

SIMPCO

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026



Cherokee County, IA • Dakota County, NE • Ida County, IA •
Monona County, IA • Plymouth County, IA • Woodbury County, IA

Acknowledgements & Contributors

Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) would like to extend our sincerest thank you to the following stakeholders involved with this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2022-2026. This plan was funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). The following stakeholders attended meetings to inform and review the plan. SIMPCO staff developed the plan with advisory assistance from the CEDS Committee. Thank you for your support and participation in this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026.

SIMPCO Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee (Full list available in Appendix A)

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Dakota County, Nebraska
Ida County, Iowa
Monona County, Iowa
Plymouth County, Iowa
Woodbury County, Iowa

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The 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was approved by members of the SIMPCO Executive/Finance Committee and Board of Directors during the September 15, 2022 meeting.

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Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a plan used to guide economic development and build regional resiliency. The CEDS for the SIMPCO Region has been updated to direct economic development efforts for the next five years, beginning October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2026. This plan updates the CEDS 2020-2024 Plan to determine the forces, trends, and issues that will have the greatest economic impact upon the Region and position leaders to take advantage of economic opportunities and to avoid or mitigate potential threats. As the next five years progress, this document will be relied upon as a benchmark to help prioritize action and evaluate outcomes for the entire Region.

The purpose of the CEDS 2022-2026 Plan is to develop a strategic action plan that will accomplish the following:

1. Identify and build on the strengths of the Region, as well as identify gaps in resources or expertise that need to be addressed.
2. Expand supply chains. Grow and support new industry clusters.
3. Qualify the six counties within the SIMPCO CEDS Region for U.S. EDA program funding. Secure the Region as an EDD, in turn making the Region more likely to attract federal funds and technical assistance by demonstrating that resources are used efficiently and effectively.
4. Develop measurable strategies to improve the regional economy and make the Region more resilient to natural disasters and economic shocks.
5. Facilitate regional collaboration, identify economic partners, and provide an engaging platform that generates region-wide discussions and actions.

Per the U.S. Economic Development Administration requirements, the CEDS document contains the following five elements:

1. **Summary Background:** A summary background of the economic development conditions of the Region; including demographic data and regional context discussion.
2. **SWOT Analysis:** An in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
3. **Strategic Direction and Action Plan:** Strategic direction and an action plan (flowing from the SWOT analysis which should be consistent with other relevant state, regional, and local plans).
4. **Evaluation Framework:** Performance measures used to evaluate the organization's implementation of the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy
5. **Economic Resilience:** The ability to recover quickly from, withstand, and avoid an economic shock. Identifying where the Region can establish and expand

capacity for economic resilience through the ability to anticipate risk, evaluate how risks can impact key economic assets, and build a responsive capacity.

The SIMPCO CEDS Region

The SIMPCO CEDS Region is composed of six counties: Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, and Woodbury Counties in Iowa and Dakota County in Nebraska. The Region is centrally located in the United States, providing convenient national access for commerce and economic development. Major highways within the Region include U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 20, U.S. Highway 59, and Interstate 29. The Region also features the Loess Hills landform.

Today the economy is firmly tied to the Region's industrial past. Looking to the future, stakeholders and economic development professionals recognize that a tension exists with how to best support economic growth. Should the Region build upon its strong industrial past and present, or should focus be on diversification of the economy?

CEDS Goals and Objectives

The following goals were generated by the CEDS Committee to guide policy and action for the next five years:

Economic Development Goal: To create high-skill, higher-wage jobs within innovative clusters as a means to diversify the regional economy and improve economic conditions in the area for years to come.

Workforce Development Goal: To develop, retain, and attract a highly trained, competitive, and entrepreneurial workforce that addresses and compliments the growing needs of the regional business community.

Infrastructure Improvement Goal: To invest in infrastructure improvements such as roads, bridges, sewers, water facilities, broadband, and multi-modal transportation systems that will strengthen and diversify the regional economy.

Housing Goal: To develop diverse housing options for all income levels to ensure the availability of housing supply for all workers, including those brought in by expanding businesses and new firms in the Region.

Quality of Life Goal: To encourage placemaking and develop quality of life amenities that attract and retain residents and businesses.

Economic Resilience Goal: To build and strengthen partnerships, resources, and communities in the region to better avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, impacts of climate change, and other major disruptions.

The CEDS Document

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a plan used to guide economic development and build regional resiliency. A CEDS is required by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to receive designation as an Economic Development District (EDD). This plan must be updated every 5 years and is produced by Siouland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) to meet the EDA requirements. Furthermore, the CEDS is designed to guide the Region's economic growth by strengthening and stabilizing the regional economy and improving the overall living conditions for residents of the Region.

The CEDS for the SIMPCO Region has been updated to direct economic development efforts for the next five years, beginning October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2026. This plan updates the CEDS 2020-2024 Plan to determine the forces, trends, and issues that will have the greatest economic impact upon the Region and position leaders to take advantage of economic opportunities and to avoid or mitigate potential threats. As the next five years progress, this document will be relied upon as a benchmark to help prioritize action and evaluate outcomes for the entire Region.

The purpose of the SIMPCO CEDS is to develop a strategic action plan that will accomplish the following:

1. Identify and build on the strengths of the Region, as well as identify gaps in resources or expertise that need to be addressed.
2. Expand supply chains. Grow and support new industry clusters.
3. Qualify the six counties within the SIMPCO CEDS Region for U.S. EDA program funding. Secure the Region as an EDD, in turn making the Region more likely to attract federal funds and technical assistance by demonstrating that resources are used efficiently and effectively.
4. Develop measurable strategies to improve the regional economy and make the Region more resilient to natural disasters and economic shocks.
5. Facilitate regional collaboration, identify economic partners, and provide an engaging platform that generates region-wide discussions and actions.

Process and Participation

SIMPCO will fulfill the role of the six-county, two-state Economic Development District (EDD). The U.S. EDA defines EDDs as multi-jurisdictional entities that help lead the locally based, regionally driven economic development planning process that leverages the involvement of the public, private, and non-profit sectors to establish a strategic blueprint (i.e., an economic development roadmap) for regional collaboration. The SIMPCO CEDS Region (the EDD) is composed of six counties: Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, and Woodbury Counties in Iowa and Dakota County in Nebraska.

CEDS Committee and Regional Collaboration

The CEDS Committee consists of representatives of the public and private sectors, including local businesses, educational institutions, and surrounding communities. In 2020, the CEDS Committee added a representative from the North Sioux City Economic Development Corp (Union County, SD) to better represent the Sioux City MSA. Though the community is located outside of SIMPCO's EDD, North Sioux City and the Dakota Dunes have increasingly become an important component of Siouxland economic development efforts.

The group worked diligently to identify the Region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Those were then translated into goals, objectives and action items to improve the Region. The CEDS Committee continues to meet quarterly to evaluate progress and offer suggestions for improving future CEDS plans. See Appendix A for a full list of CEDS Committee members.

Beyond the CEDS Committee, SIMPCO collaborates with numerous economic development partners in the Region that are listed in Appendix B. The list of partners includes federal, state, regional, county, city organizations, and major employers in the Region.

Community Participation

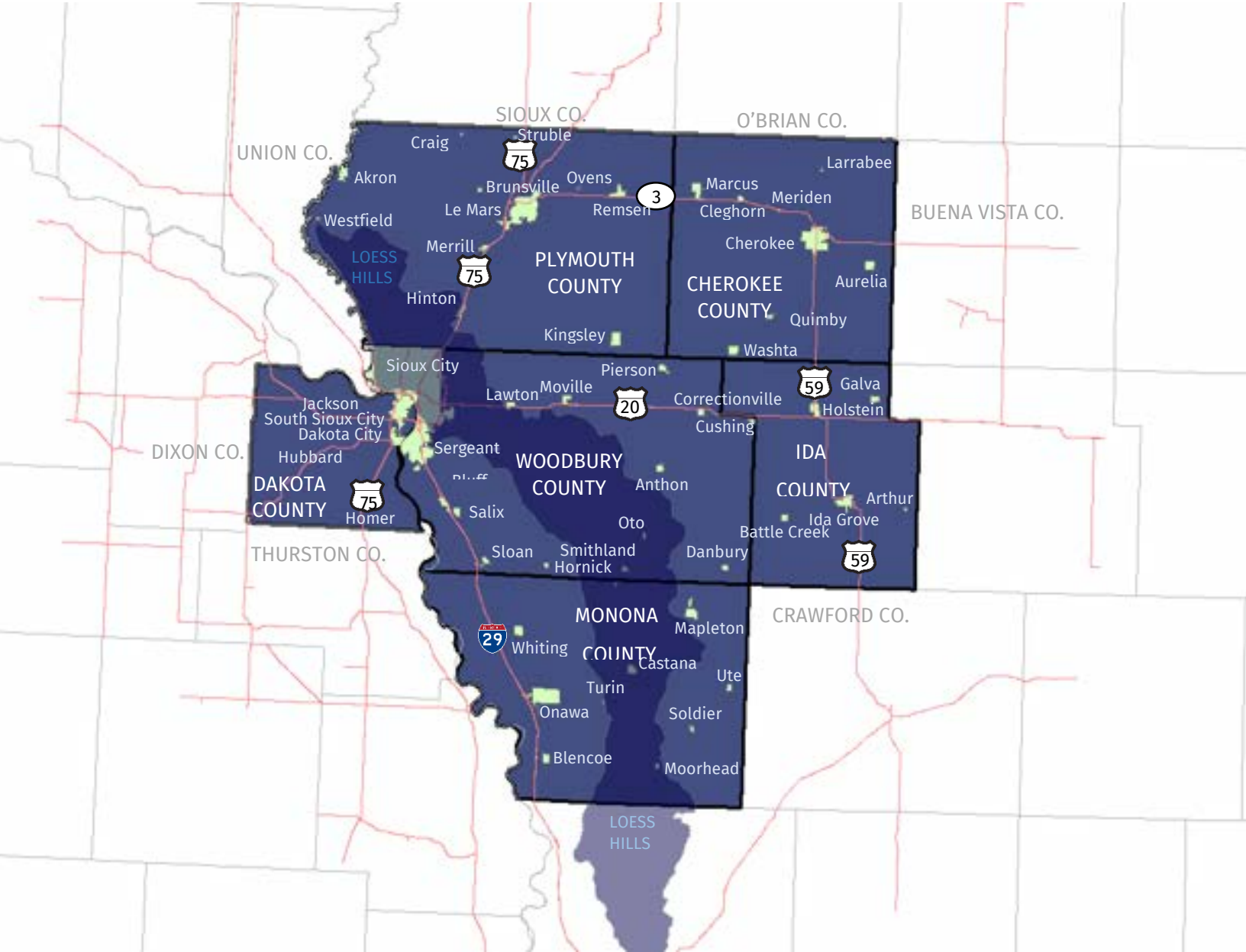
Community input was gathered by way of a survey that was administered by SIMPCO staff. The results of this survey were reviewed by SIMPCO staff and the CEDS committee and were used to guide discussions of the CEDS Committee. The survey contained 16 questions developed around the SWOT analysis. This survey was available to participants online via SurveyMonkey. Responses were gathered from March 18, 2022 through April 30, 2022. A total of 103 participants responded. The results of the survey are displayed in Appendix C.

Summary Background

Location

The SIMPCO CEDS Region is composed of six counties: Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, and Woodbury Counties in Iowa and Dakota County in Nebraska. The Region is centrally located in the United States, providing convenient national access for commerce and economic development. Major highways within the Region include U.S. Highway 75, U.S. Highway 20, U.S. Highway 59, and Interstate 29. The Region also features the Loess Hills landform which is delineated with a dark shading.

Figure 1. SIMPCO CEDS Region Vicinity Map



Local History

Archeological evidence places Native American culture in the Region as early as 1200 CE. Rivers served as an important trade route, and the area was consistently inhabited by various Native American tribes. The Yankton Sioux were present in the 18th Century according to reports from Spanish and French fur trappers. In 1803, the land was acquired by the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase, and a year later members of the Lewis and Clark expedition were met by the Omaha tribe.

Meatpacking and stockyard industries began to take shape in the 1850s and 1860s, laying the foundation for the manufacturing industry, which would become the cornerstone of the local economy. In 1870 the railroad was completed in Sioux City, not only bolstering that city's economy, but also supporting rural communities throughout the Region. Following the completion of the railroad, the late 19th Century saw rapid development, locally referred to as the "building boom."

By the 1970s, local leaders realized the need to diversify the economy, after labor unrest revealed vulnerabilities related to being primarily reliant on a couple of industries. Steps towards diversification included the addition of tourism companies and technology focused companies (including the founding of the computer hardware company Gateway in Sioux City in 1985). However, the Region has largely stayed true to its roots and built upon and expanded its agriculture and manufacturing economy over the years.



Recent Economic Overview

The economy continues to be firmly tied to the Region's industrial past. Leading employers for the Region include Tyson Foods, Seaboard Triumph Foods, and Wells Enterprises. Healthcare institutions and school districts also employ many people in the Region.

Like other communities across the country, the Siouxland Region was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment saw a record high in April 2020 at 9.7%. However, since August 2020, this rate has returned to more typical rates. One of the biggest and long-term challenges is labor shortages. This was a problem for certain industries but was exacerbated and became more of a widespread problem as part of what has been dubbed the "Great Resignation" during the pandemic.

Looking to the future, stakeholders and economic development professionals recognize that this labor shortage will be an ongoing challenge for both the Region as well as the States of Iowa and Nebraska. Workforce retention and attraction will need to be a top priority to address this challenge. This adds to the continuing tension of how to best support economic growth. Should the Region build upon its strong industrial past and present, or should the focus be on diversification of the economy? The remainder of this CEDS 2022-2026 Plan will look more deeply at these topics as well as the assets and challenges related to economic growth more generally.

Economic Resiliency

The SIMPCO Regional economic prosperity is linked to an area's ability to withstand, prevent, or quickly recover from major disruptions to its underlying economic base. The SIMPCO CEDS Region relies upon several economic development partnerships to build and sustain its ability to avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts. The Region has actively prepared to mitigate economic impacts from weather, employment, and natural disasters with pro-active planning, ongoing partnerships and groups, and responsive initiatives listed below. The Region's Economic Resilience is explored further in the Disaster Recovery & Resiliency (DRR) Addendum to the CEDS.

SIMPCO Region Economic Resilience Groups and Initiatives:

- CEDS Committee – quarterly meetings and CEDS 5-year plan updates
- US EDA Report and Programs – ongoing reporting of major employer loss, economic issues, and exploring program opportunities
- Dakota County Rural Economic Development (RED) Committee – quarterly meetings and implementing the Dakota County RED Strategic Plan
- Continued Economic Development Partnerships – list in Appendix B
- Hazard Mitigation Plans – Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan most recently updated in 2020
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) – coordinated training, planning exercises, and projects to maximize response efficiency and effectiveness for all first responders
- Tri-State Incident Management Team
- County Emergency Operations Plans
- County Recovery Plans
- Maintain CARES Act funded Economic Resilience Toolkit – SIMPCO
- SIMPCO Water Resource Committee
- Iowa's West Coast Initiative

Regional Demographics

1. Population

Since 1960, the SIMPCO CEDS Region has experienced a 3.3% population loss. Economic development initiatives in the Region have focused on retention and expansion of the Region’s population. Recent data indicates that this population decline has stopped, and the region has begun to see population growth with 2.3% population growth between 2010 and 2020. While this speaks to overall population stability within the SIMPCO CEDS Region, specific communities are experiencing differing realities of growth and decline. Only two cities (Hornick and Sergeant Bluff) within the Region have grown by over 10%. In contrast, four cities (Castana, Oto, Quimby, and Rodney) have seen more than 20% population decline. As shown in Table 1, half of the Region’s counties saw overall population growth and the other half saw overall population decline. See Appendix D for more demographic data.

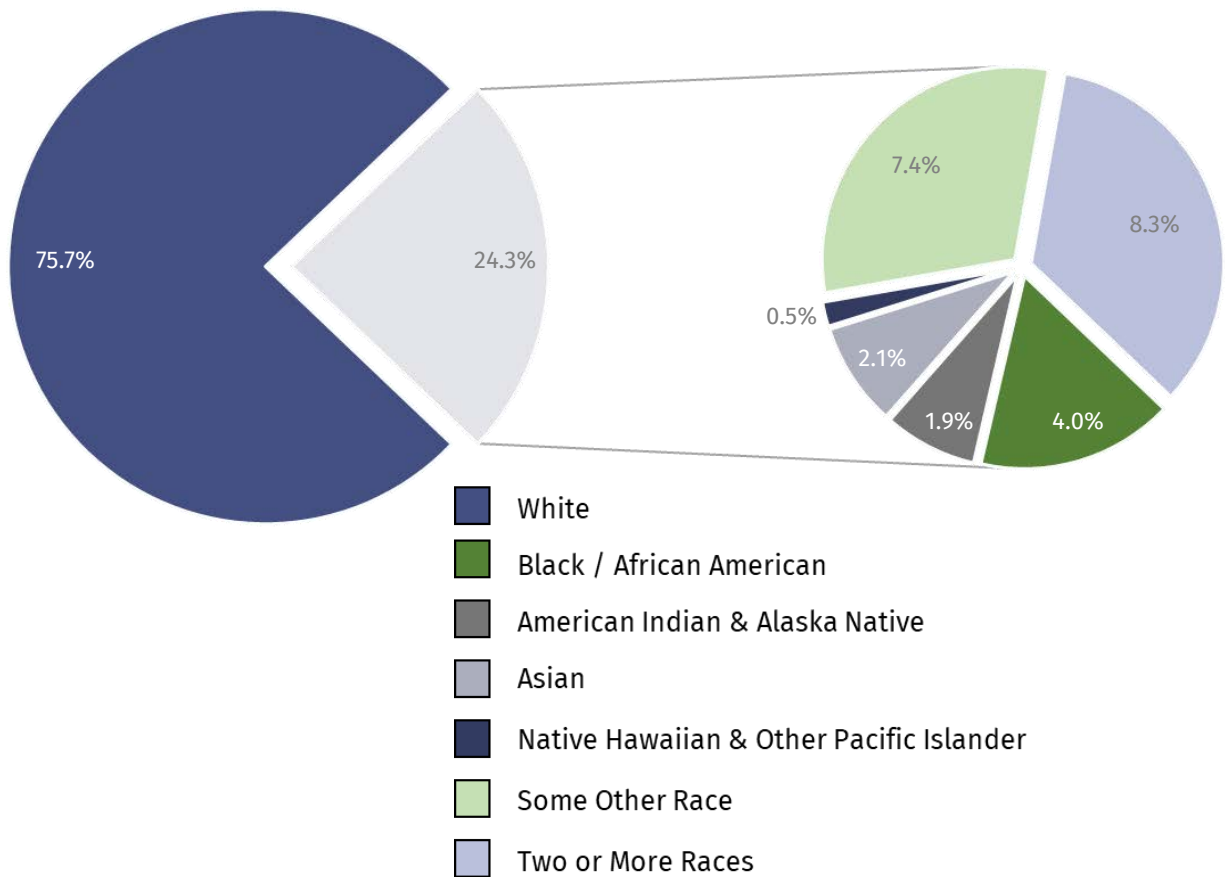
Table 1. Regional Population Trends

	2000 Pop.	2010 Pop.	2020 Pop.	2000-2020 Change	2010-2020 Change
Cherokee County	13,035	12,072	11,658	-10.6%	-3.4%
Dakota County	20,253	21,006	21,582	6.6%	2.7%
Ida County	7,837	7,089	7,005	-10.6%	-1.2%
Monona County	10,020	9,245	8,751	-12.7%	-5.3%
Plymouth County	24,849	24,986	25,698	3.4%	2.8%
Woodbury County	103,877	102,172	105,941	2.0%	3.7%
SIMPCO CEDS Region	179,871	176,570	180,635	0.4%	2.3%
Iowa	2,926,324	3,046,355	3,190,369	9.0%	4.7%
Nebraska	1,711,263	1,826,341	1,961,504	14.6%	7.4%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2000, 2010, 2020

Between 2010 and 2020, the region saw population declines in both age groups of under 25 years old (-2.7%) and 25 to 64 years old (-2.7%) but saw an increase in the 65 years and older group (12.9%). The average median age in the region in 2020 was 40.8 compared to 38.3 in 2010. The region also saw a change in racial demographics. The region became more diverse during the last decade. The Regional population was 86.0% White in 2010 and 75.7% White in 2020. The racial groups with the largest increases were those in the Black / African American (2.1%) and Two or More Races (5.9%) categories. Figure 2 shows more details about the Region’s racial breakdown.

Figure 2. Regional Demographic Overview



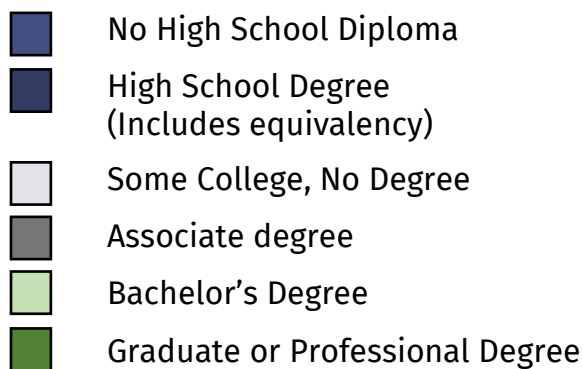
Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2020

2. Education

In 2020, 21.7% of the population within the SIMPCO CEDS Region (over the age of 25) held a bachelor's degree or higher. This is over 10% less than the national average, which is 32.9%. However, the Region is in line with national averages when it comes to attaining a high school degree (or equivalency) and higher, at approximately 88%.

General population trends show that the percent of individuals at each level of educational attainment has remained relatively constant. The exceptions to this are the categories of associates degree and bachelor's degree. Both categories have seen a slight increase since 2000.

