispanic, and .3% is African American, .1% is Asian and .4% is American Indian.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
American Indian non Hispanic	6	6	6	6	6	6
Asian non Hispanic	1	2	2	2	2	2
Black non Hispanic	4	4	4	4	4	4
Hispanic	78	81	81	81	82	84
White non Hispanic	1321	1349	1331	1310	1292	1298

Data retrieved from State Demography Office-DOLA  
<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>  
12/29/2016

## Population by Community

The population data for each community demonstrates that Eads, the county seat, is the hub with the largest concentration of population, followed by the unincorporated area and then Sheridan Lake and Haswell.



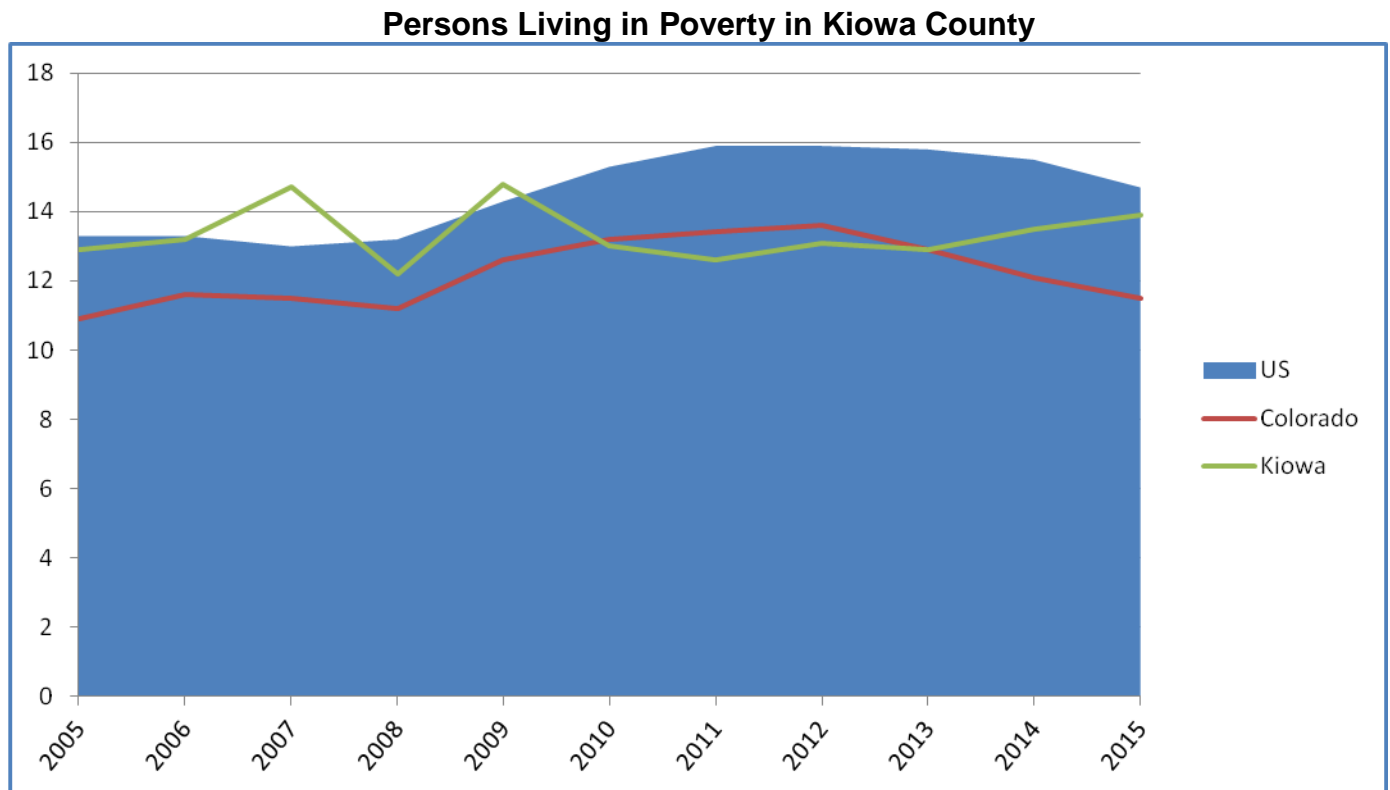
Data retrieved from State Demography Office-DOLA  
<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov> 12/21/2016



## Poverty Data

Poverty in Kiowa County is about the same compared to the State and the Nation. In 2015, Kids Count reported 41.6% of school age children qualified for free/reduced lunch compared to 41.8% in the State and 22.1% of children under 18 years of age were living in poverty compared to 14.8% in the State.

The US Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates report 13.9% of Kiowa County's total population lives in poverty compared to 11.5% in the State and 14.5% in the Nation.



Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

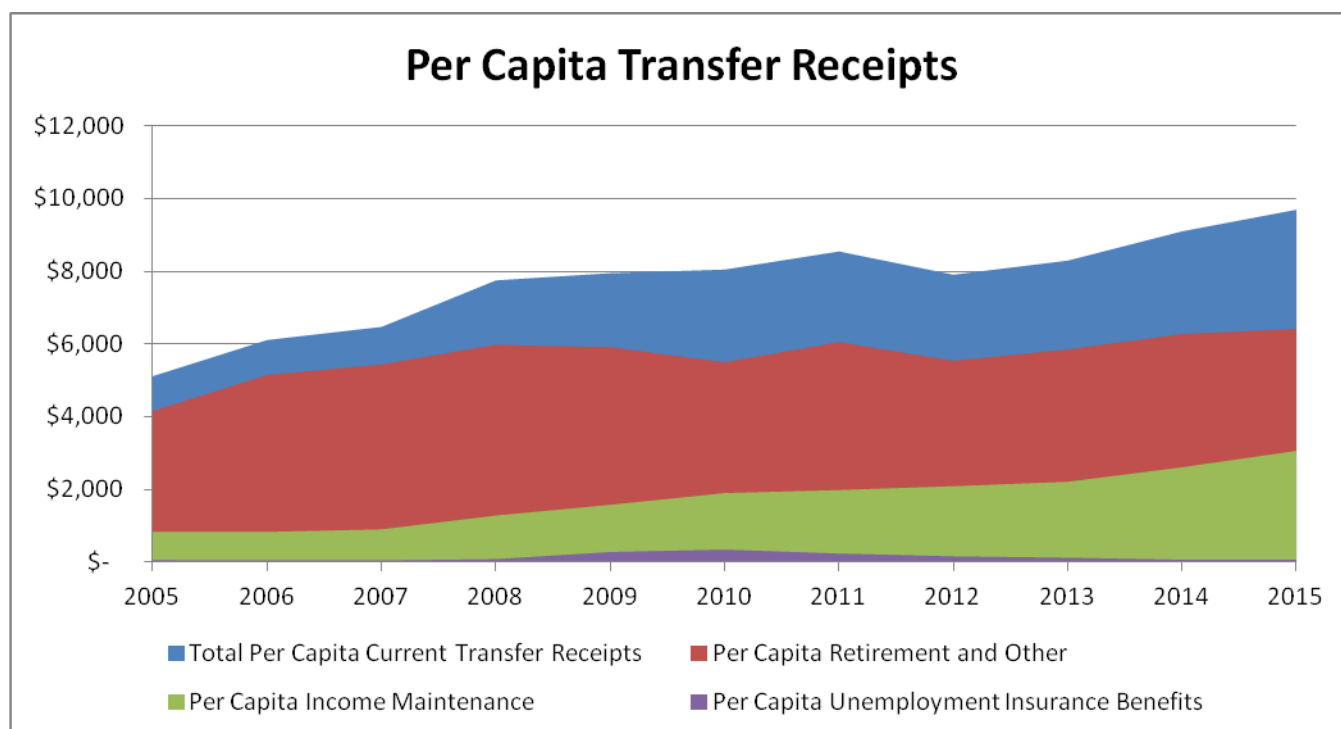
<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016



