

City of

STERLING

K A N S A S

Where the Quality of Life Shines!



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT — *COMMUNITY PROFILE*



The City of Sterling Welcomes You!

Let's make Sterling your home.

Sterling is an exceptional place to live, with high community investment in our K-12 school systems, growing higher education opportunities, superior access to local healthcare, a growing stock of available building lots and housing options, plentiful recreation and tourism opportunities, a thriving downtown area, rich history, and a low cost of living.

This community profile shows off what Sterling residents and frequent visitors have come to know as “home”.

Explore further why life in Sterling is so attractive!

Information regarding the City's history, affordable living, government, education, arts and culture, transportation systems, and economic incentives can all be found within this document.

Join us in Sterling.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT — *COMMUNITY PROFILE*

Our History

The initial exploration trip was made toward the end of December 1871 and the town of Peace was surveyed on January 15, 1872.

The town was originally called “Peace” out of respect for Mr. Ninde, a Quaker, who was the town’s first land agent. In May of 1876 the proud people of Peace decided that they needed a more progressive name for the fast-growing city and the town was incorporated as a third-class city under the name of Sterling.

Located on the mainline of the Santa Fe, the town grew rapidly and became the principal trading point for a wide area. Sterling served as a retail center, particularly for lumber, for the entire area to the southwest, including Sylvia and Stafford.

One of the first industries was broomcorn in the 1970s. Sterling gained national attention as a “Broomcorn Capital.” Another early industry was the Sterling salt plant established in 1888. From almost its first year, the town counted flour milling as a major industry. The The Farmers Co-op Union has continued to expand through the years and is now a regional operation, one of the largest in the state, and with headquarters in Sterling.

Equally important and still so today, was the establishment of Cooper (Sterling) College by the United Presbyterians in 1887. The venture was all started by a group of local civic businessmen. In 1905 the J.S. Dillon Company was founded in Sterling. This beginning has bloomed an operation of over 300 stores across the country for the Hutchinson based Dillon’s Stores. Though not in its original form, Dillon’s is still a staple of the community.

In 1916, bonds were issued by the City to purchase the George Morris Electric Light Plant from George Morris and to improve both the plant and the distribution system. In 1920 and 1923 Broadway, the main thoroughfare, was paved. The City carried 33% of the project and property owners along the route paid the balance. Street Lights were installed in 1921. Sanitary Sewer was installed in 1923.

The Sterling Chamber of Commerce annually hosts “The Old Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration” including an annual parade that has continued for over 115 years, drawing large crowds especially for the turtle races 74 years straight, and a magnificent fireworks display each year at Sterling Lake Park.

Recent developments include the investment in medical facilities and state of the art education. Business and industry are growing and expanding at a quick pace from oil exploration to farming to customer service to ethanol technologies. Good things are happening.

From medical services to support of industrial development and education, the people of Sterling have made great strides on the promise of the future.



Education in Sterling

Sterling prides itself in education and is known for its commitment to top rate learning.

Sterling has one preschool, one grade school, one junior high and one high school. Additionally, Sterling is home to Sterling College a 4-year independent college.

Persons 25 years or older in Sterling have a 95% educational attainment rate for high school and a 34.4% for a bachelor's degree or higher.



Sterling/Alden USD 376

Unified School District No. 376 operates one grade school, one junior high school and one high school in the City and surrounding area. The District has a growing enrollment of approximately 550 students and employs 105. Sterling strives to provide an educational experience preparing students for careers and meaningful impact in the world around them.

In 2008, the community invested over \$20M in the local school system facilities including a complete new building for elementary students., new cultural and athletic opportunities.



Sterling College

Sterling College, a four-year liberal arts private institution with 750 students, from every state and several foreign countries, celebrated 125 years in 2012. The college enrollment is at record levels and offers a wide variety of courses and fields of study.

The college adds a part of life to the community that is very important. From athletic events to an evening theatre show, the community and the college have a symbiotic relationship that is to be envied.



Other Regional Education and Training

Hutchinson Community College is located only at 25 miles from Sterling, Wichita State University, at 73 miles, Fort Hays State University, at 102 miles, Kansas State University, at 150 miles and the University of Kansas, at 195 miles. Each of these institutions serve the majority of the Sterling High School graduates.



Sterling Healthcare

Owned by the City of Sterling and operated by Rice County Hospital, the **Sterling Medical Center** with three physicians, one nurse practitioner and one dentist serves the community with remarkable care. The community recently invested in upgrades in the facility to better accommodate patient care and comfort.

Rice County District Hospital also serves Sterling and recently completed a \$10M upgrade investment including newly installed birthing suites. The Hospital operates the Sterling Medical Center and combined the two facilities offer many services that allow residents and students care in Sterling instead of traveling outside the community.

First responders and emergency medical services are offered locally with excellent response times.

Hutchinson Regional Medical Center and Summit Surgical LLC both serve the community with major medical services and are located in Hutchinson, approximately 25 minutes away. One nursing home, Sterling Presbyterian Manor, is located within the City.



