

McCook, Nebraska

2021 Community of Excellence Application



COE2026

McCook, NE

a journey to excellence

McCook, Nebraska

2021 Journey to Community Excellence Application

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

CHNA – Community Health Needs Assessment

COE – Communities of Excellence

MEDC – McCook Economic Development Corporation

NE – Nebraska

PDCA – Plan-Do-Check-Act

SIPOC – Suppliers, Inputs, Processes, Outputs, Customers

UNL – University of Nebraska Lincoln

VOC – Voice of the Customer

VOR – Voice of the Resident

Community Profile

P.1 Community Description: What are your community's key characteristics?

P.1a Community Environment

P.1a (1) Community Definition and Identity. What geographic area is included in your community?

We define our community as the City of McCook including the city's zoning of a two-mile extension beyond the city limit line for utility support and future growth opportunities.

McCook is located at the intersections of Highway 83 going from North to South, a highway that goes from the Canadian border to the Mexico border and Highway 6 and 34, which is a well-traveled road that connects easily between Eastern Nebraska cities of Lincoln and Omaha, to Colorado including Denver and the Estes Park area.

Figure P.1a (1) – 1 shows the City of McCook on a map.

Figure P.1a (1) - 1 McCook, NE



The closest towns of larger size are to the north by 75 miles, North Platte, population 24,110 and to the northeast by 105 miles, Kearney, population 33,520.

What are your community's population and growth compared with that of other communities locally, regionally, or nationally?

McCook itself has a population of approximately 7,700 people. The McCook market area for retail and services is closer to 30,000-32,000 people. Demographics: Figure P.1a (1)-2 includes US Census bureau information.

Figure P.1a (1) - 2 US Census Bureau Information

What is your COMMUNITY IDENTITY?

McCook offers a regional trade center that is an excellent opportunity for families to live, work and play. It is the perfect place to put down roots, raise a family, and retire. The larger customer and resident base of the area supports the city to function as a much larger city than a normal town of 7,000 people. McCook has experienced and is anticipated to continue on a slight decline for population. The State of Nebraska population is growing slightly.

Outdoor recreation is woven into the fabric of western Nebraska rural communities like McCook. Nature is never more than a few minutes away. Numerous State Recreation Areas, Reservoirs, and Wildlife Management Areas throughout the area are great place for birding, camping, hunting and fishing.

The Heritage Hills Golf course was opened in 1981 and in 1984 was rated one of Golf Digest's "Best 75 Golf Courses". The course is of the highest quality of design, course conditioning, and value.

United State Census Bureau (QuickFacts McCook)	
PEOPLE	
Population, Census April 1, 2010	7,698
Population estimates, July 1, 2018, (V2018)	7,551
Population percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2018	-1.9%
Age and Sex	
Persons under 5 years, percent	6.7%
Persons under 18 years, percent	24.8%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	19.9%
Female persons, percent	52.2%
Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone, percent	96.4%
Black or African American alone, percent	0.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	0.2%
Asian alone, percent	0.3%
Two or More Races, percent	2.7%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	5.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	91.6%
Income & Poverty	
Median household income (in 2018 dollars)	\$44,473
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2018 dollars)	\$24,572
Persons in poverty, percent	7.8%

Whether you come to McCook for shopping, an overnight stay or a several day excursion for the whole family, we promise that it will be a memorable experience! Enjoy the natural settings and outdoor adventures along the river, prairie lakes and walking trails. Celebrate with us during our award-winning festivals, special events, and annual celebrations. Stroll along our brick streets at your leisure while visiting our specialty shops and restaurants. From pumpkins to cattle, our farms offer a glance of the Midwest lifestyle.

P.1a (2) Community Offerings. What are your community's key offerings to its resident and other CUSTOMER GROUPS in the areas of health, education, the economy, and quality of life?

The Community is based on the agriculture economy. The Key offering of agriculture is supported and complimented by other strong economic bases. The city itself has strong retail offerings, schools, healthcare and general offerings. These are all hinged on the larger agriculture base that is outside the city limits.

Knowing that community is a set of systems that function together to achieve optimal performance gives us the starting point for identifying the offerings in our community.

What is the relative importance of these offerings to your community's well-being?

This economic draw to McCook is strengthened through the diversity of the industry and retail that the community offers. Families can come shopping at a Wal-Mart and other chain stores like Ace Hardware or restaurants that offer sit down dining to fast food. Implement dealers and farm supply stores also draw a number of the farming and ranching clientele.