## Personal Transfer Receipts

Federal programs attempt to alleviate poverty and are tracked as transfer payments. In 2015, federal transfer payments were slightly over \$9,705 for every man, woman and child in Kiowa County. Approximately 66% of the total transfer payments are from retirement programs like Social Security. Income maintenance (public assistance such as SNAP) accounts for approximately 32% of total payments



Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

Additional reports affecting poverty reveal:

- ❖ Food assistance program participation in 2015 is slightly under 8.4%
- ❖ In 2014, 12.4% of the population was uninsured, compared to the State at 11.7%
- ❖ Teen births are very low with fewer than three teen births reported in 2015, which is lower than the State average of 19/1,000.

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Industrial Parks

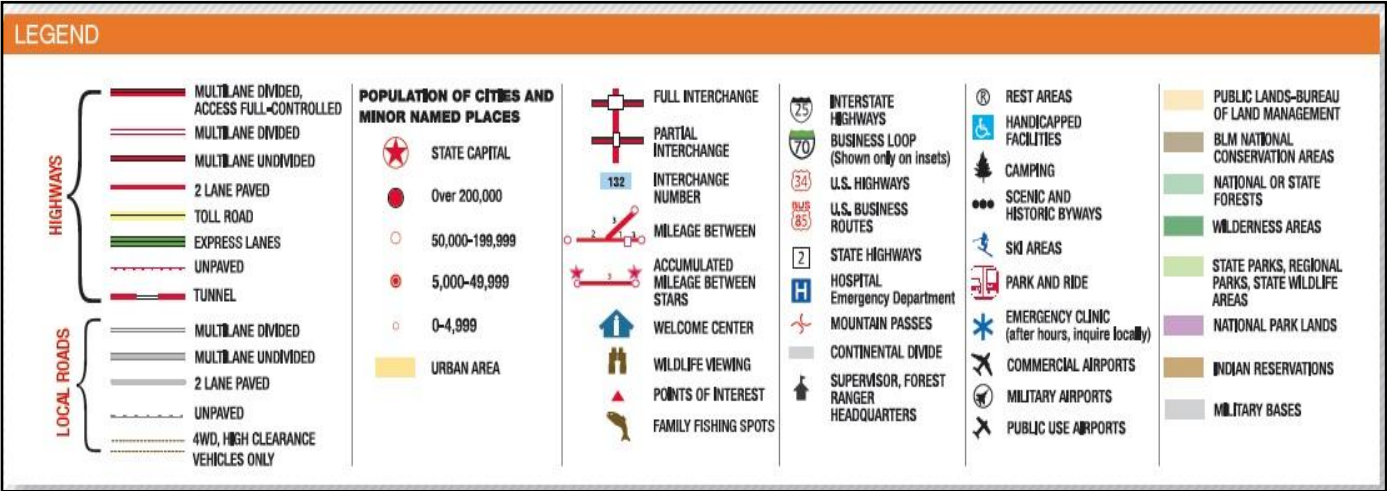
Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) owns property adjacent to the south side of Eads. Although some of this property has already been sold for businesses, there currently are approximately 60 acres still set aside for commercial property. The Town of Eads owns the airport property and acreage around the airport approximately 1 mile west of Eads. There is acreage set aside for an industrial park adjacent to the airport that could be developed.

Transportation System

Kiowa County has 3 major highways, Hwy 287 (Ports to Plains Corridor through Eads) running north and south, Hwy 385 at the east end of the county running north and south, and Hwy 96 running east and west, connecting to Hwy 287 at Eads. These connecting highways offer opportunities for businesses to market their goods outside the immediate area and get shipments out swiftly via the Ports-to-Plains corridor. Kiowa County also has an operating airport; and a railroad system running the width of the county, east and west, that could be refurbished and made available. This rail line runs from Pueblo east through Crowley County and Kiowa County to the Kansas border and on into Kansas.



CDOT Map



## Broadband

While broadband can be considered a valuable infrastructure asset in the area, it is still considered a weakness in the region. In regards to it being a valuable infrastructure asset, fiber is now available to businesses and government entities (local and county governments), hospital and schools, mainly in Eads, Sheridan Lake and Haswell. There are upwards of a half dozen providers currently servicing Kiowa County. A broadband grant enabled the Region to access funding to address connectivity issues in the early 2000s. It was a much needed communication improvement that upgraded the area from DSL to fiber optic speeds. This effort addressed the first mile (government) and middle (businesses) mile but unfortunately did not address the last mile (to residential consumers). A current grant, with a positive outlook, is in the works to upgrade all broadband infrastructures in the region.

## Education

Kiowa County is fortunate enough to have two school districts that each provides education from pre-school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Kiowa County Re-1 is in Eads, while Re-2 is at Plainview, the school community approximately 6 miles east of Sheridan Lake.

Eads Elementary School recently received a \$10,000 Distinguished Title 1 School award from the Colorado Department of Education recognizing their academic performance.

Also available within a 75 mile radius is Lamar Community College (LCC) in Lamar, and Otero Junior College (OJC), in LaJunta.

Just recently, LCC was recognized as a top online associates program in Colorado for 2016-2017. In addition to offering traditional courses, LCC offers training programs to develop a skilled workforce which includes but is not limited to welding, nursing, horse training management, solar and wind energy and agri-business programs.

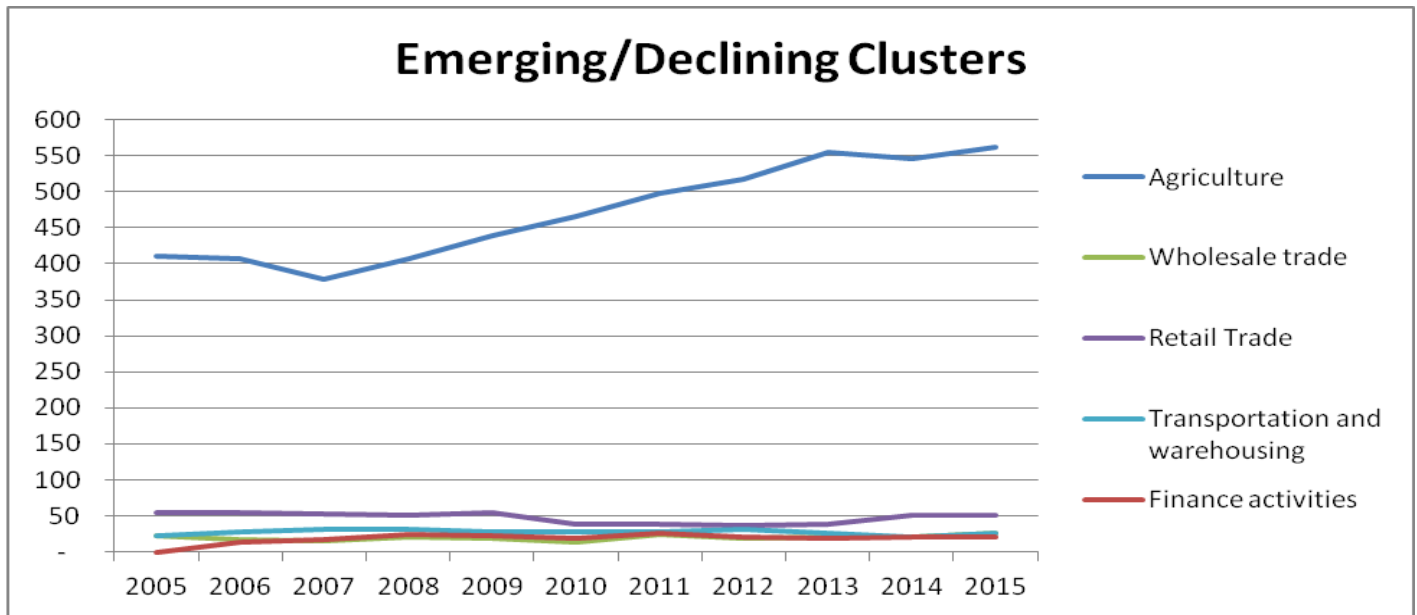
Students, both traditional and non-traditional, are able to gain a valuable education in close proximity to where they live. Lamar Community College and Otero Junior College draw in students from outlying communities as well as neighboring counties.

