

WELCOMING

KC



LETTER FROM JOE REARDON

President and CEO, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

Greater Kansas City is a special place. No matter the side of the state line, we are a unique community where our Midwest values and work ethic are combined with natural drive for innovation and collaboration. We've seen successful results of this combination as both small and large businesses have made KC their home and contributed to our community in powerful ways.

But those businesses are experiencing a challenge that began well before COVID-19 disrupted our economy. There is a workforce shortage in Greater Kansas City. That's why the KC Chamber and the members of Welcoming KC are working to make KC a designated welcoming city. We know by using all the assets across our entire community, we can welcome immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers to grow the region's globally competitive workforce.

Immigrants alone have a multi-billion-dollar impact on our local economy every year. But worth even more is the human impact. They start small businesses, bring innovative ideas, and become active and passionate members of our community. New faces become old friends, and we are all better for it.

In this welcoming plan you will find the collective work of Welcoming KC, a group of about 40 organizations that have spent a year and a half putting together coordinated and unified strategies with common goals. This plan will help make our community one of the most welcoming in the country.

We already know that state lines and city boundaries don't define and limit who we are as Greater KC. We must remember that other borders don't define us either.

It takes all of us to make this possible. When we work together and welcome people with open arms, there is nothing KC cannot accomplish. Please join us in achieving our ultimate goal to make Greater Kansas City open and welcoming to all.



President & CEO
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce



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The Greater Kansas City region has experienced a changing demographic over the past quarter-century. Our region has become more diverse; the immigrant population increased from 33,000 in 1990 to more than 150,000 in 2018. Immigrants are an important part of our economic and cultural fabric, working in a variety of industries and establishing strong roots in the community as homeowners and parents of U.S.-born children.

At a time where the general population in the metropolitan area grew by 40 percent, and the immigrant population increased by more than 300 percent, it is imperative that we reflect on our values of welcoming and inclusion to ensure everyone feels as though Greater Kansas City is home. This reflection drove the development of the Greater Kansas City Welcoming Plan.

A welcoming plan is a roadmap that helps identify key priorities. By bringing together the government, business, and nonprofit sectors, we created a roadmap that identifies the programs, policies, and activities needed to accomplish our goals of being an inclusive community.

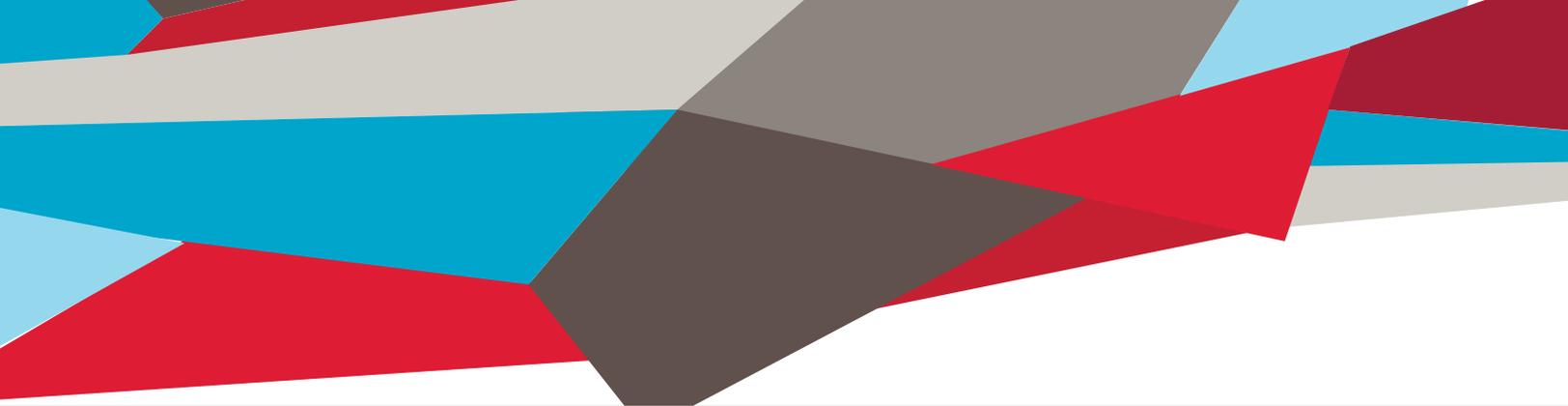
WHY A REGIONAL PLAN



Like most Midwestern cities, Kansas City's population remains predominantly white and black. The city lost white residents in the 1990s, but gained residents of other races and ethnicities. Immigrants have contributed to the changing profile of the city and region, with the number of foreign-born residents more than doubling in the 1990s, and twice as many settling in the suburbs over the same period of time. Therefore, including the suburbs and surrounding communities of Greater Kansas City in the planning and implementation of the Welcoming Plan is critical to its success.

