



Nebraska Thriving Index

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Outline

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2. A Tool for a Thriving Rural Future
3. Nebraska Regions & Comparison Regions
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5. Results by Region
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Project Contributors

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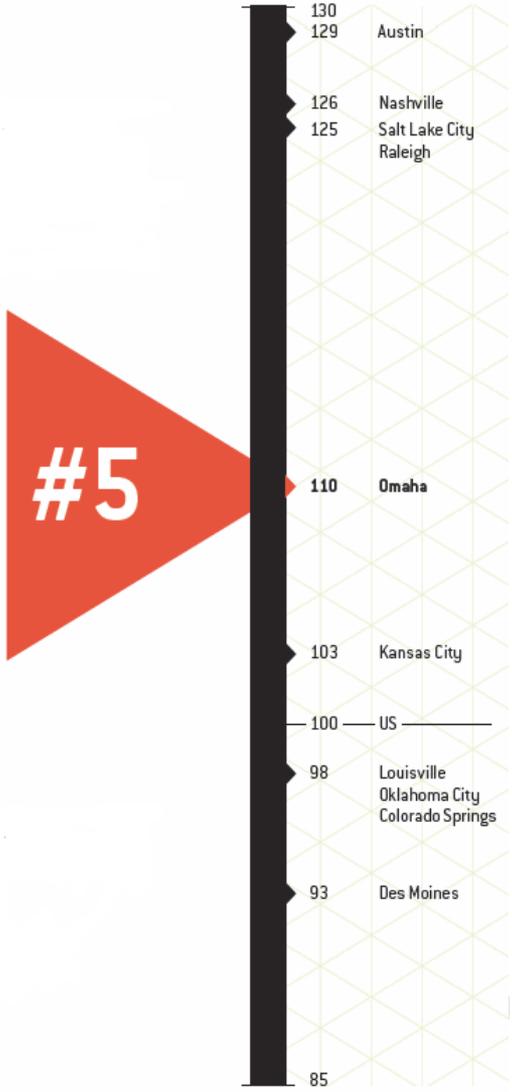
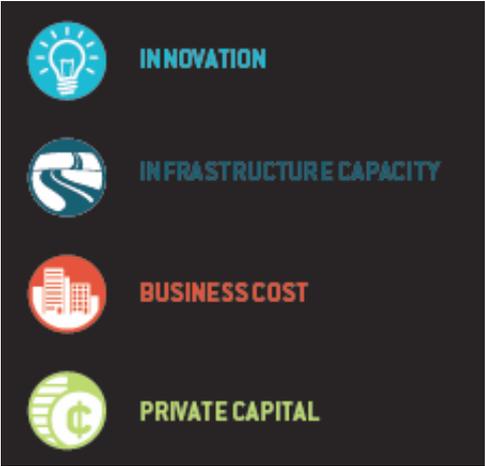
Aliese Hoffman, Assistant Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Rural Development, UNK

UNL Bureau Scholars (students)

UNK research assistant

Context – “The Barometer”

- An economic scorecard of the Omaha region
- Gauges eight key economic and performance-related areas



A Tool for a Thriving Rural Future

Nebraska Thriving Index

- **Purpose:** Benchmarking tool for the non-metropolitan and small metropolitan regions of Nebraska
 - Eight Nebraska regions are compared on economic and quality of life indicators with peer regions located around the northern Plains
- **Value:** Will help to identify areas of economic strength in Nebraska's regions and areas where Nebraska regions lag
 - Allows community and state leaders to develop future-focused strategies to build on regional advantages and address areas of concern

Nebraska Thriving Index

Compared according to three indexes of **economic prosperity**



Growth Index: Measures total employment growth, private employment, private wage growth, growth in households with children, and growth in dividend, interest and rent income (5 variables)



Economic Opportunity & Diversity Index: Measures entrepreneurial activity, industry diversity, occupation diversity and share of telecommuters (7 variables)



Other Prosperity Index: Measures non-farm proprietor personal income, total personal income stability, life span, percent in poverty and share of income from dividends, interest and rent (5 variables)

Nebraska Thriving Index

Compared according to five indexes of **economic conditions**



Demographic Growth & Renewal Index: Measures long-term population growth, dependency ratio, median age, millennial and Gen Z balance, and population diversity (6 variables)



Education & Skill Index: Measures high school and college education attainment, labor force participation and employment in knowledge-based occupations (4 variables)



Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business Index: Measures access to broadband, interstate highways and universities as well as wage rates, marginal tax rates and the presence of opportunity zones (6 variables)



Quality of Life Index: Measures the appeal of living and working in a region including commute times, housing, relative wages, public safety, climate and recreational amenities, access to health care, day care, parks, and arts and cultural activity (10 variables)

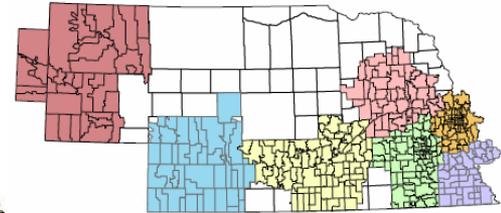
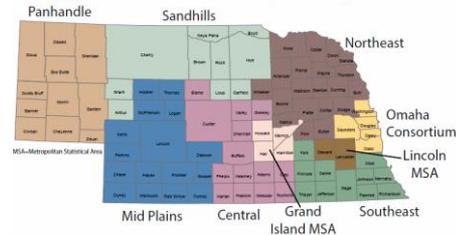


Social Capital Index: Measures involvement with volunteer organizations, programs to build the community environment, and voter participation (5 variables)

Thriving Index Regions & Comparison Regions

Nebraska Regions

- Selected in an iterative process which considered:
 - Nebraska Extension's Community Vitality Initiative Accountability Regions
 - Nebraska Economic Development Regions
 - Nebraska Economic Development Districts
 - Information from the Nebraska Department of Labor
 - Expertise of project participants



Nebraska Regions



North 81

Madison, Pierce, Platte and Stanton



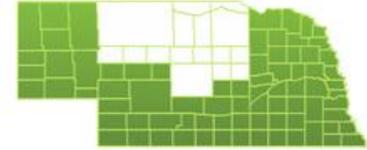
Northeast

Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dodge, Knox, Nance, Thurston and Wayne



Panhandle

Banner, Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Kimball, Morrill, Scottsbluff, Sheridan and Sioux



Sandhills

Blaine, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Custer, Garfield, Grant, Greeley, Holt, Hooker, Keya Paha, Loup, Rock, Thomas, Valley and Wheeler



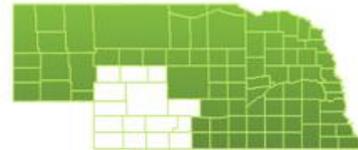
Siouxland

Dakota and Dixon



Southeast

Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Thayer and York



Southwest

Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins and Red Willow



Tri-Cities

Adams, Buffalo, Clay, Franklin, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman and Webster