## INDUSTRY SECTORS

### Emerging – Declining Sectors

#### Kiowa County

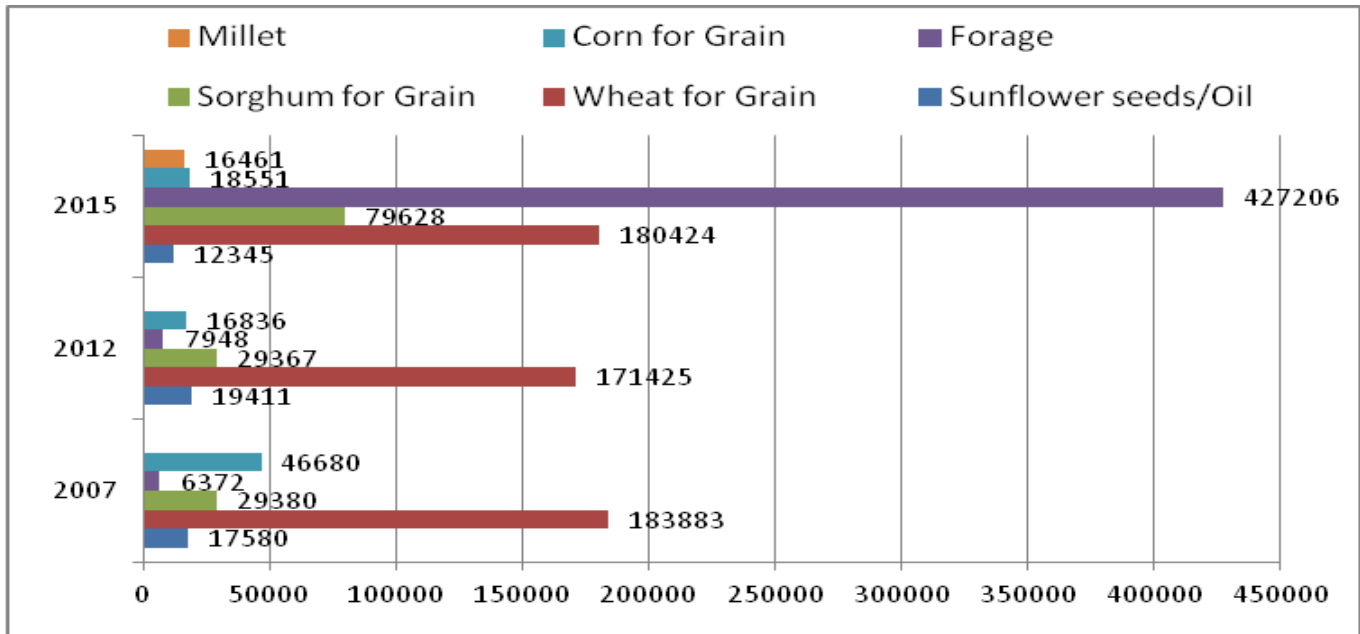
TxtFIPS	Sector Name	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
061	Agriculture	411	407	378	407	439	466	499	518	555	545	562
061	Mining	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	28	S	S
061	Utilities	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Construction	32	15	16	30	32	16	59	15	17	19	21
061	Manufacturing	4	7	4	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Wholesale trade	23	17	15	20	18	14	24	18	20	21	26
061	Retail Trade	55	54	52	51	54	38	39	36	38	51	52
061	Transportation and warehousing	22	27	32	32	27	27	27	32	26	21	26
061	Information	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Finance activities	S	13	17	25	22	19	26	20	19	21	20
061	Real estate	6	6	6	4	5	4	6	3	-	-	5
061	Professional and business services	S	11	11	14	13	11	13	S	S	S	S
061	Management of companies and enterprise	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Admin and waste	18	11	11	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Education	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Health Services	8	12	12	-	7	S	S	S	S	S	S
061	Arts	4	4	4	10	6	7	6	5	6	5	7
061	Accommodation and food	14	S	17	S	19	19	28	S	S	S	21
061	Other services, except public administration	41	39	38	33	33	28	30	30	29	32	26
061	Government	266	268	274	274	282	293	290	284	260	243	243
<b>061</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,046</b>	<b>1,065</b>	<b>1,064</b>	<b>1,072</b>



#### Agriculture / Value-Added Ag

Agriculture continues to be the main source of the economy in Kiowa County. In 2012, as reported by the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Kiowa County had 1,113,160 acres of agricultural land. There are 395 farms, with an average of 2,818 acres. Kiowa County's largest crop harvested is wheat used for grain and the top livestock is cattle and calves. Millet has recently become a crop of choice along with wheat at the east end of the county, so it was added to the crop graph in 2015.

