

# DOUGLAS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Business Retention Plan 2003

Based upon the findings of the 2002–2003 Business Retention Survey, a subcommittee of the Economic Development Board was formed, and worked with the manager of existing business programs to develop and monitor strategies of a business retention plan. These strategies will be presented to the Economic Development Board, the Excellence by Design Investors and the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. The Economic Development Team will implement the following strategies:

1. Encourage businesses to stay competitive through ownership investment in new equipment/technology. Help companies identify opportunities for technology investments such as state and local incentive programs.
2. Encourage companies to collaborate in exporting through further assessment of volume and destinations of exported products. Explore the feasibility of attracting a freight consolidator to the area.
3. Partner with Kansas International to promote international resources to businesses.
4. Promote resources such as business retention assessment tools through the Kansas University Small Business Development Center and other entities to businesses that may benefit from their services.
5. Develop a corporate headquarters visitation program to the parent company locations outside of Douglas County.
6. Purchase monitoring services that provide national and international news that is relevant to local industries and companies.

7. Serve as a catalyst to identify potential partnerships between higher-education institutions and companies to continue to strengthen research and development conducted locally.
8. Encourage collaboration between government officials and the businesses surveyed in the business retention report, to develop solutions that address the lower ratings of regulatory enforcement, traffic control, community planning as well as concerns with a perceived business unfriendly environment.
9. Monitor and advocate for traffic safety needs/issues for businesses.
10. Share training needs identified in survey with all area education and training resources, within Douglas County, with the intent of getting technical training courses offered locally.
11. Develop a comprehensive media campaign, funded through Excellence by Design, which contains the tools to create an awareness of the impact of the businesses in Douglas County and the benefits of economic development efforts.
12. Design and implement business recognition programs like Hot-Dogs-N-Thanks and Excellence in Commerce Awards, and continually look for ways to recognize achievements of local business.
13. The manager of existing business programs, funded by the Excellence by Design initiative, will annually resurvey local businesses. The survey will be used to measure the success of this business retention plan. Quarterly updates will be provided to the Economic Development Board, the Excellence by Design Investors and the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.