



S *State of the County* *C*

Year Ending 2004
Clay County, Missouri

February 17, 2005

Clay County Commission

Carol McCaslin, Presiding Commissioner
Craig Porter, Eastern Commissioner
Larry Larson, Western Commissioner

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I Inside

A message from the County Administrator	3
Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites	4
Highway Department.....	8
Clay County Regional Airport	9
Community Relations	10
Planning & Zoning.....	12
Facilities Management.....	14
Information Technology.....	15
Purchasing.....	16
Human Resources	18
Elected Offices	20
Acknowledgments	24

A message from the County Administrator



To the Citizens of Clay County:

On behalf of the Clay County Commission, I am pleased to present the written State of the County report for the year ending 2004.

Clay County experienced a challenging year highlighted by some very positive capital improvements.

Several notable enhancements included the cutting and graveling of the second 5-mile section of picturesque at Smithville Lake, the asphaltting of the first six miles of trails and an additional three-mile section bringing the total to 14 miles. Newly installed boat docks, including 69 covered boat slips, at Paradise Pointe Marina were also dedicated in 2004. In addition, the construction of an expanded public golf clubhouse with available seating up to 225 at Paradise Pointe Golf Complex will make more services available at the 40-hole facility. Clay County also began the first phase installation of a new Voice-over Internet Protocol Telephone System in satellite locations including the Clay County Annex.

The abundance of quality of life programs and amenities in Clay County produces a superior standard of living for our citizens. Our regional Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Department offers a wide variety of cultural and leisure activities such as museums, golf, fishing, camping, boating and hiking, further adding to the high quality of life Clay Countians enjoy. Citizens can look forward to a variety of activities in Clay County, with new prairie grasslands, the Ultramax Triathlon, and innovative educational and interpretive programs developed for youth, citizens and the general public.

In an effort to maintain the superb quality of life, Clay County continues to develop in accordance with its comprehensive plan. Planning and Zoning efforts foster a

systematic tiered approach to sound land-use planning and development in the rural areas as illustrated in the Land Development Code. The County is also dedicated to the continual maintenance, repair and construction of the roads and bridges serving the unincorporated areas. These improvements to Clay County rural roads benefit all citizens as well as area visitors.

Moving forward to meet the challenges of a growing community brings Clay County face to face with immediate objectives in 2005 including the remodeling of the former Camp Branch Marina Restaurant into a new Park Headquarters, the construction of two new bath houses that will also serve as storm shelters, the continuation of trails construction at Smithville Lake and the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of County assets. As Clay County strives to reach its aspirations, it is confronted with stagnant sales tax revenues and increasing funds diverted to Tax Increment Financed plans within Clay County which limit the capital available to achieve our goals.

As Clay County moves toward a milestone population of 200,000, expected in July 2005, the Clay County Commission embraces a commitment to meet the needs of our community as it continues to grow. It is our hope this growth and its anticipated economic expansion will bring greater resources to Clay County as we endeavor to better serve our citizens in years to come. To learn more about Clay County, I invite you to visit our website at www.claycogov.com.

These are but a few reasons to validate why we are pleased to be working and living in Clay County. Sincere appreciation is extended to the citizens of Clay County, the County Commission, Officeholders, and our dedicated professional employees working together for a better Clay County.

Sincerely,

Gary Panethiere

Gary Panethiere, CPA
Clay County Administrator

Parks, Recreation & Historic Sites

The Clay County Parks, Recreation & Historic Sites Department, with the assistance and guidance of the Clay County Commission and Clay County Park Board, is committed to the operation and maintenance of the existing park systems as wholesome, family-oriented, multipurpose, recreational facilities in accordance with the leisure time interest of the public. In addition, the Park Department will acquire, operate and manage parks, facilities and historic sites that command regional interest or possess unique significance, and preserve our heritage through acquisition, development and management of historic sites.

Pathways to Clay County Trails

In 1998, a grass roots effort began to bring a trails system to the Kansas City Northland. Clay and Platte counties came together with the Northland Trails Vision Plan. Fourteen miles of trails have since been constructed at Smithville Lake in accordance with the first phase of this plan. These trails have already been a positive source of enjoyment for park patrons. In 2004, approximately \$598,690 in Use Tax funds was spent on trails at Smithville Lake. Trail progress in 2004 included:



- Cut and graveled of five miles of trails from Sailboat Cove north to W Highway
- Asphalted of the first six-mile section from Camp Branch Marina to Sailboat Cove, completed in 2003.
- Cut and graveled a three-mile section that connects Camp Branch to Crows Creek.
- Planning of another six miles of trails to wind through both campgrounds and the Crow's Creek picnic arm.
- Acceptance of a trails grant award from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources totaling \$91,989. Grant funds will be used to purchase, crush and run rock as well as some minor equipment.