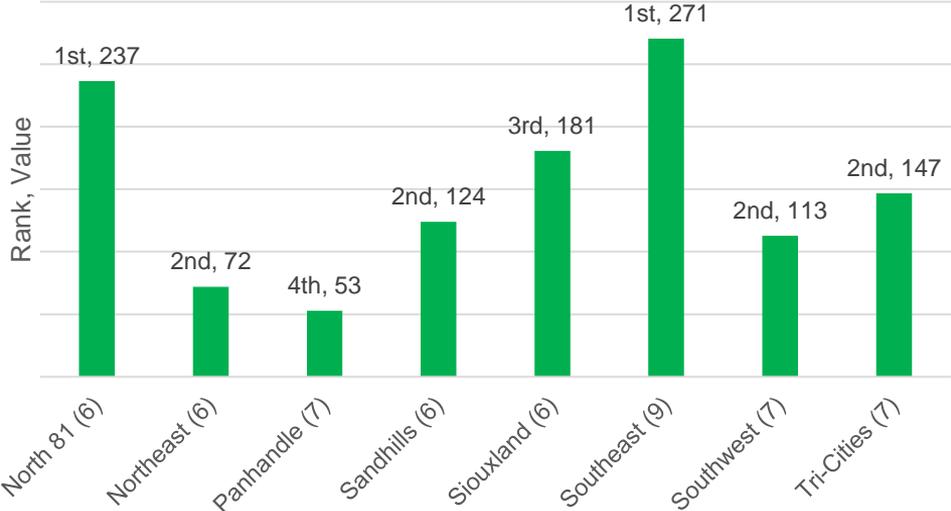
Note: Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, Saunders, Washington, Lancaster and Seward counties are not included in any of the eight regions

Comparison Regions

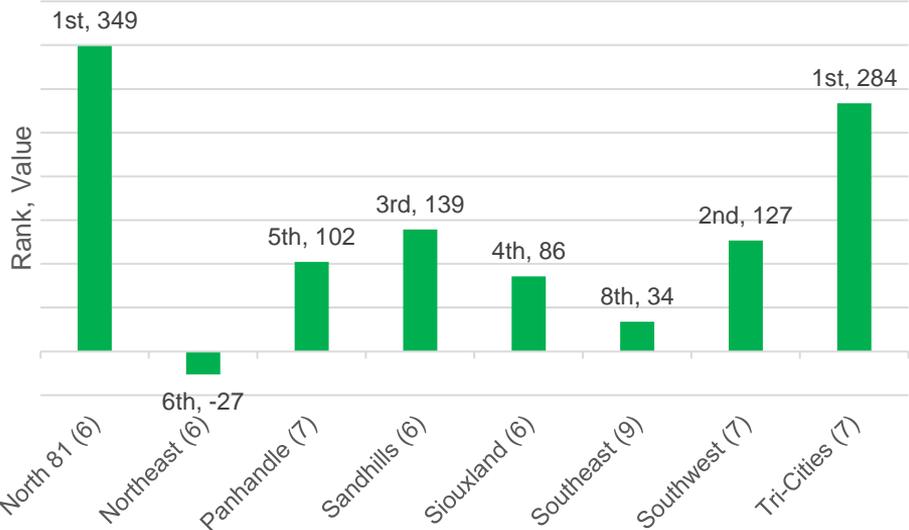
- Either other Nebraska regions or U.S. Economic Development Administration regions located in another northern Plains state:
 - Iowa, South Dakota, Kansas, Minnesota, (western) Illinois, (eastern) Colorado and (eastern) Wyoming
- Used the Mahalanobis matching technique to identify comparison regions based on the fundamental economic characteristics of the region:
 - **Total population**
 - **Economic structure:** farming share of income, ranching share of income, and manufacturing share of employment
 - **Urban orientation:** percent of population in a micropolitan area, distance to a small MSA (population <250,000) and distance to a large MSA (population > 250,000)

Results Related to Early Care

Growth in Households With Children



Day Care Providers Per Capita



Regional Results

Nebraska Thriving Index – Value & Rank within Peer Group



Interpreting an Index Value

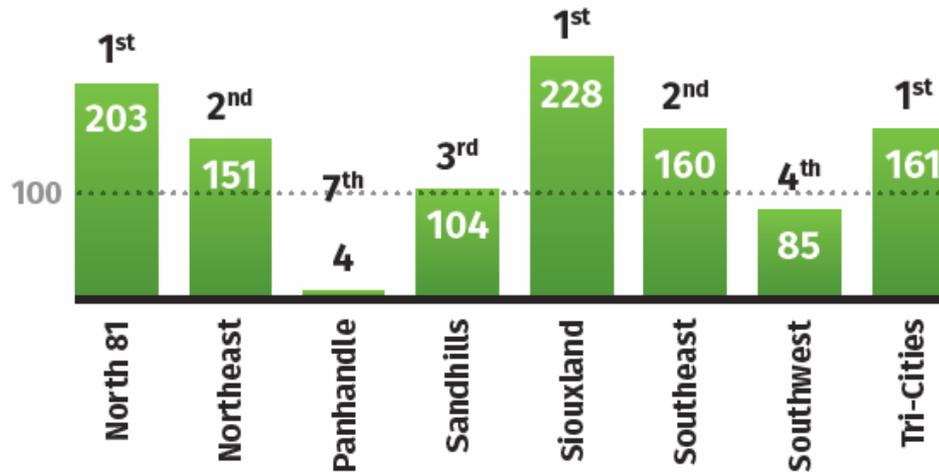
- 100 means that the Nebraska region is at the average value of its peers
- 0 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation behind its peers
- 200 means that a Nebraska region is one standard deviation ahead of its peers