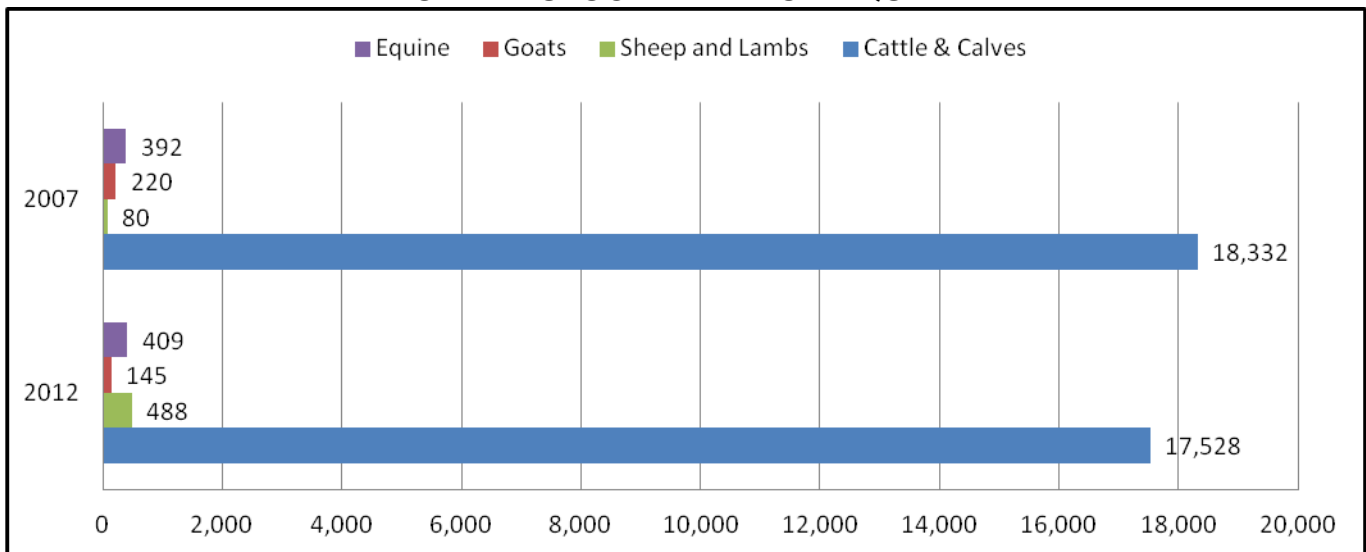
### TOP CROPS HARVESTED IN ACRES



[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) 1-4-2017

Out of sixty four counties in Colorado, Kiowa County was ranked first for production in sunflower seed/oil, second in production for Sorghum for Grain, fifth for Wheat for Grain.

### TOP LIVESTOCK INVENTORY-QUANTITY



[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) 1-4-2017

Out of sixty four counties in Colorado, Kiowa County was ranked second for Roosters and Hog/Pigs, although data was withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations in each category.

## HOUSING, HEALTH SERVICES & EDUCATION

### Housing Statistics

The 2015 average household size in Kiowa County is 2.24 compared to an average family size of 3.21 (per US Census Bureau 2010). Quality, affordable housing is of great concern to Kiowa County as stock has begun to deteriorate and/or the market has not lent itself to supporting new housing starts. A large number of the population continues to rent versus purchasing or building new.

#### KIOWA COUNTY HOUSING UNITS AND VACANCY RATES

Household Type	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Household Population	1410	1442	1422	1403	1390	1391
Housing Vacancy Rate	23.2%	21.3%	22.6%	23.7%	25.0%	24.8%
Total Households	619	639	629	622	614	615
Total Housing Units	806	812	813	815	819	818
Vacant Housing Units	187	173	184	193	205	203

Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

Vintage 2015

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

It is estimated that in 2015, to purchase the average house, a person in Kiowa County needed to earn a little over \$35,520. In 2015, the median household income was approximately \$40,304. Approximately 78% of housing is valued between \$50,000 and \$150,000. The median value is \$83,600. In addition, almost 63% of rental housing costs between \$500 and \$1000.

### Housing Profile

According to data, affordable rent represents the generally accepted standard of not spending more than 30% of gross income on gross housing costs. The fair market rent in 2015 for Kiowa County was \$582 for a two-bedroom home. In order to afford rent at this amount, a household in Kiowa County must earn \$11.19 per hour or \$23,260 annually; at minimum wage it would take 1.3 wage earners in the household to contribute.

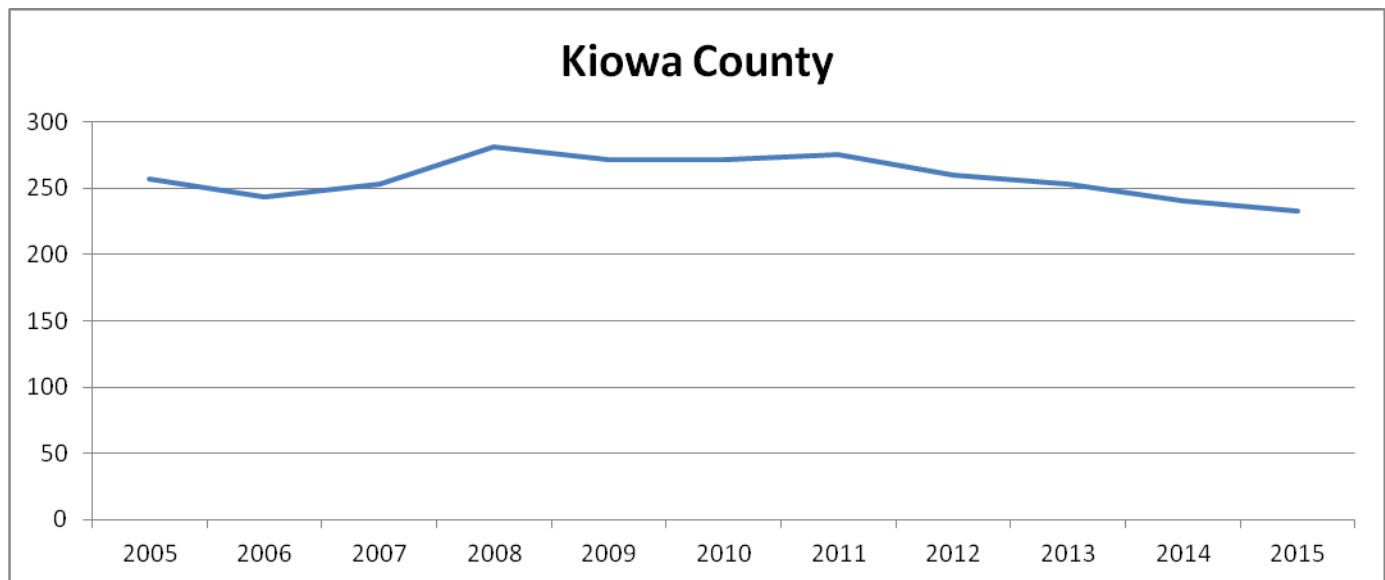


## Health Services

Kiowa County is the home of Weisbrod Memorial Hospital and Clinic. This hospital has an emergency room, and provides both extended care and nursing home care. This Kiowa County Hospital District's mission is to create a health community through access to quality, friendly, state of the art health care and health education. To add to the care available in the county, Prairie Pines is available for assisted living and local home health care can be provided through outlying counties that also cover Kiowa County. Unity Village is an apartment complex designated for disabled and elderly. In addition, Southeast Colorado Mental Health offers the county valuable services. Very few communities the size of Eads are lucky enough to have the health care that is offered here.

## Education

Two districts provide vital K-12 education in Kiowa County. Data exhibits a decrease in enrollment of at a rate of about 14.5%.



*Colorado Department of Education*  
1-2-2017

A noticeable trend seen throughout many counties in the SCEDD region is the decline in school enrollments, compared to the number of school age children living in the County. The 2015 Census estimates report there are 235 school age children (5-19 years of age) living in the County and the Department of Education reports there are 171 students enrolled in Kiowa County schools.