What major facilities, infrastructure, and resources (e.g., technology, housing, transportation, and natural resources) support your community's KEY offerings?

McCook, established in 1882, offers history deeply rooted in agriculture, the railroad, raising buffalo and the spirit of the American pioneer. McCook became the center of commerce and trade in Southwest Nebraska and Northwest Kansas. As the town grew and established itself as a commercial center, farming and ranching spread across the surrounding area.

The land area is also enriched with access to water and land for fishing and hunting. There are three lakes available within 30 minutes of McCook that provide irrigation to farming, fishing and recreation activities.

McCook has a strong political heritage. McCook was the home of George Norris, widely considered one of the top 5 United States Senators in the history of the country. McCook was also home to three Nebraska governors including Ralph Brooks, Frank Morrisen, and Ben Nelson (also a United States Senator).

McCook Ben Nelson Regional Airport offers commercial flights each day of the week going to and from Denver. The city has Burlington Northern Railroad coming through our community and offers an Amtrak stop.

The area has access to high speed internet through both wireless and wired, for a telecommunication structure that is advanced by access to major fiber optic lines. Through rural broadband high speed internet acts there is availability within the city and in the rural areas.

McCook is also home to two large manufacturing facilities that support the economy with a number of jobs. Valmont Industries focuses production efforts solely on center pivot irrigations. Parker makes a number of hose applications from hydraulic to garden usage.

The financial and overall retail base supports the region.

P.1a (3) Residents, Other CUSTOMERS, and STAKEHOLDERS. What are your community's key resident groups, other CUSTOMER groups, and STAKEHOLDER groups?

The key resident groups include the Residents of working age, Seniors/Retired, and Students.

Customers of all types of services and vendors come into the area to support the agriculture economy. People travel into the area for tourism and visiting. People also travel to the city from neighboring communities that do not offer all the same amenities.

Vendors, legislators and regulators are a beginning list for stakeholders' groups.

What are their KEY requirements and expectations of your community?

The residents of the area have a need for job opportunities. The agriculture environment supports the people directly in that field as well as a number of implement dealers, farm supply stores and help in supporting one of our two large manufacturers that supply center pivot irrigation systems. Everyone living in the area expects a safe community and values education, including a junior college. Through town celebrations and events, the area promotes culture, arts and entertainment.

What are the differences in requirements and expectations among resident groups, other CUSTOMER groups, and STAKEHOLDER groups?

The pillar groups have been looking at the different expectation from the resident groups as compared to other customer and stakeholder groups. Understanding the other groups needs comes through in discussion as community leaders are working in the pillar meetings. Through the attributes of each pillar we can understand the requirement and expectations. As an example Economic Vitality we know that the major areas of Employment, Cost of Living and Business/Industry are most important.

P.1a (4) People and Organizational Resources. What KEY Community groups and segments are involved in delivering your community's KEY Offerings?

The Key Community Groups are grouped in Figure P.1a(4) – 1 Key Community Groups below.

Figure P.1a(4) – 1 Key Community Groups

Key Community Groups	Education	Economic Vitality	Family	Health
County Government			*	*
City Government			*	*
Community Hospital		*	*	*
McCook Economic Development Corporation		*		
UNL Extension	*		*	*
McCook Chamber of Commerce		*		*
McCook Public Schools	*		*	
McCook Community College	*	*		
Southwest NE Public Health Dept.	*		*	
Red Willow County Health Dept.	*		*	
McCook Ministerial Association (representing Churches)	*		*	*
McCook Community Foundation		*		*
McCook Tourism		*		*
McCook Rotary	*		*	*

City Council, the mayor and city manager all represent the community for the City Council. Meetings are held every Monday evening and the community is encouraged to attend.

The Community Foundation has become very active in the community with very successful fundraising for the endowments to ensure future building and support of programs.

What recent changes has the community experienced in its needs for these community groups and SEGMENTS?

The hospital completes a Community Health Needs Assessment every three years. That document is available on the Community Hospital website. This provides opportunity for healthcare to help identify and affect a community's health care needs and to address the social determinants of health.

Who are the formal and informal COMMUNITY LEADERS that represent KEY organizations, groups, and SEGMENTS?

The Core group is made up of four Community Hospital employees, Chamber of Commerce Director, McCook Economic Development Corporation Director, and a local Physical Therapy group employee. The Informal leaders at the advisory group are made up of several McCook leaders from sectors of retail, education, clergy, government and others. Housing and Wellness are overall community initiatives that will support overall pillars and COE efforts.