Regional Patterns – Advantage #1



Economic Growth Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

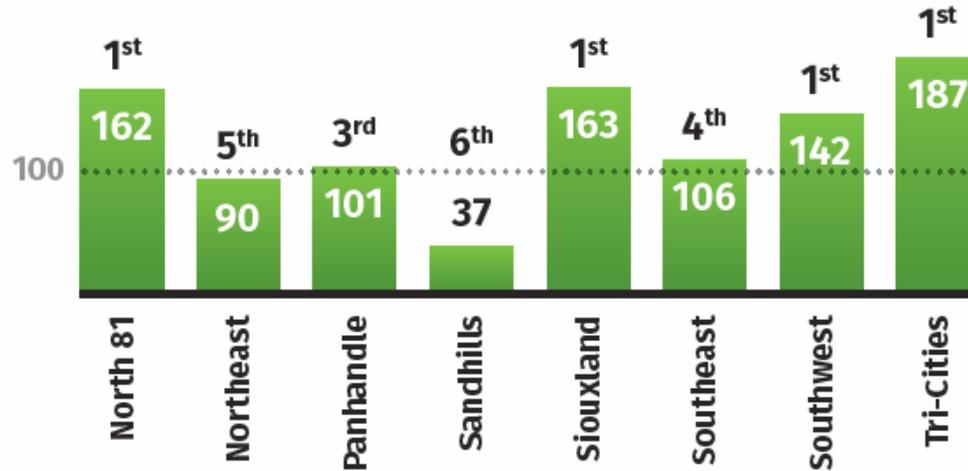


Regional Patterns – Advantage #2



Quality of Life Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

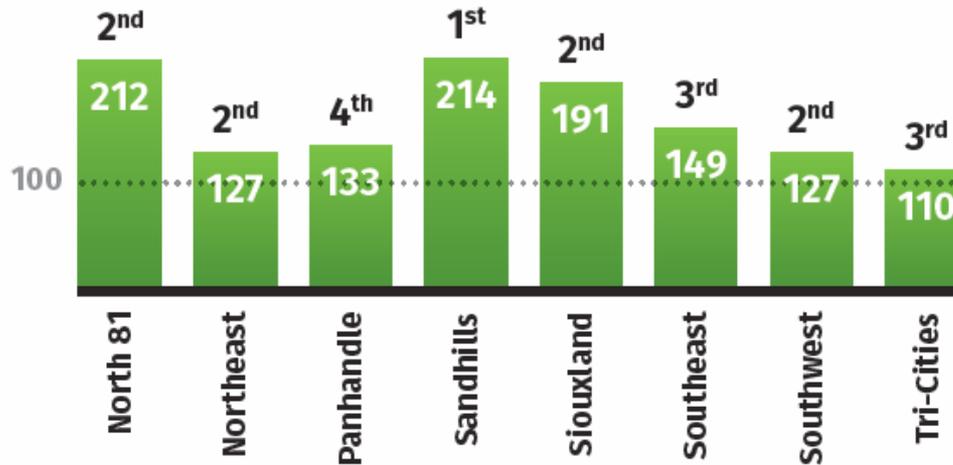


Regional Patterns – Advantage #3



Social Capital Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value

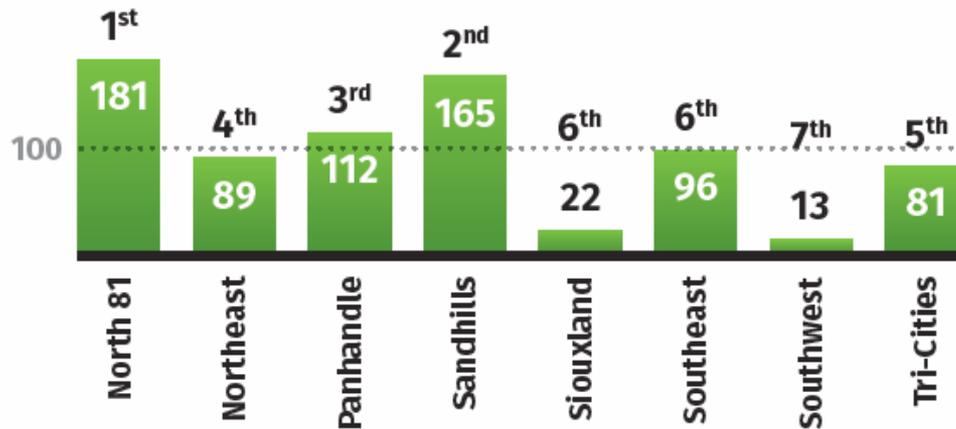


Regional Patterns – Concern



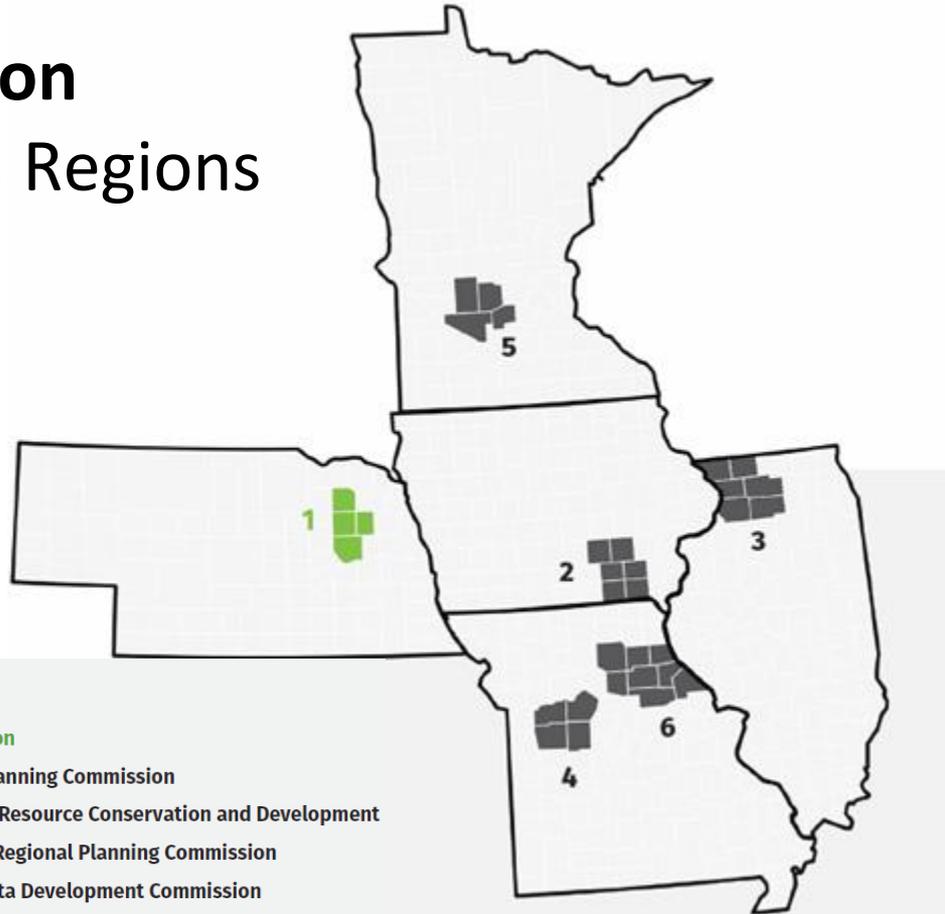
Education & Skill Index Rank by Region

Rank vs. Comparison Regions, Value



Results by Region: NORTH 81

North 81 Region & Comparison Regions

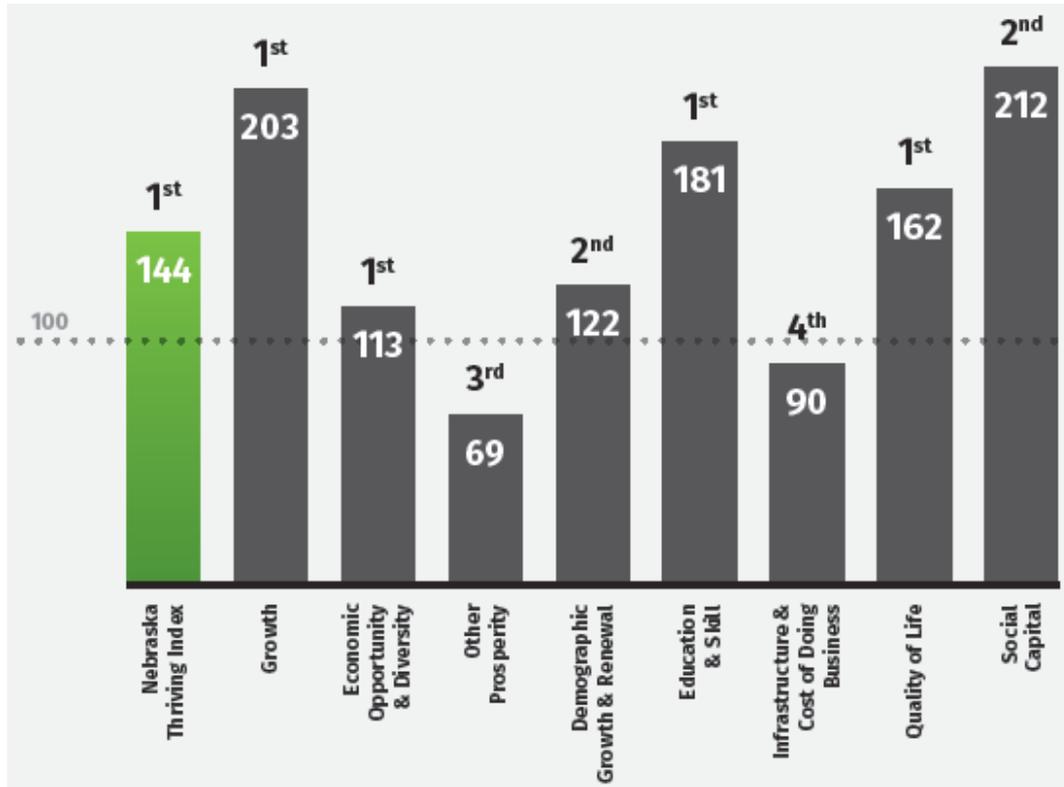


Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: North 81 Region
2. IOWA: Area 15 Regional Planning Commission
3. ILLINOIS: Blackhawk Hills Resource Conservation and Development
4. MISSOURI: Pioneer Trails Regional Planning Commission
5. MINNESOTA: Mid-Minnesota Development Commission
6. MISSOURI: Mark Twain Regional Council of Governments