We at the KC Chamber want Greater Kansas City to be a welcoming and inclusive place for all. We recognize that our greatest asset is our people, and that no matter what your background or where you are from, Greater Kansas City is stronger when we all have the opportunity to contribute and succeed. The economic and social benefits of being a welcoming community are clear, and it's in that spirit we will keep Greater Kansas City a healthy and vibrant community for everyone.

Through a welcoming plan, we have an opportunity to proactively address our changing community by bringing together key leaders in our region to learn more about current demographics, consider the implications of demographic changes to Greater Kansas City, identify priorities for action, and work together to develop new policies and programs.



Our welcoming plan is based on the following vision and values.

VISION: Greater Kansas City is welcoming to all.

VALUE: Resiliency and Growth

We celebrate our region's many resources, and we see our strength being our people and the different backgrounds and perspectives they bring. We believe in economic growth that leverages our diversity. By capitalizing on all talents, we help our communities withstand crises. We embrace and celebrate the resiliency of individual community members and of our community as a whole. We empower people and provide support systems for them to be full participants in the community. The Greater Kansas City region strives to be a place where all can thrive.

VALUE: Racial Equity and Belonging

We believe the various backgrounds, cultures, and experiences of our region's population make us a more vibrant, connected, and creative community. We also recognize our nation and our region have struggled with a divisive racial history, and that systems have perpetuated discrimination and exclusion for many years. Advancing racial equity and belonging in Greater Kansas City requires a long-term commitment on everyone's part. It's not enough to invite people to the table -- we need to advance inclusion at all levels. We are committed to looking for and recognizing everyone's contributions and investing in all of our people. We want today's generation and future generations to learn what it means to adopt a culture of welcoming and inclusion.

VALUE: Opportunity

In the Greater Kansas City region, we open doors to education, language learning, health, employment, and other opportunities to help everyone achieve their fullest potential. We seek to address and eliminate barriers that impede opportunities for international students, refugees, immigrants, and long-term residents by breaking cycles of poverty and exclusion. We are dedicated to opening up access to networks, programs, and support that allow peoples' skills to be fully utilized and help improve their quality of life. Ensuring the long-term success of all community members is our goal.

VALUE: Connection and Cohesion

We recognize that together, we are stronger. We all want to feel a sense of belonging; we need trusted relationships, support, and resources to feel connected to each other. We are all in the human experience together, and we have more in common, even across our differences. To foster community cohesion, we meet people where they are, create safe spaces to bring us together to develop meaningful relationships, and listen more than we speak. No one succeeds in isolation; together, we can decrease biases and stereotypes, have rich cultural experiences different from our own, and solve tough problems through collaboration and creative problem-solving. We can see each other as good neighbors. We are so much better together.

THE WELCOMING FRAMEWORK AND PROCESS

A leadership team, composed of key stakeholders from the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, REACH Healthcare Foundation, Communities Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees/Vibrant Health, and Shabbir Advisors has led the welcoming planning process over an 18-month period.

Our process has also been guided by consultants at Welcoming America and the Welcoming Standard. The Welcoming Standard provides a comprehensive roadmap for immigrant inclusion and welcoming in communities. The Standard addresses a range of policies and programs, from language access to hiring practices, that help communities achieve true welcoming status. The Welcoming Standard is organized into seven framework categories, which are also used as the areas for the Greater Kansas City Welcoming Plan:

- ▶ Civic Engagement
- ▶ Connected Communities
- ▶ Economic Development
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Equitable Access
- ▶ Government Leadership and Safe Communities

A steering committee has provided direct feedback and countless hours to shape, draft, and finalize the plan. Additionally, the plan has been informed by input from community leaders, government officials, community members directly impacted by the plan, and the public at large.

The following section outlines six framework areas with goals, recommendations, and strategies for creating a more welcoming Greater Kansas City. Many of these are already undergoing active planning or implementation, while others are new or just beginning development with timelines yet to be determined.