Figure 3. Educational Attainment for Individuals 25 Years and Older in the SIMPCO CEDS Region



Source: U.S. Census 2020 5-Year Estimates

The SIMPCO CEDS Region has seven higher educational institutions. Cumulatively these educate over 11,500 students every year (including part-time and full time enrolled students). These institutions are provided in the list below. Additional information about the role of these institutions in workforce and economic development is examined in Appendix G.

- Briar Cliff University
- Morningside University
- Nebraska Indian Community College
- Northeast Community College (South Sioux City Extension)
- St. Luke's College UnityPoint Health
- Wayne State College at South Sioux City
- Western Iowa Tech Community College

3. Labor Force and Industry

In 2020, the Region's labor force (civilian) consisted of 92,953 individuals. Of these, 89,355 were employed. The Region's average unemployment rate is 3.0%. This unemployment rate is lower but generally similar compared to the states of Iowa and Nebraska, which had unemployment rates of 3.9% and 3.4% respectively in 2020. These are lower than the national unemployment rate of 5.4%. Due to the pandemic, many communities saw an increase in unemployment rates as many businesses were forced to temporarily or permanently close. However, the Region and the States of Iowa and Nebraska have seen typical low unemployment numbers return.

Average earnings of employed individuals in the Region are \$34,734. This number is lower than the national median earnings (\$36,280), and lower than both Iowa (\$35,457) and Nebraska (\$35,283). Low wages may contribute to a stagnant economy and limit the Region’s ability to compete for workers.

Table 2. 2020 Labor Force Characteristics of the SIMPCO CEDS Region

Total Population	180,635
16+ Population	134,631
Not in Labor Force	41,489
Labor Force (Civilian)	92,953
Employed	89,355
Unemployed	3,598
Unemployment Rate	3.9%
Median Earnings	\$34,743
Median Household Income	\$59,255
Percent of People Living Below Poverty Line	11.8%



Source: U.S. Census 2020 5-Year Estimates

The following table communicates the number of jobs per industry in 2010, 2019, and 2020 as well as the calculated percent change between 2010-2020. The median earnings for the various industries are also included. This table also contains 2019 job numbers as an additional reference due to the unprecedented events of 2020.

In both 2019 and 2020, the top three industries in the SIMPCO CEDS Region were: Educational Services, & Healthcare and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; and Retail Trade. In 2020, there were 89,355 jobs in the SIMPCO CEDS Region. This is a 0.9 increase compared to 2010, which had 88,579 jobs. The Region’s job growth is considerably behind rates in both Iowa (3.7%) and Nebraska (6.6%) in the same time frame. These are all behind the national job growth of 9.9%.

Industries that saw the largest growth were Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and mining (17.9%); Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing (11.0%). Industries that saw the biggest declines included: Wholesale trade (-7.7%); Information (-7.2%); Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (-6.6%); and Public Administration (-8.2%). Perhaps most concerning about this trend is that the Public Administration and Whole Trade industries have high median earnings. It will be challenging to preserve and grow median earnings region wide, if higher-wage jobs are disappearing. While the Region has seen a general increase in jobs, seven industries report a decline during this period.

Table 3. Industry Statistics of the SIMPCO CEDS Region

Industry	2010 Jobs	2019 Jobs	2020 Jobs	2010-2020 Change	Median Earnings
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	88,579	89,191	89,355	0.9%	\$36,872
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	3,606	3,847	4,251	17.9%	\$40,520
Construction	6,443	6,548	6,401	-0.7%	\$42,958
Manufacturing	16,701	16,698	17,144	2.7%	\$43,384
Wholesale trade	2,753	2,753	2,542	-7.7%	\$48,624
Retail trade	10,715	10,982	10,654	-0.6%	\$23,883
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	4,331	4,654	4,421	2.1%	\$42,850
Information	1,164	1,042	1,080	-7.2%	\$32,369
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3,993	4,516	4,432	11.0%	\$43,170
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5,078	5,231	5,023	-1.1%	\$37,816
Educational services, and healthcare and social assistance	19,188	19,280	19,379	1.0%	\$34,596
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services:	7,535	6,943	7,036	-6.6%	\$13,216
Other services, except public administration	4,034	3,891	4,204	4.2%	\$27,041
Public administration	3,038	2,806	2,788	-8.2%	\$48,016

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019, 2020

4. Industry Clusters and Innovation Index

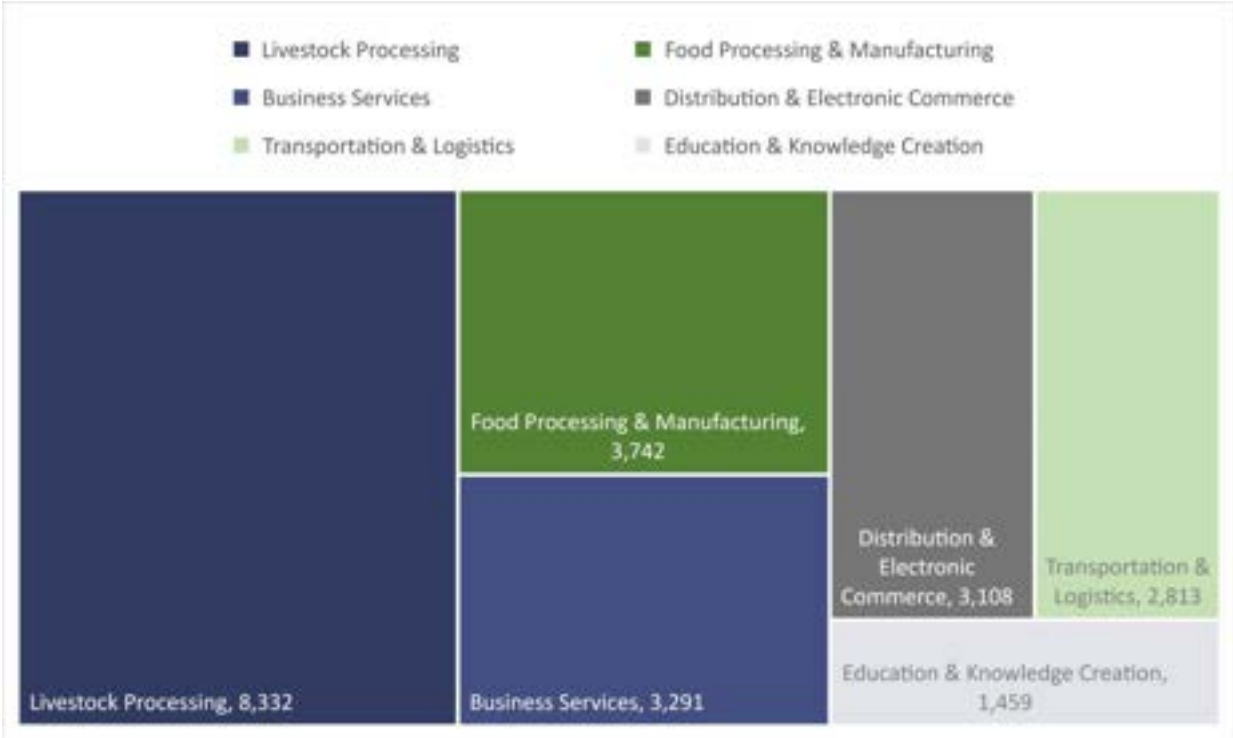
The U.S. EDA's Cluster Mapping Project identifies and defines cluster categories for all regions across the nation. A cluster is a regional concentration of related industries that arises out of the various types of linkages that span across industries in a particular location including technology, skills, and information. Identifying similar companies and institutions as a cluster provides opportunities for coordination and mutual improvement, yields better market insights, more refined research agendas, larger pools of specialized talent and faster deployment of new knowledge. Naturally, clusters emerge through the market process; enhancing companies productivity as

they grow in size. Over time companies looking for a new location are attracted to the established industry cluster and grow through the performance of the already established companies in the area.

The SIMPCO CEDS Region cluster portfolio was derived from the U.S. Cluster Mapping design region tool. In creating these cluster categories, the research team of the U.S. Cluster Mapping Project developed an algorithm to group together narrowly defined U.S. industry codes that show significant inter-industry linkages based on input-output measures, labor occupations, and the co-location patterns of employment and establishments.

Traded clusters refer to the groups of industries that serve markets beyond the region in which they are located. These are vital to strong regional economies because these industries and jobs generally account for higher wages and greater levels of innovation. The top six traded clusters in descending order are: Livestock Processing; Food Processing and Manufacturing; Business Services, Distribution and Electronic Commerce; Transportation and Logistics; Education and Knowledge Creation. Three of these are considered a “Strong Traded Cluster”, which is a cluster that has high employment specialization in a region. These are Livestock Processing (ranked #5 in U.S.), Food Processing and Manufacturing (#41), and Transportation and Logistics (#95).

Figure 4. Top Traded Clusters with Number Employed for Sioux City MSA



Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project, Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School. <https://clustermapping.us/>

Traded clusters account for 37% of all clusters in the Region, while 63% are local clusters. Local clusters are those that serve the region, rather than extending beyond

it. Leading local clusters by employment including: Local Health Services; Local Hospitality Establishments; Local Real Estate, Construction, and Development; Local Motor Vehicle Projects and Services; and Local Food and Beverage Processing and Distribution.

The U.S. EDA provides a set of tools and data that can be used by regional leaders to understand how their region compares to other areas of the country. The Innovation Intelligence tool includes both innovation inputs and outputs in order to measure both innovation capacity and innovation outcomes. This tool can highlight strengths and weaknesses of a region, and guide economic development strategies, as it showcases regions’ capacity for innovation and regional competitiveness. This score consists of five components, each with their own sub-score. The EDA defines these as:

- The **Human Capital and Knowledge Creation Index** suggests the extent to which a region’s population and labor force have the collective cognitive capacity and know-how to engage in innovative activities.
- The **Business Dynamics Index** gauges the competitiveness of a region by investigating the entry and exit of individual firms—the creative destruction measures.
- The **Business Profile Index** measures local business conditions and resources available to entrepreneurs and businesses.
- The **Employment and Productivity Index** describes economic growth, regional desirability or direct outcomes of innovative activity.
- The **Economic Well-Being Index** explores standard of living and other economic outcomes.

Table 3. 2021 SIMPCO Innovation Intelligence Index Scores

	SIMPCO	Iowa	Nebraska
Innovation Intelligence	108.2	99.8	102.0
Human Capital and Knowledge Creation	104.5	98.5	110.5
Business Dynamics	102.6	96.9	79.8
Business Profile	90.3	85.2	111.2
Employment and Productivity	111	92.3	87.1
Economic Well-Being	132.4	125.9	121.3

Source: U.S. Economic Development Administration, StatsAmerica: <https://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/>

The SIMPCO CEDS Region has an Innovation Intelligence Index score of 108.2, which is slightly above the Iowa and Nebraska scores. A comparison of these scores is provided in Table 3. A further breakdown of the wide variety of statistical data contributing to the Innovation Intelligence Index scores is available in Appendix D.

The Innovation Intelligence tool ranks the SIMPCO CEDS Region as “moderate” in all five categories for its relative Innovative Capacity. Among the lowest scores and economic areas to grow include:

- **STEM Education & Employment**
- **Technology-Based Knowledge Occupation Clusters** (*The employment share of occupations that apply higher technology, such as scientists and engineers, relative to all jobs*)
- **Average Patenting Rate** (*Number of patents per 1,000 workers*)
- **Venture Capital Count & Dollar Measures** (*Amount and type of venture capital money coming into the Region*)
- **Business Establishment Formation** (*Number of new business formation and the extent to which a region is creating new business ventures, an indicator that a region is undergoing positive economic change*)
- **Average Net Migration** (*The average annual net migration rate from 2013 to the latest year available*)

5. Economic Distress

As outlined in Section 301(a) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act (PWEDA) of 1965 (42 U.S.C. §3161(a)), the EDA determines economic distress by one or more of the following calculations or thresholds:

- **Low per capita income** (*the area has a per capita income of 80% or less of the national average*);
- **Unemployment rate above national average** (*the area has an unemployment rate that is, for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available, at least one percent greater than the national average unemployment rate*); or
- **Special Need** (*an area that “has experienced or is about to experience a special need arising from actual or threatened severe unemployment or economic adjustment problems resulting from severe short-term or long-term changes in economic conditions (42 U.S.C. §3161(a)(3)).” Special needs have included substantial out-migration or population loss, military base closures, and negative effects of changing trade patterns*).

Using data collected through the Stats America Measuring Distress Tool, the following table shows the SIMPCO CEDS Region’s and its counties’ these economic distress components compared to the U.S. The criteria used in this table include: 24-Month Average BLS Unemployment Rate ending in March 2022; 2020 Per Capita Personal Income (BEA PCPI); and 2020 Per Capita Money Income (ACS 5-year PCMI). The table’s included threshold calculation for unemployment reflects the percentage point difference between the unemployment rate for the selected area and the U.S. figure.

The threshold calculation for income is the selected area’s per capita value divided by U.S. per capita income and shown as a percentage share of the U.S. figure.

As a whole, the Region is not distressed. Each of the Region’s counties have a 24-month unemployment rate below the U.S. rate. However, Dakota County is below the 80% threshold for both the BEA PCPI and the ACS 5-Year PCMI, making it a distressed county.

Table 4. Regional Economic Distress

	24 Month Unemployment	Threshold Calculation	BEA PCPI	Threshold Calculation	ACS 5-Year PCMI	Threshold Calculation
U.S.	6.7	0.0	\$59,510	100	\$35,384	100
SIMPCO CEDS Region	4.1	-2.6	\$50,715	85.2	\$30,002	84.8
Cherokee County	3.4	-3.3	\$60,881	102.3	\$33,882	95.8
Ida County	3.3	-3.5	\$57,429	96.5	\$31,481	89
Monona County	4.5	-2.2	\$50,807	85.4	\$30,221	85.4
Plymouth County	3.2	-3.5	\$59,460	99.9	\$35,078	99.1
Woodbury County	4.6	-2.1	\$47,731	80.2	\$28,919	81.7
Dakota County	3.5	-3.2	\$47,062	79.1	\$26,416	74.7

Source: U.S. Economic Development Administration, StatsAmerica: Measuring Distress County Tool.

<https://www.statsamerica.org/distress/>

6. Income

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the SIMPCO CEDS Region’s median household income in 2020 was \$59,255. This was a 29.3% increase from 2010. Despite the increase, the median income is still below that of Iowa and Nebraska, at \$61,836 and \$63,015 respectively in 2020. Furthermore, while the median income rose, the percent of people living below the poverty level also rose in the same time frame. This can be indicative of increasing income disparity.

Table 5. SIMPCO CEDS Region Income and Poverty Comparison

	2010	2020	Percent Change
Median household income	\$45,834	\$59,255	29.3%
Percent of people living below the poverty level	10.2%	11.8%	1.6%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2000; American Community Survey 2020 5-Year Estimates

7. Housing

Having adequate, affordable housing is an important component for attracting and retaining workers. The median home value in the SIMPCO CEDS Region is \$124,350. This is significantly lower compared to state median home values which are \$153,900 in Iowa and \$164,000 in Nebraska. The Region’s median gross rent is also relatively low at \$675, compared to Iowa and Nebraska at \$806 and \$857, respectively. Low cost of housing supports the economy by acting as a compelling reason for new residents and workers to move to the Region.

However, the current state of the housing stock can be detrimental to economic growth. While recent efforts have been made to add to the Region’s housing stock, new and updated housing only makes up a small portion. Currently almost three quarters (74.6%) of the total housing stock is over 40 years old, and 60.6% is over 50 years old. Comparatively, the proportion of houses 50 or more years old is 50.4% in Iowa, 45.5% in Nebraska, and 37.9% nationwide. Along this line, only 9.5% of the housing stock has been constructed in the since 2000, less than half that of the States and national percentages (19.8%).

Table 6. Housing Characteristics of the SIMPCO CEDS Region

Housing Stock Characteristics		Age		
Median home value	\$124,350	2014 or later	1,526	2.0%
Median gross rent	\$675	2000-2013	5,640	7.5%
Total housing units	75,137	1980-1999	11,938	15.9%
Occupied	69,428	1940-1979	32,729	43.6%
Owner occupied	48,509	1939 or earlier	23,304	31.0%
Renter occupied	20,919			
Vacant	5,709			

Source: U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 2020 5-Year Estimates

8. Transportation

The SIMPCO CEDS Region is served primarily by four transportation systems. These include the road network, air travel, railroad, and river transport. Interstate 29 runs generally north to south near the western portion of the Region and serves as a

significant route for transporting goods and people. It also connects the Region to other significant transportation routes such as Interstate 80, situated south of the Region. The Region is also served by several U.S. highways which include Highways 20, 59, and 75.

The Sioux Gateway Airport is the largest airport in the Region. There are a number of smaller airfields as well. Residents can travel slightly outside the Region to the Sioux Falls Regional Airport in Sioux Falls, SD or to the Omaha Eppley Airfield in Omaha, NE to reach more destinations.

The Missouri River separates Nebraska from Iowa, serving as the western border for Plymouth, Woodbury, and Monona Counties and the eastern border of Dakota County. This river provides more than just recreational opportunities; barges along the river allow the transportation of goods without having to use land-based transportation methods.

A final option for the transportation of goods and services is the railroads. There are three Class 1 railroads and one Shortline railroad.

More information on transportation in the Region can be found on the [SIMPCO website](https://simpco.org/divisions/transportation-planning). (<https://simpco.org/divisions/transportation-planning>)

9. Environmental Context and Climate

The climate of the SIMPCO CEDS Region is characterized by large changes in temperature throughout the year and moderate precipitation. Generally, the Region is colder and has a lower drought severity rating compared to national averages.

More information regarding the environmental context can be found in Appendix E.

Table 7. SIMPCO CEDS Region Climate Comparison 2021

	SIMPCO CEDS Region	Contiguous U.S.
High temperature in July	86.2°	87.6°
Low temperature in January	17.1°	25.2°
Annual precipitation	30.0"	30.5"
Palmer Drought Severity Index (January)	Approx. -2.2	-2.87

Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, *Climate at a Glance*

10. Natural Resources

From an economic perspective, arguably the Region’s most valuable natural resources are the soil and climate that enable farming and ranching. The Missouri River is another important natural resource. Water is important for agriculture, manufacturing, and utilities. There are also transportation options that utilize the River. In addition, the

River acts as the setting for other natural resources to thrive, such as vegetation, fish and wildlife. This can contribute to recreational and tourism based economic activities. Due to the expansion of agricultural and urban areas, the Region's biodiversity and plant and animal habitats have declined over time.

11. Rivers and Watersheds

The Region includes seven major rivers including: Missouri River, Big Sioux River, Floyd River, West Fork Little Sioux River, Little Sioux River, Maple River, and Soldier River. There are numerous streams and creeks that feed into these.

Active watershed districts and plans in the Region include: SIMPCO Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, SIMPCO Water Resources Committee, Lewis and Clark Natural Resources District (NRD), Papio-Missouri River NRD, Big Sioux River Water Quality Improvement Plan Iowa-South Dakota, Blue Lake Water Quality Improvement Plan Monona County, and Floyd River Water Quality Improvement Plan.

12. Environmental Concerns

In recent years, the SIMPCO CEDS Region has experienced many significant flood events. In response to the March 2019 flooding event, SIMPCO gathered resources and links to funding programs for member counties and communities, which can be found on the SIMPCO website. SIMPCO updated its Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for the five counties located within Iowa in 2020 (approved by FEMA on July 24, 2020). Dakota County's hazard mitigation planning efforts are met through the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was approved in 2021.

Like elsewhere, the Region must also prepare for the effects of climate change. The Region anticipates changes to precipitation and temperature which may affect the agricultural industry. Additionally, more extreme and frequent hazardous events are likely to occur, disrupting daily economic activities.



SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis is an exercise used to reflect on the current state of the regional economy by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The [U.S. EDA](#) defines the SWOT components in the following way:

Strengths are a region’s relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and are often internal in nature.

Weaknesses are a region’s relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture); these are also generally internal in nature.

Opportunities are chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), and are often external in nature.

Threats are chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g., several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often are external in nature.

A region may be able to capitalize on strengths and opportunities, as well as better understand factors that may contribute to a region’s economic growth. Likewise, identification of weaknesses and threats can inform sources of possible economic decline and guide strategies for overcoming those factors.



Methods

SIMPCO staff and the CEDS committee reviewed the SWOT analysis results completed in 2020, which were used to write the CEDS 2020-2024, to complete the Disaster Recovery & Resiliency Addendum in 2021. In order to complete the SWOT Analysis for the CEDS 2022-2026, SIMPCO staff and the CEDS committee returned to this analysis as a foundation to complete the update. SIMPCO staff and the CEDS Committee looked at each item within the four categories. The items were evaluated for current relevancy and determined to be either still relevant, no longer relevant, or relevant but belonging to a different category (such as an opportunity turning into a strength).

In addition to this, the SIMPCO staff and CEDS Committee members evaluated the results of a survey that was distributed to communities within the SIMPCO CEDS Region. This 16-question survey was developed around the SWOT Analysis. The results of this survey can be found in Appendix B. While the survey responses were not directly integrated within the SWOT Analysis results, these responses were used to inform and guide the CEDS Committee discussions. Themes and individual responses were discussed at a committee meeting and either added to the SWOT Analysis or determined to be incorrect or not relevant.

Finally, the committee looked to external resources. These included the U.S. EDA Innovation Index, regional demographics, industry clusters, environmental context, and current events.