North 81 Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value



Neb. Thriving Index: 144
Ranks 1st Among Peers

1st Growth

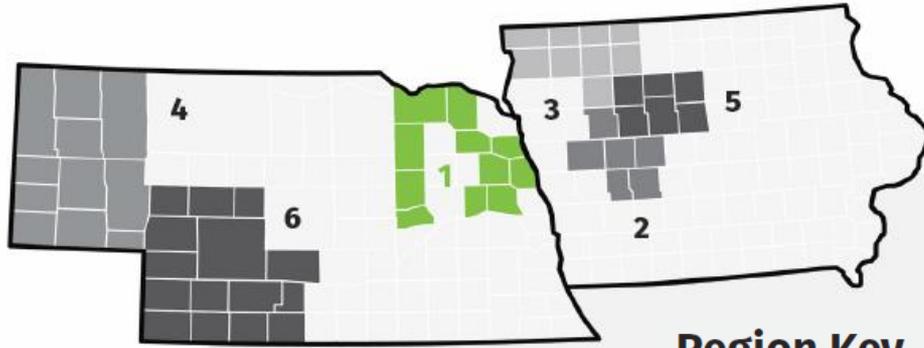
**1st Economic Opportunity
& Diversity**

1st Education & Skill

1st Quality of Life

Results by Region: NORTHEAST

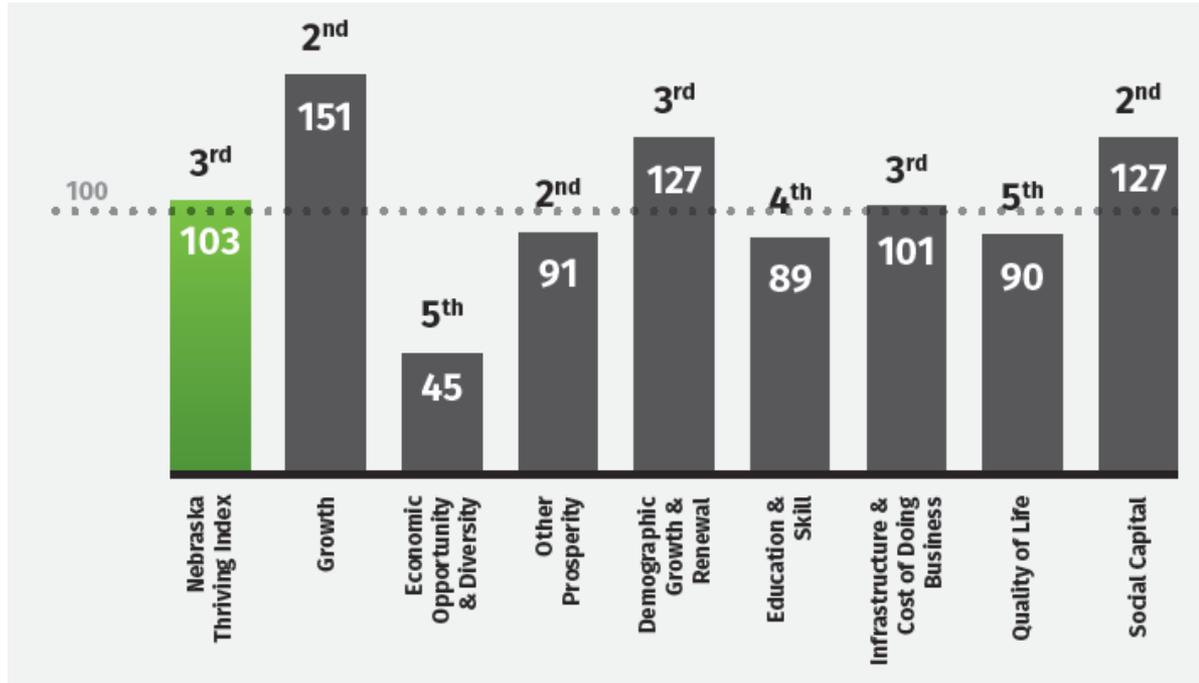
Northeast Region & Comparison Regions



Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: Northeast Region
2. IOWA: Region XII Council of Governments
3. IOWA: Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission
4. NEBRASKA: Panhandle Region
5. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association Council of Governments
6. NEBRASKA: Southwest Region

Northeast Region – Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value

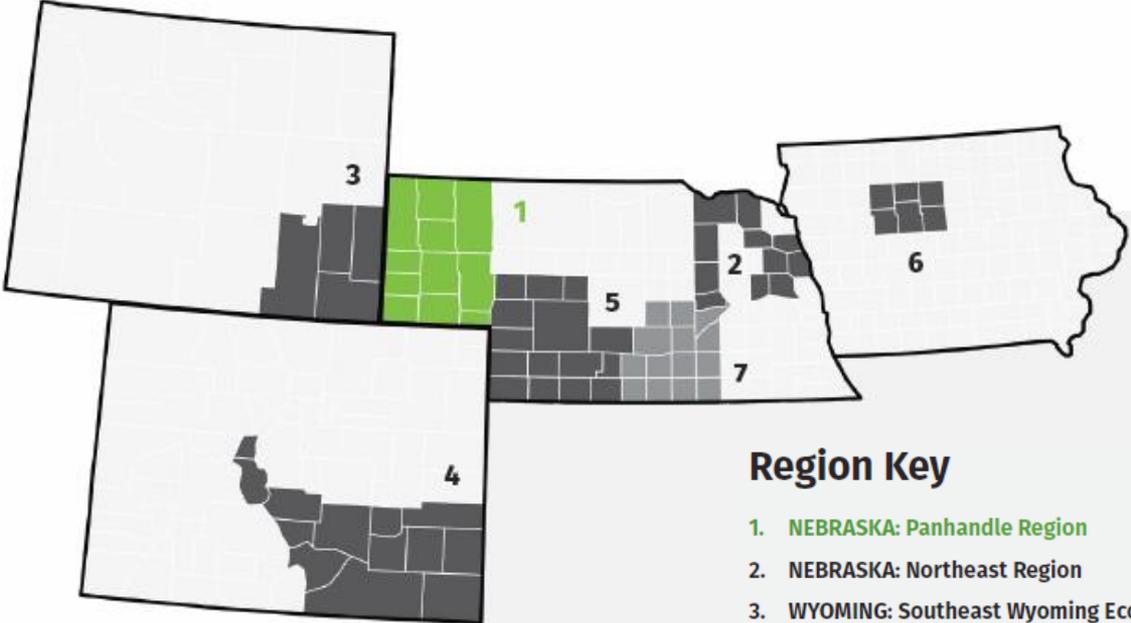


Neb. Thriving Index: 103
Ranks 3rd Among Peers

- 2nd Growth
- 2nd Social Capital
- 2nd Other Prosperity
- 3rd Demographic Growth & Renewal