GREATER KANSAS CITY WELCOMING PLAN GOALS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND STRATEGIES

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Welcoming communities actively ensure that residents, including newcomers, fully participate in civic life by increasing access to leadership and democratic spaces.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY WORKS TO EMPOWER RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE RESIDENTS WITH EDUCATION AND ACCESS TO CIVIC LIFE.

RECOMMENDATION: Local community organizations and institutions are accessible and processes for engagement are clear.



IMMIGRANTS ELIGIBLE TO
VOTE IN GREATER KANSAS CITY

63,537

Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

RECOMMENDATION: Neighborhood groups and associations increase inclusion, equity, and belonging.

STRATEGY:

- Review and adjust civic education programs, including neighborhood groups/associations, to intentionally reach new residents and ensure programming is accessible.

RECOMMENDATION: Barriers to voting are addressed and removed.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase access to voter registration.
- Expand voter access.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and provide immigrant and refugee education programming that includes information on the responsibilities of local government.
- Identify organizations or individuals with experience and expertise on anti-racism, immigration systems, and equity and inclusion and connect them with local governments to provide professional development opportunities for civil servants.
- Review requirements to serve on local boards and commissions to ensure they are accessible and enable active recruitment of racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.

RECOMMENDATION: Naturalization programs are supported and accessible.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase access to citizenship opportunities.
- Promote and celebrate public naturalization ceremonies.

- Assist immigrants and refugees who are U.S. citizens with understanding their eligibility to vote, the voting process, and voter guides.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Welcoming communities build connections between newcomers and longer-term residents by strengthening relationships and communicating shared values.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY WILL BE A PLACE THAT PURPOSEFULLY CREATES, SUPPORTS, AND PROMOTES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO BUILD TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER.

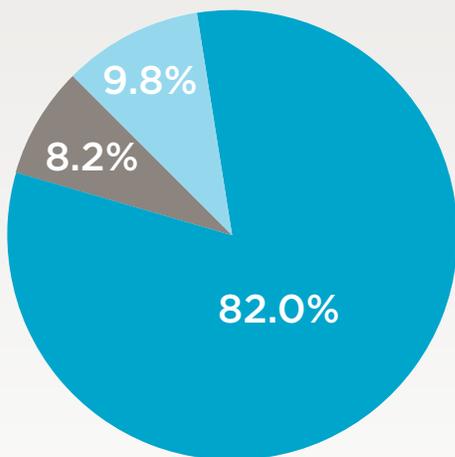
RECOMMENDATION: Organizations are supported in their efforts and commitment to racial equity, inclusion, and belonging.

STRATEGIES:

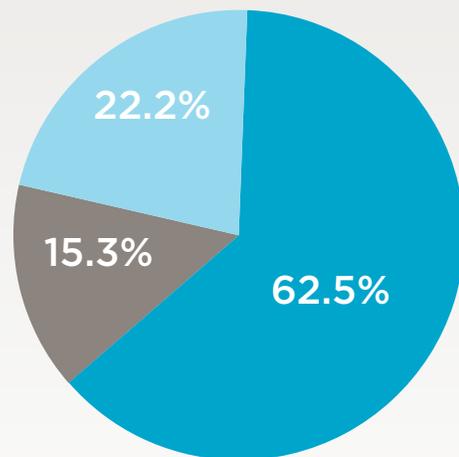
- Community leaders and organizations that work with immigrants and refugees provide education and information on the history of race and racism in the United States to address anti-Blackness, power, privilege, and oppression, as well as the ways in which all residents are impacted by racism.
- Invite community leaders from racially and ethnically diverse communities, including those from immigrant and refugee communities, to discuss and identify opportunities for cross-racial solidarity.
- Create a resource hub for organizations to access training information and resources for continued education on racial equity, inclusion, and belonging.

DEMOGRAPHICS BY AGE GROUP

Foreign-Born Population Share



U.S.-Born Population Share



■ Age Group 0-15 ■ Age Group 16-64 ■ Age Group 65+

In the United States, immigrants are more likely to be working-age than their U.S.-born counterparts. This is true as well for every metro area featured in Map the Impact. This means immigrants are more likely to be active in the labor force, allowing them to contribute to the economy not only as consumers but also as taxpayers, helping fund social services and programs like Medicare and Social Security.

Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

RECOMMENDATION: A “connected communities group/program” composed of members from diverse sectors develops and promotes opportunities for all residents to learn about and from each other.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a steering committee from diverse sectors to regularly plan, host, and promote events.
- Identify issues of common interest and concern for all residents, ensuring racially and ethnically diverse residents are included, to work on together.
- Develop and host new, smaller-scale culturally enriching events in spaces that will reach and engage all residents.
- Use partnerships and personal relationships to engage racially and ethnically diverse residents to proactively market events on diverse platforms.
- Host events to invite residents into spaces they are not familiar with (e.g. places of worship may host an open house once a quarter for other community members to tour and learn about different faiths).
- Create opportunities for mainstream arts and culture organizations to partner with racially and ethnically diverse residents.
- Promote and recognize existing large-scale cultural and faith-based events throughout the Greater Kansas City area.

Top 10 Birth Countries of Immigrants in the Kansas City Region (2010-14)

Top Countries of Birth	Kansas City Region (Number)	Johnson County (%)	Wyandotte County (%)	Clay County (%)	Jackson County (%)	Platte County (%)
All Countries	126,000	37	18	8	32	5
Mexico	42,000	27	35	4	33	1
India	8,000	73	1	5	19	2
China	6,000	43	7	7	35	8
Vietnam	5,000	30	2	17	39	12
El Salvador	4,000	15	29	3	53	1
Philippines	4,000	35	6	11	39	9
Korea	3,000	52	5	14	18	11
Guatemala	3,000	35	13	3	48	0
Kenya	3,000	51	16	2	32	0
Honduras	2,000	28	39	0	30	2

Source: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigration-heartland-profile-immigrants-kansas-city-region>

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City will engage minority-owned business assistance offices to promote immigrant and refugee-owned restaurants.

STRATEGIES:

- Hold a “restaurant week” to uplift immigrant and refugee-owned restaurants.
- Create a map or app to promote immigrant and refugee-owned restaurants.
- Partner with a tour group(s) and incorporate immigrant and refugee-owned restaurants and community spaces into the tour.

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City is recognized as a welcoming and inclusive community.

STRATEGIES:

- Use diverse platforms and media outlets to lift up cultural and faith-based events.
- Create or participate in a communications campaign that promotes shared values and recognizes the strength in unity.
- Participate in Welcoming Week and other welcoming activities.
- Sign a welcoming proclamation or resolution.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Welcoming communities harness the full potential of all residents. Immigrants have the skills and assets to thrive, and economic development systems are prepared to leverage new and existing talent.

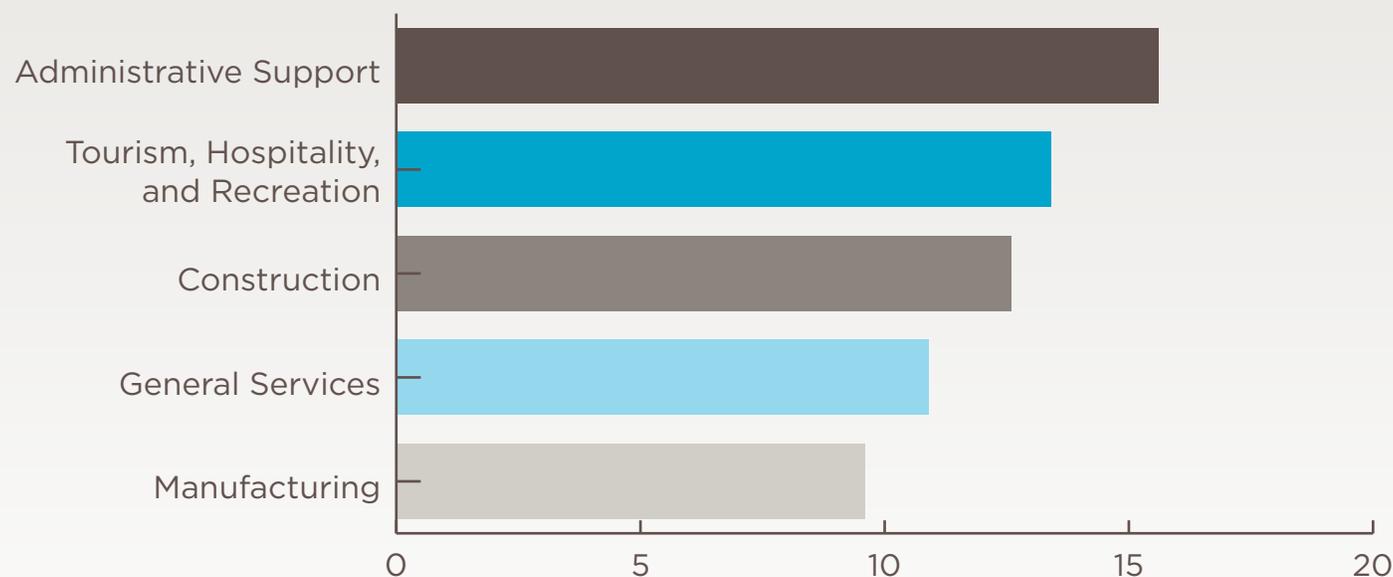
GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY RESIDENTS ARE FULLY ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ECONOMY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS ARE PREPARED TO LEVERAGE NEW AND EXISTING TALENT.

