



# Imagine Salina

TURNING **WHAT IF**  
INTO **WHAT IS**







## TURNING WHAT IF INTO WHAT IS

**What if** Salina would attract more talented people and their families to our workforce and community? **What if** there were an even stronger economic base in Saline County? **What if** our workforce were more aptly prepared to meet the needs of Salina area employers? Much like the once imagined ideas of downtown development, and projects like Kenwood Cove, the Salina Fieldhouse, USD 305 enhancements and the Smoky Hill River Renewal, **Imagine Salina** is built for **TURNING WHAT IF INTO WHAT IS**.

**Imagine Salina** is comprised of two primary strategies to be accomplished over the next five years, including support of organic and new business growth. This plan was developed by the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, with significant input from the business community. The core of **Imagine Salina** focuses on two initiatives:

- **Workforce Development**
- **Business Expansion & Retention**

## Imagine Salina Program Co-Chairs



**Mark Ritter**  
Crown Distributors, LLC



**Joyce Volk**  
Joyce Volk Insurance Agency



**Linda Salem**  
Great Plains Manufacturing



**Steve Ryan**  
Ryan Mortuary



**John Gunn**



**Don Weiser**  
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

## Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Business Development Program

### Core Goals & Strategies 2019-2023

The initial step will be to hire a **Workforce Solutions Director**. This position will be dedicated to the implementation of applicable aspects of the strategic plan of action. While this document outlines specific Action Items to address our Core Strategies, it will remain a working document with projects, programs and steps to be further explored by the Chamber of Commerce staff and Advisory Task Force.

For oversight, a **Workforce Advisory Task Force** will be created, comprised of Chamber BOD members, Program Stakeholders, and others to provide counsel and guidance on a quarterly basis over 5-years. As the primary strategies of the program are implemented, this Task Force will monitor results and respond with urgency should course corrections be needed or plans of actions changed. These members would be staggered with rotational positions to maintain appropriate continuity of mission and accountability.

We recognize that strong collaboration among entities Salina-wide is the healthiest, most effective approach to developing the community, and plan to do so on many levels. The plan before you is primarily built of initiatives that will be the Chamber's responsibility. Further, as the plan features many new initiatives, we will be creating baselines for measurement in several areas. With those measurements, comparisons on an annual basis will be conducted and reported in all areas.

“Through **Imagine Salina**, the Chamber will fulfill its mission of advancing prosperity in Salina. Current excitement about private and public investment in Salina is palpable across the community **creating opportunities, some we can only imagine.**”

- Don Weiser, President, Salina Area Chamber of Commerce







## Workforce Development

**GOAL:** Through recruitment, training/professional development and retention of talent, create a talented and ready workforce pipeline

### STRATEGY: RECRUITMENT

A. Market and promote the area's unique skills training, and post secondary programs to populations beyond the region and state;

#### Action Steps:

- Highlight programs/opportunities at Salina Area Technical College and classroom/employment opportunities;
- Support Kansas State Polytechnic Global Aeronautic Initiative, including UAS training of public safety related organizations;

B. Develop an aggressive marketing plan to include job fairs, campus visits, targeting of high unemployment areas combined with potential relocation incentives;

#### Action Steps:

- Develop a "Salina Recruiting Package" for job fairs and marketing;
- Develop and sustain a task force to work with industries and develop an incentives program for relocation of skilled employees to fill specific tiers of available jobs;
- Enhance the Chamber's website and reach;
- Expand online information sources for potential employees and those looking to relocate, to include area companies, jobs, careers, educational programs, housing, incentives, recreation, and opportunities that exist in Salina;
- Develop and maintain an inventory of available jobs and points of contact in Salina and Saline County, accessible via the Salina Chamber's website;
- Promote companies and highlight industry sophistication to draw population into Salina using various online portals, including the Chamber website;
- Provide support to both public and private entities working toward the goal of implementing the results contained in the City of Salina's Comprehensive Salina Housing Action Plan;

C. Identify high unemployment areas of the state and country and have representation at job fairs or organize job fairs to recruit individuals to Salina;