Results by Region: PANHANDLE

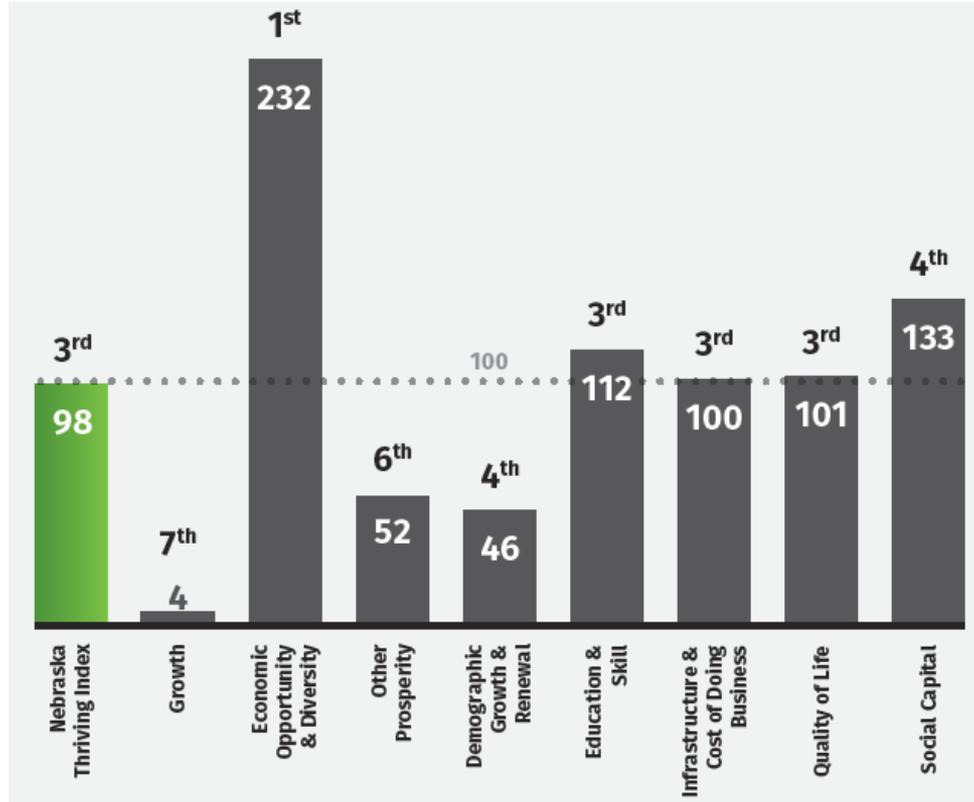
Panhandle Region & Comparison Regions



Region Key

- 1. NEBRASKA: Panhandle Region
- 2. NEBRASKA: Northeast Region
- 3. WYOMING: Southeast Wyoming Economic Development District
- 4. COLORADO: Southern Colorado Economic Development District
- 5. NEBRASKA: Southwest Region
- 6. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association Council of Governments
- 7. NEBRASKA: Tri-Cities Region

Panhandle Region – Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value

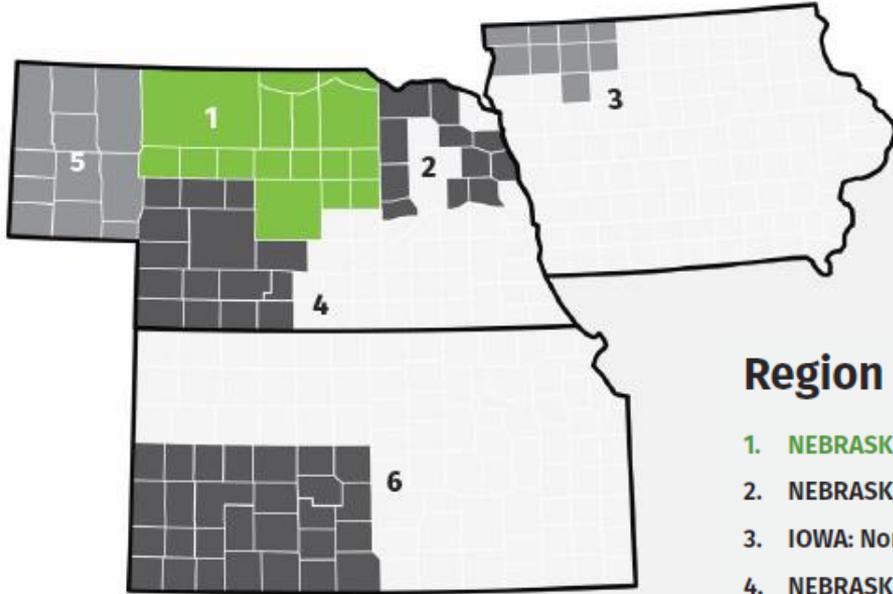


**Neb. Thriving Index: 98
Ranks 3rd Among Peers**

- 1st Economic Opportunity & Diversity**
- 3rd Education & Skill**
- 3rd Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business**
- 3rd Quality of Life**

Results by Region: SANDHILLS

Sandhills Region & Comparison Regions

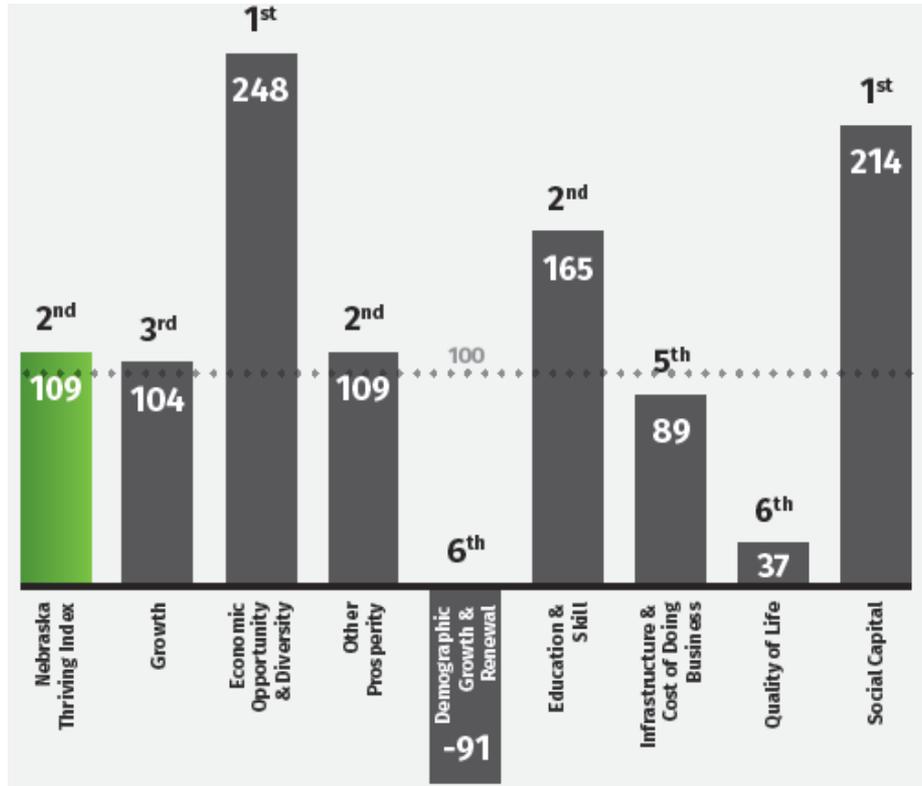


Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: Sandhills Region
2. NEBRASKA: Northeast Region
3. IOWA: Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission
4. NEBRASKA: Southwest Region
5. NEBRASKA: Panhandle Region
6. KANSAS: Great Plains Development Inc.