RECOMMENDATION: Workforce systems and initiatives support and sustain career pathways for racially and ethnically diverse residents.

STRATEGIES:

- Engage local employers, chambers of commerce, and other employer networks in equity and immigrant inclusion work.
- Support access to career and credentialing opportunities.
- Support licensing and re-credentialing for immigrants and refugees who have professional credentials from outside of the United States.

TOP INDUSTRIES WITH HIGHEST SHARE OF FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS



Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

RECOMMENDATION: An entrepreneurial ecosystem supports immigrant, refugee, and minority-owned businesses for new business development and growth.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase contract opportunities for immigrant, refugee, and minority-owned businesses.
- Promote innovative programs for immigrant, refugee, and minority entrepreneurs.
- Ensure that small business development centers meet the needs of immigrant, refugee, and minority entrepreneurs eligible to receive federal support.
- Increase entrepreneurship among immigrants and refugees by offering multi-lingual training, microfinance, and business incubation support services.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS COLLABORATE TO CREATE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE REGION.

RECOMMENDATION: Regional economic development plans and efforts identify and address immigrant and refugee engagement.

STRATEGIES:

- Workforce development systems and programs are accessible and promoted to immigrants and refugees.
- Regional economic development services collaborate to address barriers for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY CREATES A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT.

RECOMMENDATION: Employers, immigrants, refugees, and racially and ethnically diverse residents work together to improve workplace conditions and culture.

STRATEGIES:

- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate education to immigrants and refugees on workers' rights and workplace safety.
- Support local businesses to diversify their workforce, including support to ensure compliance with visa requirements and re-credentialing.
- Businesses offer racial equity, inclusion, and belonging training to employees.
- Businesses incorporate a racial justice lens in hiring, retention, and promotion policies and practices, including addressing implicit bias.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are **9,067** immigrant entrepreneurs in the Kansas City Region. Immigrant residents are **24.7%** more likely to be entrepreneurs than U.S.-born residents.

Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

EDUCATION

Welcoming communities strive for an educational system that ensures all students have the support they need to succeed in school and the education they need to succeed in the workforce.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY COMMITS TO PREPARE AND SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS, INCLUDING IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES — REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS -- FOR THE WORKFORCE THROUGH ALL AREAS OF EDUCATION.

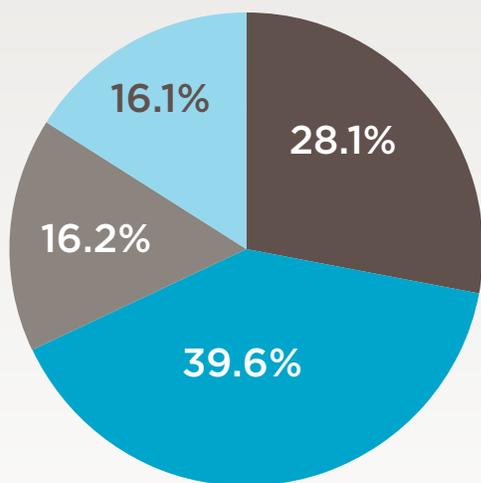
RECOMMENDATION: Education opportunities are expanded for young adults, regardless of immigration status, and include those who have aged out of secondary education.

STRATEGIES:

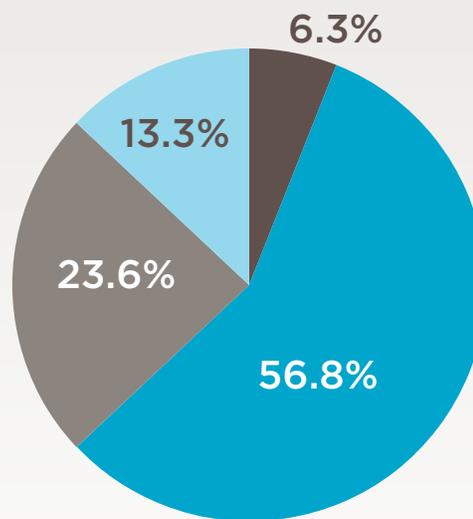
- Create twilight schools in the community.
- Provide GED/HiSet and trade/vocational classes at no cost.
- Ensure paid internships are accessible to racially and ethnically diverse students, including immigrants and refugees.
- Ensure scholarships and financial aid programs are accessible to racially and ethnically diverse students, including immigrants and refugees.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY NATIVITY, AGE 25+