#### Action Steps:

- Work with KansasWorks and subscribe to services providing information on RIFs or shutdowns in Kansas and surrounding states;
- Place a quick response recruiting representation team on-site;
- Conduct job fairs in areas where natural disasters have occurred and provide displaced individuals with opportunities in Salina;
- Develop an incentive package for relocation, housing, training and other options for individuals and link trailing spouse and family to available resources to be included in the "Trailing Spouses Program."
- Offer incentives to potential employees for attending job fairs in Salina;

"Schwan's Company values the work of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and supports their efforts to secure the resources necessary to further develop and strengthen our area workforce."

- Todd Clark, Schwan's Company

D. Develop an attractive collegiate level internship program with local professionals and businesses, beginning with local post-secondary institutions and broadening across the region;

#### Action Steps:

- Host summer program for young professionals to visit the area and spend time attending a Leadership Salina week;
- Develop leading industry programs for internship exposure and industry development in areas like cybersecurity, e-gaming, UAS operations & Summer Camp, etc.;

### STRATEGY: TRAINING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Survey and document area programs and training resources that support workforce development and enhance these programs to upscale the quality of the existing workforce;

#### Action Steps:

- Coordinating through SHRMA and Task Force, gather and share available training program information with businesses to reduce costs and enhance training;







“Collaborating together, the **community can creatively and aggressively face the challenges** of both attracting skilled workers to the Salina area and ensuring that skills are grown and retained within the local workforce.”

- Linda Salem, President, Great Plains Manufacturing

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“As the Salina Regional Healthcare System continues to grow, we believe a **collaborative community effort to grow the workforce** is paramount to the Salina area’s continued success.”

- Micheal Terry, President/CEO, Salina Regional Health Center







- Expand or create training programs for area businesses based on survey results;
- Develop a summer SATC/Industry certificate program for 16 to 18 year olds in needed skill areas for employment upon HS graduation;
- Develop online skills training programs for employees and offer incentives for completion;
- Develop and coordinate programs and find funding for training at temp agencies - boot camp, basic training skills, communications skills, and advance 5S, LEAN or others;
- Find funding for training of hard to employ groups/ individuals;

B. Review 5-year Workforce Skill Set and Position Needs Plan, commissioned by SCEDO, and develop pipeline for filling positions;

**Action Step:**

- Coordinate projected industry needs with local training resources and begin initiative to fill future positions;

C. Work with community partners like Kansas Department for Children and Families, Salina Adult Education Center, Kansas Workforce One and Community Corrections in their efforts to upskill unemployed and/or underemployed individuals;

**Action Steps:**

- Review options and funding available and develop plans to utilize these resources;
- Support a program to reduce recidivism;

D. Provide seminars and training for employees from front-line to mid-level management;

**Action Steps:**

- Develop and enhance online training for employees and management;
- Connect the frontline to the bottom-line;
- Enhance and deliver customer service communications skills training to Salina's first point of contact employees;

**STRATEGY: RETENTION**

A. Administer the School-to-Career program with local high schools;

B. In cooperation with Network Kansas, organize and host annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge events to promote entrepreneurship among HS youth in Saline County;

**Action Steps:**

- Offer online certification to teachers in Entrepreneurship and offer classes in HS;
- Sustain the Salina Innovation Foundation facility;
- Utilize the planning grant from the EDA/North Central Regional Planning Commission to create a fabrication lab;
- Make Salina 1st on lists of "Best Communities" to Live - Work - Play...;

**Measurement:**

1. Increase workforce from 28,159 to 29,159 over 5 years;
2. Increase population from 55,417 to 57,817 over 5 years;
3. Work with employers to develop process to determine net jobs numbers;
4. Make 60 marketing calls/contacts annually to promote Salina and opportunities;
5. Increase number of website visits; Conduct 2 community tours of various industry sectors annually;
6. Increase requests of relocation resources and packages by 2% annually above 2018 baseline numbers;
7. Attend 6 job fairs annually; Conduct 2 job fairs in Salina annually; Increase by 2% annually number of companies attending above initial meeting;
8. Develop collection of data process on employment in Salina and identify best practice and resources used;
9. Expand Trailing Spouse Program, track numbers and identify the main draw/incentive;
10. Track and report on all post secondary work programs; establish 2018 baseline and increase by 5% over 5-year period;
11. Develop dashboard reporting of all numbers to be updated quarterly online and presented quarterly to stakeholders;