Sterling Recreation and Culture

Sterling has many recreational programs, parks and events. What kind of activity would you like to take part in first? You name it, Sterling has it! Football, cycling, car shows, bird watching, baseball, volleyball, fireworks, fishing, softball, tennis, soccer, bowling, golf, horseshoes and indoor and outdoor swimming.

The **Sterling Recreation Commission** offers youth baseball, youth basketball, soccer clinics, summer art, summer cooking, summer drama, youth volleyball, women's volleyball, co-ed volleyball, men's slow pitch, youth striders track, Christmas movie with the **Public Library**, swimming lessons and more.

The **Quivira National Wildlife Refuge** is 7,000 acres of wetlands large and small to explore. For years, the marshes of Quivira NWR have attracted thousands of migrating waterfowl. These marshes, together with a wide diversity of other habitats, provide food, cover, and protection for wildlife. It is located just 19 miles southwest of Sterling.

Studio 96 Community Center provides facilities for art exhibits, receptions, conferences, weddings and more. **Sterling Country Club** offers a 9 hole course in the Sterling countryside. The **Annual Old Fashioned Fourth of July** brings thousands of visitors and families back to Sterling for a weekend of activities and a parade that has gone on over 115 years. The **Sterling Plaza Community Center** hosts daily activities for older citizens to fulfill social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs.



Government in Sterling

By election of the people the City of Sterling adopted the Commission-Manager form of government in 1924. The Commission-Manager plan is the system of local government that combines the strong political leadership of locally elected City Commissioners with the strong managerial experience of a local government manager. The plan establishes a representative system where all power is concentrated in the elected commission as a whole and where the commission hires a professionally trained manager to oversee the management of the City's operations and its delivery of public services, including policy decisions of the City Commission.



Police and Fire/EMS: With 24/7 police protection and a community driven approach to Fire/EMS-Sterling is second to none when it comes to protecting life and property.



Water: Municipally operated, Sterling boasts some of the lowest rates in the State for water services.

Sewer: Municipally operated, Sterling recently invested \$1.2M in its sewer facilities to accommodate future growth in the community.



Electric: Municipally operated, Sterling has been a public power community for 100 years in 2016. As private companies continue to seek rate increases, Sterling offers a competitive rate and unbeatable service delivery.

Gas: Private service offers a reliable source to meet your energy needs.



Telecommunications/Internet: Multiple private providers offer business and residents the right choice for connecting.

Business in Sterling

Employment:

Some of the major employers in the Sterling Area are **Jacam Chemical**, a company working in the oil exploration field; **Kansas Ethanol**, an ethanol production plant from grain; **Sterling Services**, a customer care center for outside organizations which includes direct mail production, product warehousing and fulfillment, and inbound/outbound call center services; **KMW, Inc.** a global supplier of modern engineered front end loaders and back hoes; **United Industries**, a specialized provider for all things aquatic facilities; **Central Prairie Coop**, an all things agriculture supply, marketing and agricon center; and the **Sterling USD 376** and **Sterling College**, both educational facilities.



Top Employers:

	<u>Product/Service</u>	<u>Local Employees</u>
1.	JACAM Chemical	226
2.	Sterling College	120
3.	USD 376 Sterling/Alden Schools	105
4.	Central Prairie Coop	108
5.	KMW Front End Loaders	64
6.	Sterling Services	50
7.	Kansas Ethanol	46
8.	City of Sterling	19
9.	United Industries	10



Labor Force 2014:

In the 4th Quarter of 2014, unemployment was 2.7% in Rice County and 4.0% for the State of Kansas.

	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
Rice County	6,106	2.7%
State of Kansas	1,497,433	4.0%

Source: Kansas Department of Labor (4th Qtr., 2014)



Wage/Income Statistics:

The average weekly wage for Rice County, Kansas in the 3rd quarter, 2014 was \$702. This would be equivalent to **\$17.55 per hour** or **\$36,504 per year**, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around.



Location!