Foreign-Born Population Share



U.S.-Born Population Share



■ Less Than High School ■ High School & Some College ■ Bachelor's Degree ■ Graduate Degree

The growth in the immigrant population has helped to strengthen America's labor force. As baby boomers retire, younger immigrants are filling critical gaps in the market. Nationally, immigrants are more likely to hold an advanced degree than the U.S.-born. They are also more likely to have less than a high school education. In many cities across the country, their unique educational profile allows immigrants to fill labor shortages at both ends of the skill spectrum, from high-tech fields to more manual sectors like construction or food service.

Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY COMMITS TO IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY THROUGH EDUCATION.

RECOMMENDATION: Educational opportunities at various literacy and education levels are accessible for working adults.

STRATEGIES:

- Prepare immigrants and refugees to enter certification programs through trade/vocational classes by offering them at a variety of times and locations.
- Hold on-site English learning classes at employment locations.
- Expand the Kansas City Public Library RISE program to ensure the services it provides are accessible throughout Greater Kansas City.
- Continually assess educational programming and its accessibility based on community feedback.
- Expand the Kansas City Public Library RISE

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY COMMITS TO CREATING EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS.

RECOMMENDATION: Support racially and ethnically diverse families, including families who do not speak English at home, to actively participate and succeed in the education system.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify, promote, and incorporate proven family engagement strategies that focus on the unique needs of racially and ethnically diverse students, including immigrants and refugees.
- Ensure early childhood education is accessible.
- Create a seal of biliteracy certification program to recognize multilingual students.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Welcoming places work to ensure community services and opportunities are available to all residents, including immigrants.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY ENSURES EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND MINORITY RESIDENTS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING HEALTHCARE, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, LEGAL ASSISTANCE, PLACES OF WORSHIP, AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

RECOMMENDATION: Processes for Safe Space designation are developed and adopted.

STRATEGIES:

- Immigrants and refugees will be involved in the process to identify barriers to Safe Spaces and address solutions.
- Identify organizations that represent the range of necessary access points.
- Create a checklist of criteria for Safe Space designation.
- Identify a committee to administer Safe Space designation.
- Provide education to community members to increase awareness of designation.

RECOMMENDATION: Policies and programs are in place that protect racially and ethnically diverse residents from discrimination and predatory practices.

STRATEGIES:

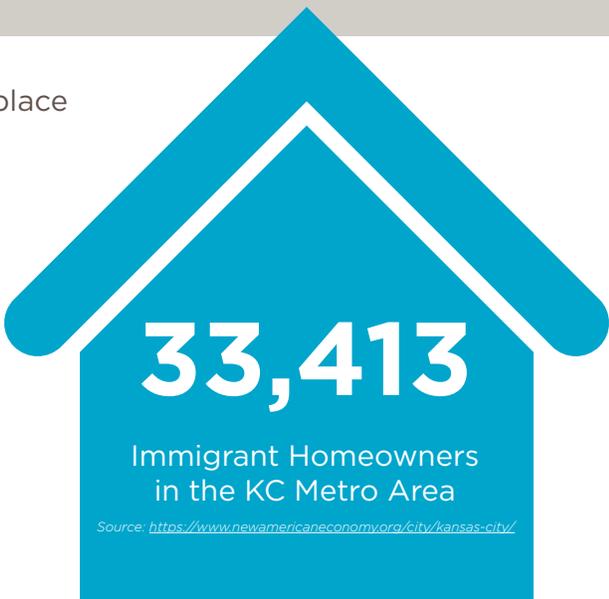
- Community-based organizations provide information about fraudulent services and scams.
- Community-based organizations provide referrals and information to reputable service providers, including but not limited to: housing, legal and justice services, healthcare, and financial services.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY, INCLUDING ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, PROVIDES MEANINGFUL LANGUAGE ACCESS.

RECOMMENDATION: A language access program is in place across government agencies, with the goal of expanding to programs, services, and activities.