## Business Expansion & Retention

**GOAL:** Support the growth of existing employers in Salina and Saline County by providing project assistance, resource information, and advocacy

**STRATEGIES:**

- A. Conduct local business and corporate headquarter visits to determine challenges that affect expansion;
- B. Determine future needs based on business visits, standardized survey of needed skills, and identification of programs to address skills gap;
- C. Implement recommendations included in "Global Aeronautic Initiative Study" pertaining to the Salina community and in cooperation with K-State Polytechnic;
- D. Promote and ramp up activities at the K-State Bulk Solids Innovation Center;
- E. Review the healthcare sector needs and plans and assist where possible;
- F. Develop the logistics sector;
- G. Purchase and implement database software to manage contact information, needs and assessment;
- H. Conduct information sessions with school counselors, parents, and company representatives to cover employment opportunities, skills, costs, and future growth projections;
- I. Discuss and consider enhancing the workplace environment such as flexible schedules, job sharing, incentives for referrals, and improved transportation options;

"In today's business environment, finding good, qualified employees has become a monumental challenge. With the Chamber's help, Salina can become a place where people want to live, work and enjoy their lives!"

- Mark Ritter, Crown Distributors





# 5-Year Strategy

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**\$190,000**

ANNUAL ALLOCATION

**\$950,000**

5-YEAR ALLOCATION

## BUSINESS EXPANSION & RETENTION

**\$130,000**

ANNUAL ALLOCATION

**\$650,000**

5-YEAR ALLOCATION

## TOTAL

**\$320,000**

ANNUAL ALLOCATION

**\$1,600,000**

5-YEAR ALLOCATION

- J. Expand marketing of the Project Open Entrepreneur Assistance program;
- K. Collect and share relevant data, i.e. Salina Wage and Benefit Survey, Economic Development Key Performance Indicators, and others;
- L. Collaborate with Salina Community Economic Development Organization on organic and new business growth;

### Measurement:

1. Visit 6 local businesses per month with standardized questionnaire to identify issues and opportunities;
2. Develop a plan to have representation at existing industry association meetings, events, or other gatherings to highlight opportunities in Salina;
3. Report on number of expansion projects, jobs, and investments quarterly;
4. Produce annual report on Project Open and outcomes;
5. Identify workforce development initiatives underway and establish one-stop-shop approach;
6. Conduct quarterly Advisory Council/Workforce Development Task Force meetings to review progress, assess needs and respond accordingly;
7. Conduct 2 combined meetings per year with school counselors, parents, and potential employers to discuss employment opportunities, training, certificates, costs, and resources available;

## Oversight of Investments

The funds needed to implement the **Imagine Salina** program of work will be sought from those with a stake in Salina and Saline County's future – businesses, organizations, community leaders, and individual stakeholders. The Salina Area Chamber of Commerce along with major campaign stakeholders will provide oversight of invested funds and program implementation, through a Workforce Advisory Task Force.

## Accountability

In order to track its progress, implement strategic activities and demonstrate tangible returns to its investors, **Imagine Salina** strategically pursues meaningful goals using performance-based metrics to be achieved by the end of the five-year cycle. The Chamber board, staff, and Advisory Task Force will be held accountable to its investors and the community.