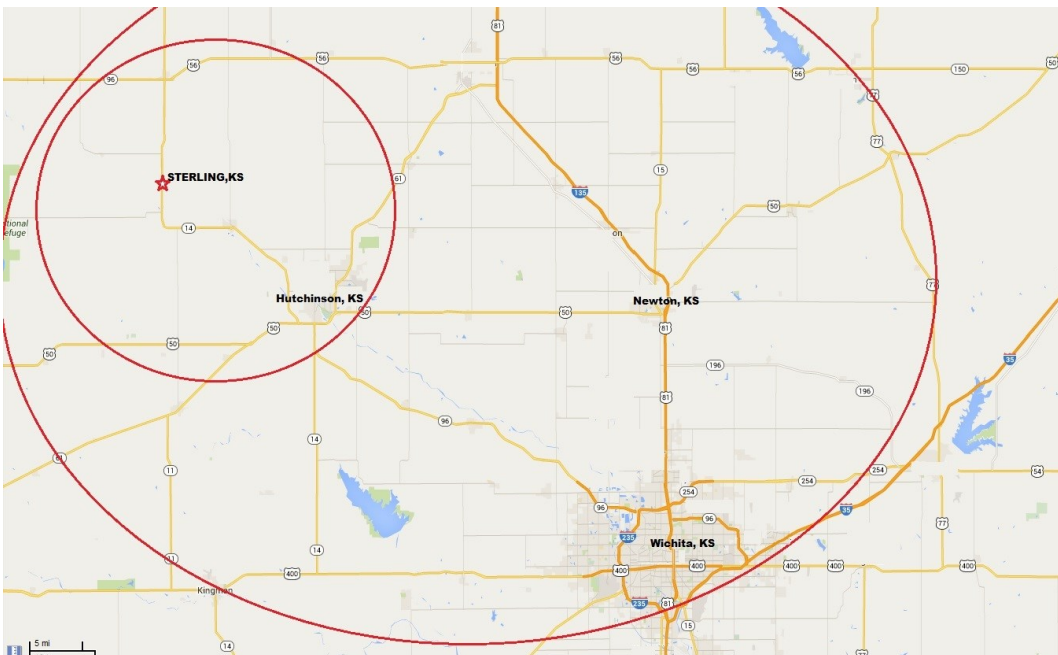
Sterling is located on the main trucking trade line of K-96 which at its northern Sterling peak accommodates average daily traffic flows upwards of 3,500.

Sterling, just 25 minutes from Hutchinson, 55 minutes from Wichita, contributes to the regional manufacturing industry and is in close proximity to other major employers and cultural amenities.

K-96 Expansion Project:

With the addition of a major trade amenity and transportation corridor, Sterling is poised to help business capitalize on the opportunity for growth and development.

The projected 2035 design year traffic volumes on the new highway are estimated to range between 7,000 vehicles-per-day east of Sterling.



Business in Sterling

Housing:

The housing and construction industry has been recently in an upward swing with the construction of six private-public partnership duplexes. Purely market based housing construction has remained slow. Estimated median housing price in Sterling is \$79,000.

Cost of Living:

In March of 2012, the cost of living index in Sterling was 79.8 (low) US Average was 100.

Demographics:

Year	Population
1990	2,191
2000	2,300*
2010	2,334
2011	2,321
2012	2,301
2013	2,299

Source: Kansas Statistical Abstract

Age in Sterling	
Under 5 years	6.80%
5 to 9 years	5.10%
10 to 14 years	6.10%
15 to 19 years	9.90%
20 to 24 years	11.90%
25 to 34 years	10.40%
35 to 44 years	9.10%
45 to 54 years	11.70%
55 to 59 years	6.90%
60 to 64 years	3.20%
65 to 74 years	9.90%
75 to 84 years	6.70%
85 years and over	2.40%
Median age (years)	34.9

Population has remained a steady trend over the years in Sterling and Rice County. *This is an estimated number as the changes in city boundary affected the census estimate for 2000.



Sterling Business Incentives

Tax Incentives:

- Rice County-Sterling NRP Property Tax Rebate on Improvement/Development
- Kansas EDX Tax Abatement
- Tax-Exempt Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB)
- Kansas Business and Machinery Sales Tax Exemption
- Community Improvement Districts (CID)
- Tax Credit Programs

Loan/Grant Programs:

- Rice County Revolving Loan Fund
- Sterling-Alden E-Community Revolving Loan Fund
- Sterling Main Street Incentives Without Walls
- Sterling Main Street Legacy Fund
- Network Kansas Zero Interest Loan Program
- Small Business Development Center, USDA, and Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship Loan Guarantee Programs

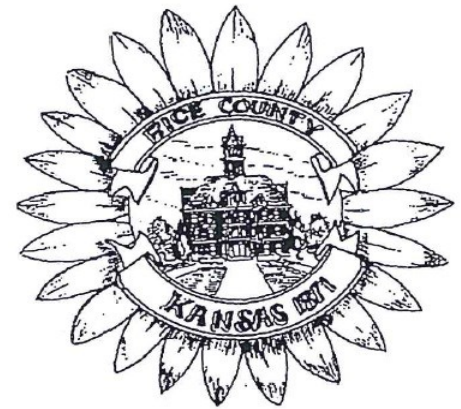
City Business Services:

- Site Selection/Review
- Financing Connections
- Zoning Assistance
- Infrastructure– Utilities

Business Contacts:

- City of Sterling 620-278-3423
- Chamber of Commerce 620-278-3360
- Main Street Sterling 620-278-2099
- Rice County EcoDevo 620-257-5166

NRP Tax Rebate Plan	
Residential	
Industrial—Commercial	
Year 1	95%
Year 2	95%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	95%
Year 5	95%
Year 6	75%
Year 7	75%
Year 8	75%
Year 9	50%
Year 10	50%



U.S. Small Business Administration