STRATEGIES:

- Audit government services for language access compliance.
- Provide training to government employees on when and how to access and work with interpretation and translation services.
- Include emergency services and response plans in all language access programs.



33,413

Immigrant Homeowners
in the KC Metro Area

Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP AND SAFE COMMUNITIES

In welcoming places, the local government implements systems and programs that strengthen community efforts and embed inclusion within government agencies. Welcoming communities foster trust and build relationships between residents, including newcomers, and local law enforcement and safety agencies.

GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY WILL WORK TO ADVANCE RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION SO THAT EVERYONE - INCLUDING RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE RESIDENTS, IMMIGRANTS, AND REFUGEES - FEELS SAFE AND WELCOME.

RECOMMENDATION: Locally elected officials and government leaders commit to racial equity, inclusion, and belonging.

STRATEGIES:

- Local governments adopt the Greater Kansas City Welcoming Plan.
- Locally elected officials and government leaders support community events that are hosted by racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.
- Locally elected officials and government leaders make public statements about the importance and strength of being a welcoming and inclusive community.
- Local governments ensure information about government services and resources, English classes, and naturalization is accessible through digital and non-digital means, as well as in multiple languages.

GOAL: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN GREATER KANSAS CITY ADOPT POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES.

RECOMMENDATION: Local governments review policies and services to ensure they do not have a disparate impact on or exclude racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.

STRATEGIES:

- Transparent and open opportunities are available for residents to provide feedback on existing and new policies.
- Ensure immigration status is not a barrier to accessing government services.
- Policies are adopted to ensure immigration status is not a barrier to accessing non-federal government services or shared publicly.

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City works to build trust and strengthen relationships between law enforcement and racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.

STRATEGIES:

- Local law enforcement agencies receive regular training on working with racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.
- Partner with community leaders to enhance engagement and proactive interactions with racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.
- Foster positive youth engagement.

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City works to enhance accountability, transparency, and communication within its law enforcement agencies.

STRATEGIES:

- Greater Kansas City invests in relationships and communication between racially and ethnically diverse residents, and law enforcement to better serve and protect the community.
- Partner with community-based organizations to provide Know Your Rights education sessions.
- Educate and promote the process to file law enforcement complaints with an impartial point of contact and ensure complaint processes are available in multiple languages for English learners.
- Publicly share data by race, ethnicity, gender, and geography on law enforcement policies, arrest, jail population, use of deadly force, and resident complaint statistics.

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City protects residents from deportation.

STRATEGIES:

- Track and assess how ICE is operating immigration enforcement in the Greater Kansas City region.
- Local governments and other agencies establish policies and procedures to create “safe spaces” for immigrants by prohibiting participation or assistance with civil immigration enforcement.
- Identify and support a local agency in efforts to provide universal representation to individuals facing deportation.

RECOMMENDATION: Code enforcement agencies adopt equitable practices.

STRATEGIES:

- Review and adopt policies to strengthen relationships and promote regular communication with racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.
- Partner with community-based organizations to provide education to racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees on code enforcement policies.
- Code enforcement staff receive regular training on working with racially and ethnically diverse residents, including immigrants and refugees.

RECOMMENDATION: Greater Kansas City is prepared for natural disasters and emergencies with strategies to support resilience in racially and ethnically diverse communities.

STRATEGIES:

- Local governments have inclusive emergency management plans.
- Provide meaningful language access throughout emergencies and disaster relief.
- Ensure racially and ethnically diverse residents are involved in the emergency planning and response process and part of the Emergency Operations Center.

