

Nebraska Thriving Index: 126 Ranks 2nd Among Peers

1st Demographic Growth & Renewal

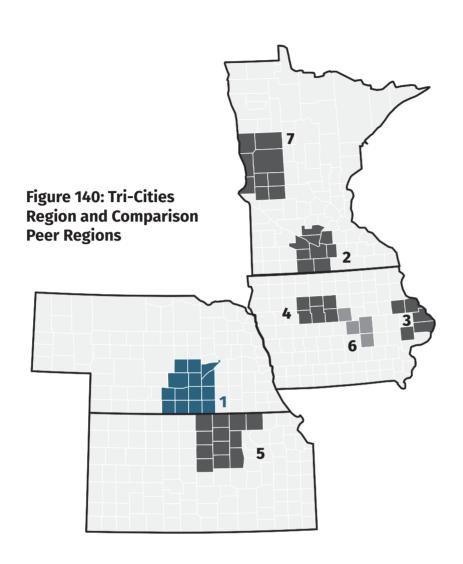
1st Quality of Life

2nd Economic Opportunity & Diversity

2nd Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business

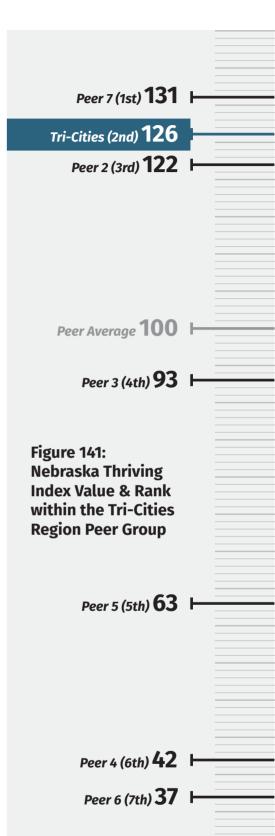
The Tri-Cities region contains the counties of the Grand Island metropolitan area, the Kearney micropolitan area, the Hastings micropolitan area as well as surrounding counties. The Tri-Cities region is manufacturing-oriented and has a large share of its population residing in micropolitan and small metropolitan areas. There are six peer comparison regions for the Tri-Cities region, all located outside of the state of Nebraska. The comparison regions are located in Iowa (3), Minnesota (2) and Kansas (1). (See Figure 140.)

To explore individual scores and rankings for each of the component measurements (including previous years) and download the Comparison Region Supplement visit **RuralProsperityNE.unl.edu**.



Comparison Peer Region Key

- 1. NEBRASKA: Tri-Cities Region
- 2. MINNESOTA: Region Nine Development Commission
- 3. IOWA: East Central Intergovernmental Association
- 4. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association
- 5. KANSAS: North Central Regional Planning Commission*
- 6. IOWA: Region 6 Planning Commission
- 7. MINNESOTA: Minnesota West Central Initiative

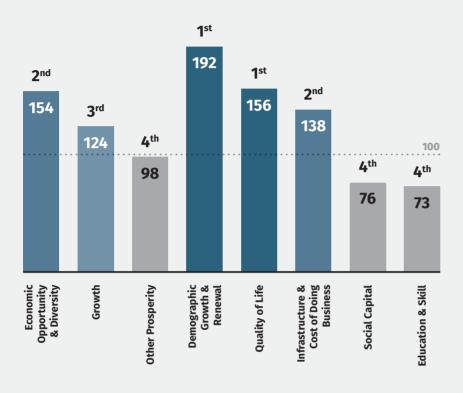


^{*}Based on discussions with economic developers and others in the Tri-Cities region, Peer 5 was changed from KANSAS: Flint Hills Economic Development District.

NEBRASKA THRIVING INDEX TRI-CITIES REGION

Figure 142: Nebraska Thriving Component Index Rank and Value for the Tri-Cities Region

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Index Interpretation

<100 = BELOW the average of its peers

100 = AT the average of its peers

>100 = ABOVE the average of its peers

Example: A value of 156 for Quality of Life indicates that quality of life is 0.56 of a standard deviation above the average quality of life among the peer regions.