P.1a (5) Regulatory Environment. What are the Key aspects of the regulatory environment under which your community operates?

Most organizations are accountable to at least some regulatory standards if not a number of different Federal, State, County or City regulations.

P.1b Community Excellence Group

P.1b (1) Mission, Vision, and Values. Why have you formed a community excellence group?

We formed this collaborative group and joined Communities of Excellence because we know that McCook can always be better. The short term goal for our community isn't to make it great, because it already is. What we wanted to identify is where the strategic planning for the community could develop even better cooperation and collaboration between all the players. There are many overlaps and meetings between all the local agencies, but before COE there was nothing formal that brought everyone's missions together. Each agency also brings their own metrics and goals that can be shared for the benefit of the entire community.

We also have an opportunity as we select future members for our collaborative to tap into different groups and people that have talent in our community. We are like many communities where the same people seem to always be at the table and we know that there are several other sources of expertise and energy that we can encourage to be engaged for the future of our community.

What are the group's stated MISSION, VISION, and VALUES?

Mission:

To enhance the quality of life in McCook, Nebraska by creating a collaborative community that focuses on:

- Education
- Family
- Economic Vitality
- Health

Vision:

To champion the collaboration of organizations in McCook in order to consistently evaluate and improve the quality of life in our community.

Values:

Excellence

We constantly seek ways to identify areas for improvement in order to provide the highest quality of life for our residents, jobs for the region, and retail for consumers.

Inclusiveness and Diversity

We value the input and ideals of each organization, resident, and consumer in our region and are determined to give each person a voice in community improvement.

Collaboration

We encourage communication between organizations in McCook to foster teamwork on similar initiatives and goals.

P.1b (2) Composition. What KEY people, organizations, and groups are involved in your community excellence group?

The core group started in August 2018 with seven members from the hospital, MEDC, McCook Chamber of Commerce and UNL Extension.

Introductory meetings were held in January and March of 2019. Attendees were from the McCook Area Chamber of Commerce, the schools, Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department, Red Willow County Health Department, McCook Community Foundation, local banks, industry, churches, government, retail and the media. From the first sessions a number of people volunteered to be on the Advisory Board and others agreed to join Pillar meetings, specific workgroups and action plans.

What are the KEY drivers that engage them in achieving your group’s MISSION and VISION?

One of the key drivers is knowing that individual efforts can be continued. We also value that organizations can still have their own identity and mission. We have found the momentum and power of audiences coming together.

What is the BACKBONE ORGANIZATION, if your group includes one?

Community Hospital is the Backbone Organization for Communities of Excellence.

Community Hospital has been on a performance improvement journey since 2009 using the Baldrige framework. The hospital has obtained the top Colorado award and is now applying on the National Level for their efforts. The hospital sees the power of what these collective efforts can do for our community. The overall health and wellness of the community is a driving factor for the hospital where it is important that the organization support other agencies and groups in succeeding in their efforts, making everything more prosperous and successful.

P.1b (3) Leadership System. What LEADERSHIP SYSTEM does your community excellence group use to lead its community excellence effort?

To be able to tell all of our involved groups the flow of our work we’ve designed the Figure P.1b (3) – 1 Building a COE. This was implemented initially to communicate the next steps and efforts that were going to be doing as a team.

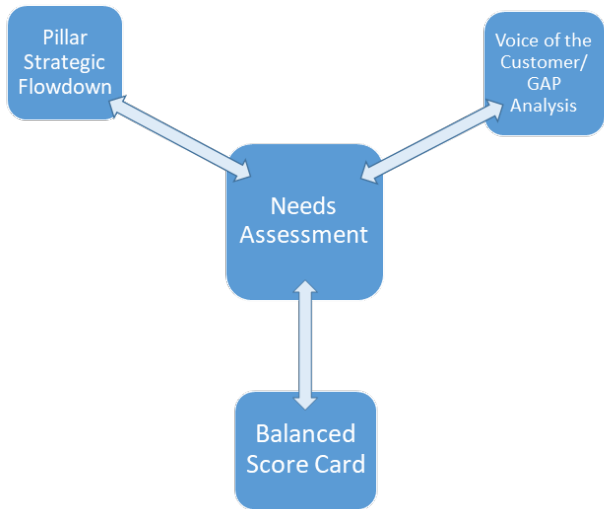
The Core team was developed as the steering group. The advisory Board was designed to meet quarterly for input and feedback on items. Community Partners meet annually with an information agenda.