Table 8. SWOT Components

Sub-Section	Contents
Location	Six-county (Cherokee, Dakota, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, Woodbury), two-state region (Iowa and Nebraska)
SWOT List	Evaluation of 2021 DRR existing SWOT list (updated 2020-2024 existing SWOT list) and additions based on survey and external resources.
SWOT Survey	103 responses to 16 survey questions centered on SWOT related themes
U.S. EDA Innovation Index	SIMPCO Region Innovation Index score and recommendations
Region Demographics	Census demographics: population, employment and labor force, industries, unemployment, wage – income, poverty, education
Industry Clusters	US cluster mapping data
Environmental Context	Land use, transportation, watersheds, soils, floodplains and natural hazards, site contamination, air and water quality, endangered and threatened species, historic, cultural and archeological resources
Economic Resilience and Global Competitiveness	Economic shifts and regional stakeholder collaboration in post-disruption stage, foreign direct investments (FDI) & exports

Strengths

Strong agricultural economy • Interconnected transportation network (rail, interstate, river, air) • Tradition of strong work ethic • Low energy costs; dependable energy • Leadership committed to economic growth • Strong educational system and resources (including public, private, and non-degree programs) • Strong technical education for trade skills • Workforce development agency • Readily available water • High air quality • Low commute time • Low cost of living for a high quality of life • Low housing costs • Cultural diversity • Proximity to markets due to central location • Legacy of manufacturing and embracing latest manufacturing technology • Recent growth of skilled workforce with apprenticeships, internships, and career development center • Career Academy developed with local school districts

Weaknesses

Lack of housing (both in terms of quantity and variety); shortage of affordable housing • Decline in working-age population • Limited entrepreneurial opportunities • Limited ability to attract and retain young workers, especially college graduates, skilled workers, and local talent (brain drain) • Shortage of skilled labor • Aging infrastructure (pipes, sewers, electrical, housing) • Limited apprenticeship opportunities • Lack of adequate air transportation service • Lack of distance learning plan (in regards to consolidated school districts) • Lack of a land grant university • Inadequate broadband coverage and access, especially in rural areas • Lack of childcare facilities (both in terms of quantity and distribution) • Presence of food deserts

Opportunities

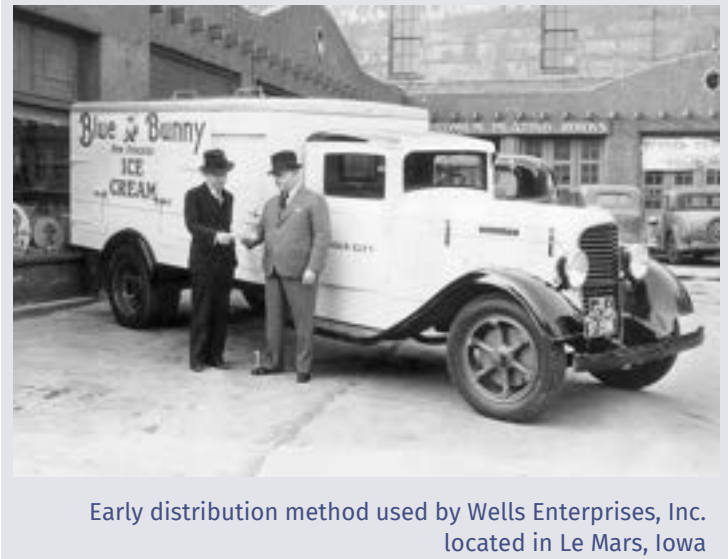
Aggressive workforce development • Regional business retention • Infrastructure Improvements (roads, bridges, broadband, rail, airport, etc.) • Promote low cost of living • Attract art and entertainment options • Promote the consolidated, high-quality job website • Market our regional successes more aggressively • Build upon family amenities • Attract new residents, while also retaining current population • Embrace technological advances such as automation, particularly in the manufacturing industry • Attract young workers and former residents (Return to roots campaign) • Immigrants and international workers can bolster economic outputs • Diversification of Siouxland employers • Grow healthcare systems & providers • Investment in downtowns • Ag/tech job growth • Build upon housing growth & rehabilitation • Upskilling untapped workforce • Airport & Aviation School/Industry • Embrace recently invested in and growing industries, such as barge and freight carrier • Innovating and expanding public transportation

Threats

Worker retention • Effective training in local colleges and trade schools to keep up with industry needs and demands • Lack of business succession planning • Loss of available funds as population declines • Adverse natural and environmental impacts • Lack of qualified and eligible workers; labor shortage • Young people moving out of region • Cost of construction; lack of contractors • Lack of elderly/senior care & housing • Declining population can result in loss of available funds

Strengths

The SIMPCO CEDS Region has numerous assets that drive economic development and contribute to a high quality of life. The primarily rural region has a long agricultural history. Today, that history translates to a modern and **strong agricultural economy**. In addition to agriculture, the local economy is driven by manufacturing. The manufacturing industry has been the cornerstone for many communities within the Region including Sioux City, South Sioux City, and Le Mars dating back over one-hundred years. This **legacy of manufacturing** also encompasses the Region's culture of **embracing the latest manufacturing technology**. As the Region looks ahead, this means continued support of trade and technical education, as well as positioning itself at the forefront of workplace automation and robotics. By having two strong industries, the Region has been



able to count on the stability that arises from that economic diversity. Not only is this diversity an advantage, but the two distinct industries are able to complement each other. Many manufacturing companies in the Region use local, agricultural products.

Additionally, an important economic advantage for the SIMPCO CEDS Region is the **central location**, relative to the larger region and country. This central location eases access to a range of markets. Cities such as Sioux Falls, Omaha, Des Moines, and Minneapolis are all quickly accessible from most communities within the Region. Beyond that, the **highly connected transportation network** (composed of highways, interstates, rail, river, and air travel) connects the Region to national and international markets.



Another strength of the Region is the **variety and quality of available education** and tools devoted to workforce development. Communities are served by strong private and public school districts, as well as less traditional educational resources such as the **Career Academy** in Sioux City. Adults can continue their education at a local college or university or pursue **trade and technical education** at one of the many trade schools, community colleges, and technical programs. More recently, efforts by

community and industry leaders have focused on bringing more **apprenticeships and internships** to the Region.

Furthermore, a strong economy contributes to the quality of life that residents and workers experience. Along this line, several characteristics contribute to the Region's



Loess Hills

high quality of life, which supports the current workforce and encourages future growth. Residents within western Iowa and eastern Nebraska are fortunate to be able to **easily access clean water and air**. With this, proximity to the **Loess Hills** landform is unique to the Region. Additional positive characteristics include **low commute times, low housing costs, and a decreasing crime rate**. Ultimately these contribute to a high quality life, which can be used to entice new businesses and residents to the area.

Finally, the culture of this Region is an asset to the economy. The “**Midwestern work ethic**” can be seen in the hard-working individuals and resilient businesses throughout the Region. In addition to this, the Region has a **legacy of embracing diversity**. The Region values diversity of residents and perspectives, and it believes that this creates a more stable and sustainable economy. Furthermore, immigration from other states and countries is vital for the Region's growth goals. Finally, local **government, business, and community leaders** have proven through decisions and actions that they are dedicated to issues related to economic development.

Weaknesses

Despite the many strengths of the SIMPCO CEDS Region, there are several factors that limit economic development and potential growth. A weakness that is discussed frequently by regional leaders, stakeholders, and residents relates to housing. While low housing costs have been a valued characteristic for the Region, housing and rent costs more recently have been on the rise. A main contributing factor where low cost has been able to continue, is the age of many structures. The **aging housing stock** acts as a barrier to the Region's ability to look and function at a high level that is standard in other parts of the country. One reason is that older homes require financial investment in terms of remodeling and renovation, not only to keep up with modern trends, but more importantly to prevent visible signs of disrepair and maintain structural integrity. Additionally, older homes are less energy-efficient than new

60.6%

of the housing stock is
50 or more years old

construction. Furthermore, because of limited new construction, the Region is experiencing a **lack of housing in terms of quantity and variety**. Several communities express the sentiment that open jobs cannot be filled due to lack of viable housing for potential workers.

Another point of weakness experienced by residents is inadequate infrastructure. **Aging infrastructure**, including water and sewer pipes, electrical systems, and roads, plague the Region. Substantial investment will be required to repair, replace, and maintain these systems. While aging infrastructure may be common to many regions in the country, more unique to rural areas is the **inadequate broadband coverage and quality**. Recently, communities and leaders have pushed to expand the broadband coverage in the Region and seen successes. SIMCO has assisted these efforts directly through a statewide broadband speed test study in Nebraska. The study's data will help the State of Nebraska and its local entities identify the availability, reliability, and redundancy of broadband at the parcel level. This project is funded through a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES grant. However, there is still much work to be done as the quality of broadband coverage is low compared to many other areas of the country.

“

Broadband helps create jobs. It also helps rural areas offer the programs and services that strengthen economies and encourage growth.

”

Lack of community services and opportunities are also commonly cited weaknesses. Educational opportunities can be a strong reason for young people to stay or move to a location. While the existing educational institutions are strong, the SIMPCO CEDS Region falls behind in other potential opportunities that could be incorporated in the overall educational network. For example, **limited apprenticeship opportunities** and **no land grant university** potentially limit individuals who seek higher levels of education. In addition to education, work opportunities are hugely influential in a person's ability or willingness to live in a region. One component of this that is lacking in the Region is the **limited of entrepreneurial opportunities** and supports. Entrepreneurs can be used as a measurement for economic health and a catalyst for development. Additionally, childcare is vital to any employed individual with children. The Region **lacks childcare facilities** both in terms of quantity and distribution, and this can directly prevent individuals from joining the workforce. Each of these factors affect

residents' daily lives and long-term decisions and can contribute to a lower quality of life. This can also hinder potential new residents and workers from moving to the Region.

Finally, the SIMPCO CEDS Region's **population is aging**. Overall, the Region is seeing population gains, however it has seen losses in both age groups of 0-25 and 25-64 years old. Additionally, the population gains have not been consistent across the Region with many rural areas and smaller communities seeing significant decline.

This trend of working-age population declining at a faster rate than retirees is particularly troubling when thinking about the decline in potential families and children that result from a declining young adult population. This can have long-term ramifications in terms of who will compose the future workforce. The crux of this issue is the Region's **inability to attract and retain young workers**.

Opportunities

The biggest opportunity to foster economic development is to prioritize the attraction of new residents and workers to the Region. While general population growth can help the local economy, stakeholders identify two populations to target: young workers and immigrants. Due to the aging population, **young workers** are important to revitalize and bolster the workforce. Furthermore, for the population to grow, **immigrants are important community members**. Communities have the opportunity to welcome new residents and workers from other states and countries. Not only will this allow the population to grow, but these incoming residents can fill necessary jobs and bolster regional stability through diversity.

The SIMPCO CEDS Region also sees opportunity in **promoting existing quality of life components**. For example, the comparatively low housing costs are an advantage that would be attractive to potential young residents looking to settle down and buy a first home. However, this needs to be promoted and marketed in order for other parts of the country to know about it. In addition, the Region can work to make other facets of the community more attractive in terms of quality of life. Recent efforts to attract **arts and entertainment** options have been successful, but there is opportunity to expand on this. Furthermore, the Region sees the need to cater to children and **build upon and create more family amenities** in order to attract and retain young



Sioux City Art Center attracts visitors of all ages and backgrounds.

families. The Region also has the opportunity to further quality of life for workers and businesses by investing in its infrastructure. The Region has a unique opportunity for this through its seven **Opportunity Zones** located in five of the Region's six counties (Cherokee, Dakota, Ida, Plymouth, and Woodbury). A closer look at the Region's Opportunity Zones is available in Appendix F.

Ultimately jobs are one of the most important factors in building and retaining any region's workforce. There are opportunities to better support both businesses and workers. Components of this include **aggressive workforce development** and **regional business retention**. Further investment and focus higher education, especially in developing trade school programs, internships, and apprenticeships specific to the Region's needs, can help support further business development and retention.

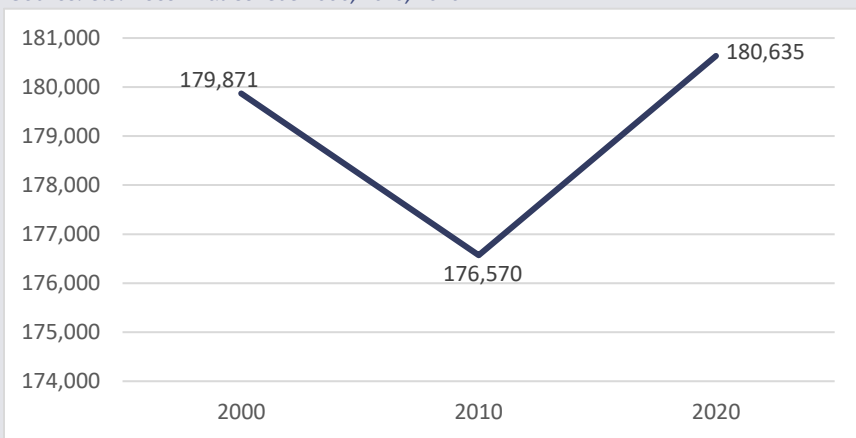
Investment in workers and businesses can also be a valuable marketing tool. **Regional successes can be marketed more aggressively** to attract attention and awareness to the Region. Finally, the Region sees an opportunity in promoting its consolidated, high-quality **job website, My Sioux City Jobs: <https://mysiouxcityjobs.com/>**. Current job openings are posted by individual businesses and organizations. While some communities may have a somewhat central location for their postings, a regional website enables a more collaborative effort to attract and retain workers, and these jobs are more likely to be seen by a larger audience.

Threats

While promoting population growth may be an important opportunity for the SIMPCO CEDS Region, the inverse, population decline is also possible and, according to many data sources, more likely for many communities within the Region. The Region as a whole saw a

Population of the SIMPCO CEDS Region

Source: U.S. Decennial Census 2000, 2010, 2020



population increase between 2010 and 2020, but this is not equally distributed. Three (Cherokee, Ida, Monona) of the Region's six counties saw populations declines and the other three (Dakota, Plymouth, Woodbury) saw increases.

The **consequences of population decline** threaten the Region's economic development. Population is directly tied to federal funds that are available to a community, which means that as the population declines, so do **available funds**. Additionally, fewer workers may result in **lower tax revenue** in terms of property tax,

income tax, and sales tax. There is an unfortunate cycle that appears here – less revenue results in less capacity to complete projects that address community weaknesses (such as improving infrastructure). This may result in residents deciding to move to another region or community, which results in less revenue, and so the cycle continues. In addition to this loss of revenue, a lower or declining population can result in a **loss of political influence**.

An additional threat faced by the Region is the adequacy of training of new and current workers. The **training provided by local colleges and trade schools does not always align with industry needs and desires**. Not only can this be detrimental to students seeking employment, but this can be a challenge for businesses trying to find workers with necessary skill sets. Furthermore, as the population and workforce continue to age, many businesses and organizations are faced with trying to fill upper-level jobs that workers may not have been trained for. **Lack of succession planning** can deeply hurt any organization, as transitions are often when a business is most vulnerable.

Finally, adverse **natural and environmental impacts can threaten the regional economy**. This point has been clearly illustrated by the flooding of 2019. Many communities in western Iowa and throughout Nebraska have been affected by flood water on multiple occasions throughout the year. While natural hazards, such as summer and winter storms, flooding, tornadoes, etc., have always been present in the Region, climate change is likely to result in more frequent and intense hazardous events. These events can halt routine economic activities, create challenges for employees to commute to work or consumers to travel to businesses. Furthermore, recovery efforts can divert funds intended for other community enhancement projects.



Floodwaters in Hornick in Woodbury County, 2019

Strategic Direction and Action Plan

The CEDS vision statement was developed using the previous statement as a foundation. Input was gathered from CEDS Committee members and residents of the Region who participated in the survey. This vision statement reflects the Region's ultimate aspirations related to economic development. In generating this CEDS update, it was used to guide the committee and develop more specific goals.

CEDS Vision Statement:

The SIMPCO region is a preferred location for innovative businesses and entrepreneurs who desire a skilled workforce, quality infrastructure, high quality of life for residents, and a positive business environment in order to contribute to continual regional economic success.

This vision is supported by several overarching goals and specific action items, which are described in the remainder of this chapter. The Strategic Direction and Action Plan was created to address the components of SWOT Analysis. Goals and actions items capitalize on the Region's strengths and attempt to harness various opportunities. Likewise, this chapter reflects upon the weaknesses and threats to the Region and attempts to address these.

Through the SWOT Analysis process, six significant categories were identified. These are:

- Economic Development
- Work Force Development
- Infrastructure Improvement
- Housing
- Quality of life
- Economic Resilience

Each category is discussed as a distinct sub-section within this Action Plan. A larger goal with more detailed objectives were generated. Then detailed actions with project descriptions were developed to achieve these objects. The projects and actions discussed within each section will become the primary functions of the CEDS Committee moving forward and all regional stakeholders who wish to bolster the local economy.

Economic Development

Goal: To create high-skill, higher-wage jobs within innovative clusters as a means to diversify the regional economy and improve economic conditions in the area for years to come.

Objectives:

1. Develop a diverse industrial and commercial base that is competitive in the global economy.
2. Support the creation of a successful and equitable business climate for local business creation and business retention.
3. Target innovation clusters, such as “green” technology and value-added agriculture industries.
4. Foster the growth of the job support network necessary to maintain the high-skill positions and cluster developments.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Continue existing business expansion programs and annually meet with local employers to discuss business needs and concerns.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, economic development organizations	Long-Term	High
Improve business retention by creating programs that encourage businesses to stay through creative incentives.	Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	Long-term	High
Recruit new businesses from targeted industries that complement the Region’s economic base.	Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	Long-term	High
Work with organizations to provide business start-up resources and spaces for new entrepreneurs and encourage experienced entrepreneurs to mentor local leaders, local investors, and potential entrepreneurs in how to navigate the entrepreneurial process.	Education institutions, entrepreneurs, Chambers of Commerce, business associations	Long-term	High

Support economic development planning initiatives and projects that help advance equity across the Region that benefit underserved communities and populations.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations	Long-term	High
Offer technical assistance to local communities when developing economic development programs and applying to EDA and other grant options.	SIMPCO	Long-term	Medium
Collaborate with regional economic development efforts and initiatives to encourage and support entrepreneurship and business start-up programs.	Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations, entrepreneurship groups	Short-term	Medium
Assist businesses with succession planning.	Chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses, local SBDC	Long-term	Medium
Support Regional business retention through initiatives and investments that encourage job creation, business expansion, technology and capital upgrades, and productivity growth.	Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Counties, and economic development organizations	Long-term	Medium
Develop a network of lenders and investors to provide start-up capital for new businesses and entrepreneurs.	Local lenders, SEDC, entrepreneurship groups, regional economic groups	Short-term	Low
Support efforts to mechanize certain services as needed.	Economic development organizations	Long-term	low

Workforce Development

Goal: To develop, retain, and attract a highly trained, competitive, and entrepreneurial workforce that addresses and compliments the growing needs of the regional business community.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate collaboration among economic development stakeholders to address the current and future employment and skill needs of the regional business community.
2. Improve workforce retention for local businesses.
3. Foster a workforce that can identify and execute on entrepreneurial opportunities.
4. Support and increase accessibility to further education opportunities for current and potential workers.
5. Encourage local businesses to offer internship and apprenticeship opportunities.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Establish a direct conduit between industries and potential workers by marketing internships and apprenticeships at local education institutions and job fairs.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	Long-term	High
Monitor employers and worker training programs to ensure they provide the skill sets needed for available employment.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development	Long-term	High
Support entrepreneurial training through direct mentorship, networking, and educational institutions.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development	Long-term	High
Encourage area school districts to integrate skilled trades instruction and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) into educational programs.	Educational institutions	Short-term	High

Support programs that provide education and training to immigrants.	Private businesses, educational institutions, workforce development, non-profits	Long-term	High
Support the development and construction of educational and training programs and facilities that contribute to workforce development.	SIMPCO, municipalities, counties, economic development organizations, educational institutions	Long-term	High
Work with existing programs to market potential employees for regional businesses.	Economic and workforce development groups, State agencies and initiatives	Long-term	High
Support career academies.	Educational institutions, Chambers of commerce, local entrepreneurship groups, Municipalities, Counties	Short-term	Medium
Create a regional working group to market current business needs and desired target industries for future expansion.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, economic development directors, private business leaders	Long-term	Medium
Maintain and enhance a consolidated, regional website to promote and market regional assets and jobs, which can be used to connect employers with jobseekers from inside and outside the Region.	Chambers of Commerce, economic development directors, workforce development, private businesses, local newspapers, Municipalities, Counties, SIMPCO	Long-term	Medium
Create a unified economic development marketing message.	SIMPCO, SEDC, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	Long-term	Low
Establish a regional database of trade-based positions.	Workforce development, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses, SIMPCO	Short-term	Low

Infrastructure Improvement

Goal: To invest in infrastructure improvements such as roads, bridges, sewers, water facilities, broadband, and multi-modal transportation systems that will strengthen and diversify the regional economy.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and expand the Region’s infrastructure to address the needs of existing businesses and residences, as well as accommodate the needs of new and expanding businesses.
2. Target infrastructure improvements to areas in the Region with the greatest need.
3. Pursue the development and maintenance of regional multi-modal transportation networks as a critical resource for economic growth.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Continue to support construction and expansion of all transportation modes through regional transportation efforts, applications for state and federal funding, and coordination of local planning needs.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	Long-term	High
Support and encourage additional airlines to serve the SIMPCO CEDS Region	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses, Municipalities	Long-term	High
Assist and support municipalities with construction, replacement, and maintenance of infrastructure related to water and sewer. These items may include: water towers, water and waste water treatment facilities.	SIMPCO, Municipalities	Long-term	High
Seek broadband and connectivity improvements for rural areas.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	Long-term	High

Continue pressing IA, NE, and SD legislators to provide adequate funding for regional infrastructure.	Chambers of Commerce, local legislators and elected officials, business community, SIMPCO	Long-term	High
Assist municipalities and counties with storm water and natural hazard mitigation infrastructure.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations, private businesses, and developers	Long-term	High
Improve and expand the current rail system, incorporating an additional rail storage site.	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private business leaders, SIMPCO	Long-term	Medium
Support efforts to encourage barge traffic along the Missouri River as an alternative mode of transporting goods.	SIMPCO, private business, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	Long-term	low

Housing

Goal: To develop diverse housing options for all income levels to ensure the availability of housing supply for all workers, including those brought in by expanding businesses and new firms in the Region.