### Enrollment

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
EADS RE-1	200	177	192	202	189	187	185	180	181	175	171
PLAINVIEW RE-2	57	66	61	79	83	85	90	80	72	66	62
<b>Totals</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>233</b>

Colorado Department of Education  
1-2-2017

The 2011-2015 Census American Community Survey estimates 91% of the total population 25 years of age and older has attained a high school diploma or higher; 20.3% have attained a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

### Graduation Rate

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Eads RE-1	92.3	100.0	94.7	90.0	100.0	88.9	92.9	93.3	90.0	100.0	100.0
Plainview RE-2	100.0	100.0	80.0	33.3	100.0	100.0	66.7	75.0	80.0	60.0	100.0

Colorado Department of Education  
1-2-2017

### Drop Out Rate

KIOWA	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Eads RE-1	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Plainview RE-2	2.6	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

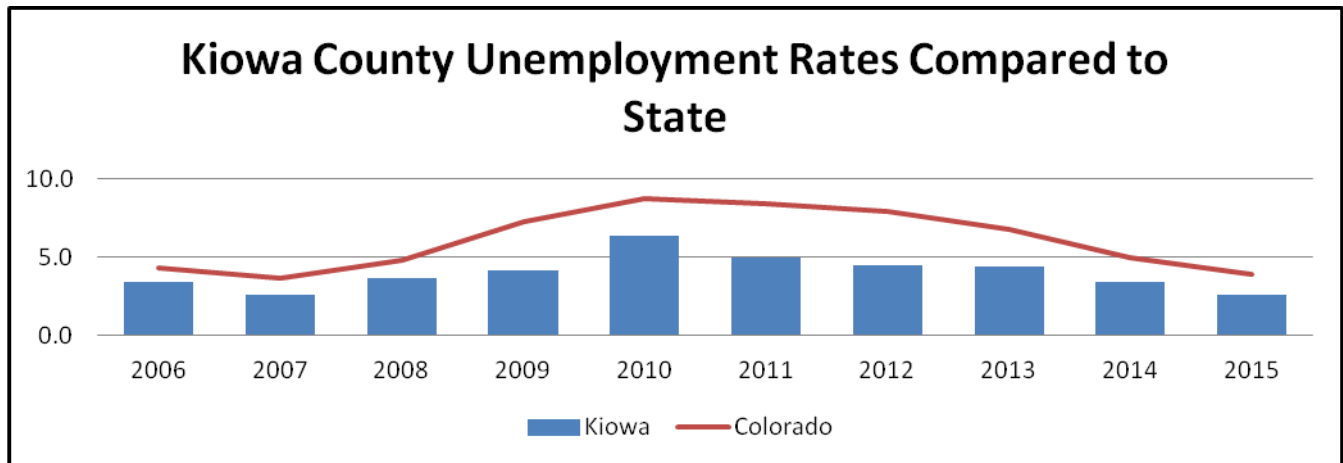
Colorado Department of Education  
1-2-2017

Higher education is available within a 75 mile radius of Kiowa County at Lamar Community College and Otero Junior College. Eads and Plainview graduates take advantage of the proximity of these junior colleges before moving on. However, it needs to be pointed out that approximately 75% of the high school graduates have already taken dual credit classes through Lamar Community College before graduation.

## LOCAL ECONOMY

### Workforce Data

Kiowa County unemployment rate has been steadily declining since 2012 when it was at its highest at 6.4%. Data shows the lowest unemployment rate was recorded in 2007 at 2.6%. Colorado's 2015 unemployment rate was 3.9% while in 2015 the Kiowa County rate again fell to 2.6%.



Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

### Employment by Sector

Sector Name	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Agriculture	411	407	378	407	439	466	499	518	555	545	562
Mining	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	28	S	S
Utilities	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Construction	32	15	16	30	32	16	59	15	17	19	21
Manufacturing	4	7	4	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Wholesale trade	23	17	15	20	18	14	24	18	20	21	26
Retail Trade	55	54	52	51	54	38	39	36	38	51	52
Transportation and warehousing	22	27	32	32	27	27	27	32	26	21	26
Information	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Finance activities	S	13	17	25	22	19	26	20	19	21	20
Real estate	6	6	6	4	5	4	6	3	-	-	5
Professional and business services	S	11	11	14	13	11	13	S	S	S	S
Admin and waste	18	11	11	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Education	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Health Services	8	12	12	-	7	S	S	S	S	S	S
Arts	4	4	4	10	6	7	6	5	6	5	7
Accommodation and food	14	S	17	S	19	19	28	S	S	S	21
Other services, except public administration	41	39	38	33	33	28	30	30	29	32	26
Government	266	268	274	274	282	293	290	284	260	243	243
<b>Total</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,046</b>	<b>1,065</b>	<b>1,064</b>	<b>1,072</b>

Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA <https://demography.dola.colorado.gov> 12/21/2016

## Wages

Wages in Kiowa County are lower than the State average. In 2015, average weekly wages, as reported by the Colorado Workforce, for Kiowa County were 40% below the State, with Kiowa County wage being \$623 and the State at \$1,042. The Bureau of Economic Analysis reports average annual wages for Kiowa County in 2015 were 40% below the State with Kiowa County at \$32,396 and the State at \$54,179.

### Average Weekly Wages by Sector

<b>Kiowa County</b>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total, All Industries	\$614	\$705	\$728	\$635	\$628	\$623
Accommodation and Food Services	Confidential	\$153	Confidential	Confidential	\$256	\$294
Administrative and Waste Services	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$512	\$655	\$581	\$547	\$617	\$744
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Construction	\$617	\$892	\$1,009	\$926	\$1,536	\$770
Educational Services	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Finance and Insurance	\$720	\$698	\$658	\$820	\$817	\$793
Health Care and Social Assistance	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Information	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Manufacturing	Confidential	Confidential	0	0	0	0
Mining	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	\$1,261	Confidential	Confidential
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Professional and Technical Services	Confidential	\$733	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Public Administration	\$368	\$369	\$372	\$417	\$453	\$517
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	0	0	0
Retail Trade	\$260	\$296	\$320	\$346	\$368	\$410
Transportation and Warehousing	\$4,228	\$7,761	Confidential	Confidential	\$679	\$647
Utilities	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential	Confidential
Wholesale Trade	\$738	\$563	\$662	\$576	\$616	\$611

### Average Weekly Wages by Sector

<b>Kiowa County</b>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total, All Industries	\$31,936	\$36,661	\$37,873	\$33,026	\$32,671	\$32,396
Accommodation and Food Services	ND	\$7,980	ND	ND	\$13,324	\$15,296
Administrative and Waste Services	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	\$26,624	\$34,083	\$30,210	\$28,450	\$32,074	\$38,708
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Construction	\$32,078	\$46,374	\$52,448	\$48,130	\$79,856	\$40,035
Educational Services	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Finance and Insurance	\$37,433	\$36,291	\$34,230	\$42,664	\$42,478	\$41,228
Health Care and Social Assistance	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Information	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Manufacturing	ND	ND	0	0	0	0
Mining	ND	ND	ND	\$65,575	ND	ND
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Professional and Technical Services	ND	\$38,091	ND	ND	ND	ND
Public Administration	\$19,148	\$19,194	\$19,368	\$21,671	\$23,566	\$26,872
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	ND	ND	ND	0	0	0
Retail Trade	\$13,542	\$15,383	\$16,627	\$18,001	\$19,146	\$21,336
Transportation and Warehousing	\$219,865	\$403,557	ND	ND	\$35,318	\$33,641
Utilities	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Wholesale Trade	\$38,393	\$29,253	\$34,409	\$29,947	\$32,030	\$31,784

Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

## Median Household Income

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Colorado*	\$52,265	\$55,517	\$57,184	\$55,735	\$56,456	\$57,685	\$58,244	\$58,433	\$59,448	\$60,629
Kiowa County	\$33,032	\$34,084	\$38,581	\$36,931	\$40,089	\$41,542	\$41,739	\$40,813	\$39,375	\$40,304