Figure 142 shows the value and ranking of the Nebraska Thriving Component Indexes for the Tri-Cities region compared to its peers. The Tri-Cities region's 2nd place ranking and 126 value on the aggregate 2020 Nebraska Thriving Index (see Figure 141) is driven by strong performance in several of the economic prosperity indexes and the economic conditions indexes. Specifically, the Tri-Cities region performs well relative to its peers on two of the three outcome measures, ranking 2nd for the Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index and 3rd for the Growth Index. Demographic Growth & Renewal, Quality of Life, and Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business are other areas of strength for the Tri-Cities region as it ranks 1st and 2nd for these indexes.



Kearney, Nebraska



Aurora, Nebraska

Strengths

This section focuses on the underlying indicators of the Nebraska Thriving Component Indexes where the Tri-Cities region is recognized as having an area of strength. An area of strength is identified as the Tri-Cities region ranking in one of the top three of seven places among its peers.



Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index

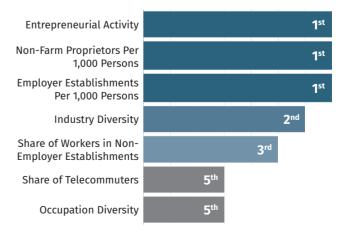
Figure 143: Ranking from 7 Component Measurements

-56	63	68	77	127	154	166
Peer 6	Peer 4	Peer 3	Peer 2	Peer 5	Tri-Cities	Peer 7

The Tri-Cities region ranks 2nd among its peers for the Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index, which measures entrepreneurial activity, industry and occupation diversity and telecommuting (see Figure 143).

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks 1st on three of seven indicators and 2nd or 3rd on another two of seven indicators (see Figure 144).

Figure 144: Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region



Growth Index

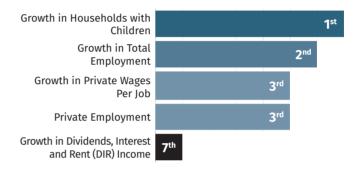
Figure 145: Ranking from 5 Component Measurements

-4	11	62	91	124	144	151
Peer 6	Peer 5	Peer 4	Peer 3	Tri-Cities	Peer 7	Peer 2

The Tri-Cities region ranks 3rd among its peers for the Growth Index, which measures growth in employment, wages, population and returns on wealth (see Figure 145).

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks 1st and 2nd for growth in households with children and total employment growth, respectively and 3rd for both private wage growth and private employment. However, it ranks last for growth in dividends, interest and rent income (see Figure 146).

Figure 146: Growth Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region



Demographic Growth & Renewal Index

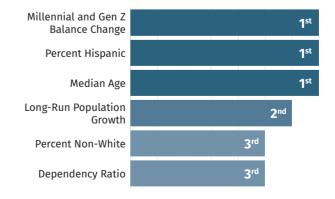
Figure 147: Ranking from 6 Component Measurements

16	18	49	91	120	145	192
Peer 5	Peer 4	Peer 3	Peer 7	Peer 6	Peer 2	Tri-Cities

The Tri-Cities region ranks 1st among its peers for the Demographic Growth & Renewal Index, which measures long-term population growth, age structure and diversity (see Figure 147). This index is nearly one standard deviation above the peer average.

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks in one of the top three places for all six indicators, three of which are 1st (see Figure 148).

Figure 148: Demographic Growth & Renewal Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region



Quality of Life Index

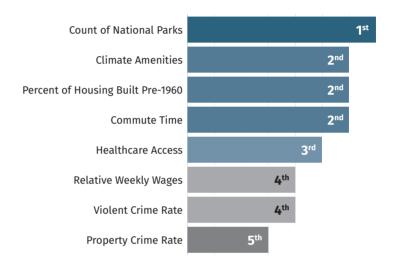
Figure 149: Ranking from 8 Component Measurements

67	70	81	92	104	115	156
Peer 3	Peer 4	Peer 5	Peer 2	Peer 7	Peer 6	Tri-Cities

The Tri-Cities region ranks 1st among its peers for the Quality of Life Index (see Figure 149). The Index measures the appeal of living and working in a region.