Objectives:

1. Work with employers, state, and local housing and development agencies, banks, and private developers to encourage the development of affordable housing on a regional basis.
2. Support diverse housing types in the Region to meet the housing needs of the workforce throughout changing life events.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Seek funding for housing rehabilitation, housing CDBG programming, homebuyer purchase programs, and housing assessments and plans.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations	Long-term	High
Encourage the development of multi-family housing and mixed-use development to support young families, elderly populations, and low-income families, so that residents have options for purchase or rent.	Municipalities, SIMPCO, IA Workforce Development	Long-term	High
Develop a resource to collect and distribute information about federal and state funds available for housing and workforce housing. Assist communities with having information ready for developers.	Municipalities, Counties, Workforce Development, economic development directors, SIMPCO	Long-term	High
Ensure Federal, State, and Municipal codes allow for and encourage diverse and attainable housing options.	Municipalities, SIMPCO, Workforce Development	Long-term	Medium
Establish short-term housing options for new workers and residents.	Municipalities, SIMPCO, Workforce Development	Long-term	Medium

Quality of Life

Goal: Encourage placemaking and develop quality of life amenities that attract and retain residents and businesses.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the development of vibrant communities including amenities such as personal services, eateries, childcare, grocery stores, and co-ops.
2. Support projects that enhance and sustain the quality of life in the Region, such as smart growth, walkable communities, and mixed-use development.
3. Increase awareness among the Region of the recreational and cultural resources, public safety & services, and consumer alternatives available in every county of the Region.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Improving transportation access and connectivity to parks and natural resources.	SIMPCO, Counties, IDOT, DNR	Long-term	High
Encourage development near transportation hubs and along public transit corridors.	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, business associations	Long-term	High
Continue to address the crime rate through proactive enforcement.	Municipality/County local officials, law enforcement, non-profits, service organizations	Long-term	High
Support regional initiatives that positively impact the environment and natural resources management.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, Counties, DNR, local organizations	Long-term	High
Support existing regional and local initiatives aimed at welcoming new immigrants and support expansion to rural areas.	Cultural groups, Municipalities, Counties, non-profits, service organizations	Long-term	High
Assist rural communities and rural emergency agencies to maintain high quality levels of response, equipment, and training.	SIMPCO, Municipalities Counties, emergency managers	Long-term	High

Support regional and local tourism opportunities.	Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Counties, SIMPCO, SCRCVB	Long-term	Medium
Ensure that targeted businesses match the goals and objectives of the community.	Economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce	Long-term	Medium
Support and organize family-oriented cultural events, housing options, businesses, and institutions that are instrumental in maintaining the Region's high quality of life.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, economic development organizations, cultural groups, local education institutions	Long-term	Medium
Encourage communities to pursue downtown and Main Street revitalization.	State/Federal economic development agencies, Municipalities, economic development organizations	Long-term	Low

Economic Resilience

Goal: To build and strengthen partnerships, resources, and communities in the region to better avoid, withstand, and recover from economic shifts, natural disasters, impacts of climate change, and other major disruptions.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the development of a resilient economic environment for businesses, workforce, and communities.
2. Support projects and programs that enhance and diversify the Region's economy and workforce.

Actions:

Project Description	Invested Parties	Timeline	Priority
Encourage business investments in business succession planning and disaster preparation	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, business associations	Long-term	High
Assist municipalities and counties with hazard mitigation planning and economic resilience & recovery plans and projects.	SIMPCO, economic development organizations, Municipalities, Counties, private businesses and developers	Long-term	High
Support economic development planning initiatives and projects that help mitigate or address the climate crisis.	SIMPCO, local municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations	Long-term	High
Promote and maintain Resilience Toolkit	SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations	Long-term	Medium

Evaluation Framework

The CEDS 2022-2026 Plan is a thorough analysis of the current condition and perception of the Region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and offers goals, objectives, and actions to support growth from its current conditions. Measurable performance metrics are essential to the document to ensure actions are being initiated, projects are being documented, and subsequent results are quantified. The purpose of this section is to state evaluation methods of the CEDS document and assure the successful implementation of the plan.

The concept of regional wealth is weighed heavily when evaluating the effectiveness of the CEDS goals and objectives. To measure progress related to overall job growth and investments in the Region, several measures will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. While some measures directly measure job growth and wealth in the Region, there are several indirect measures that contribute to regional wealth by concentrating on the built environment, social issues, cultural assets, educational offerings, and natural resources. The following list identifies these performance measurements.

- Develop and utilize a regional reporting system that includes data for each county
- Regional synchronistic survey
- Number of jobs created after the implementation of the CEDS 2022-2026 Plan
- Number and types of investments taken in the Region
- Number of jobs retained in the Region
- Employment and unemployment figures
- Changes in the economic environment of the Region
- Educational attainment
- Poverty rates
- Median household income
- Organizations forged to build partnerships among invested partners to increase economic resiliency within the Region
- Monitor crime rates
- Monitor water/air quality
- Housing statistics
- Walkability and bikeability scores
- Demographics
- Monitor county business patterns to commute business formation rate/declines
- Implementation of specified projects
- Monitor the quality, quantity, and dispersal of childcare facilities
- Immigration statistics
- Supply of skilled workers
- Broadband availability and accessibility

The CEDS Committee will reconvene on a quarterly basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the goals and objectives as written, in addition to pursuing future resiliency efforts. Individual projects throughout the Region will be examined for congruency to the goals and objectives and will be documented as such. In addition to evaluation of current actions within the year, the committee will also discuss whether the CEDS 2022-2026 Plan is effective and if current implementation and action items are meeting the expectation of the Region. Finally, the committee will suggest changes to the document for future updates that may make it more effective for the Region's use.

Refer to Appendix H for the Evaluation Framework Scorecard.



Appendix A: CEDS Committee Members

The CEDS 2022-2026 Plan is the result of a regional capacity-building process designed to provide regional leaders, businesses, counties, and cities with a framework for driving regional economic growth. The CEDS Committee, comprised of informed leaders and representatives of the counties and cities, worked diligently to identify the Region’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and then translate the results into goals, objectives, and potential action items to improve the Region.

The committee continues to meet 3-4 times per year to evaluate progress and offer suggestions for improving future CEDS plans.

Aaron Lincoln	City of Sergeant Bluff
Al Aymar	Fibercom
Alex Smith	Economic Development Administration
Andrew Nilges	North Sioux City Economic Corp
Barbara Sloniker	Siouxland Chamber of Commerce
Bo Fox	Monona County Board of Supervisors
Bret Hayworth	Briar Cliff University
Charles Persinger	Monona County Economic Development
Clinton Weaver	Onawa Economic Development
Cynthia Hanson	Northeast Community College South Sioux City Extended Campus
Dan Priestley	Woodbury County Rural Economic Development
Bob Kratky	City of Dakota City
Jesse Hinrichs	Iowa’s West Coast Initiative (IWCI)/SIMPCO
Jesse Pedersen	City of Lawton
Joan Spencer	Dakota County
Karrie King	ISU Extension/CIRAS
Keith Bohle	Keith Bohle Financial
Keith Radig	Woodbury County Board of Supervisors
Kolby DeWitt	Senator Joni Ernst
Lance Hedquist	City of South Sioux City – City Administrator
Lillyan Rodriguez	Southern Hills Mall
Mark Monson	Sergeant Bluff Planning and Zoning
Marty Dougherty	City of Sioux City – Economic development
Oscar Gomez (Alt.)	City of South Sioux City – Assistant City Manager
Pat Somsy (Alt.)	South Sioux City Grant Administrator
Richard Zietlow	Le Mars Chamber of Commerce
Rick Mongan	Cherokee Board of Supervisors
Rita Frahm	Ida County Economic Development
Sam Wagner	MidAmerican Energy
Sam Pribil	Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC)
Wesley Fopma	Congressman Feenstra

Appendix B: SIMPCO CEDS Region Economic Development Partners

The following list contains economic development partners and potential partners. These partnerships will assist in implementing the goals and action items outlined in the CEDS 2022-2026 Plan.

Federal Partners

- United States Economic Development Administration
- United States Department of Agriculture
- United States Department of Education
- United States Department of Commerce
- United States Department of Transportation
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- United States Housing and Urban Development
- United States Department of the Interior Indian Affairs

State Partners

Iowa

- Iowa Area Development
- Iowa Agriculture and Land Stewardship Department
- Iowa Department of Education
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Iowa Energy Office
- Iowa Environmental Protection Commission
- Iowa Finance Authority
- Iowa Natural Resource Commission
- Iowa Travel & Tourism
- Iowa Workforce Development
- State Historical Society of Iowa

Iowa Higher Education

- Briar Cliff University
- Iowa State University
- Iowa State University Extension
- Morningside University
- St. Luke's College UnityPoint Health
- University of Iowa
- University of Northern Iowa
- Western Iowa Tech Community College

Nebraska

- Nebraska Center for Rural Affairs
- Nebraska Department of Agriculture
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- Nebraska Department of Game and Parks
- Nebraska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
- Nebraska Department of Transportation
- Nebraska Energy Office
- Nebraska Environmental Trust
- Nebraska Historical Society
- Nebraska Housing and Community Development
- Nebraska Investment Finance Authority
- Nebraska Public Power District
- Nebraska Tourism Commission

Nebraska Higher Education

- Nebraska Indian Community College
- Northeast Community College
- University of Nebraska Extension
- Wayne State College

Regional Partners

- Center for Industrial Research and Services
- Growing Community Connections
- Iowa's West Coast Initiative
- Iowa Workforce Development of Siouxland
- Keep Northeast Nebraska Beautiful
- Mary J. Treglia
- MidAmerican Energy
- North West Rural Electric Cooperative
- Northwest Iowa Development
- Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative
- One Siouxland
- Small Business Development Center
- Siouxland Chamber of Commerce
- Siouxland Economic Development Corporation
- Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council
- The Siouxland Initiative
- Urban Native Center
- Western Iowa Advantage
- Women Aware

Cherokee County Partners

- Aurelia Economic Development Corporation
- Cherokee Area Economy Development Corporation
- Cherokee Chamber of Commerce
- Cherokee County
- Cherokee Industrial Corporation
- Cherokee Regional Medical Center
- Cherokee School District
- Hy-Vee Distribution
- Hy-Vee Food Store
- Marcus Economic Development Corporation
- Mental Health Institute

Cherokee County Cities

- Aurelia
- Aurelia Economic Development Corporation
- Cherokee
- Cherokee Area Economic Development
- Cherokee Chamber of Commerce
- Cleghorn
- Larrabee
- Marcus
- Marcus Chamber of Commerce
- Marcus Economic Development Corporation
- Meriden
- Quimby
- Washta

Cherokee County School Districts

- Alta-Aurelia Community Schools
- Cherokee Community School District
- Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn Community School District
- River Valley Community School District

Cherokee County Hospitals

- Cherokee Regional Medical Center
- Cherokee Mental Health Institute

Dakota County Partners

- Empirical Foods
- Dakota County
- Dakota County Connections
- Great West Casualty
- Leadership Dakota County
- South Sioux City School District
- Tyson Fresh Meats
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln Dakota County Extension Office
- Walmart

Dakota County Cities

- City of Dakota City
- City of South Sioux City
- Homer P.R.I.D.E.
- South Sioux City Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
- South Sioux City Economic Development
- Village of Emerson
- Village of Homer
- Village of Hubbard
- Village of Jackson

Dakota County School Districts

- Allen Consolidated School District
- Emerson-Hubbard School District
- Homer Community Schools
- Ponca Schools
- South Sioux City School District
- St. Michaels School

Ida County Partners

- Galva Economic Development Corporation
- GOMACO Corp Inc.
- Horn Memorial Hospital
- Ida County
- Ida County Economic Development Corporation
- Ida Grove Economic Development Corporation
- Midwest Industries Inc.
- OA-BCIG Community School District
- VT Industries Inc.

Ida County Cities

- Arthur
- Battle Creek
- Galva
- Galva Economic Development Corporation
- Holstein
- Ida Grove
- Ida Grove Chamber of Commerce

Ida County School Districts

- Galva-Holstein Community School District
- Odebolt-Arthur & Battle Creek-Ida Grove Community School District

Ida County Hospitals

-Horn Memorial Hospital

Monona County Partners

- Burgess Health Center	- Maple Heights
- Elmwood Care Center	- Monona County
- NEW Cooperative	- Monona County Economic Development
- Mapleton Community Development Corporation	- Onawa/Mapleton Schools
	- Pleasant View Care Center

Monona County Cities

- City of Blencoe	- City of Rodney
- City of Castana	- City of Soldier
- City of Mapleton	- City of Turin
- City of Moorhead	- City of Ute
- City of Onawa	- City of Whiting

Monona County School Districts

- Whiting School District	- Maple Valley – Anthon Oto Community School District
- West Monona School District	

Monona County Hospitals

- Burgess Health Center

Plymouth County Partners

- BoDeans Baking Co.	- Schuster Co LLC
- Floyd Valley Hospital	- Wells Blue Bunny
- Heyl Truck Lines Inc.	- Plymouth County Conservation District
- Plymouth County	

Plymouth County Cities

- Akron Chamber of Commerce	- City of Oyens
- Akron Development Corporation	- City of Remsen
- City of Akron	- City of Struble
- City of Brunsville	- City of Westfield
- City of Craig	- Le Mars Business Initiative Corporation
- City of Hinton	- Le Mars Chamber of Commerce
- City of Kingsley	- Remsen Chamber of commerce
- City of Le Mars	- Remsen Economic Development Group
- City of Merrill	

Plymouth County School Districts

- Akron-Westfield Community School District	- Le Mars Community School District
- Hinton community School District	- Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn Community School District
- Kingsley Pierson Community School District	

Plymouth County Hospitals

- Floyd Valley Hospital

Union County Partners

- Dakota Valley Business Council
- North Sioux City Economic Development Corp.

Woodbury County

- 185 th Air National Guard	- Sioux City Human Rights Commission
- Downtown Partners Sioux City	- Sioux City NAACP
- Inclusive Sioux City	- Sioux City School District
- Iowa Workforce Development of Siouxland	- Unity Point Health – St. Luke’s
- Leadership Siouxland	- Woodbury County
- Mercy Medical Center – Sioux City	- Woodbury County Rural Economic Development
- Seaboard Triumph	
- Sioux City Growth Organization	

Woodbury County Cities

- Anthon Community Development Corporation
- City of Anthon
- City of Bronson
- City of Correctionville
- City of Cushing
- City of Danbury
- City of Hornick
- City of Lawton
- City of Merville
- City of Oto
- City of Pierson
- City of Salix
- City of Sergeant Bluff
- City of Sioux City
- City of Sloan
- City of Smithland
- Correctionville Chamber of Commerce
- Merville Chamber of Commerce
- Merville Community Development Association, Inc.
- Merville Community Foundation
- Sergeant Bluff Community Development Corporation

Woodbury County School Districts

- Lawton-Bronson Community School District
- Maple Valley Anthon-Oto Community School District
- Sergeant Bluff-Luton Community Schools
- Sioux City Community School District
- Westwood Community School District
- Woodbury Central Community School District

Woodbury County Hospital

- Associates for Psychiatric Services, P.C.
- Mercy Medical Center – Sioux City
- Unity Point Health – St. Luke’s

Appendix C: Survey Results

CEDS 2022-2026 Survey

SIMPCO staff administered a survey to community stakeholders to inform the CEDS update. The survey contained 16 questions developed around the SWOT analysis. One hundred three (103) participants responded to the survey gathered online from March 18, 2022 – April 30, 2022. Survey respondent demographics are shown in the graphs below.

Q1. What county within the SIMPCO CEDS Region do you live in?						
Cherokee County	Dakota County	Ida County	Monona County	Plymouth County	Woodbury County	Other (please specify)
6	15	4	34	6	34	4
5.8%	14.6%	3.9%	33%	5.8%	33%	3.9%
Other: Union; Crawford, IA; Union County; Dakota County Nebraska						

ANSWERED: 103 | SKIPPED: 0

Q2. What county do you work in?							
Cherokee County	Dakota County	Ida County	Monona County	Plymouth County	Woodbury County	I do not currently work / I am retired	Other (please specify)
6	14	4	30	4	31	6	8
5.8%	13.6%	3.9%	29.1%	3.9%	30.1%	5.8%	7.8%
Other: Woodbury and Plymouth; Union County; Tri-state, 3 counties, Woodbury, Dakota Union (SD); I work in both Dakota and Woodbury Counties; Crawford County, IA; Multiple counties; Union; Woodbury, Monona, Plymouth, Dakota, and Union counties							

ANSWERED: 103 | SKIPPED: 0

Q3. What age group are you in?						
0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 and over
0	5	11	30	29	20	8
0.0%	4.9%	10.7%	29.1%	28.2%	19.4%	7.8%

ANSWERED: 103 | SKIPPED: 0

Q4. Why do you live in the SIMPCO CEDS region? (Select all that apply)					
Family & Friends	Employment Opportunities	Schools/ Education	Quality of Life	Recreational Opportunities	Other (please specify)
76	46	29	51	12	13
73.8%	44.7%	28.2%	49.5%	11.7%	12.6%
Other: I grew up here. Moved away and returned; Grew up here; I was born here and too chicken to leave; Renting from friend; I don't live in the SIMPCO CEDS region.; Lived here for 20 years not changing at this time.; Central point between families; Moved here due to husband's job in Sioux City. Prefer smaller town Onawa for living.; My job is here but not other opportunities; Job; Staying here so kids do not have to move schools.; All of the above					

ANSWERED: 103 | SKIPPED: 0

Q5. Which of the following community member descriptions apply to you? (Select all that apply)		
Consumer of regional goods and services	74	71.8%
Residential property owner	83	80.6%
Business owner and/or operator	27	26.2%
Employee of a business	30	29.1%
Employee of a non-profit or civic organization	16	15.5%
Government employee (local, state, federal)	40	38.8%
Investor of commercial property owner	13	12.6%
Board member or volunteer at one or more non-profit or civic organization	50	48.5%
Elected local, state, or federal official	19	18.5%

ANSWERED: 103 | SKIPPED: 0

Q6. Rank Regional Strengths: In your opinion, what are the region’s top strengths and competitive advantages? Please rank using 1-16 score, where “1” is the most important and “16” is the least important of the strengths listed.

Note: Strengths here are defined as a region’s relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and are often internal in nature.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Strong agricultural economy	21	18	7	6	7	3	3	4	5	2	0	2	4	1	1	2
Interconnected transportation network (rail, interstate, river, air)	6	9	8	3	8	5	5	3	5	6	3	3	8	3	4	8
Low energy costs; dependable energy	4	5	10	9	9	9	9	6	4	2	7	2	0	3	2	1
Leadership committed to economic growth	8	6	9	8	7	7	6	2	6	3	3	5	2	6	3	6
Strong educational system and resources (including public, private, and non-degree programs)	8	8	8	8	11	7	2	11	4	6	3	4	2	2	1	0
Strong technical education for trade skills	3	2	4	10	5	12	9	7	4	6	8	4	4	3	3	1
Workforce development agency	0	2	3	2	1	3	7	7	11	8	10	8	5	7	7	6
Readily available water	2	2	9	11	4	13	7	10	2	5	3	2	2	6	1	3
High air quality	2	5	8	3	5	7	9	7	13	6	4	6	4	5	6	0
Low commute times	8	15	6	5	6	6	5	5	5	8	3	1	5	3	3	4
Low cost of living for a high quality of life	22	8	4	8	5	4	3	2	5	8	5	4	4	1	2	0
Cultural diversity	4	3	2	0	10	3	3	3	2	6	8	11	6	5	4	21
Proximity to markets due to central regional location	3	4	11	2	4	2	6	7	3	3	6	15	12	6	3	2
Legacy of manufacturing and embracing latest manufacturing technology	0	0	3	1	5	3	4	5	4	8	7	7	8	19	8	6
Recent Growth of skilled workforce with apprenticeships, internships, and career development center	3	1	0	5	4	2	1	5	6	6	7	8	9	6	24	3
Career Academy recently developed with local school districts	5	0	1	7	2	3	7	6	5	5	5	2	7	5	9	22

ANSWERED: 102 | SKIPPED: 1

Q7. In your opinion, are there additional top regional strengths and competitive advantages that are not listed in the previous question (question #6)?
Events to promote Siouxland bringing in visitors
Ability to get involved in education and volunteer opportunities
The above question was confusing. Do you want items ranked based on how we believe our region is performing in each category; "what are the region's top strengths?" Or do you want items ranked "where 1 is the most important"? I'm not sure which way you intended the above question to be answered, so I'm not sure how beneficial your data will be. I ranked items based on what I feel are our region's top strengths. Here are others that could have been included: Outdoor recreation Safety/low crime Residential growth Corporate growth Opportunities/services for the disabled Opportunities/services for those in need of food & shelter
Ability for "work from home" employment while raising family in "Iowa Nice" culture
I wish that there were more retail in my county rather than having to drive over to Iowa.
The police officer [xxxxx xxxxx]** is a dirty cop and the department knows it and does nothing because they can't fill positions
No, if there are, the leaders do not act on them. We have had stagnant growth for many many years. There seems to be little incentive for younger generations to stay in the area. SIMPCO needs to start thinking bigger and longer term.
Beautification of the town, is important to SSC
Strong community network focused on advancement
Historically strong work ethic compared to many other regions. Strong local ownership of many businesses. State governments with supportive get it done attitude and policies
High job availability. Everywhere is hiring.
People in the community Crime Rates
Tourism and outdoor activities. Loess Hills, Lewis & Clark State Park, Missouri River
No, in fact several of the items listed are not actually advantages. The Career Academy is largely out of touch with the area's needs; local government leaders do not show interest in growth beyond retail and unaffordable housing, and there is a tremendous lack in access to training and apprenticeship opportunities, largely due to ignorance among administrators at the Sioux City Community School District and Western Iowa Tech.
Small town feel
Sports Tourism and Cultural Heritage Tourism
Community culture with strong work ethic.
Industrious workforce
Wage/income growth for middle class
Diversity of manufacturing/processing Tri state area strengths Good railroad access
Increasing services, wineries and entertainment venues.
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>
<i>**Individual resident name has been censored.</i>

ANSWERED: 53 | SKIPPED: 50

Q8. Rank Regional Weaknesses: In your opinion, what are the top unaddressed needs or weakness in the region (the needs which most stand in the way of productive economic development)? Please rank using 1-14 score, where “1” is the biggest need/weakness and “14” is the smallest need/weakness?