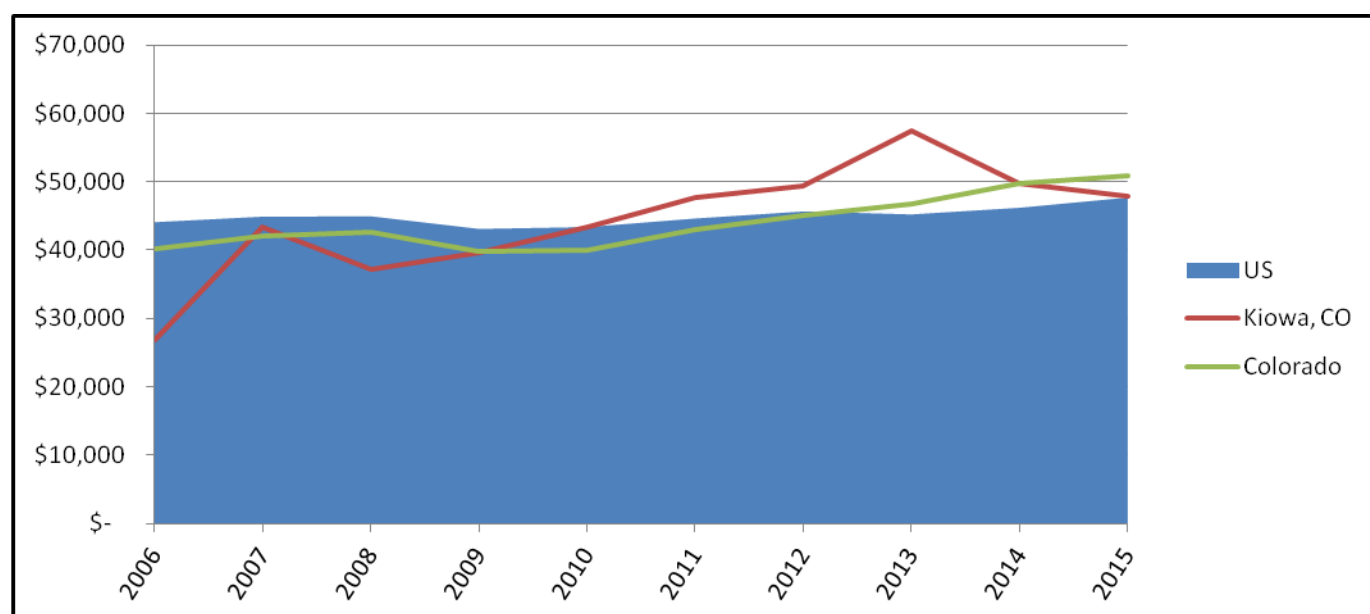
Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

## Per Capita Personal Income

The per capita income for Kiowa County is 5.8% below the State average. Per capita income for Kiowa County in 2015 was \$47,936 compared to the State average of \$50,899.



Data provided by State Demography Office-DOLA

<https://demography.dola.colorado.gov>

12/21/2016

Spike in income for 2013 is attributed to oil land leases when it was thought that oil drilling would escalate for Kiowa County. The leases were paid, however the drilling has yet to happen.

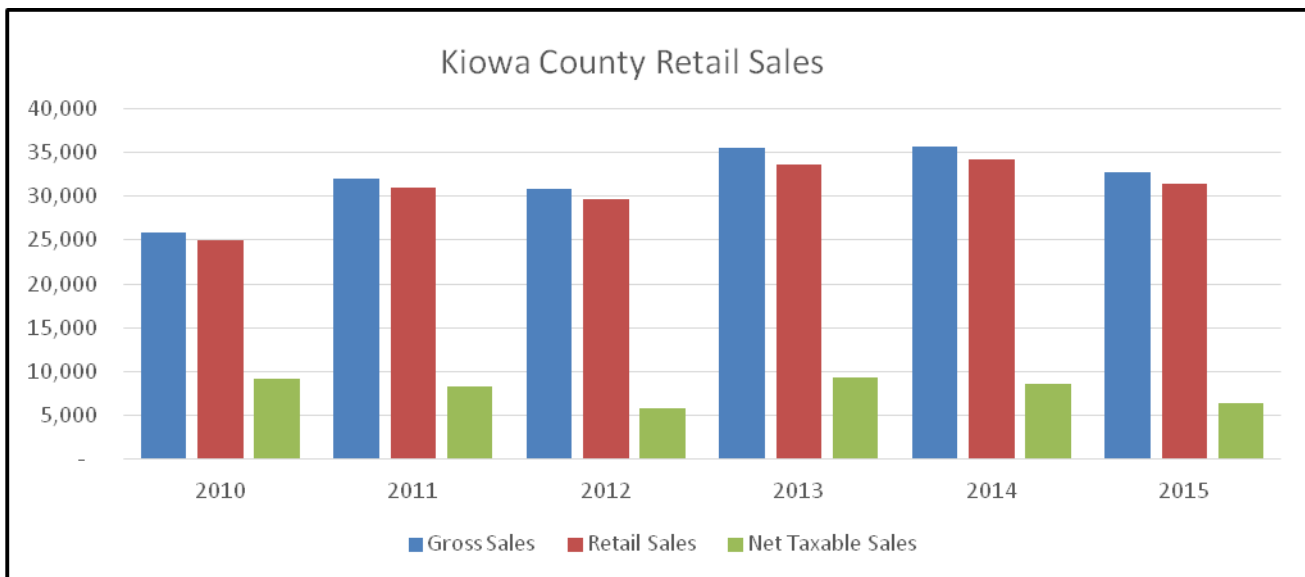
## ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE & FACTORS

Kiowa County itself does not have a sales tax or a lodging tax. The Town of Eads sales tax is 2% Colorado's sales and use tax is 2.9%.

### Retail Sales

Kiowa County	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	%Change 10-15	
Gross Sales	25,792	31,970	30,880	35,560	35,677	32,699	21%	
Retail Sales	24,991	30,998	29,698	33,571	34,237	31,453	21%	-0.2701
Net Taxable Sales	9,153	8,330	5,848	9,340	8,651	6,389	-43%	
Net Tax	268	241	171	266	244	178		

Kiowa County experienced growth in retail sales from 2010 through 2014 at a rate of 27%. There has, however, been a slight decline from 2014 to 2015 of approximately 8%. However the net increase from 2010 to 2015 is a welcomed improvement. Reported gross sales have increased as well at about the same rate as retail sales. Taxable sales have remained fairly, consistent since 2010.