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks in one of the top three places for five of the eight indicators of quality of life (see Figure 150).

Figure 150: Quality of Life Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region



Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business Index

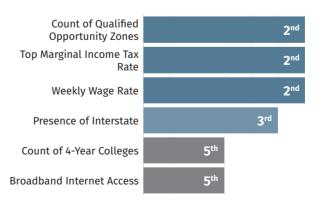
Figure 151: Ranking from 6 Component Measurements

22	50	52	98	136	138	155	
Peer 6	Peer 4	Peer 2	Peer 7	Peer 5	Tri-Cities	Peer 3	

The Tri-Cities region ranks 2nd among its peers for the Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business Index, which measures the cost of operating businesses in a region (see Figure 151).

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks 2nd or 3rd for four of the six indicators. However, it ranks 5th for the count of 4-year colleges and for broadband internet access (see Figure 152).

Figure 152: Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business **Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region**



Considerations

This section focuses on the underlying indicators of the Nebraska Thriving Component Indexes where the Tri-Cities region is identified as having neither an area of strength or concern. An area of consideration is identified as the Tri-Cities region ranking 4th among its peers.

Other Prosperity Index

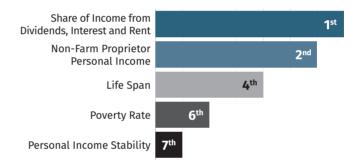
Figure 153: Ranking from 5 Component Measurements

-31	37	66	98	115	135	157
Peer 4	Peer 5	Peer 6	Tri-Cities	Peer 3	Peer 2	Peer 7

The Tri-Cities region ranks 4th among its peers for the Other Prosperity Index, which measures life span, non-wage sources of income, income stability and the poverty rate (see Figure 153).

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region ranks 1st and 2nd for the share of income from dividends, interest and rent income and non-farm proprietor personal income, respectively. However, it ranks more poorly on poverty rate and personal income stability (see Figure 154).

Figure 154: Other Prosperity Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region





Social Capital Index

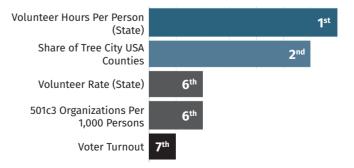
Figure 155: Ranking from 5 Component Measurements

14	58	67	76	87	129	176
Peer 6	Peer 5	Peer 4	Tri-Cities	Peer 3	Peer 7	Peer 2

The Tri-Cities region ranks 4th among its peers and is below the peer region average for the Social Capital Index, which captures social networks and a shared sense of identity within the region (see Figure 155).

Within this index, the Tri-Cities region is below the peer region average on three of the five indicators. However, it ranks 1st and 2nd on volunteer hours per person and the share of Tree City USA counties, respectively (see Figure 156).

Figure 156: Social Capital Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region





Education & Skill Index

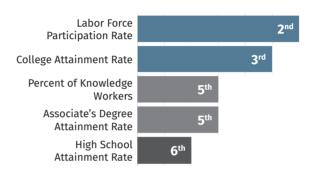
Figure 157: Ranking from 5 Component Measurements

19	36	42	73	110	148	160
Peer 6	Peer 5	Peer 4	Tri-Cities	Peer 3	Peer 2	Peer 7

The Tri-Cities region ranks 4th among its peers for the Education & Skill Index and is below the peer region average (see Figure 157).

Although the region ranks 2nd for labor force participation and 3rd for college attainment, the region ranks 5th for both the share of the workforce in knowledge occupations (e.g., STEM occupations, financial occupations, management occupations, teachers and health care occupations) and associate's degree attainment, and 6th for high school attainment (see Figure 158).

Figure 158: Education & Skill Index indicator rankings for the Tri-Cities Region



Concerns

An area of concern would be identified as the Tri-Cities region ranking in one of the bottom three of seven places among its peers. However, the Tri-Cities region did not have a ranking below 4th place on any of the eight Nebraska Thriving Component Indexes.