Note: Weaknesses here are defined as a region’s relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture); these are also general internal in nature.

The table below shows the quantity of each ranking for the various weaknesses options.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Lack of housing (both in terms of quality and variety)	25	16	6	6	7	6	5	1	6	3	1	1	1	0
Shortage of affordable housing	15	27	11	9	5	6	6	1	2	1	2	1	0	1
Decline in working-age population	11	5	12	6	10	8	3	8	7	2	1	0	2	5
Lack of entrepreneurial opportunities	1	6	4	6	4	10	11	10	8	11	6	3	2	4
Limited ability to attract and retain young workers (especially college graduates, skilled workers, and local talent)	10	6	15	16	15	2	3	6	3	3	3	2	1	1
Shortage of skilled labor	3	6	10	9	11	14	9	4	7	1	6	2	2	0
Aging infrastructure (pipes, sewers, electrical, housing)	13	6	13	13	3	10	11	11	0	1	1	1	2	0
Lack of apprenticeship opportunities	0	0	5	6	5	4	8	17	12	8	8	7	3	0
Lack of adequate air transportation service	2	4	5	4	6	3	4	6	14	7	5	7	6	10
Lack of distance learning plan (in regards to consolidated school districts)	0	0	2	2	2	4	2	2	7	24	11	18	6	2
Lack of a land grant university	1	1	1	0	4	3	2	4	2	4	13	16	19	11
Inadequate broadband coverage and access (especially in rural areas)	2	6	1	6	4	9	5	4	4	8	11	12	13	2
Lack of childcare facilities (both in terms of quantity and distribution)	6	7	4	7	12	4	9	6	4	4	5	5	13	2
Presence of food deserts	4	2	3	0	1	3	3	5	3	4	6	3	6	42

ANSWERED: 100 | SKIPPED: 3

Q9. In your opinion, are there additional regional weaknesses, needs, or faults not listed in the previous question (question #8)?
Lack of block community grants to help medium income families that are barely above the low income limit with necessary home repairs
Lack of knowledge of what SIMCO services are available for individuals in rural counties. Transportation? Transportation for handicap individuals? Cost of transportation? Transportation available to where? How to be aware of SIMPCO grants for rural towns. Seems everything is Sioux City related.
Lack of passenger rail service
High utility rates and real estate taxes.
quality of life-related policies are in name only, with too many exceptions resulting in too many missed opportunities
Sioux City decision makers keep funneling money into the Missouri River waterfront to attract tourists and appease those driving through. BUT IT STILL STINKS DUE TO THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT! FIX AND REPLACE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE!!!!!!!
Lack of affordable senior care options
Low income housing for the elderly Lower price groceries
Leadership not interested in regional economic growth/improvements
The city transit needs to expand it's hours as it is not accommodating for working people. The bus should run at least until 8-9pm and should have a weekend schedule. Also there needs to be more covered bus stops in South Sioux. A lot of people walk or ride bikes in South Sioux, would be nice to have benches along Dakota Ave. and some of the busier streets. Would also like to see more businesses with bike racks. Traffic on G street is extremely heavy. It would be nice to see at least one or two more stop signs to slow the traffic down, especially the dump trucks and semi's as they drive like it is a highway and rattle the houses. Would like to see the stop lights on Dakota Ave adjusted so it can allow turning and cross traffic from the side streets.
The police force. Look at all the shootings. We should be on the cutting edge for mental health, substance abuse and fighting homelessness.
Our leaders lack the ability to attract any new major employers. There is little or no incentive for younger people to remain in the area. Other metros have attracted Google and Facebook. Sioux City should be able to do the same.
There's plenty of affordable housing. We need to concentrate on building nicer homes to attract that appetite of existing and potential community members
Fun hating old farts. Need block parties, festivals, etc.
The housing is very old. Water is gross, always discolored. Not a lot of opportunity so people look elsewhere.
Lack of business incentives to draw companies to our area.
All three states are considered high property tax states for both commercial and residential property compared to faster growing regions. Poor winter weather
lack of affordable shovel ready property; lack of high quality, good paying jobs
Lack of Family friendly entertainment options
Very little entertainment
Lack of things and activities to do
Shortage of small town business
Inability for community leadership to work together on large community needs. City Councils often not listening to the actual needs of the community. Poverty and ranking at the bottom of the state for health outcomes.
Lack of support from city officials for growth in our communities
Storm water drainage issues
The private sector is not a reliable community partner. Major employers clamor to find employees and complain that there are too few skilled workers, but I see only nominal engagement with the

community. The huge gap left by low wages and poor benefits are left to be filled by an army of human services and non profit organizations, many of whom are underpaid and overworked. Meanwhile, meat packing plants saw record profits throughout the pandemic, and real estate developers benefited from an inflated housing market. Leadership should hold private sector partners accountable and ask for investment in our community beyond naming rights to event centers.
Few local jobs
Lack of a common community vision for economic development and entrepreneurial growth Strong "can't be done" or "can't be bothered" attitude in City Hall and Chamber when it comes to community improvement projects, unwillingness to work with nonprofit community groups
Immigration backlog and delays in issuing visas has a huge impact on our ability to bring more people to our area and/or retain those here due to their status.
Sewage treatment capacity limits
Insufficient wage rates
Competitiveness between SD,Neb,and Iowa
Trades education at the high school level. Guidance counselors focus on 4 year degrees.
Regionally our tax structure should be more competitive, due to the three states. Property tax, utility, sales tax, and income tax all vary greatly with SD being the most competitive and welcoming to entrepreneurs, business owners, and retirees.
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>

ANSWERED: 57 | SKIPPED: 46

Q10. Rank Region Opportunities: In your opinion, what are the top opportunities for productive economic development? Please rank using 1-19 score, where “1” is the biggest opportunity and “19” is the smallest opportunity.

Note: Opportunities here are defined as chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of biosciences research lab in the region), and are often external in nature.

The table below shows the quantity of each ranking for the various opportunity options.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Aggressive workforce development	15	6	6	3	6	5	5	7	3	3	4	5	2	3	1	1	1	1	0
Regional business retention	10	13	10	6	2	5	6	5	6	2	1	2	1	3	1	4	0	1	1
Infrastructure improvements (roads, bridges, broadband, rail, airport, etc.)	10	9	13	6	7	4	5	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	0	3	0
Promote low cost of living	10	9	8	12	10	5	8	1	3	2	2	2	1	0	3	0	0	1	1
Attract art and entertainment options	5	4	6	4	11	2	6	4	7	2	7	3	2	2	3	1	4	3	5
Promote consolidated, high-quality job website	0	3	2	6	3	8	4	6	9	4	4	3	6	4	0	3	4	5	5
Build upon and create more family amenities	5	5	6	11	6	12	11	3	2	1	2	5	1	6	2	1	0	1	0
Attract new residents, while also retaining current population	8	8	8	8	7	5	6	10	4	8	3	0	1	3	0	1	1	1	0
Embrace technological advances such as automation, particularly in the manufacturing industry	3	2	2	1	2	3	4	5	10	7	6	7	8	4	5	3	5	1	2
Attract young workers and residents who formerly lived in the region (Return to Roots campaign)	5	8	9	6	6	5	4	3	4	11	4	3	2	3	3	1	1	2	2
Immigrants and international workers can bolster economic outputs	2	3	0	4	2	4	1	1	0	6	7	5	8	6	6	9	4	4	9
Diversification of Siouxland employers	4	0	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	7	9	10	5	4	6	6	5	5
Grow healthcare systems & providers within region	0	5	5	1	4	3	2	6	5	4	4	9	8	6	8	4	4	2	1
Investment in downtowns	0	2	3	2	5	4	4	5	6	3	3	5	9	10	5	5	3	5	4
Grow agriculture/tech jobs	4	1	3	3	3	3	1	4	4	5	4	5	3	6	14	10	6	1	0
Build upon housing growth & rehabilitation efforts	3	3	0	1	6	6	7	7	6	6	2	2	5	5	4	13	2	4	0
Upskilling untapped workforce	1	3	1	3	0	4	5	6	3	3	9	3	5	4	6	4	16	7	1
Embrace recently invested in and growing industries, such as: airport & aviation school, barge, freight carrier	2	1	1	2	2	2	0	5	3	4	1	3	1	4	4	5	13	18	12
Innovating and expanding public transportation	1	2	0	1	3	2	1	1	1	5	5	3	1	2	5	4	6	10	29

ANSWERED: 93 | SKIPPED: 10

Q11. In your opinion, are there additional regional opportunities that are not listed in the previous question (question #10)?
Diversification of housing options- continue building apartments and condos downtown and townhomes and duplexes
encourage mixed use opportunities in new and old developments. For example including store fronts on ground floors of new complexes.
Go look at Sioux Falls and Omaha.
Trade learning experiences Apprenticeships
Making it AFFORDABLE to be an entrepreneur/ small business owner. Retail rental space is OUTRAGEOUSLY expensive and does not appropriately reflect the affordable Midwest cost-of-living. People come here to start a business and leave/fail because of sticker price shock.
We should be taking advantage of SHIP and more joint planning with public and private service providing agencies. Where did the multidisciplinary approach go? Research has demonstrated this is the best approach
More red light cameras will certainly welcome folks!
We should invest in becoming the best at teaching English to our non English speaking residents. This will open many economic opportunities and help employers needing to fill jobs
More housing, existing housing is too expensive
I would like to see investment in current residents and businesses. It's not clear that attracting new business and residents is feasible or even advisable when we have an underpaid and undereducated population. A new employer of the same caliber as those already present is unlikely to alleviate socioeconomic struggles our community faces.
Lack pride in community history and heritage. Encourage more historic preservation and heritage conservation activities to remove blight and repurpose structures, particularly in downtown. Encourage more entrepreneurship in the Arts and more nonprofit entrepreneurship in historic preservation work.
More regional government cooperation
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>

ANSWERED: 38 | SKIPPED: 65

Q12. Rank Regional Threats. In your opinion, what are the top external (state, national, international) threats or dangers to the region? Please rank using 1-9 score, where “1” is the biggest threat and “9” is the smallest threat.

Note: Threats are defined as chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g., several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often external in nature.

The table below shows the quantity of each ranking for the various threat options.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Worker retention	22	23	12	9	6	7	1	1	1
Effective training in local colleges and trade schools to keep up with industry needs and demands	6	8	13	12	9	17	5	6	5
Lack of business succession planning	5	7	13	12	14	8	11	5	6
Loss of available funds in areas where population declines	12	6	8	12	11	7	9	13	4
Adverse natural and environmental impacts; increasing frequency of extreme weather events	1	4	4	2	6	11	16	11	28
Lack of qualified and eligible workers; worker shortage	16	18	9	9	11	7	10	6	1
Young people moving out of region; brain drain	16	11	14	12	11	4	5	8	4
Costs of construction; lack of contractors	5	8	10	10	10	13	12	15	5

ANSWERED: 94 | SKIPPED: 9

Q13. In your opinion, are there additional external (state, national, international) threats or dangers to the region not listed in the previous question (question #12)?		
Few job opportunities in rural areas that pay a living wage.		
Our state government still ignores the Western side of Iowa. Our local city government is horrible to work with regarding small businesses.		
Intolerance in area for immigrants and people living alternative lifestyles		
Strategic destruction of electric grid (taking out Gavins Point Dam, power plants, and EMPs) by national or international deviants. Political divisiveness. The Midwest should be the example for the rest of the nation and remain united, grounded, and level-headed. Law Enforcement. Again, our region should be the example by holding high standards in educating, training, and appropriate day-to-day policing. Discrimination. As a region we should be embracing diversity in all forms.		
Limited work force, no adequate housing, and limited daycare		
Gun violence. Homelessness MH & substance abuse		
Lack of leadership to attract opportunities and industries to grow our area.		
Very clear training opportunities and expectations!		
Trend toward dumbing down kids in response to "wokeness" For example, largest high school in San Diego is dropping advanced classes		
Continuing higher cost of goods and services--gas and food prices--imports from other countries. We need to make more and buy more locally.		
AFFORDABLE SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING		
#1 Other countries buying up our businesses and land. Some producing products that are actually reducing our soil, water and air quality while reaping the economic gains from these companies. Example - fertilizer companies. Buying land up but not being good stewards of land. I don't believe other countries should own anything in our country.		
Most of the threats listed have internal causes: weak leadership, catering to a handful of wealthy individuals and businesses, replacing quality education with glossy facilities.		
lack of meaningful immigration reform. We MUST find ways for people to navigate the legal system in a matter of months not years upon years for processing.		
Energy costs		
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>		

ANSWERED: 38 | SKIPPED: 65

Q14. Do you have any suggested changes or additions to the existing CEDS vision statement (listed below)?		
Existing Vision: The SIMPCO region will be a preferred location for innovative businesses and entrepreneurs who desire a skilled workforce, quality infrastructure, high quality of life for residents, and a positive business environment in order to contribute to continual regional economy success.		
No, changes; looks good	72	75.8%
Yes, needs changes	12	12.6%
My suggested changes:	11	11.6%
Needs to include residents/families and helping with their growth and success		
Build multiple culturalism and celebration of diversity		
Business and retail environment		
Innovative, while it covers all aspects of business, makes me think technology and manufacturing. I would like to see the vision statement encapsulate other industries as well (restaurants, the arts,		

entertainment, specialty shops, boutiques, bakeries/delis/catering, etc.) How about "innovative and fresh"? I think you can get rid of "for residents." Instead of "resiliency," I would say "growth."
Until we can house a work force, we will continue to struggle.
Safe
To act on it, not just say it.
Increase prosperity by being regionally competitive, business-friendly, education aware and comprised of healthy, diverse, and cultural communities sustaining a high-quality of life.
Get clear about what quality of life means. Be specific and address the community you serve.
being based in Sioux City I believe most of what happens stays in the metro area

ANSWERED: 95 | SKIPPED: 8

Q15. In the next 10-20 years, what economic and entrepreneurship changes would you like to see in the region?
Added future-ready Infrastructures. Well maintained downtown. Charging stations for electric cars, safe bike parking in addition to the trails and bike-friendly road.
More opportunities for young people and young families.
More industry for job growth and retaining citizens, growing housing and entertainment market, nothing to really do here for kids/teens.
More family friendly events, spaces and activities. More opportunities for young adults that stay in our region and become an active member of their community. Working with local high school and colleges to recognize those individuals that may fall under the radar of becoming the next best asset to our community
Improved housing funds to repair old family homes instead of building new all the time
Recruitment of industry in rural areas to keep them alive, industries that pay a living wage. Affordable housing for families as well as elderly Continue to recruit specialized drs to have satellite services available in rural hospitals
More small businesses, a thriving downtown attractive to young professionals. Embrace diversity and promote cultural exchange. Continue to support the arts and expand arts and entertainment venues and opportunities- quality of life improvements paired with low cost of living will help to retain young professionals.
A major improvement in public transportation of routes and flexibility in mobility, expansion in housing and more biking, walking and hiking trails.
Additional airline options
more mixed-use buildings -- infill and new construction
Lower cost of housing & renting, more homes & apartments need to be built, and eventually more people living in Siouxland to bring in more businesses and growth.
Tax incentives for new businesses, large and small. FIX AND REPLACE THE STREETS!
More local businesses outside of restaraunts
More manufacturing. We are in a great location between Omaha and Sioux City for trucking access.
Lower cost of brick & mortar retail space. Lower taxes on goods and services. Less political red tape and hoops to jump through when trying to start a business. There needs to be systems in place, but the process is not easy to navigate or affordable. Business loans/grants for start-ups.
Low cost financing for start ups, continued service oriented job education
I would like to see more housing, condo's. I would like to see more tech and retail jobs in South Sioux other than spanish shops and restaurants. I would like to see a better transit schedule.
Housing. Putting \$ in to poor housing conditions
I would love to see several large employers come to the SIMPCO area.
More growth and development along the River. Get Rid off the soccer fields
A community where growth is planned and well thought out.
Quality affordable places to live

Support for existing businesses. Support is there to create new businesses, but they cannibalize existing businesses. I'm for creating new businesses but not at the expense of existing businesses.
Find a way for state to work together more. Rich keep getting richer...
More assistance for small business from the city (only large employer focused) and to become a place where entrepreneurs can thrive.
Expansion on more affordable housing.
Newer housing, more job opportunities, a bigger company to come in such as a target, walmart, etc.
Better jobs
Better shopping opportunities and restaurant choices developed in small communities in the region. If not invested in, these communities will not survive.
Find ways to help our smaller communities recruit small manufacturers and employers that bring job opportunities to those communities,
Local business support and enhancement.
Younger people coming to town, more business opportunities
More business, retain young generation
Would like to see more manufacturing businesses offering good paying jobs, which in turn will benefit our towns and increase the need for better quality housing, school enrollment, and an increase in our population instead of being known as the oldest and poorest county in the state.
greater partnerships in the area
just more businesses, small towns thriving and workers getting back to work
While definitely a valuable asset, we need to diversfy from Value added Ag.
I would like to see more employment opportunities for college graduates. Yes, there are a lot of places hiring, but not many that college graduates feel are "worth it." I would also like to see more small businesses and a bigger focus on small towns. More events and actives. When I look up "things to do in (blank)" I would like there to be actual things to do.
fix failing infrastructure, new businesses
blue collar training at high school level. More affordable housing for young families. Living conditions of some of the rental properties need to be addressed. Entertainment opportunities of youth and teens. One more grocery store.
Tax breaks, loan opportunities for new business owners. Better outreach from local schools to get youth in skilled trades and intern at local businesses. A combined effort to recruit families. Improvements to entertainment options for all ages.
We need land to build houses on. With towns landlocked by farms it is very difficult to expand.
I don't know what is possible under current circumstances. It is unreasonable to believe that this region will develop and support a higher quality of life without significant changes to ideology.
Less packing plants and more retail/consumer business. Bringing new businesses into town without 'old money' stomping on them.
Apartments
more business
More housing in rural areas
better salaries better employee retention
We have a common vision for how to grow small businesses, nonprofit-based amenities, and entrepreneurial startups - City of Sioux City needs to become a better financial partner.
Larger manufacturing businesses
New Business one-stop hub like GCC only for economic and entrepreneurship.
support current businesses - especially those established by recent immigrants - and working to expand their operations and develop succession planning. Stop chasing "big fish" for economic development. Focus on supporting growth of what we have here.
Electric vehicle support and amenities
More whiter-collar jobs for people with 4 year degrees. Too much of region is retail and manufacturing.

better air service
More focus on trades developmet
Stronger support and encouragement for entrepreneurial opportunities and activity.
A more competitive tax, property tax, and sales tax area. A wider diversity of employers (ie. white collar)- example Des Moines or Sioux Falls.
More activities for youth.
more high school appreciation of Siouxland
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>

ANSWERED: 66 | SKIPPED: 37

Q16. Please provide additional comments for the SIMPCO CEDS committee here:
Thank you.
Make your agency more visible in rural areas, sharing opportunities, accomplishments, how citizens can help to achieve positive goals in our communities.
FIX AND REPLACE THE STREETS
Stop messing with hamilton bike lanes and work on the plywood trail
Thank you for taking the time to collect these and for taking the initiative to improve our region.
The young folks are not very loyal, but is that because of broken trust? On who's part?
Simpco does an excellent job in helping small towns.
THANK YOU
We should promote those who live in our region to get out and discover the region e.g. residents of metro Sioux City to discover parks and restaurants and shops outside of Sioux City and opportunities (including things like transportation for older rural and small town residents) to take advantage of things like say Orpheus. One thing that would help in this regard, more and better signage at rural blacktop intersections (how many people in Sioux City could find say steak house in Anthon).
The largest problem for our area is the housing costs far exceed the wages being paid to workers. The only large scale housing structures being built are multi-family. People want a single family home, in a neighborhood, where their children can play, that they can afford. That will attract people to stay and maybe relocate.
Emphasis towards rural communities
thanks for asking!
Look at the data as you make decisions. Don't pursue projects just because they worked elsewhere. This is not Sioux Falls, and it certainly is not Des Moines, so stop chasing those identities. Serve the community instead of seeking recognition. The site selection awards are meaningless to families who can't afford food and medicine, so stop pretending like the award is an accomplishment.
This areas biggest disadvantage is its location. When investors or business owners look at this area, they consider Omaha, Sioux City, and Sioux Falls. Sioux City is probably the weakest for growth and prosperity of the three. It is also easier to expand offices or businesses to Sioux Falls and Omaha as there is a greater reach than investing in Omaha and Sioux City for example. If you can only pick two spots, the best two are going to be the furthest from each other. Siouxland also has a weak discretionary income level, with the vast majority of the working/spending population makes under the median income (per person, maybe not household).
<i>Note: Some survey participants answered this question with no, none, I don't know, and the like. These responses are not included in the above list.</i>