Sandhills Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value

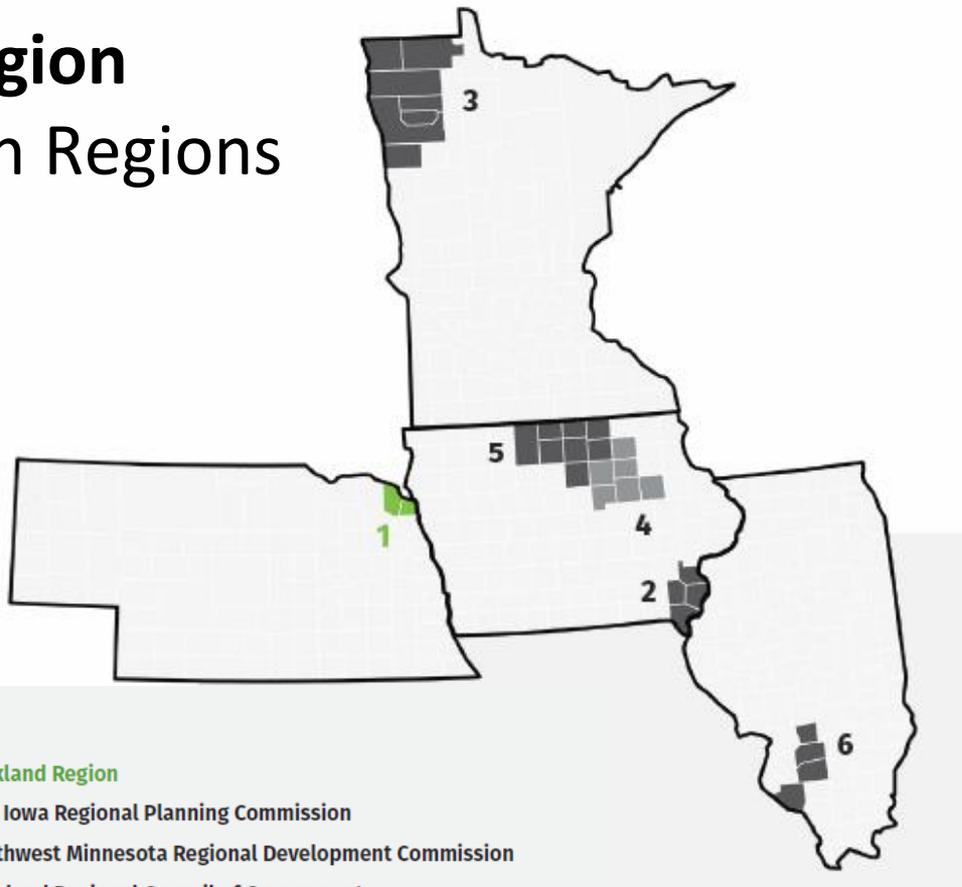


Neb. Thriving Index: 109
Ranks 2nd Among Peers

- 1st Social Capital
- 1st Economic Opportunity & Diversity
- 2nd Education & Skill
- 2nd Other Prosperity

Results by Region: SIOUXLAND

Siouxland Region & Comparison Regions

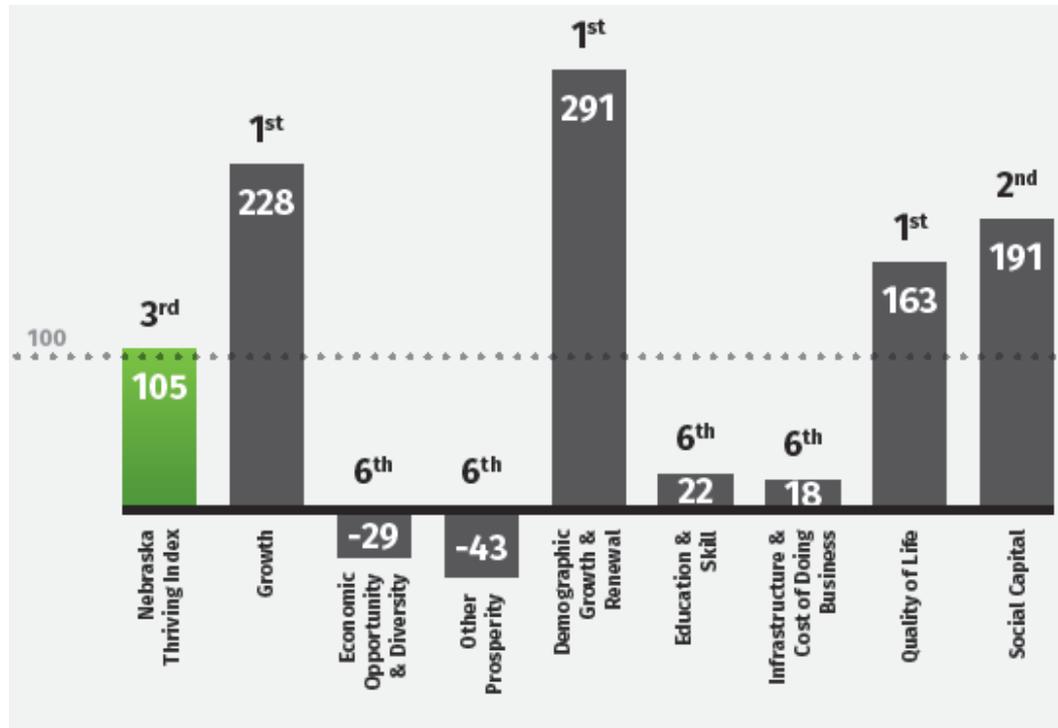


Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: Siouxland Region
2. IOWA: Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission
3. MINNESOTA: Northwest Minnesota Regional Development Commission
4. IOWA: Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments
5. IOWA: North Iowa Area Council of Governments
6. ILLINOIS: Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan & Regional Planning Commission

Siouxland Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value

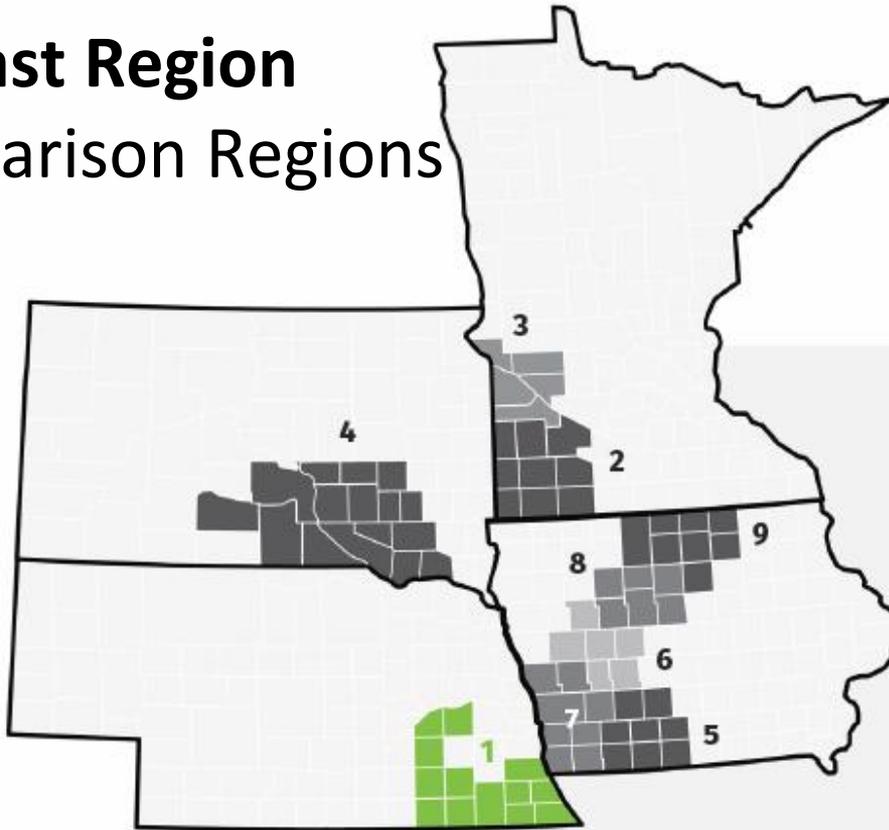


Neb. Thriving Index: 105
Ranks 3rd Among Peers

- 1st Demographic Growth & Renewal
- 1st Growth
- 1st Quality of Life
- 2nd Social Capital