# Campaign Committee Members

## OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

- Jennifer Brantley**  
Schwan Global Supply Chain, Inc.
- Brandon Ebert**  
BE Wealth - Waddell & Reed, Inc.
- Brandon Hughes**  
Harbin Construction
- Dahx Marrs**  
Techniqol Consulting
- Mark Ritter**  
Crown Distributors
- Joyce Volk**  
Joyce Volk Insurance Agency
- Guy Walker**  
Blue Beacon International
- Don Weiser**  
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

## REFINEMENT COMMITTEE

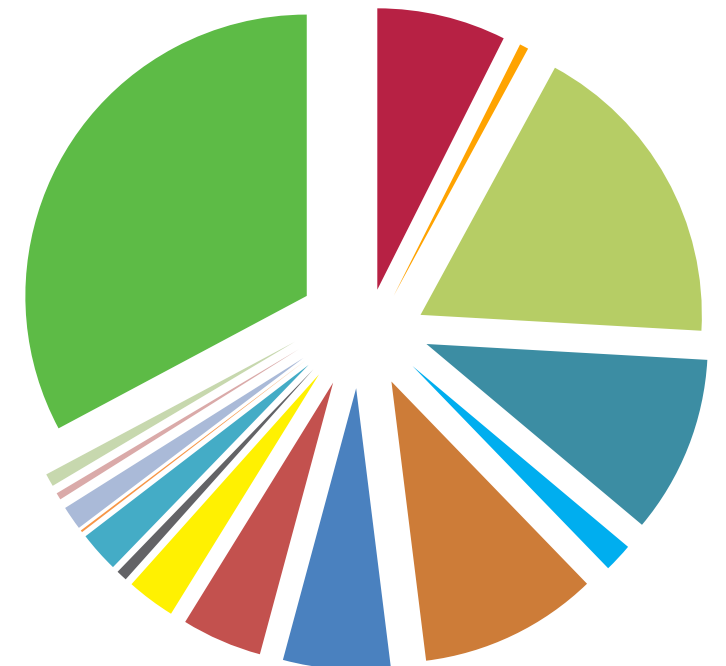
- Colby Bertrand**  
Edward D. Jones
- Jennifer Brantley**  
Schwan Global Supply Chain, Inc.
- Kim Brown**  
Smoky Hill, LLC
- Brenda Cox**  
Salina Regional Health Center
- Dave Hiechel**  
Eagle Technologies Inc.
- Gregory Nichols**  
Salina Area Technical College
- Linda Salem**  
Great Plains Manufacturing
- Todd Smith**  
Coperion K-Tron Salina
- Brian Weisel**  
Salina Regional Health Center
- Monte White**  
REPCO
- Barb Young**  
Triad Manufacturing, Inc.

## BRANDING/MARKETING COMMITTEE

- Michael Freeland**  
Mr. Freeland Design
- Dahx Marrs**  
Techniqol Consulting
- Bob Protzman**  
Rocking M Media
- Lonnie Smith**  
Eagle Communications
- Gary Stansberry**  
Salina Blue
- Susan Trafton**  
Tony's Pizza Events Center
- Robin Vandegrift**  
Consolidated Printing & Stationery
- Joyce Volk**  
Joyce Volk Insurance Agency, Inc.

## TOTAL CONSUMER SPENDING BY YEAR 6 OF THE PROGRAM

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Deposit Potential for Area Financial Institutions: \$35,095,222 | <span style="color: red;">■</span> Health Care: \$4,943,849                      |
| <span style="color: maroon;">■</span> Food: \$7,934,572  | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Entertainment: \$2,990,723                 |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Alcoholic Beverages: \$549,317                                 | <span style="color: grey;">■</span> Personal Care Products: \$671,387            |
| <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Housing: \$19,226,078                                      | <span style="color: teal;">■</span> Cash Contributions: \$2,502,442              |
| <span style="color: darkteal;">■</span> Shelter: \$10,925,295  | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Reading: \$122,070                         |
| <span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Apparel: \$1,770,020   | <span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Education: \$1,464,844                  |
| <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Transportation: \$10,986,330                                    | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Tobacco Products/Smoking Supplies: \$427,246 |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Personal Insurance & Pensions: \$6,591,798                       | <span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Miscellaneous: \$793,457               |







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Salina

Area Chamber of Commerce

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