ANSWERED: 20 | SKIPPED: 83

Appendix D: Demographic Data

Table 1. Regional Population Trends

Community	2000 Population	2010 Population	2020 Population	2000-2010 Percent Change	2010-2020 Percent Change
Cherokee County	13,035	12,072	11,658	-7.39%	-3.43
Aurelia	1,062	1,036	968	-2.45%	-6.56%
Cherokee	5,369	5,253	5,199	-2.16%	-1.03%
Cleghorn	250	240	240	-4.00%	0.00%
Larrabee	149	132	123	-11.41%	-6.82%
Marcus	1,139	1,117	1,079	-1.93%	-3.40%
Meriden	184	159	161	-13.59%	1.26%
Quimby	368	319	249	-13.32%	-21.94%
Washta	282	248	209	-12.06%	-15.73%
Dakota County	20,253	21,006	21,582	3.72%	2.74%
Dakota City	1,821	1,919	2,081	5.83%	8.44%
Emerson	817	840	840	2.82%	0.00%
Homer	590	542	532	-8.14%	-3.10%
Hubbard	234	236	153	0.85%	-35.17%
Jackson	205	223	207	8.78%	-7.17%
South Sioux City	11,925	13,353	14,043	11.97%	5.17%
Ida County	7,837	7,089	7,005	-9.54%	-1.18%
Arthur	245	206	222	-15.92%	7.77%
Battle Creek	743	713	700	-4.04%	-1.82%
Galva	368	434	435	17.93%	0.23%
Holstein	1,470	1,396	1,501	-5.03%	7.52%
Ida Grove	2,350	2,142	2,051	-8.85%	-4.25%
Monona County	10,020	9,245	8,751	-7.73%	-5.32%
Blencoe	231	224	233	-3.03%	4.02%
Castana	178	147	107	-17.42	-27.21%
Mapleton	1,416	1,224	1,165	-13.56%	-4.82%
Moorhead	232	226	199	-2.59%	-11.95%
Onawa	3,091	2,998	2,906	-3.01%	-3.07%
Rodney	74	60	45	-18.92%	-25.00%
Soldier	207	174	184	-15.94%	5.75%
Turin	75	68	72	-9.33%	5.88%
Whiting	707	762	745	7.78%	-2.23%
Ute	378	374	338	-1.06%	-9.63%
Plymouth County	24,849	24,986	25,698	0.55%	2.85%
Akron	1,489	1,486	1,558	-0.20%	4.85%

Community	2000 Population	2010 Population	2020 Population	2000-2010 Percent Change	2010-2020 Percent Change
Brunsville	146	151	129	3.42%	-14.57%
Craig	102	89	79	-12.75%	-11.24%
Hinton	808	928	935	14.85%	0.75%
Kingsley	1,245	1,411	1,396	13.33%	-1.06%
Le Mars	9,237	9,826	10,571	6.38%	7.58%
Oyens	132	103	92	-21.97%	-10.68%
Remsen	1,762	1,663	1,678	-5.62%	0.90%
Struble	85	78	67	-8.24%	-14.10%
Westfield	189	132	123	-30.16%	-6.82%
Woodbury County	103,877	102,172	105,941	-1.64%	3.69%
Anthon	649	565	545	-12.94%	-3.54%
Bronson	269	322	294	19.70%	-8.70%
Correctionville	851	821	766	-3.53%	-6.70%
Cushing	246	220	230	-10.57%	4.55%
Danbury	384	348	320	-9.38%	-8.05%
Hornick	253	225	255	-11.07%	13.33%
Lawton	697	908	943	30.27%	3.85%
Moville	1,583	1,618	1,687	2.21%	4.26%
Oto	145	108	72	-25.52%	-33.33%
Pierson	371	366	337	-1.35%	-7.92%
Salix	370	363	295	-1.89%	-18.73%
Sergeant Bluff	3,321	4,227	5,015	27.28%	18.64%
Sioux City	85,013	82,684	85,797	-2.74%	3.76%
Sloan	1,032	973	1,042	-5.72%	7.09%
Smithland	221	224	181	-1.36%	-19.20%
SIMPCO CEDS Region	179,871	176,570	180,635	-1.84%	2.30%
Iowa	2,926,324	3,046,355	3,190,369	4.10%	4.73%
Nebraska	1,711,263	1,826,341	1,961,504	6.72%	7.40%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2000, 2010, 2020

Table 2. Regional Age Distribution

		14 and younger	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-74	75 and older
Cherokee County	<i>Count</i>	2,069	1,586	1,850	2,062	2,355	1,359
	<i>Percent</i>	18.3%	14.1%	16.4%	18.3%	20.9%	12.0%
Dakota County	<i>Count</i>	4,959	4,187	3,638	3,722	2,508	1,110
	<i>Percent</i>	24.6%	20.8%	18.1%	18.5%	12.5%	5.5%
Ida County	<i>Count</i>	1,384	1,096	1,129	1,199	1,325	729
	<i>Percent</i>	20.2%	16.0%	16.5%	17.5%	19.3%	10.6%
Monona County	<i>Count</i>	1,488	1,357	1,307	1,654	1,770	1,099
	<i>Percent</i>	17.2%	15.6%	15.1%	19.1%	20.4%	12.7%
Plymouth County	<i>Count</i>	5,075	4,286	4,363	4,954	4,298	2,165
	<i>Percent</i>	20.2%	17.0%	17.4%	19.7%	17.1%	8.6%
Woodbury County	<i>Count</i>	22,328	21,168	19,134	18,626	15,037	6,394
	<i>Percent</i>	21.7%	20.6%	18.6%	18.1%	14.6%	6.2%
SIMPCO CEDS Region	<i>Count</i>	37,303	33,680	31,421	32,217	27,293	12,856
	<i>Percent</i>	21.3%	19.3%	18.0%	18.4%	15.6%	7.4%
Iowa	<i>Count</i>	605,633	641,289	576,286	585,295	504,717	236,791
	<i>Percent</i>	19.2%	20.4%	18.3%	18.6%	16.0%	7.5%
Nebraska	<i>Count</i>	397,019	394,961	367,359	341,877	292,466	130,144
	<i>Percent</i>	20.6%	20.5%	19.1%	17.8%	15.2%	6.8%

Source: U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 2020 5-Year Estimates

Table 3. Regional Racial Distribution

		White	Black / African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races
Cherokee County	<i>Count</i>	10,831	87	33	57	14	238	398
	<i>Percent</i>	92.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%	0.1%	2.0%	3.4%
Dakota County	<i>Count</i>	11,028	1,613	711	609	154	4,177	3,290
	<i>Percent</i>	51.1%	7.5%	3.3%	2.8%	0.7%	19.4%	15.2%
Ida County	<i>Count</i>	6,662	31	4	22	11	87	188
	<i>Percent</i>	95.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	1.2%	2.7%
Monona County	<i>Count</i>	8,141	28	146	28	2	59	347
	<i>Percent</i>	93.0%	0.3%	1.7%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%	4.0%
Plymouth County	<i>Count</i>	23,289	356	88	116	117	656	1,076
	<i>Percent</i>	90.6%	1.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	2.6%	4.2%
Woodbury County	<i>Count</i>	76,794	5,197	2,515	3,008	661	8,155	9,611
	<i>Percent</i>	72.5%	4.9%	2.4%	2.8%	0.6%	7.7%	9.1%
SIMPCO CEDS Region	<i>Count</i>	136,750	7,312	3,497	3,840	959	13,372	14,910
	<i>Percent</i>	75.7%	4.0%	1.9%	2.1%	0.5%	7.4%	8.3%
Iowa	<i>Count</i>	2,694,521	131,972	14,486	75,629	5,758	88,720	179,283
	<i>Percent</i>	84.5%	4.1%	0.5%	2.4%	0.2%	2.8%	5.6%
Nebraska	<i>Count</i>	1,538,052	96,535	23,102	52,951	1,534	105,167	144,163
	<i>Percent</i>	78.4%	4.9%	1.2%	2.7%	0.1%	5.4%	7.3%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census Data, 2020

Table 4. Regional Educational Attainment Distribution for Population 25 years and over

		Less than 9 th Grade	9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
Cherokee County	<i>Count</i>	249	379	2,962	1,832	910	1,240	620
	<i>Percent</i>	3.0%	4.6%	36.2%	22.4%	11.1%	15.1%	7.6%
Dakota County	<i>Count</i>	1,581	1,229	4,150	2,304	1,245	1,327	488
	<i>Percent</i>	12.8%	10.0%	33.7%	18.7%	10.1%	10.8%	4.0%
Ida County	<i>Count</i>	45	332	1,868	990	643	650	178
	<i>Percent</i>	1.0%	7.1%	39.7%	21.0%	13.7%	13.8%	3.8%
Monona County	<i>Count</i>	144	326	2,474	1,661	708	690	298
	<i>Percent</i>	2.3%	5.2%	39.3%	26.4%	11.2%	11.0%	4.7%
Plymouth County	<i>Count</i>	603	484	5,868	3,904	2,337	2,862	919
	<i>Percent</i>	3.6%	2.9%	34.6%	23.0%	13.8%	16.9%	5.4%
Woodbury County	<i>Count</i>	4,143	3,999	20,938	14,266	7,111	10,556	4,985
	<i>Percent</i>	6.3%	6.1%	31.7%	21.6%	10.8%	16.0%	7.6%
SIMPCO CEDS Region	<i>Count</i>	6,765	6,749	38,260	24,957	12,954	17,325	7,488
	<i>Percent</i>	5.9%	5.9%	33.4%	21.8%	11.3%	15.1%	6.5%
Iowa	<i>Count</i>	61,329	97,072	647,371	433,481	248,496	415,048	202,067
	<i>Percent</i>	2.9%	4.6%	30.8%	20.6%	11.8%	19.7%	9.6%
Nebraska	<i>Count</i>	47,818	58,366	324,098	285,338	134,605	269,312	140,003
	<i>Percent</i>	3.8%	4.6%	25.7%	22.7%	10.7%	21.4%	11.1%

Source: U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 2020 (5-Year Estimates)

Table 5. Regional Industry Employment and Median Earnings in Past 12 Months (in 2020 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

		Cherokee County	Dakota County	Ida County	Monona County	Plymouth County	Woodbury County	SIMPCO CEDS Region
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	<i>Employees</i>	595	212	442	396	1,234	1,372	4,251
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$41,406	\$37,321	\$35,769	\$51,190	\$36,995	\$40,440	\$40,520
Construction	<i>Employees</i>	491	852	278	286	748	3,746	6,401
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$45,118	\$47,279	\$39,783	\$43,750	\$37,885	\$43,931	\$42,958
Manufacturing	<i>Employees</i>	850	3,182	808	442	2,645	9,217	17,144
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$47,873	\$36,063	\$42,171	\$41,719	\$52,528	\$39,947	\$43,384
Wholesale trade	<i>Employees</i>	138	193	90	136	369	1,616	2,542
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$48,438	\$49,635	\$42,857	\$50,833	\$54,028	\$45,955	\$48,624
Retail trade	<i>Employees</i>	986	854	258	497	1,528	6,531	10,654
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$25,082	\$21,139	\$20,781	\$26,533	\$22,419	\$27,344	\$23,883
Transportation and warehousing, ad utilities	<i>Employees</i>	247	664	135	279	801	2,295	4,421
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$38,125	\$35,000	\$44,702	\$40,208	\$52,254	\$46,812	\$42,850
Information	<i>Employees</i>	130	131	32	46	164	577	1,080
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$25,000	\$46,553	\$31,146	\$29,091	\$34,079	\$28,343	\$32,369
Finance and Insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	<i>Employees</i>	188	641	195	240	615	2,553	4,432
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$40,179	\$49,831	\$43,977	\$38,571	\$48,036	\$38,427	\$43,170

Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	<i>Employees</i>	192	770	87	181	438	3,355	5,023
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$36,111	\$29,478	\$29,375	\$48,203	\$46,181	\$37,550	\$37,816
Educational services, and healthcare and social assistance	<i>Employees</i>	1,362	1,708	808	1,033	2,908	11,560	19,379
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$33,784	\$33,317	\$31,389	\$33,250	\$38,485	\$37,353	\$34,596
Art, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	<i>Employees</i>	230	688	170	358	811	4,779	7,036
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$9,083	\$12,137	\$17,778	\$14,953	\$11,941	\$13,406	\$13,216
Other services, except public administration	<i>Employees</i>	178	400	116	218	756	2,536	4,204
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$19,167	\$33,333	\$21,786	\$23,241	\$30,710	\$34,009	\$27,041
Public administration	<i>Employees</i>	297	202	43	104	440	1,702	2,788
	<i>Earnings</i>	\$46,641	\$48,333	\$41,094	\$49,375	\$51,000	\$51,650	\$48,016

Source: U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 2020 (5-Year Estimates)

Table 6. Labor Force Characteristics

	Cherokee County	Dakota County	Ida County	Monona County	Plymouth County	Woodbury County	SIMPCO CEDS Region
16 years and older Population	9,128	14,674	5,410	7,041	19,681	78,697	134,631
Not in labor force	3,096	3,722	1,868	2,723	5,903	24,177	41,489
Labor force (civilian)	6,030	10,945	3,542	4,318	13,743	54,375	92,953
Employed	5,884	10,497	3,462	4,216	13,457	51,839	89,355
Unemployed	146	448	80	102	286	2,536	3,598
Unemployment rate	2.4%	4.1%	2.3%	2.4%	2.1%	4.7%	3.0%
Median earnings for workers	\$32,821	\$33,415	\$35,252	\$33,254	\$39,939	\$33,779	\$34,743
Median household income	\$56,302	\$61,227	\$54,219	\$51,866	\$71,147	\$60,768	\$59,255
Percent of people living below the poverty level	11.8%	14.1%	11.6%	12.8%	7.2%	12.4%	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census Data, American Community Survey 2020 (5-Year Estimates)

Table 7. Innovation Intelligence Index (2021)

	SIMPCO	Iowa	Nebraska
Innovation Intelligence Index	108.2	99.8	102
Human Capital and Knowledge Creation	104.5	98.5	110.5
Educational Attainment	109.5	123.6	140.5
High School Attainment	129.5	170.6	169.5
Some College Attainment	96	102.4	149.9
Associate's Degree Attainment	163.2	189.7	169.8
Bachelor's Degree Attainment	92.9	97.4	139.7
Graduate Degree Attainment	66	57.8	73.3
Knowledge Creation and Technology Diffusion	94.2	87.6	108.9
Patent Technology Diffusion	73.1	57.9	100.5
University-Based Knowledge Spillovers	115.4	117.2	117.3
STEM Education and Occupations	75.8	83	89.8
Average STEM Degree Creation (per 1,000 Population)	113.6	101.4	97.5
Technology-Based Knowledge Occupation Clusters	55.4	79.3	85.8
Average High-Tech Industry Employment Share	58.3	68.1	86.2
Average Prime Working-Age Population Growth	138.4	100.1	102.7
Business Dynamics	102.6	96.9	79.8
Establishment Formation	86.4	87.1	76.5
Traded Sector Establishment Births to All Establishment Ratio	95.9	59.6	63.6
Jobs Attributed to Establishment Births to Total Employment Ratio	56.2	50.7	66
Change in Establishment Births to All Establishment Ratio	143.7	192.4	91.9
Average Small Establishments (per 10,000 Workers)	67.2	79.9	99.6
Average High-Tech, Early-in-Life-Cycle Establishment Ratio	69.1	53	61.5
Establishment Dynamics	118.7	106.6	83.1
Jobs Attributed to Establishment Expansions to Establishment Contractions Ratio	149.3	76.3	87.8
Establishment Births to Deaths Ratio	74.6	138.2	65.7
Traded Sector Establishment Births to Deaths Ratio	132.1	105.3	95.8
Business Profile	90.3	85.2	111.2
Venture Capital Dollar Measures	66.3	70.3	95.9
Average Annual Venture Capital (scaled by GDP)	50	54.9	90.7
Average Annual Expansion Stage Venture Capital (scaled by GDP)	50	111.3	113.5
Average Annual High-Tech Industry Venture Capital (scaled by GDP)	115.3	55.7	109.1
Change in Average Venture Capital	50	59.5	70.3
Venture Capital Count Measures	69.7	60.5	89.5

Average Initial Public Offerings (scaled by GDP)	50	50	131.3
Average Annual Venture Capital Deals (scaled by GDP)	109.2	58.8	77.6
Change in Average Venture Capital Deals	50	72.8	59.6
Foreign Direct Investment Attractiveness	95.9	120.6	130.4
FDI Employment Ratio, Foreign Source	104.6	105.3	99.6
FDI Investment Ratio, Foreign Source	50	105.3	142.8
FDI Employment Ratio, Domestic Source	110.7	109.9	117.8
FDI Investment Ratio, Domestic Source	118.5	162	161.3
Proprietorship	129.2	89.4	129.1
Farm Operators with Internet Access	184.3	121.1	143.5
Proprietorship Rate	55.6	61.3	65.1
Change in Proprietorship Rate	93.6	80.3	128.7
Proprietor Income to Total Wages and Salaries Ratio	183.5	94.9	179
Industry Diversity	142.4	130.1	87.2
Industry Cluster Growth Factor	154.1	155.3	50
Average Large Establishments (per 10,000 Workers)	130.3	106.8	126.7
Employment and Productivity	111	92.3	87.1
GDP	101.9	82.3	108.5
Average Gross Domestic Product (per Worker)	96.1	84.1	93.5
Change in Gross Domestic Product (per Worker)	107.6	80.6	123.4
Patents	125.6	70.3	107.2
Change in Average Patenting Rate	88.8	88.8	135.1
Patent Diversity	162.3	51.7	79.3
Job Growth to Population Growth Ratio	106.7	62.1	73.8
Change in Share of High-Tech Industry Employment	88.3	154.7	58.8
Economic Well-Being	132.4	125.9	121.3
Residential Internet Connectivity	139.9	100.7	88.9
Broadband Infrastructure and Adoption	117.8	90.8	76.3
Broadband Adoption Barriers	152.3	100.8	98.5
Compensation	93	81.5	91.5
Change in Annual Wage and Salary Earnings per Worker	107.3	97.1	131.5
Change in Proprietor Income (per Proprietor)	78.8	66	51.5
Per Capita Personal Income Growth	156.4	145	51.8
Income Inequality (Mean to Median Ratio)	134.9	131.9	130.6
Average Poverty Rate	151.6	156.1	156.6
Average Unemployment Rate	181.9	184.4	191.7
Government Transfers to Total Personal Income Ratio	151.9	109	156.7
Average Net Migration	50	98.9	102.7

Source: Source: U.S. Economic Development Administration, StatsAmerica: <https://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/>

Appendix E: Environmental Context

Soils

The SIMPCO CEDS Region is primarily covered (53.5%) by the following five soil types: Galva, Ida, Monona, Napier, and Colo. These are further described below. The map following the descriptions shows these soils and an additional soil type, Crofton, primarily found in Dakota County. Data gaps, represented in white, indicate the presence of another soil type, river, or tributary creek bed.

Soil Descriptions

The following soil descriptions of the SIMPCO CEDS Region top soils were gathered from the USDA online soil series. Approximately 53.5% of the SIMPCO CEDS Region is covered by the following five soils shown in the map above. Floodplain information can be found in the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Galva (23.7%)

The Galva series consists of very deep, well drained soils on uplands and loess covered stream terraces. These soils formed in loess. Slopes range from 0 to 15 percent. Mean annual air temperature is about 8 degrees C (47 degrees F). Mean annual precipitation is about 685 millimeters (27 inches).

TAXONOMIC CLASS:	Fine-silty, mixed, superactive, mesic Typic Hapludolls
TYPICAL PEDON:	Galva silty clay loam, on a convex slope of 4 percent, in a cultivated field.

Ida (11.8%)

The Ida series consists of very deep, well drained soils formed in calcareous loess. These soils are on side slopes and crests on dissected till plains and on risers on stream terraces. Slopes range from 2 to 60 percent. Mean annual air temperature is about 9 degrees C (49 degrees F). Mean Annual precipitation is about 74 centimeters (29 inches).

TAXONOMIC CLASS:	Fine-silty, mixed, superactive, calcareous, mesic Typic Udorthents
TYPICAL PEDON:	Ida silt loam, on a 5 percent slope, in a cultivated field, at an elevation of 425 meters (1,395 feet) above sea level.

Monona (8.6%)

The Monona series consists of very deep, well drained soils formed in loess. These soils are on interfluvies and side slopes on loess hills and on risers and treads on stream terraces in river valleys. Slope ranges from 0 to 40 percent. Mean annual air temperature is about 10 degrees C (51 degrees F). Mean annual precipitation is about 710 millimeters (29 inches).

TAXONOMIC CLASS:	Fine-silty, mixed, superactive, mesic Typic Hapludolls
TYPICAL PEDON:	Monona silt loam, on a slope of 1 percent, in a cultivated field, at an elevation of 418 meters (1,370 feet) above sea level.

Napier (5.2%)

The Napier series consists of very deep, well drained soils on foot slopes, upland drainage ways, and alluvial fans. These soils formed in local colluvium and alluvium derived from loess. Slopes range from 0 to 20 percent. Mean annual air temperature is about 11 degrees C. Mean annual precipitation is about 790 millimeters.

