

## In the Heart of North America

An Interview with Tim Cowden, President and Chief Executive Officer, Kansas City Area Development Council (KCADC)

**EDITORS' NOTE** Tim Cowden has spent nearly 30 years in economic development. Before assuming his current role, he served as KCADC's Senior Vice President of Business Development for more than 17 years. Prior to his position at KCADC, he worked for the Economic Development Corporation of Utah, a private/public corporate recruitment organization representing the State of Utah based in Salt Lake City. Cowden holds a BA degree from the University of Oklahoma.



Tim Cowden

**INSTITUTION BRIEF** Kansas City Area Development Council ([thinkKC.com](http://thinkKC.com)) is a private, nonprofit organization charged with representing the economic interests of the two-state (Missouri and Kansas), 18-county greater Kansas City region with a population of 2.5 million.

### How do you define the mission of the Kansas City Area Development Council?

I'm fortunate in that I have the best job in Kansas City, leading the KCADC team to sell this amazing place to the world every day. In a highly competitive

marketplace, we engage business and talent from around the globe to invest in our region, and we've seen plenty of success – over our 40-plus year history, the 18-county, two-state Kansas City area has attracted more than 60,000 new jobs.

We have the privilege of KC being our product, and through our strategic initiatives – the KC Animal Health Corridor, KC SmartPort, TeamKC, KC Heartland and KC Global Design – alongside our 50-plus community and business partners, we work continuously to promote the benefits of living

and doing business in Kansas City.

### Will you provide an overview of the services that the Kansas City Area Development Council offers?

KCADC and our team serves as a vital connecting point for companies and individuals who are evaluating the KC region to establish or grow their lives, careers and companies. Our value is determined by our customers, and our job is to identify whatever information gaps they have when evaluating the KC region against other markets globally and showcase our region's assets

as a prime location for growing businesses and top talent.

### What do you tell companies about the advantages that Kansas City offers from a business standpoint?

KC is an easy place to do business. With steady population growth, access to a highly educated workforce and lower cost of living, KC offers significant value to companies and individuals evaluating our market. KC's location in the heart of North America is unparalleled for a major market, and our size allows those who are based here to leverage the very best of large market amenities, as well as the value and quality often associated with smaller cities. KC epitomizes that the best is in the middle.

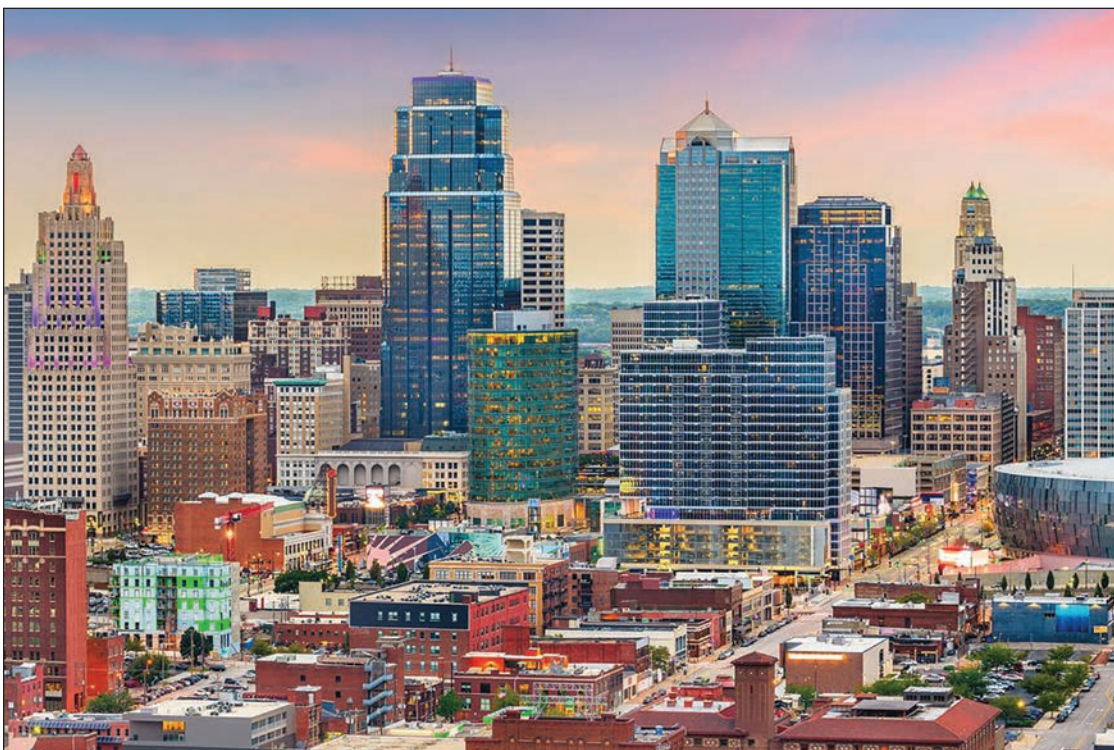
KC is on the move with tremendous market opportunities, as well. Our new single-terminal airport, opening in Spring 2023, will make access to and from KC easier than ever before, further energizing our established and emerging industries booming throughout the region, including bioscience, food and beverage manufacturing, fintech, construction, and more.

### How important is it to have such an engaged and committed board of directors for the Kansas City Area Development Council?

It is critical for the business leaders of Kansas City to have an active role in the future growth of our region. KCADC's role as a sales and marketing engine for KC is an excellent entry point for business executives to have influence and provide leadership in our community. There's nothing more important to any company than the prospects for their own growth and by extension, these leaders know that the region in which they operate or are based must also grow. There's no better platform for them to contribute to that overall success for KC than KCADC.

### What are your priorities for the Kansas City Area Development Council as you look to the future?

My priority for the future of KCADC is to elevate KC's national brand to the highest degree possible, ensuring that our region takes advantage of our unique position to attract high-value companies and talent to the region. We will continue to attract mega-projects such as Meta's new \$800 million hyperscale data center, while continuing to support our legacy industries that represent strategic investment from years past and are paying dividends now. I am extremely bullish on our region's future and our team's ability to meet the ever-growing interest of businesses and talent evaluating Kansas City. ●



Kansas City Area Development Council represents the economic development interests of the 18-county, two-state KC region