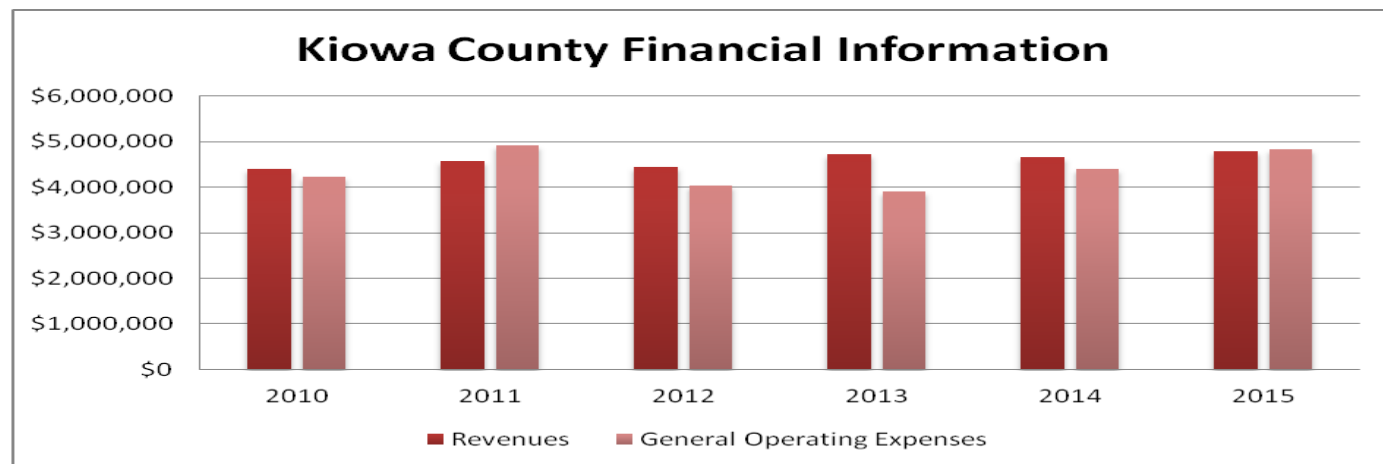


Colorado Department of Revenue  
<http://www.colorado.gov>  
 1/4/2017

As in most small communities, goods and services are not fully available, out-sourcing remains a problem. "Buy Local" campaigns are constantly at work through the Eads High School FBLA and Eads Chamber of Commerce, and Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) efforts.

## County General Revenue & Expenses

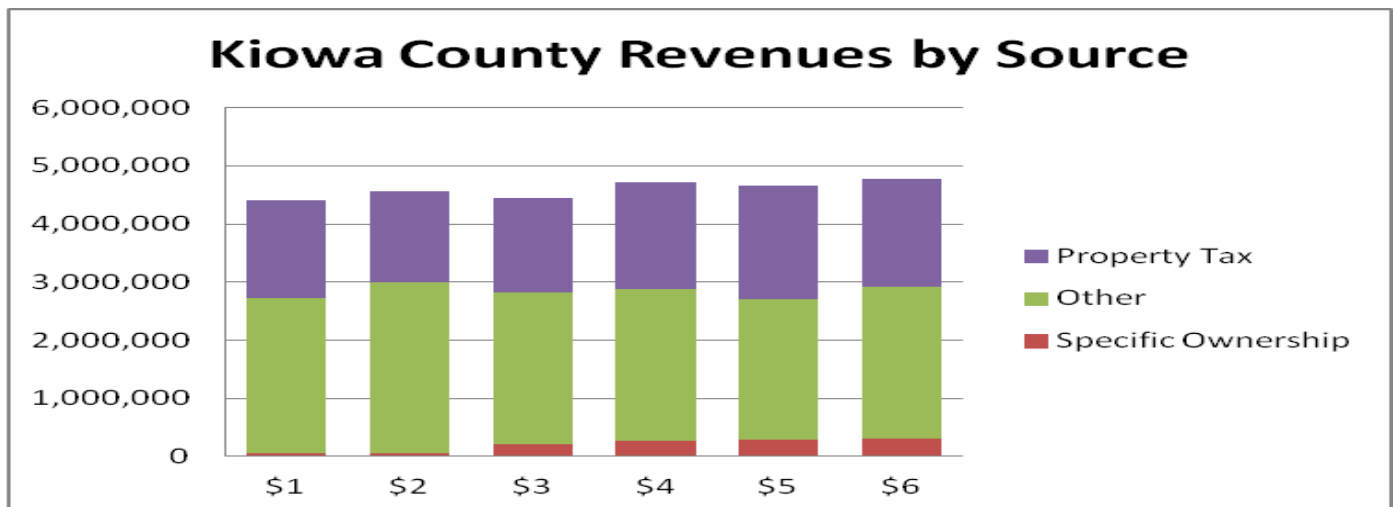
Kiowa	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Revenues	\$4,401,387	\$4,569,469	\$4,453,435	\$4,714,339	\$4,664,492	\$4,782,315
General Operating Expenses	\$4,235,231	\$4,919,572	\$4,026,144	\$3,910,649	\$4,402,498	\$4,829,338
Revenue Debt						



## Revenues by Source

Revenues by Source	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Property Tax	\$1,670,995	\$1,574,830	\$1,633,469	\$1,843,784	\$1,956,114	\$1,856,205
Sales & Use Tax						
Specific Ownership	\$53,142	\$56,168	\$209,615	\$259,336	\$288,556	\$297,868
Other	\$2,677,250	\$2,938,471	\$2,610,351	\$2,611,219	\$2,419,922	\$2,628,242





### Factors Affecting Economic Performance

Some of the items identified that are affecting economic performance include but are not limited to the list below, in no specific order:

- Reliance on agriculture, with the drought and resulting water issues, there has been a downturn in agriculture production which once was our strongest sector.
- A loss of entrepreneurial spirit as people afraid to start new ventures in a depressed economy.
- Lack of available capital.
- Defeatist attitude
- Lack of creative, competitive incentive packages.
- Lack of workforce readiness and availability.
- Out-migration of skilled workers due to low wages offered in the county.
- Inability to grow existing businesses due to factors such as the lack of support businesses and increased operating costs.
- Continual out-sourcing due to lack of goods and services in small communities.
- Lack of available buildings, although commercial property is available.
- Lack of housing for workforce.
- Infrastructure not always readily available.

# CURRENT ASSESSMENT

## STRENGTHS

- Avenues of transportation are available for shipment of goods and services as well as tourism opportunities with Highways 287 (Ports to Plains) and 96 intersecting mid-county and Hwy 385 on the east end, small airport and rail system across the county that could be beneficial with the right ownership
- 6-county collaboration strengthens the entire area and helps promote one another's assets
- Health care system includes clinic, hospital, extended care, nursing home, assisted living and home health care
- Great Plains Reservoirs located inside Kiowa County for recreation
- Availability of land for commercial and residential development
- Wind accessibility ripe for development along with land for solar farms
- Low cost of living index that should be a draw to work for big business from a smaller community with the infrastructure already in place
- Safe and relatively healthy environment

## WEAKNESSES

- Lack of renewable energy projects inside the county
- Out-sourcing of goods and service as small communities cannot provide everything necessary
- Aging population
- Lack of housing availability for workforce – workers brought in from other counties taking their salaries back out of Kiowa County
- Out-migration of workforce due to low salaries, lack of training or lack of job opportunities for skilled workforce
- Basically an agricultural community with little to no light manufacturing
- Complacent attitudes – residents not wanting change

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Great Lakes Reservoirs becoming a recreational mecca and providing jobs
- Commercial and residential property available
- Transmission line to dissect east end of county could provide wind farm promise
- Land available for solar farms
- Rail line needs forward thinking ownership
- Ports to Plains Highway 287 running north-south through the county for commerce

## THREATS

- Defeatist attitude
- Too much dependence on agriculture for the lack of water/drought
- Rural location does not allow others to realize the opportunities here
- Government regulations slow down or stop possible business growth
- Being forgotten by those who could help us grow and prosper

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION / ACTION PLAN

## VISION STATEMENT

To actively promote and manage growth and development for Kiowa County while preserving the unique rural atmosphere and quality of life inherent throughout the history of Kiowa County, Colorado.

## OBJECTIVES

Kiowa County is unique to Colorado in its scenery, its sparse population, and its slower paced lifestyle. Our goal is not to emulate others, but to build upon our existing strengths. We treasure our uniqueness; therefore will enhance these qualities so we may share them with others. In this way, we will promote natural growth from within while expanding our horizons.