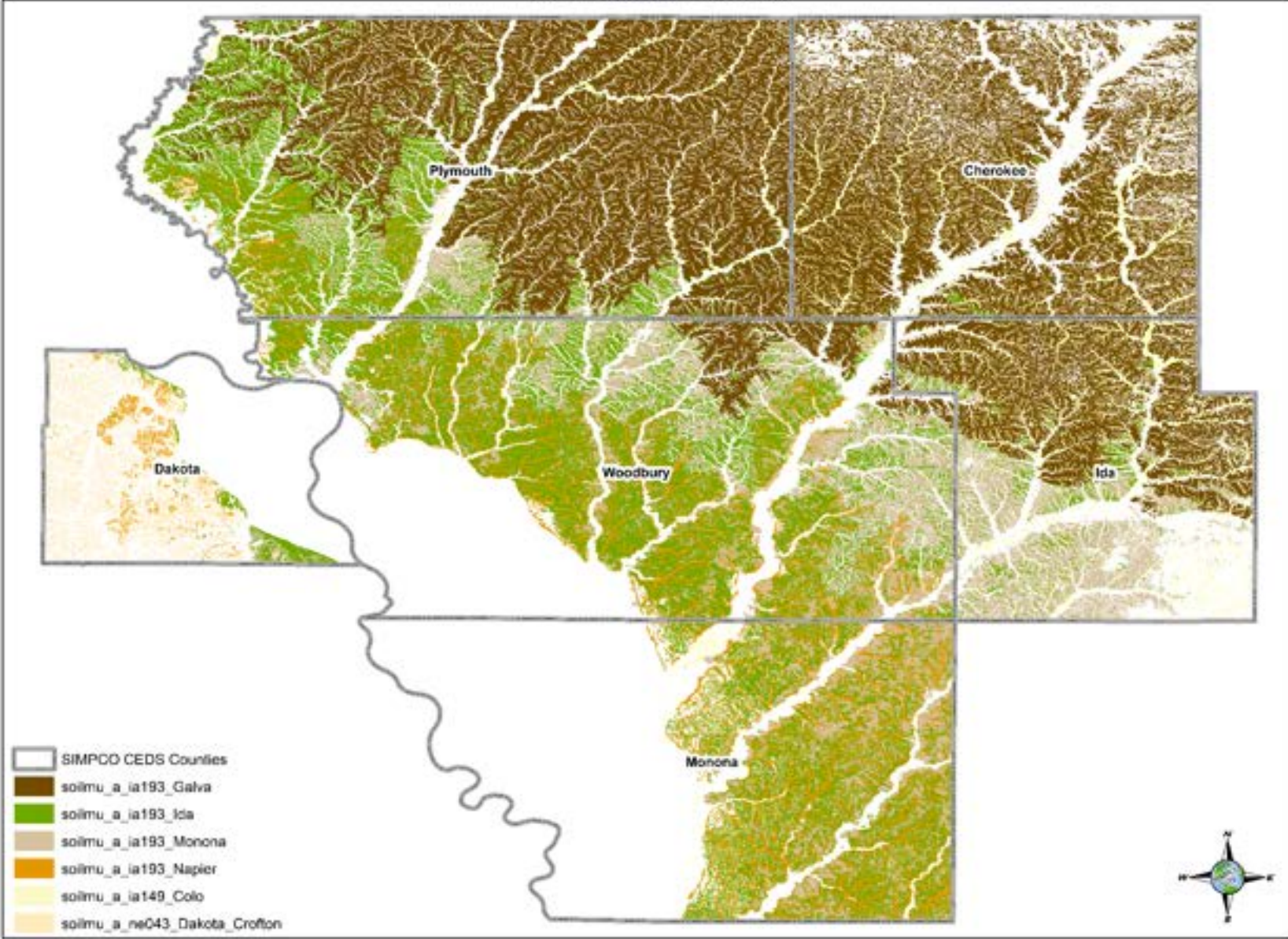
TAXONOMIC CLASS:	Fine-silty, mixed, superactive, mesic Cumulic Hapludolls
TYPICAL PEDON:	Napier silt loam, on a 3 percent slope, in a cultivated field, at an elevation of 312 meters (1,025 feet) above sea level.

Colo (4.2%)

The Colo series consists of very deep, poorly drained soils formed in alluvium. These soils are on floodplains, low stream terraces, alluvial fans, and upland drainage ways. Slope ranges from 0 to 5 percent. Mean annual air temperature is about 10 degrees C. Mean annual precipitation is about 775 millimeters.

TAXONOMIC CLASS:	Fine-silty, mixed, superactive, mesic Cumulic Endoaquolls
TYPICAL PEDON:	Colo silty clay loam, on a slope of less than 1 percent, in a cultivated field, at an elevation of about 275 meters above sea level.

SIMPCO CEDS Soils



Site Contamination

There are numerous hazardous waste and toxic contamination sites in the Region. Economic development complications can arise from the presence or potential presence of hazardous waste. State and Federal resources are relied upon for the identification and monitoring of contaminated sites in the Region. SIMPCO Tri-State Incident Management Team and Region IV Iowa Hazardous Materials Response Commission, both provide local emergency response and hazardous waste guidance. The following definitions of site contamination levels and site descriptions were gathered from Iowa and Nebraska Departments of Environmental Quality or Natural Resources and US Environmental Protection Agency.

Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination (IA DNR). There are 46 EPA recognized brownfield sites in the two-state SIMPCO CEDS Region. State and Federal resources for regional assistance are listed below.

Superfund sites are contaminated sites that underwent hazardous waste being dumped, left out in the open, or otherwise improperly managed. These sites include manufacturing facilities, processing plants, landfills, and mining sites (US EPA). There is currently one superfund site in the SIMPCO CEDS Region, and one being proposed. The existing superfund site, which is on the national priorities list (NPL), is located in Sergeant Bluff, IA (Woodbury County). It is a former tanning company that operated from 1970 to 1989. This site was removed from the list in 2004 after undergoing a series of cleanup, maintenance, and monitoring measures. However, it was readded to the NPL after another release occurred on the site. This site will be reviewed in 2023.

The proposed NPL site is Highway 3 PCE located in Le Mars, Iowa (Plymouth County). It was proposed to EPA in 2022 to address contaminated soil, groundwater, and indoor air/vapor that threatens human health and the environment (US EPA).

Federal and State resources for assistance are listed below.

Federal Resources

- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)
- [Brownfields Assistance](#)
- [Superfund Assistance](#)

Iowa Resources

- [Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Brownfields Program](#)
- [Iowa Federal Brownfield Site Locations](#)
- [Redevelopment Tax Credits Program for Brownfield & Grayfield Sites](#)

Nebraska Resources

- [Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality – Brownfields Assistance Section 128\(a\) Assessment](#)
- [Superfund Site Assessment Program](#)
- [Superfund National Priority List Site Management Assistance Program](#)

Air and Water Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency establishes standards for air and water quality that must be upheld in the two-state SIMPCO CEDS Region. State, Federal, and local agencies are relied upon to identify and monitor air and water quality in the Region. Both Iowa and Nebraska have the required air quality State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) in place and approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The US Environmental Protection Agency maintains a list of impaired water in Region 7 which includes the SIMPCO CEDS Region. As of 2021, there are two lakes, five wetlands, and a series of river sections within SIMPCO's EDD that are designated as impaired waters. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides a map of the impaired waters here: <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/adbnet/Assessments/Summary/2022/Impaired/Map>

Federal, State, and local resources for air and water quality in the Region are listed below.

Federal Resources

- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Air Quality](#)
- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Water Quality](#)
- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency list of impaired waters in region 7 \(Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri\)](#)

Iowa Resources

- [Iowa Department of Natural Resources Air Quality](#)
- [Iowa Department of Natural Resources Water Quality](#)

Nebraska Resources

- [Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality Air Quality](#)
- [Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality](#)

Endangered and Threatened Species

The following endangered or threatened species exist in the SIMPCO CEDS Region.

Species	Threatened or Endangered	Habitat	Food	Threats
Northern Long-eared Bat (Mammal)	Threatened	Winter: caves and mines, called hibernacula. Summer: singly or in colonies underneath bark, in cavities or in crevices of both living and dead trees.	Insects	White-Nose syndrome (a fungal disease commonly known to affect bats)
Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (Flowering Plant)	Threatened	Wet prairies & sedge meadows	Not applicable	Conversion of habitat to cropland and poorly conducted burning, grazing, and mowing.
Prairie Bush-Clover (Flowering Plant)	Threatened	Dry to mesic prairies with gravelly soils	Not applicable	Conversion of pasture into cropland, overgrazing, and expansion of agricultural operations and urban development.
Pallid Sturgeon (Fish)	Endangered	Bottom dwelling in the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and some tributaries from Montana to Louisiana.	Bottom feeders; small fish	Habitat destruction, modification, and overutilization.
Piping Plover (Bird)	Threatened	Ocean shores in the Northeast and along lakeshores and alkali wetlands in the northern Great Plains and Great Lakes.	Aquatic invertebrates	Habitat loss or degradation, nest disturbance, and predation.

Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, ECOS Environmental Conservation Online System

2021 Climate Summary

	Cherokee County	Dakota County	Ida County	Monona County	Plymouth County	Woodbury County	SIMPCO CEDS Region	United States
High temperature in July	84.0°	86.2°	84.0°	85.7°	84.9°	85.5°	86.2°	87.7°
Low temperature in January	16.8°	18.8°	18.3°	19.6°	18.0°	18.9°	17.1°	25.2°
Precipitation	27.1"	23.5"	27.7"	30.0"	24.1"	25.7"	29.7"	30.5"

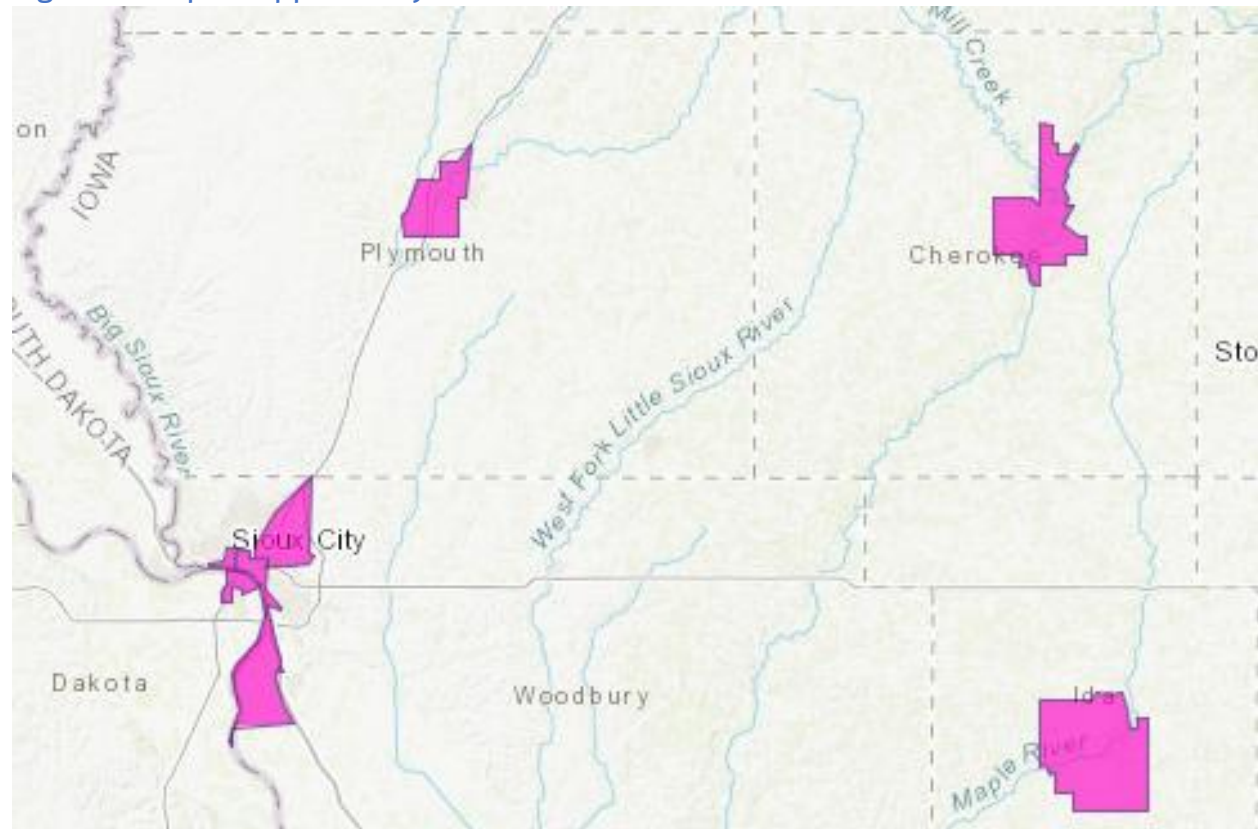
Source: NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, Climate at a Glance

Appendix F: Opportunity Zones

The nationwide Opportunity Zone program, created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, was initiated to foster job creation and attract long-term, private investment in distressed, low-income areas by harvesting unrealized gains and injecting capital in those designated areas. The State of Iowa hosts 62 Opportunity Zones and the State of Nebraska hosts 44. The SIMPCO CEDS Region contains seven Census tracts designated in five of its counties: four counties in Iowa and one in Nebraska. Counties include Cherokee, Dakota, Ida, Plymouth, and Woodbury. Three of the Opportunity Zones are located in Woodbury County.

Demographic information that influenced Census tract eligibility for the Opportunity Zones program is shown in the table below.

Figure 6. Map of Opportunity Zones in the SIMPCO CEDS District



Source: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). Opportunity Now. <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov/resources/map>

Table 8. SIMPCO CEDS Region Opportunity Zone Demographic Information

Census Tract ID	State	County	City	Total Census Tract Population	Median Family Income	Poverty Rate	Non-White Population	Bachelor's Degree Plus Holders	Total Jobs	Total Businesses
1	IA	Woodbury	Sioux City	4,694	\$63,590	13%	32%	9%	3,937	262
15	IA	Woodbury	Sioux City	2,275	\$38,235	39%	65%	3%	1,603	165
36	IA	Woodbury	Sioux City	3,113	\$54,968	28%	50%	12%	16,699	990
101	NE	Dakota	South Sioux City	6,592	\$65,489	20%	100%	9%	1,962	193
903	IA	Ida	Ida Grove	2,211	\$83,750	9%	2%	20%	2,078	189
801	IA	Cherokee	Cherokee	5,210	\$70,746	16%	5%	22%	3,525	339
9702	IA	Plymouth	Le Mars	3,675	\$59,592	14%	17%	18%	3,984	395

Source: Economic Innovation Group, Opportunity Zones Map; ESRI; ACS 2019 (5-year): <https://eig.org/opportunity-zones/facts-figures/>

Key to the implementation of qualified projects in the Region's Opportunity Zones is the Region's Chambers of Commerce, City and County Economic Development Departments and Directors, State and Federal Departments, and many community-level partners. These include:

- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Nebraska Department of Economic Development
- SIMPCO
- Siouxland Chamber of Commerce and the Siouxland Initiative
- Siouxland Economic Development Corporation (SEDC)
- Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Dakota County Community Development Agency
- Chambers of Commerce: Cherokee, Ida Grove, Le Mars, South Sioux City
- County and City Economic Development Directors

A comprehensive list of key stakeholders and stakeholder groups that would be instrumental in implementing projects in Opportunity Zones can be found in Appendix B.

While no communities have local incentives specifically tied to development in Opportunity Zones, the Region and its respective communities have multiple grant, loan, and incentive options that can be used as tools to bolster development within the Zones. There are nationwide and state-based Opportunity Funds to help spur investment into these areas, as well as certain tax incentives. Several applicable federal programs have adjusted their application requirements to add priority points

to projects in Opportunity Zones. The White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council has identified over 300 Federal programs where preference or additional support can be granted to Opportunity zones as of November 30, 2020. Examples of programs include Economic Development Assistance programs that allow applications in Opportunity Zones to be eligible for funding if the area would have otherwise failed to meet economic distress criteria; Rural Business Development grants and Capacity Building grants; Brownfields and Land Revitalization grants; food and agriculture programs; and grants for buses and bus facilities. There is potential in almost all opportunities listed in the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council's program list that may apply to potential projects in the SIMPCO Region's Opportunity Zones.

The SIMPCO Region is very fortunate to contain seven Opportunity Zones within its boundary. While each community has its unique character and community profile, some priorities remain consistent throughout. Universal factors include the need to develop and maintain a robust workforce and more diverse housing options as well as the need to address aging housing inventories, further diversification of the regional economy, further investment in infrastructure, and overall improvements to quality of life to recruit and retain businesses and residents. Incentives available to Opportunity Zones specifically to improve any of the regional priorities above help our Region address the consequences of an aging population, gaps between the needs of business and the trained workforce available, housing options at all income levels, and obstacles in retaining existing businesses and recruiting new.

The Region currently has one project utilizing a funding opportunity directly tied to being located within an Opportunity Zone and is located in Sioux City (Census tract 36). The Urbane 1220 housing project is a mixed-use infill development that will transform a vacant lot on the periphery of downtown Sioux City into 56 residential rental housing units and roughly 6,600 SF of commercial space.



Merge Urban Development's \$6 million mixed use building on Historic 4th Street in Downtown Sioux City.

The SWOT process and resulting Strategic Direction and Action Plan provide a good framework for communities with Opportunity Zones as they promote and prioritize

potential Opportunity Zone projects in their cities. While not an all-encompassing list, the action items below have a direct connection to the potential projects within the Region's Opportunity Zones.

As a part of the CEDS Committee's quarterly meetings, the group will discuss and evaluate the goals, objectives, and action items contained in this document and will incorporate a status report and evaluation of current and prospective development in the Region's Opportunity Zones.

Economic Development

1. Improve business retention by creating programs that encourage businesses to stay through creative incentives.
2. Recruit new businesses from targeting industries that complement the Region's economic base.
3. Collaborate with regional economic development efforts and initiatives to encourage and support entrepreneurship and business start-up programs.

Workforce Development

1. Monitor employers and worker training programs to ensure they provide the skill sets needed for available employment.
2. Work with existing programs to market potential employees for regional businesses.
3. Support the development and construction of educational and training programs and facilities that contribute to workforce development.

Infrastructure Improvement

1. Continue to support construction and expansion of all transportation modes through regional transportation efforts, applications for state and federal funding, and coordination of local planning needs.
2. Support and encourage additional airlines to serve the SIMPCO CEDS Region.
3. Improve and expand the current rail system, incorporating an additional rail storage site.
4. Assist and support municipalities with construction, replacement, and maintenance of infrastructure related to water and sewer. These items may include: water towers, water and waste water treatment facilities.
5. Seek broadband and connectivity improvements for rural areas.
6. Support efforts to encourage barge traffic along the Missouri River as an alternative mode of transporting goods.
7. Assist municipalities and counties with storm water and natural hazard mitigation infrastructure.

Housing

1. Seek funding for housing rehabilitation, housing CDBG programming, homebuyer purchase programs, and housing assessments and plans.
2. Encourage the development of multi-family housing and mixed-use development to support young families, elderly populations, and low-income families, so that residents have options for purchase or rent.
3. Establish short-term housing options for new workers and residents.

Quality of Life

1. Improve transportation access and connectivity to parks and natural resources.
2. Ensure that targeted businesses match the goals and objectives of the community.
3. Encourage development near transportation hubs and along public transit corridors.
4. Encourage communities to pursue downtown and Main Street revitalization.
5. Support existing regional and local initiatives aimed at welcoming new immigrants and support expansion to rural areas.

Economic Resilience

1. Assist municipalities and counties with hazard mitigation planning and economic resilience & recovery plans and projects.
2. Support economic development planning initiatives and projects that help mitigate or address the climate crisis.

Appendix G: Institutions of Higher Education

A region's educational institutions play a critical role in workforce and economic development. Schools provide training and knowledge required for jobs throughout our economy. This section looks at the role local universities and community colleges play in the SIMPCO CEDS Region's workforce development.

The Region has seven primary community colleges and universities. These are listed below as well as shown on the map on the next page. There are no EDA-funded University Centers nor Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the Region.

- Briar Cliff University
- Morningside University
- Nebraska Indian Community College
- Northeast Community College (South Sioux City Extension)
- St. Luke's College UnityPoint Health
- Wayne State College at South Sioux City
- Western Iowa Tech Community College

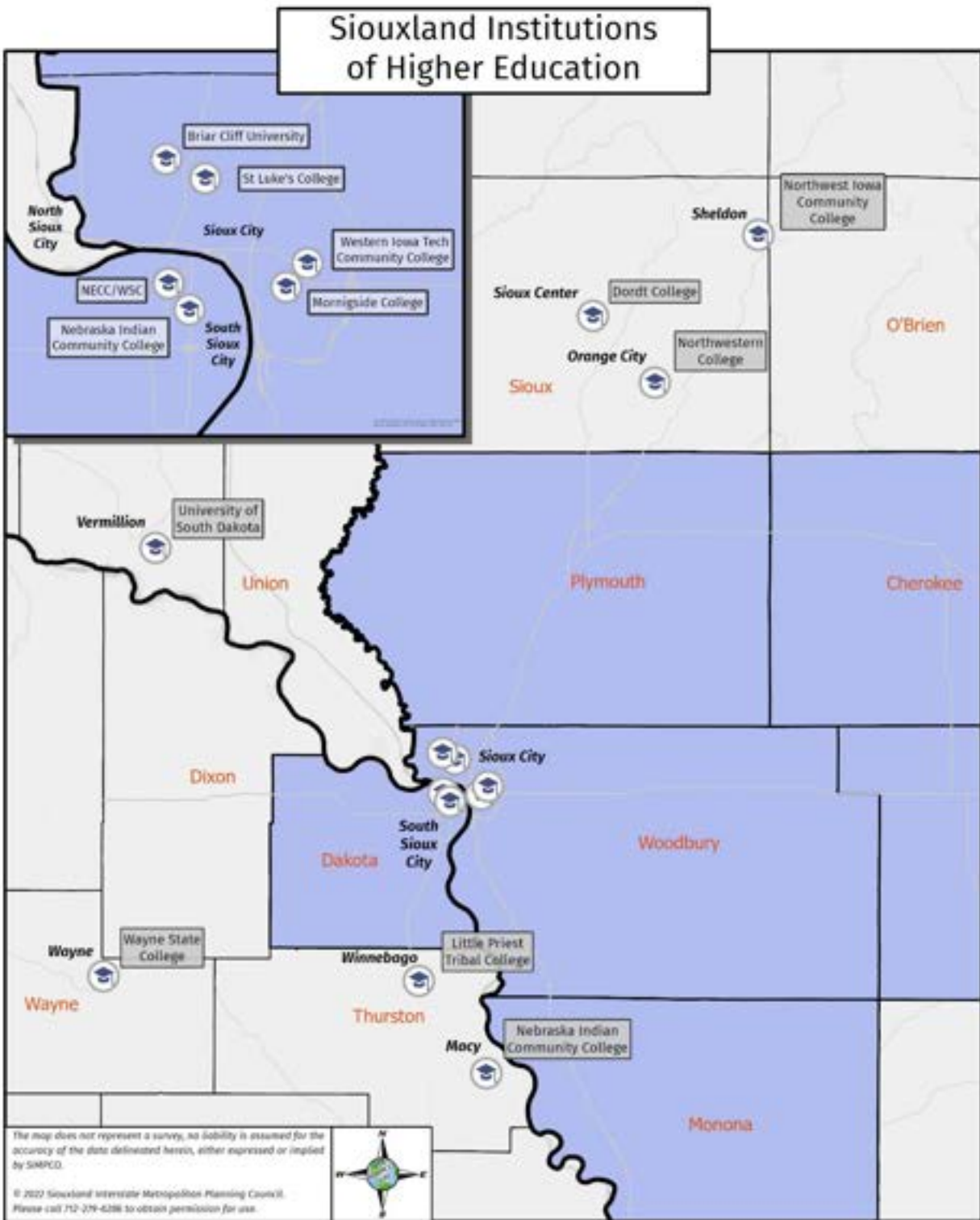
Community colleges and universities work to align curriculums with industry standards and job requirements to help students be better prepared for the job market. This requires collaboration and partnerships with local and regional industries. In both the short- and long-term, this benefits the schools, students, businesses, and their communities.