Figure P.1b (3) - 1 Building a COE

Building a Community of Excellence					
ENGAGE	MINE	CREATE	SEEK	DEVELOP	MEASURE
KEY STAKEHOLDERS	THE DATA	A COMMUNITY PROFILE	INPUT	STRATEGIES & IMPLEMENTATION	MONITOR SUCCESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Core Group > Community Leader Advisory Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Collect and Review Community Data Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Compile current community identity and features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Business Leaders > Stakeholder Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop action plan with appropriate detail and timelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Monitor results to ensure projects and initiatives have oversight and accountability

The Community Partners are a group to ask for assistance with ad hoc requests for a specific subject or project for the community. Community Friends will be kept aware of our progress through newsletter or e-mail.

Figure P.1b (3) - 2 Leadership System



Introducing the Strategic Planning process to the community partners was done in phases as we implemented the specific tools included in our leadership system. Figure P.1b (3) – 2 Leadership system shows the structure of the specific pieces that will be completed. The voice of the resident exercise was done early in the planning process after the initial planning meetings were completed.

Community Documents are being compiled that have a wealth of knowledge and data. They are included in Figure P.1b (3) – 3 Community Documents here:

Figure P.1b (3) - 3 Community Documents

Documents	Relationship to Mission
Community Health Needs Assessment	Identifies and prioritizes health needs and coordinating resources to improve access.
Extension Baseline Community Profile	Increase the effectiveness of the University and its resources to stimulate and support strategic community economic development
McCook, Nebraska Comprehensive Plan 2013-2023	Planning for future stability and development in the City and the respective Two-Mile Planning Jurisdiction

What Key community organizations, groups, and segments are involved in this system?

McCook Economic Development Corporation, McCook Chamber of Commerce, Financial, Education, Manufacturing, Government, Retail, Healthcare.

P.1b (4) Programs and Services. What programs and services are offered through the efforts of your community excellence group.

There have been some specific seminars that have been offered. There have been discussions on an overall McCook health plan for some overall Capital investments.

The Flow downs for each pillar represent programs currently offer like housing items on Econ. Vital. done by MEDC. The efforts are improving and growing through the initiatives chosen and included on the flow down. Health pillar this past year has discussed how to get Dental Vouchers out to early grade school for dental services. Wellness McCook is a program sort of that has brought the YMCA full force into the mix with hopes of leveraging the overall Wellness initiative to help them to jumpstart initiatives.

P.1b (5) Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators. What KEY suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS support your community excellence group?

The core group started by compiling community resources and identifying leaders that could be involved early in the process. For health, initial discussions were held between McCook Clinic, Hillcrest Nursing Home, Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department and the hospital. A focus group was held for Voice of the Customer with a tenant’s association meeting for health insurance coverage and needs. Doing focus groups will be an important tool for us to use in each of the pillars.

The Key Partners and Collaborators will be Schools, College, Business, City and Healthcare. The chart here includes partners attending most pillar meetings.

Pillar	Organizations present in meetings
Health	YMCA, Mid-Nebraska, Family Resource, McCook Clinic, Hillcrest Nursing Home, South-west Nebraska Public Health Department, Red Willow County Health Department, Community Hospital, McCook Community College
Economic Vitality	McCook National Bank, Pinnacle Bank, McCook Tourism, McCook Chamber of Commerce, MEDC, VK Electronics, Valmont, Community Hospital
Education	McCook Public Schools, Community Hospital, McCook Community College, McCook Community Foundation, YMCA
Family	Pinnacle Bank, McCook Chamber of Commerce, YMCA, Community Hospital

The Key Partners and Collaborators will be Schools, College, Business, City and Healthcare.

What role do they play in its WORK SYSTEMS, especially in producing and delivering its programs and services?

Early sessions gave the core team good input for how some in the community would like to be involved. Through the beginning Pillar meetings, it became a reality for who will be in the room for discussion and active in action plans. It also lets the Core Group know who can be called on for help in the short term for specific initiatives.

P.2a Competitive Environment

P.2a (1) Competitive Position. With regard to its KEY Offerings, what is your community's competitive position relative to similar or nearby communities?

The city of McCook is an economic necessity for the Agriculture base in the region. The City is also a regional hub for smaller neighboring communities. The closest communities are much smaller and do not offer the amenities that McCook does for things like retail, grocery, hardware stores, movies, farm/country stores, implement/car dealerships, automotive repair and supply, and healthcare services.