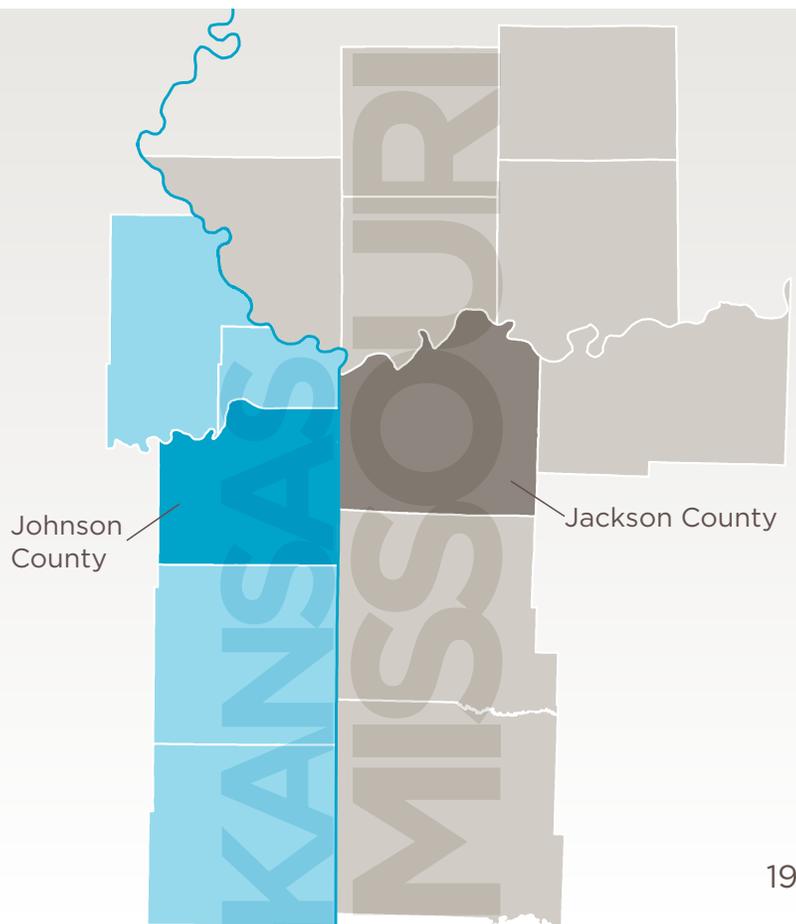
GOAL: GREATER KANSAS CITY CREATES A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ATTRACTIVE TO RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY DIVERSE RESIDENTS.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify best practices for local governments to adopt policies that ensure all residents feel welcome.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote the arts and cultures of racially and ethnically diverse residents
- Arts and cultural programs and services are accessible to and celebrate the contributions of immigrants, refugees and, racially and ethnically diverse residents..
- Government communication materials reflect and celebrate the diversity of the community.
- Recreational services evaluate and ensure their programs are accessible and engaging to racially and ethnically diverse residents.
- Local governments adopt welcoming resolutions.

The majority of immigrant population is concentrated in the areas two most populous counties. **70%** of immigrants in region lived in **Jackson and Johnson**; **18%** resided in **Wyandotte County**; and **12%** lived north of Missouri River in **Clay or Platte** counties.



Source: <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/city/kansas-city/>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The dedicated partners of the Greater Kansas City Welcoming Planning Team and Steering Committee provided perspective, guidance, and insight throughout the plan's development. We deeply appreciate the organizations and individuals for their participation in the process and contributions to the plan.

We are also grateful for the numerous community members who shared their stories and ideas. We especially thank the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and Welcoming America. Their expertise, encouragement, and support have sparked a movement in our community.

Many thanks to REACH Healthcare Foundation for valuing the importance of building a more welcoming community, as well as the generous financial support of this planning process and implementation of the plan in our region.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Co-Chair: Mahnaz Shabbir, Shabbir Advisors

Co-Chair: Greg Valdovino, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

Melissa Bertolo, Welcoming America

Carla Gibson, REACH Healthcare Foundation

Molly Hilligoss, Welcoming America

Susan Downs-Karkos, Formerly with Welcoming America

Andrea Perdomo-Morales, Communities Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees/Vibrant Health Kansas City

WORKING GROUPS

Civic Engagement

Co-Chair: Irene Caudillo, El Centro Inc.

Co-Chair: Andrew Weisberg, KC Chamber

Connected Communities

Chair: Hilary Singer, JVS

Economic Development

Chair: Sheri Gonzales, Civic Council of Greater Kansas City/KC Rising

Education

Chair: Julie Robinson, Kansas City Public Library

Equitable Access

Chair: Andrea Perdomo-Morales, Citizens Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees/Vibrant Health Kansas City

Government Leadership

Co-Chair: Marlene Nagel, MARC

Co-Chair: Maury Thompson, Johnson County Government

Safe Communities

Chair: Damon Daniel, AdHoc Group Against Crime

STEERING COMMITTEE

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Amanda Jackson, Formerly of Samuel U. Rodgers

Fatima Mohamed, Samuel U. Rodgers

Bob Theis, Samuel U. Rodgers

Eileen Bobowski, Sewing Labs

Emmerick Cross, Unified Government of WYCO/KCK

Deb Carter, University of Kansas

Suba Nadarajah, VMLY&R

Garry Linn, YMCA of Greater Kansas City





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