Schools also serve as an important resource for businesses to connect with students and vice versa for internships and apprenticeships. These opportunities help students gain experience and connections with regional businesses and prospective employers. A study from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found that in 2021, students working paid internships were nearly twice as likely to receive a job offer than those without an internship. These resources and partnerships aid the Region in its ongoing challenge with emigration of highly trained and skilled workers from the Region, or "brain drain."

Beyond these, the Region's six institutions of higher education provide a range of additional resources and programs for students and businesses. From scholarships and grants to retraining initiatives and professional development sessions to building new workforce training facilities, these institutions are playing a critical role in our Region's workforce development. A list of these and related workforce development resources available in the Region is shown in Table 3.

The following three examples are highlighted to provide a deeper look at this assortment of workforce development endeavors in the SIMPCO CEDS Region.

Figure 1. Map of Higher Education Institutions in and near SIMPCO CEDS Region



Example #1

Briar Cliff University (BCU) is investing in a \$3.3 million School of Interprofessional Health and Help Services on its campus. The school will support the preparation, graduation, and placement of competent healthcare professionals in order to address the persistent workforce shortage of nurses and other healthcare workers across Northwest Iowa, Southeast South Dakota, and Northeast Nebraska.

Like many universities and colleges with health sciences programs of study, BCU is charged with creating an annual pool of graduates who have the competencies, skills, and potential to serve in the high-stress, fast-paced health care professions. This new school will support graduates finding careers in the area, reducing the Region’s challenge with brain drain.

Briar Cliff received a \$2 million EDA grant for this project. It is expected to launch in summer 2022 and be complete by the end of 2023.

Example #2

Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) offers an education funding option for Iowa residents through the Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship. This provides free tuition and covers fees for select programs that align with high-demand jobs within the Region. These programs include the below list. Currently, the top programs of study for enrolled students who received Last Dollar Scholarship are Nursing-AAS (89 students) and Practical Nursing (86 students).

- Agriculture
- Automotive and Trades
- Information Technology
- Culinary and Hospitality
- Health Administration
- Health and Science
- Law and Politics
- Robotics and Engineering
- Business, Administration, and Design

Eligible participants include Iowa high school graduates enrolling in college full-time immediately following high school graduation and adults ages 20 and over who enroll part-time or full-time. Eligibility conditions also require participating students to plan to earn a Diploma (one-year degree) or Associate of Applied Science (two-year degree) aligned with a designated high-demand job.

Over \$3.4 million of financial aid has been awarded through the Last Dollar Scholarship program over the period of 2019-2022*. This is broken down by award year in Table 1 on the next page. The program has served 1,642* during this timeframe. Of these 1,354 are unique students.

Table 1. Financial Aid Awarded by WITCC through Last Dollar Scholarship by Award Year

Award Year	Adult	Immediately After High School	Total
2019	\$489,175	\$210,325	\$699,500
2020	\$804,748	\$568,173	\$1,372,921
2021*	\$710,473	\$617,856	\$1,328,329
Total	\$2,004,396	\$1,396,354	\$3,400,750

Source: Western Iowa Tech Community College, 2022
**Note: 2021 Award Year does not include summer term recipients and is subject to change once these numbers are available.*

Table 2. WITCC Last Dollar Scholarship Recipients by Award Year

Award Year	Adult	Immediately After High School	Total
2019	327	79	406
2020	448	184	632
2021*	418	186	604
Total	1,193	449	1,642

Source: Western Iowa Tech Community College, 2022
**Note: 2021 Award Year does not include summer term recipients and is subject to change once these numbers are available.*

Example #3

Northeast Community College supports workforce expansion and growth in a number of ways, including by sponsoring registered apprenticeships for entry-level workers, providing upskilling and leadership training for incumbent workers and career awareness activities for middle and high school students.

This includes participating in the Nebraska Workforce Retraining Initiative (WRI). This statewide program was created in direct response to pandemic-related displaced workers and was funded by \$16 million from the State’s federal Coronavirus Relief Fund allocation. It provided short-term job training in high-demand and sustainable careers. In the nine-month period of the program, Northeast Community College was able to generate inquiries from more than 150 individuals; provide scholarships and learning opportunities to 67 students, resulting in 46 completing training that positioned them for immediate re-entry to the workforce.

On an ongoing basis, Northeast provides customized training for incumbent workers to a variety of local businesses. Training can be done on-site or at the SSC Extended campus. The school’s most popular topics include: management skills, leadership training, industrial maintenance including PLC, welding and forklift safety. Businesses in Iowa may be able to leverage 260E funds (state withholding set aside) to pay for the training. Nebraska-based employers can apply for workforce development funds from the Department of Labor.

Table 3. Institutions of Higher Education Workforce Development Programs & Resources

Name	Recipient	School & Partners	Resource Type	Description
Registered Apprenticeship Program	Students	Midwest Diesel Tech Academy	Apprenticeship/ Internship	Provide regional access to low-cost training and jobs in an expanding market. The program is a Registered Apprenticeship with the U.S. Department of Labor and approved for GI Bill funding. Students benefit from on-the-job training, and graduate with a Nationally Recognized Credential.
Internship & Externship Programs	Students	Morningside University	Apprenticeship/ Internship	Morningside's internship and externship programs helps students obtain opportunities to gain experience related to students' academic and career interests.
Registered Apprenticeships	Students	Northeast Community College	Apprenticeship/ Internship	Northeast Community College is a recognized DOL Apprenticeship Sponsor. This allows us to develop, file and evaluate registered apprenticeships in our service area
Apprenticeship Program	Students	WITCC	Apprenticeship/ Internship	Businesses use apprenticeships (combination of classroom and on-the-job training) to build a pipeline of skilled workers, gain skilled workers, boost workforce retention, save money and make a positive return on investment. This training is for a new generation of tradespeople in the profession of Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC, and Industrial Maintenance. Upon successful completion, apprentices receive a professional certification from the Department of Labor.
Residency Program	Students	Siouxland Medical Foundation, St. Luke's College	Apprenticeship/ Internship	An integrated program that includes physicians, nursing, clinic staff, clinical pharmacists and behavioral health. Five different rotations available, which are open to medical students in good standing from L.C.M.E. accredited schools.
National Institute for Food & Agriculture Workforce Development Grant	Businesses	Northeast Community College	Grant	Provides approximately \$400,000 to the development of Information Security principles in agriculture-based employees.
Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training (260E)	Businesses	WITCC, IEDA	Grant	This grant is to encourage the creation of new jobs and increase the company's productivity and profitability through the training of employees.
Training Program (260F)	Businesses	WITCC, IEDA	Grant	This program is funded by the Iowa Economic Development Authority through Application for Assistance by businesses through local community colleges. Provides funds to support job training services to current/existing employees of eligible businesses located in Iowa. Additional funding was provided to community colleges to encourage Manufacturing 4.0 efforts.

Accelerated Career Education (260G)	Businesses	WITCC, IEDA	Grant	Designed to support community colleges to create new programs or expand existing programs (credit or noncredit). For the most recent ACE (260G) Program, WITCC has partnered with hospitals/medical institutions for them to sponsor seats for nursing.
Sector Partnership	Businesses	WITCC	Grant	Sector partnerships are increasingly recognized as an effective method for aligning education, economic and workforce development systems to address industry-identified labor market needs. This program makes mini grants available across the State of Iowa to help small businesses.
Career Exploration Day	Students	Northeast Community College	Networking	Northeast SSC Extended Campus annually hosts a Career Exploration Day for 7th-10th graders to explore local career options and learn from local professionals in those careers. This is important for retention of students post-graduation by revealing the many jobs available in this area.
Nebraska Career Scholarships	Students	Northeast Community College	Scholarship	Available to students entering training programs for high demand, high wage fields. The NE legislature allocates funds to each community college, state college and university for award to students.
Nebraska Community College GAP scholarship	Students	Northeast Community College	Scholarship	Available to students meeting income guidelines interested in taking a program that is career preparation and not eligible for Federal Financial Aid. This may be short-term credit or non-credit programming.
Nebraska Workforce Retraining Initiative (WRI)	Students, Workers	Northeast Community College, State of Nebraska	Scholarship	Short-term program created as direct response to pandemic-related displaced workers to provide short-term job training in high demand and sustainable careers. Average scholarships are approximately \$1,100.
Last Dollar Scholarships	Students	WITCC	Scholarship	The Future Ready Iowa Scholarship, for Iowa residents, offers free tuition and fees for select programs that align with high-demand jobs including: Agriculture; Automotive; Building and Trades; Business, Administration, and Design; Information Technology; Culinary and Hospitality; Health Administration; Health and Science; Law Politics; Robotics and Engineering
GAP 2 Expansion	Students	WITCC	Scholarship	For students pursuing short-term certificates in non-credit programs, most forms of federal aid are not applicable. However, full tuition assistance is available to qualifying students through the GAP Tuition Assistance Program. To qualify, students must meet certain income guidelines. The chart below outlines these guidelines.
School of Interprofessional Health & Help Services	Students	BCU	School/Program	The school will support the preparation, graduation, and placement of competent health care professionals, in order to address the persistent workforce shortage of nurses and other health care workers across Northwest Iowa, Southeast South Dakota, and Northeast Nebraska.

Aviation Program	Students	Morningside University	School/Program	Morningside is partnering with Oracle Aviation, LLC, an Omaha aviation company, to establish a fully accredited aviation program at Sioux Gateway Airport. This program will offer a Bachelor of Science degree in aviation-related fields.
Experiential Learning	Students	Morningside University	School/Program	Program requirement for all students in first and second year, as well as the third and fourth years for others.
Morningside Student Advertising Agency (MSAA)	Students	Morningside University	School/Program	MSAA provides students an opportunity to build experience and apply their classroom knowledge to real-life projects and situations through graphic design and image branding for organizations on campus and in the community. Any student from any major is welcome to check us out.
Professional Truck Driving Instructional Range	Students	Northeast Community College	School/Program	Expected to be built on the current SSC Extended Campus in 2022.
Aviation Programs <i>(in development)</i>	Students	City of Sioux City, EDA	School/Program	The EDA awarded a \$1 million grant to the City of Sioux City, Iowa to build a hangar at the Sioux Gateway Airport to be leased by a new aviation school that would provide training in flight, mechanics, avionics and other certifications. This EDA project, to be matched with \$4.5 million in local funds, is expected to create 30 jobs and generate \$720,000 in private investment.
Dual Credit Program <i>(in development)</i>	Students	Northeast Community College	School/Program	Will provide dual credit (collaborating with career academy and SSC High) in areas of building construction, small engines, welding, robotics and more. Additionally, short-term learning programs in these areas will be available for post-high school and post-traditional learners interested in upskilling or learning a new trade. Program is currently being developed.
Customized training for incumbent workers	Businesses, Workers	Northeast Community College	Training	Training can be done on-site or at the SSC Extended campus. Our most popular topics include: management skills, leadership training, industrial maintenance including PLC, welding and forklift safety.
Workforce Partners	Businesses, Workers	Northeast Community College	Training	A collaborative program in which businesses subscribe to a series of professional development sessions. The subscribers determine the training topics to be delivered locally and subscribing businesses may utilize their 'seats' in a variety of flexible ways. This format allows for small businesses to engage in quality professional development at a low cost.

Table Abbreviations:

- BCU – Briar Cliff University
- Northeast Community College – Northeast Community College South Sioux City Extended Campus
- St. Luke's College – St. Luke's College UnityPoint Health
- WITCC – Western Iowa Tech Community College

Note: This is not a complete list of resources and programs within the SIMPCO CEDS Region. The table will be updated on a rolling basis.

Appendix H: Evaluation Framework Scorecard

The scorecard below is intended to be used by the CEDS Committee and other invested parties on an annual or ongoing basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategic Direction and Action Plan. Evaluators should use the tools for measuring performance to understand each project's level of success and opportunities for improvement. Goals for the following year should be established and reevaluated.

Project Description	Invested Parties	Tools for measuring performance*	Achievement level				Goals for next year	Notes
			None	Low	Med.	High		
Economic Development								
Continue existing business expansion programs and annually meet with local employers to discuss business needs and concerns.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with local employers in last year • Meetings with business associations 						
Improve business retention by creating programs that encourage businesses to stay through creative incentives.	Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs • Inventory of businesses who left the Region 						
Recruit new businesses from targeted industries that complement the Region's economic base.	Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of new businesses categorized by industry 						

<p>Support economic development planning initiatives and projects that help advance equity across the Region that benefit underserved communities and populations.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in poverty rate 						
<p>Offer technical assistance to local communities when developing economic development programs and applying to EDA and other grant options.</p>	<p>SIMPCO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of grants applied for and awarded • Inventory of economic development programs 						
<p>Collaborate with regional economic development efforts and initiatives to encourage and support entrepreneurship and business start-up programs.</p>	<p>Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations, entrepreneurship groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of startups • Meetings with entrepreneurs 						

Work with organizations to provide business start-up resources and spaces for new entrepreneurs and encourage experienced entrepreneurs to mentor local leaders, local investors, and potential entrepreneurs in how to navigate the entrepreneurial process.	Education institutions, entrepreneurs, Chambers of Commerce, business associations	• Meetings with entrepreneurs						
Develop a network of lenders and investors to provide start-up capital for new businesses and entrepreneurs.	Local lenders, SEDC, local entrepreneurship groups, regional economic groups	• Inventory of startups with local funding sources						
Support efforts to mechanize certain services as needed.	Economic development organizations	• Inventory of mechanized services compared to past years						
Support Regional business retention through initiatives and investments that encourage job creation, business expansion, technology and capital upgrades, and productivity growth.	Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Counties, and economic development organizations	• Inventory of retained businesses compared to past years						

Assist businesses with succession planning.	Chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses; local SBDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with local businesses • Inventory of businesses with succession plans 						
Workforce Development								
Establish a direct conduit between industries and potential workers by marketing internships and apprenticeships at local education institutions and job fairs.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of apprenticeships and internships filled with local candidates 						
Monitor employers and worker training programs to ensure they provide the skill sets needed for available employment.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training program evaluations 						
Support entrepreneurial training through direct mentorship, networking, and educational institutions.	Private businesses, education institutions, workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of startups • Meetings with entrepreneurs 						

Encourage area school districts to integrate skilled trades instruction and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) into educational programs.	Educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of local curriculums 						
Support career academies.	Educational institutions, Chambers of commerce, local entrepreneurship groups, Municipalities, Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with career academies • Survey of past students an employers of past students 						
Create a regional working group to market current business needs and desired target industries for future expansion.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private business leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report from regional working group with key market data to be determined by group 						
Work with existing programs to market potential employees for regional businesses.	Economic and workforce development groups, state agencies and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of jobs filled by local candidates • Inventory of workers leaving the Region 						

<p>Create a unified economic development marketing message.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, SEDC, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing message awareness and effectiveness (survey) 						
<p>Establish a regional database of trade-based positions.</p>	<p>Workforce development, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses, SIMPCO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of database • Positions filled by database 						
<p>Maintain and enhance a consolidated, regional website to promote and market regional assets and jobs, which can be used to connect employers with jobseekers from inside and outside the Region.</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce, economic development directors, workforce development, private businesses, local newspapers, Municipalities, Counties, SIMPCO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of jobs filled through website • Evaluation of marketing effectiveness 						

Support programs that provide education and training to immigrants.	Private businesses, educational institutions, workforce development, non-profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory and survey of Immigrants to include various demographic statistics 						
Support the development and construction of educational and training programs and facilities that contribute to workforce development.	SIMPCO, municipalities, counties, economic development organizations, educational institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of educational programs and facilities 						
Infrastructure Improvement								
Continue to support construction and expansion of all transportation modes through regional transportation efforts, applications for state and federal funding, and coordination of local planning needs.	SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of infrastructure for all transportation modes • Transportation grants applied for and awarded 						
Support and encourage additional airlines to serve the SIMPCO CEDS Region	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private businesses, Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with airport 						

Improve and expand the current rail system, incorporating an additional rail storage site.	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, private business leaders, SIMPCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study of incorporating an additional rail storage site. 						
Assist and support municipalities with construction, replacement, and maintenance of infrastructure related to water and sewer. These items may include: water towers, water and waste water treatment facilities.	SIMPCO, Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of water and sewer infrastructure • Inventory of new projects 						
Seek broadband and connectivity improvements for rural areas.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with fiber optic providers • Inventory of fiber optic infrastructure 						
Continue pressing IA, NE, and SD legislators to provide adequate funding for regional infrastructure.	Chambers of Commerce, local legislators and elected officials, business community, SIMPCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of changes to funding 						

Support efforts to encourage barge traffic along the Missouri River as an alternative mode of transporting goods.	SIMPCO, private business, Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of barge traffic and goods transported 						
Assist municipalities and counties with storm water and natural hazard mitigation infrastructure.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, Counties, economic development organizations, private businesses, and developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of storm water damages and comparison to previous hazard events 						
Housing								
Seek funding for housing rehabilitation, housing CDBG programming, homebuyer purchase programs, and housing assessments and plans.	SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic housing studies • Annual evaluation of funding for housing programs 						

<p>Encourage the development of multi-family housing and mixed-use development to support young families, elderly populations, and low-income families, so that residents have options for purchase or rent.</p>	<p>Municipalities, SIMPCO, IA Workforce Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of housing types and ownership 						
<p>Ensure Federal, State, and Municipal codes allow for and encourage diverse and attainable housing options.</p>	<p>Municipalities, SIMPCO, Workforce Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing evaluation of municipal codes • Meetings with legislatures to discuss state and federal rules. 						
<p>Establish short-term housing options for new workers and residents.</p>	<p>Municipalities, SIMPCO, Workforce Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation to ensure compatibility with municipals codes • New resident survey or HR survey or new employees 						

<p>Develop a resource to collect and distribute information about federal and state funds available for housing and workforce housing. Assist communities with having information ready for developers.</p>	<p>Municipalities, Counties, Workforce Development, economic development directors, SIMPCO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with developers • Inventory of new development and funding sources 						
<p>Quality of Life</p>								
<p>Support and organize family-oriented cultural events, housing options, businesses, and institutions that are instrumental in maintaining the Region's high quality of life.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, economic development organizations, cultural groups, local education institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of families and family satisfaction • Quality of life and community attitude survey • Demographic and migration data • Program evaluations 						
<p>Improving transportation access and connectivity to parks and natural resources.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, Counties, IDOT, DNR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization of parks and natural resources 						

Ensure that targeted businesses match the goals and objectives of the community.	Economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings and evaluations of local businesses 						
Encourage development near transportation hubs and along public transit corridors.	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, business associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of municipal codes and incentive programs • Inventory of location for new development 						
Continue to address the crime rate through proactive enforcement.	Municipality/County local officials, law enforcement, non-profits, service organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime rate statistics • Discussions with local law enforcement 						
Encourage communities to pursue downtown and Main Street revitalization.	State/Federal economic development agencies, Municipalities, economic development organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of businesses and business expansion in downtown areas 						
Support regional initiatives that positively impact the	SIMPCO, Municipalities,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental health evaluation 						

environment and natural resources management.	Counties, DNR, local organizations	• Inventory of environmentally positive initiatives and incentives						
Support existing regional and local initiatives aimed at welcoming new immigrants and support expansion to rural areas.	Cultural groups, Municipalities, Counties, non-profits, service organizations	• Immigrant surveys • Immigrant retention data						
Assist rural communities and rural emergency agencies to maintain high quality levels of response, equipment, and training.	SIMPCO, Municipalities Counties, emergency managers	• Inventory of awarded grants for equipment, training, etc.						
Support regional and local tourism opportunities.	Chambers of Commerce, Municipalities, Counties, SIMPCO, SCRCVB	• Inventory of tourism assets and events • Meeting with Tourism industry businesses						
Economic Resilience								
Encourage business investments in business succession planning and disaster preparation	Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, business associations	• Meeting with businesses						

<p>Assist municipalities and counties with hazard mitigation planning and economic resilience & recovery plans and projects.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, economic development organizations, Municipalities, Counties, private businesses and developers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with municipalities and counties 						
<p>Support economic development planning initiatives and projects that help mitigate or address the climate crisis.</p>	<p>SIMPCO, local municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme weather and economic disaster statistics 						
<p>Promote and maintain Resilience Toolkit</p>	<p>SIMPCO, Municipalities, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, business associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Toolkit on SIMPCO website 						

*The list of tools for measuring performance is not exhaustive, and action items should be evaluated annually in a way that is deemed pertinent by the acting members of the CEDS Committee.