The McCook Economic Development Corporation has studies that show a 1.5 return on our retail sector, proving that we bring into the area well over our base population.

What other communities are your community's Key competitors?

The Key competitors for retail is North Platte, 75 miles north and Kearney, 105 miles to the northeast where there are larger malls and specialty stores that people will use for more extensive shopping.

P.2a (2) Competitiveness Changes What KEY changes, if any, are affecting your community's competitive situation, including changes that create opportunities for INNOVATION and Collaboration for your community excellence group, as appropriate?

The community has many opportunities and challenges because of the geography and economic situation. Figure P.2a (2) – 1 Community Competitive Situation describes.

Figure P.2a (2) - 1 Community competitive situation

Pillar	Key Changes	Innovation Opportunity
Health	*Age and Health of our population *Declining reimbursement and coverage for healthcare services	*Dental coverage *Health promotion and programs for exercise
Education	*Graduates from high school and college leaving the area	*Programs to train trade jobs
Economic Vitality	*Agriculture prices and economic impact *Low unemployment limits job applicants	*Agriculture extending businesses * opportunity to increase affordable housing so we can attract more labor force.
Family	*Housing challenges	*Family friendly events

P.2a (3) Comparative Data. What KEY sources of comparative and competitive data about your community are available to your community excellence group?

We have good Housing and economic data through the MEDC. The health pillar has been using RWJ Foundation annual data and the US Census Bureau American Community Survey. The health pillar early in meeting did a Facebook initiative for Social Determinants of Health information from the public.

The City of McCook completes a comprehensive plan every decade for the future planning and expansion of the city. It evaluates the infrastructure in general and the needs for the growth or decrease in population.

Hospital regional market assessment information gives the current market share of services the volume of specific services and how they are changing and comparing to other healthcare organizations in the area. There is a future forecast of how service demands are expected to trend. The report also includes demographic data with forecasted changes.

Southwest Public Health Department has extensive data that tracks and trends healthcare attributes for the populations. The College and Public school systems both have benchmarking data.

What limitations, if any, affect the ability to obtain or use these data?

As we started asking for data we found that everyone was willing to hand us binders and folders. The first limitation is that it was sometimes for the county rather than the city or even for a number of counties depending on the region represented. The second limitation was the age of the data and how frequently things are updated. The third challenge was turning these piles of data into useful information that doesn't overwhelm community leaders.

P.2b Strategic Context.

P.2b (1) Core Competencies. What are your community's CORE COMPETENCIES?

What are your community excellence group's CORE COMPETENCIES, and what is their relationship to its Mission?

The Core Competencies for our efforts is understanding a community based on an agriculture economy. The community is responsive and changes based on economic price fluctuations and changes in an agriculture environment.

P.2b (2) Challenges and Advantages. What are your community's Key STRATEGIC CHALLENGES and ADVANTAGES?

Challenges:

- ❖ Decreasing population
- ❖ Aging Population
- ❖ Attracting, recruiting, and retaining necessary qualified staff to a small rural community
- ❖ Agriculture Economy (dependent on changing prices and weather)
- ❖ Rapid technology growth – lack of fiber (Incredible infrastructure just outside the city, Fiber to the home is planned for the next 2-3)

Advantages:

- ❖ Leadership from all generations – Southwest Nebraska Leadership, Bartley Young Guns
- ❖ Wide array of offerings for residents
- ❖ Hub for trade and multiple job opportunities
- ❖ Environment for Value added agriculture entrants
- ❖ Natural Resources – close lakes for fishing/camping and opportunities for hunting
- ❖ Reputation for political history
- ❖ McCook Community College student base
- ❖ Community Service Groups – Optimists, Rotary, Lions, Habitat for Humanity
- ❖ Geography being a regional hub used more being 70 to 100 miles from larger cities

How do these challenges and advantages relate to your community excellence group's MISSION and VISION?

The introduction of Communities of Excellence to our community leaders has brought about a large number of possible initiatives. As we develop the four pillars, groups will be able to find their individual direction and identity within the broad framework.

P.2c Performance Improvement System

What are the KEY elements of the performance improvement system used by your community excellence group, including its PROCESSES for evaluating and improving Key projects and PROCESSES?

The pillars will be developing the chart, Figure P.2c-1 Resources, identifying the resources available to start evaluating Key projects and processes. As resources are evaluated the pillars will be able to evaluate the appropriateness and fit of future projects.

Figure P.2c – 1 Resources