- We will improve the infrastructures and aesthetics of our towns and county to make them more attractive and inviting.
- We will encourage the development of our natural resources while protecting our environment.
- We will expand our technological capabilities, which will allow us to be apart from the overpopulated, fast-paced regions but not behind them.
- We will promote locally and nationally the benefits of our central location and accessibility.
- We will support our agricultural backbone while diversifying through other economic interests.
- We will continue to utilize and enhance our recreational areas for the enjoyment of our citizens and visitors.
- We will strengthen our commitment to quality education and healthcare.
- We will manage growth to maintain a safe and stable environment for residents and visitors to live, work and play.

Although we have these objectives in mind, it will take collaboration between KCEDF, the Kiowa County Commissioners, Town of Eads, Town of Sheridan Lake, Town of Haswell and all of our state and federal partners to accomplish any and all of these. Collaboration is the foundation of all needed projects for any area.

## GOALS/ACTION PLAN

### Energy:

- A transmission line will be erected at the east end of the county as a line from Lamar to Burlington passes through.

We need to take advantage of said line development because of our already established wind access so will continue to work with those involved.

- Land is available throughout the county.

We will pursue the idea of solar farms that will not only help our economy, but also provide a needed resource for outlying areas.

### Recreation:

- Great Plains Reservoirs: Kiowa County is home to the Great Plains Reservoirs and Jackson's Pond.

A plan is in place to have a joint meeting between all those involved that could assist in having water permanently stored in these lakes for constant recreation. This group consists of, but is not limited to, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Kiowa County Commissioners and Road and Bridge, Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) Amity and Ft. Lyon Ditch companies, and Tri-State Generation.

Kiowa County received assistance through the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) that consists of CU Students who will provide ideas and promotions for the Great Plains Reservoirs as a tourist attraction. A font of information has been sent to these students that show what all is available in the area for visitors and conference calls have provided an opportunity to discuss strategy for a website and Facebook site to promote the reservoirs and surrounding area attractions. These students will soon visit the area to get the best perspective on what they are working toward.

- Prairie Horizons Trail: Part of the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail that dissects the United States comes through Kiowa County on Highway 96. The portion of that trail that runs from Pueblo east to the Kansas border is referred to as the Prairie Horizons Trail. Kiowa County boasts as being the home of the half way point of the TransAmerica Trail, just west of Eads.

Cyclists from all over the world are not only welcome in all of our small communities but are a huge economic boost all along the way. The Prairie Horizons committee provides leaflets to the cyclists showing what amenities are available in each community and welcome signs in business windows.

Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) will continue take the lead to promote and service this trail that serves both Kiowa and Crowley Counties.

- Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site: Although a somber reminder of an event in our history, this site is an attraction for our county that draws both tourists and historians.

National Park Service (NPS) offices for the site are currently located in a building rented in Eads. Ongoing efforts by such entities as NPS, Kiowa County Commissioners, Town of Eads, KCEDF, State Historic Fund, DOLA, etc. are now turning a historic building in downtown Eads into new offices, visitor center and archival library. This new facility will offer visitors the ultimate experience and information depicting this sacred piece of Kiowa County heritage.

- Wayfinding I and II – Interpretive signage in communities along Highway 96 highlighting what there is to see in Kiowa County.

Such organizations as CDOT, Canyons & Plains, NPS and KCEDF were instrumental in erecting signage at key locations in our 6-county region several years ago. Now Wayfinding II is in process by these same groups to put additional signage in the smaller communities along Highway 96 as visitor stops with fonts of information for our local and surrounding areas.

### **Health/Child Care:**

- Weisbrod Hospital/Kiowa County Hospital District(KCHD): For a small community, the county seat of Eads is fortunate to have every aspect of health care available.

We are pleased to provide health care that gives our residents peace of mind and also draws patients from surrounding areas. Currently there is a hospital with emergency room, clinic, extended care, nursing home, assisted living and home health care. KCEDF was proud to donate land to KCHD for the added service of Flight for Life.

KCHD is always striving to improve health care. They have just recruited a new dentist and are currently constructing a new facility for a CT Scanner through grant funds.

- Future Leaders Learning & Care Center (FLLCC) is a proposed day care center.

Though in the infancy stages, a group of concerned citizens feel that a licensed day care center is a necessary component for both children and working parents. A group was therefore formed to accomplish the goal of a new center. Meetings have been held resulting in 501(c)3 designation, a work group and a board being formed, a mission statement, possible building requirements, field trips to other like facilities for information gathering, etc. as this project gets started.

Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) has donated .65 acre of land for the future construction of a day care facility.

### **Waste Disposal:**

- Kiowa County currently has two landfills: one in Eads and one in Haswell.

The Kiowa County Commissioners continue to work with state and federal regulations and representatives to keep both landfills operating.

Grant information is being pursued that would allow Kiowa County to have a trailer capable of hauling E-waste from Kiowa County to the nearest E-waste facility.

### **Housing:**

- The need for housing is of great concern throughout the region.

Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) is one of few economic development foundations to have purchased land specifically for development of commercial, agricultural, residential and recreational needs for the community.

KCEDF has recently donate 3 lots for the sole purpose of erecting 6 two and three bedroom apartments to help with the housing crunch. This is a combined effort of KCEDF, SECED and the State Housing Authority, with grant funds currently being pursued. Although KCEDF will oversee the project, SECED will ultimately manage it.

The residential aspect of the KCEDF property has given homeowners the opportunity to purchase larger parcels of land that include utilities, with most of the lots already sold. Some homes are already built with more being erected.

A private concern is working toward a modular home area that will be inside the city limits of the Town of Eads, providing at least 8 residences.

### **Commercial Property/Commerce:**

- Kiowa County has commercial property for sale as well as avenues for commerce transportation.

The Town of Eads has set aside space for an industrial park by the airport, 1 mile west of Eads.



Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF) has commercial property for sale adjacent to the south edge of Eads. There are ongoing talks between the Town of Eads and KCEDF to annex a portion of KCEDF commercial property.

The rail line going east to west across the county needs a forward looking owner to turn it into a thriving line again.

Highways 287 (Ports to Plains) and Highway 96 intersect in the Town of Eads providing a constant means of shipping goods.

With commercial property available, a small airport, a rail line and a Ports to Plains highway, Kiowa County provides what is needed for a business to consider our area no matter where they may want to ship their goods.

# **ECONOMIC RESILIENCE**

Below represents initiatives that will assist Kiowa County and the region in facing our issues:

## **“STEADY STATE” INITIATIVES & EFFORTS**

**Colorado Blueprint 2.0**

**Regional Broadband Strategic Grant**

**Regional Manufacturing Labor Shed Study**

**Regional Housing Study**

**Regional "flight for life" Service with Care Connect**

**Regional Healthcare Sector Partnership**

**Regional Electric Car Plug-In Stations**

**Creative Marketing and Regional Website**

## **“RESPONSIVE” INITIATIVES**

**SEBREA (Southeast Business Retention Expansion and Attraction)**

**SBDC (Small Business Development Center)**

**SECED, Inc. (Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc.)**

**OEDIT (Office of Economic Development & International Trade)**

**DOLA (Department of Local Affairs)**

**USDA RD (US Dept of Agriculture Rural Development)**

**Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation (KCEDF)**

**Kiowa County Commissioners**

**Town of Eads**

**Town of Haswell**

**Town of Sheridan Lake**