Results by Region: SOUTHEAST

Southeast Region & Comparison Regions

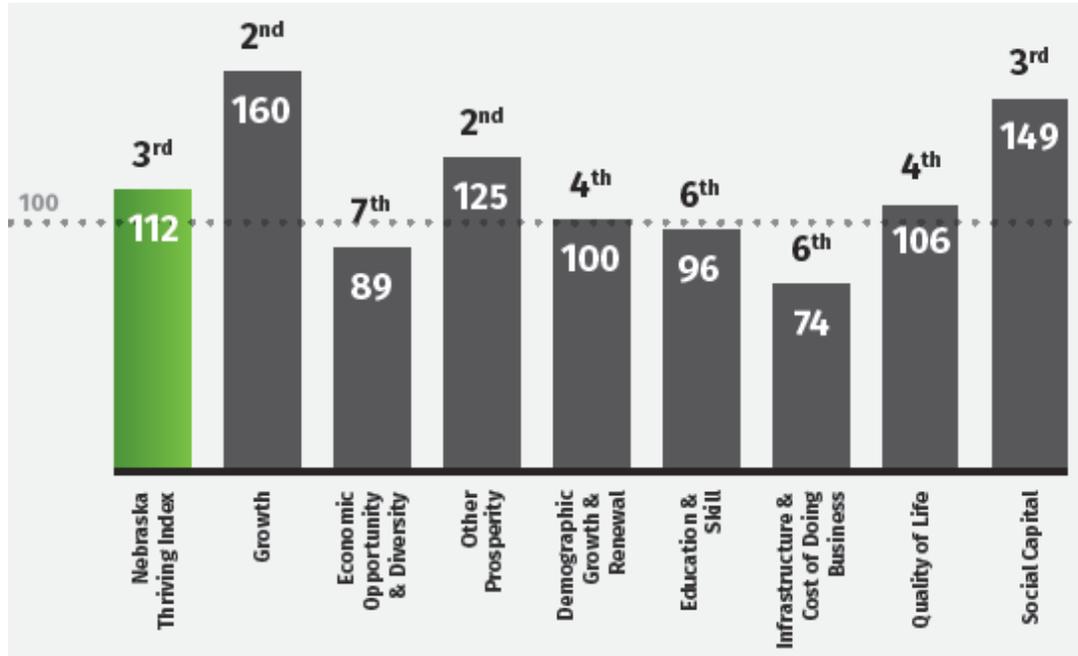


Region Key

1. **NEBRASKA:** Southeast Region
2. **MINNESOTA:** Southwest Regional Development Commission
3. **MINNESOTA:** Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission
4. **SOUTH DAKOTA:** Planning & Development District III
5. **IOWA:** Southern Iowa Council of Governments
6. **IOWA:** Region XII Council of Governments
7. **IOWA:** Southwest Iowa Planning Council
8. **IOWA:** Mid-Iowa Development Association Council of Governments
9. **IOWA:** North Iowa Area Council of Governments

Southeast Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value



Neb. Thriving Index: 112
Ranks 3rd Among Peers

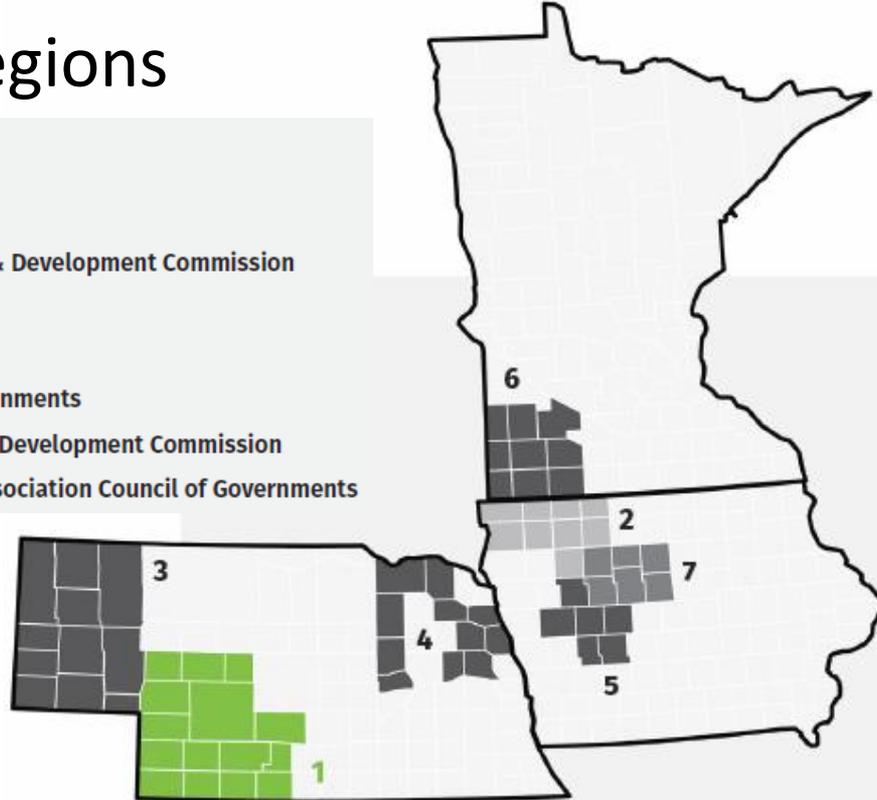
- 2nd Growth
- 2nd Other Prosperity
- 3rd Social Capital

Results by Region: SOUTHWEST

Southwest Region & Comparison Regions

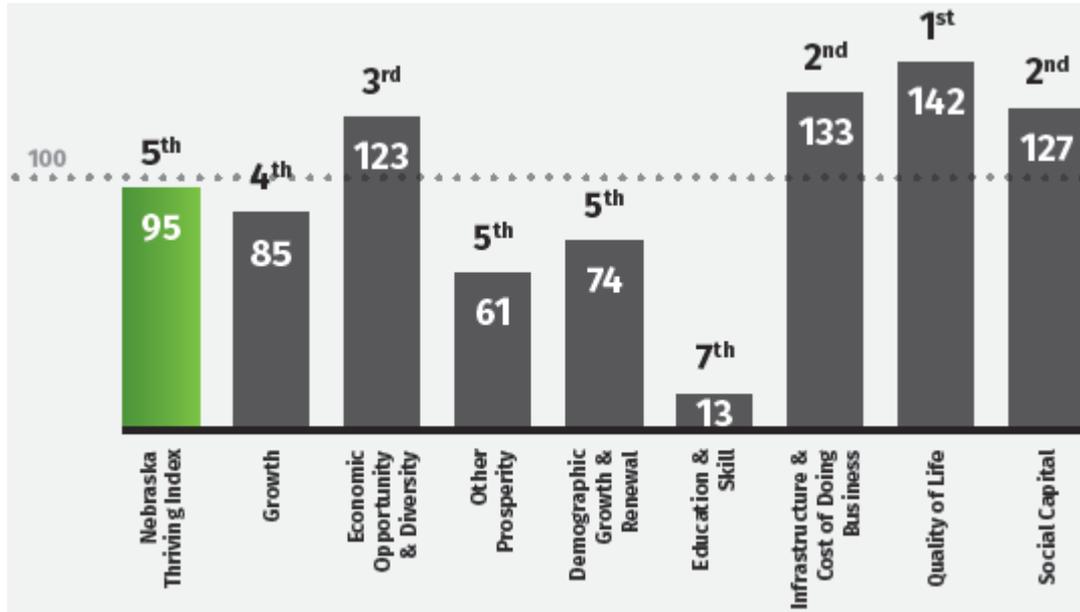
Region Key

1. NEBRASKA: Southwest Region
2. IOWA: Northwest Iowa Planning & Development Commission
3. NEBRASKA: Panhandle Region
4. NEBRASKA: Northeast Region
5. IOWA: Region XII Council of Governments
6. MINNESOTA: Southwest Regional Development Commission
7. IOWA: Mid-Iowa Development Association Council of Governments



Southwest Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value

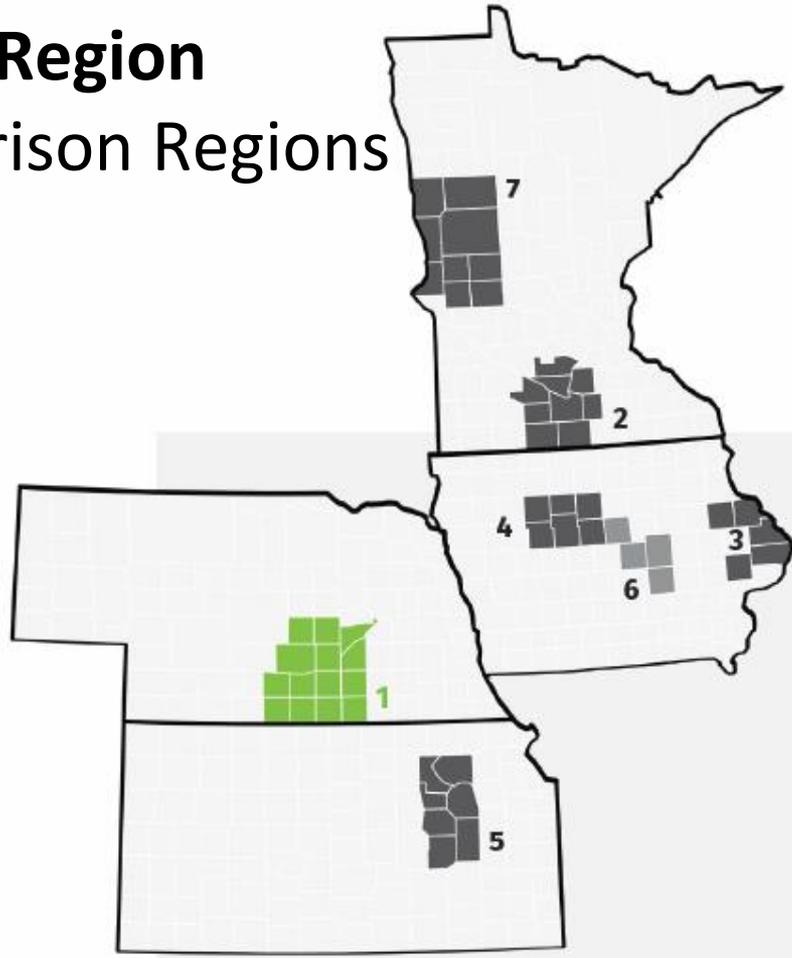


Neb. Thriving Index: 95
Ranks 5th Among Peers

- 1st Quality of Life
- 2nd Social Capital
- 2nd Infrastructure & Cost of Doing Business

Results by Region: TRI-CITIES

Tri-Cities Region & Comparison Regions

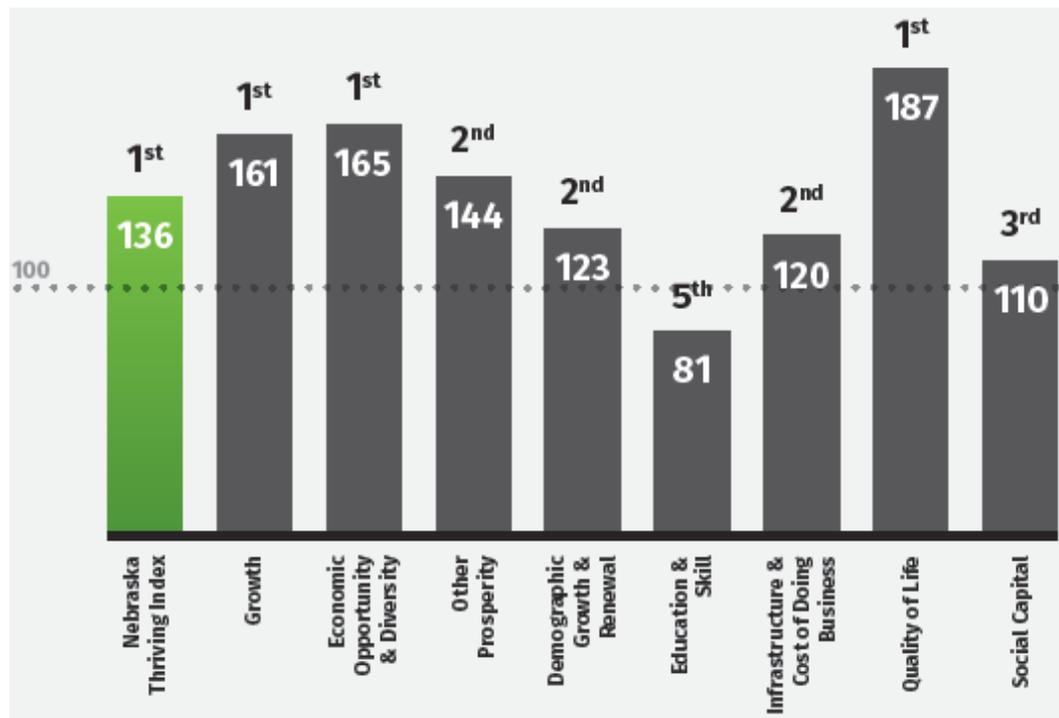


Region Key

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: Flint Hills Economic Development District
6. IOWA: Region 6 Planning Commission
7. MINNESOTA: Minnesota West Central Initiative

Tri-Cities Region –

Nebraska Thriving Index & Component Index Rank & Value



Neb. Thriving Index: 136
Ranks 1st Among Peers

- 1st Growth
- 1st Economic Opportunity & Diversity
- 1st Quality of Life

Nebraska Thriving Index – Summary

Uses

- **Benchmarking:** To help identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the region
- **Prioritization:** To help identify areas that are important and urgent from those that are important but less urgent
- **Data/Evidence:** To help motivate/justify current and/or sought after initiatives (e.g., targeted recruitment of tech workers)
- **Evaluation:** Could be used as direct measures to evaluate the effectiveness of strategic goals/objectives

Question?

- Website: ruralfutures.nebraska.edu/nethrivingindex
 - Where you can find the Nebraska Thriving Index data
 - Where you can share feedback with us and find our upcoming in-person presentations and webinars