The trails crew has been praised for their work, and the Clay County Highway Department has been instrumental in assisting with the trails project when needed.

Paradise Pointe Golf Complex

Paradise Pointe Golf Complex provides a high quality golf experience to the general public through its two 18-hole courses, 4-hole academy and driving range while maximizing the customer's golfing value with fair, competitive pricing.

2004 Golf Activities

A new \$1 million golf clubhouse expansion project began in May and was nearly complete by years end. This new facility is expected to increase tournaments and special events at Paradise Pointe. Conversely, golf rounds at courses throughout the area remained even after severe reductions the past three years. Paradise Pointe followed the area wide trend; two major factors affecting golf play are the state of the economy and competition from six new courses in the northland in recent years. Despite fewer rounds, Paradise Pointe has continued to be attractive to golfers as a well maintained complex with superior course conditions.

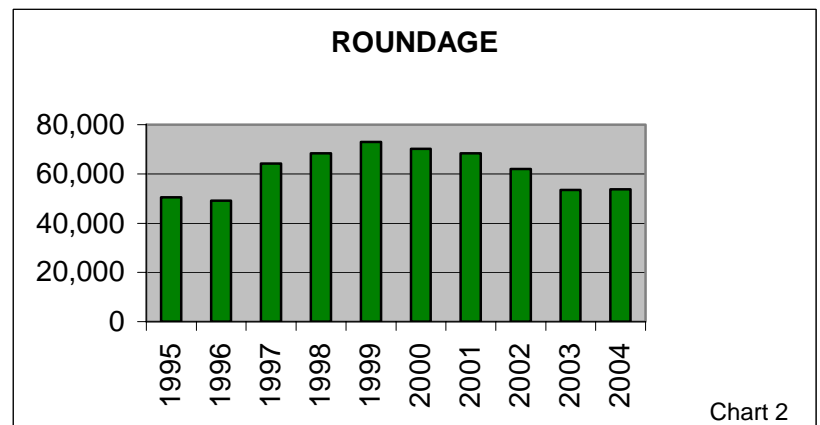
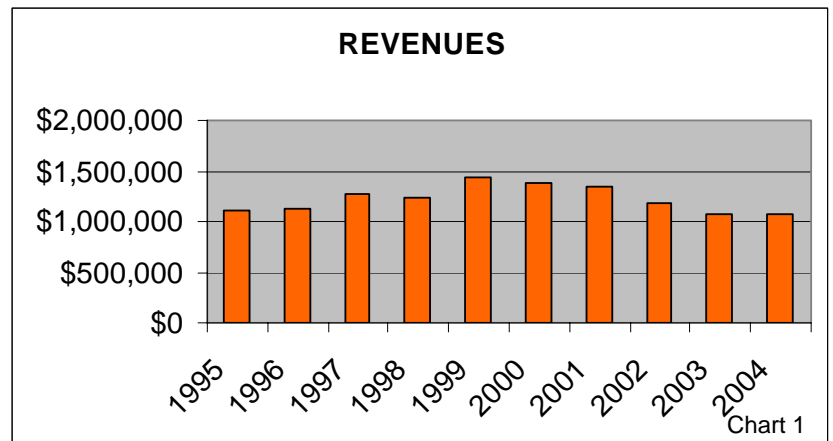
Clubhouse Expansion

The newly expanded Paradise Pointe Clubhouse with seating for up to 225 opened with its first event in December 2004. The renovation and expansion provides a more spacious and efficient pro shop, tournament/banquet facility and enhanced level of amenities that will help retain and attract customers, as well as provide for other events.

Golf Complex Statistics. As competition moves northward with the construction of new golf courses, staff will be assessing financially feasible methods of improving the Complex while delivering a quality product at a fair price to the public. Six new courses in the northland have had a definite impact on the play at Paradise Pointe. Charts 1 and 2 compare revenue and roundage since 1995.

Pro Shop. For the 10 years, Paradise Pointe Golf Complex Pro Shop has been the only public golf shop named one of the Top 100 Pro Shops in the U.S. by Golf Digest. The Pro Shop was also ranked as one of the Top 25 Public Facilities nationwide and made the All Time Honors List.

Tournament Services. The pro shop handles tournament services and all the details for an organization scheduling an outing. Two major tournaments, North Kansas City Hospital and the Spelman Classic, depend on the services of Paradise Pointe for a successful event. These tournaments are the largest events at Paradise Pointe. Other events, including the Henderson Engineering, KCGA



Juniors Tournament, Plantation Juniors Golf Tour and RIMS (Risk Insurance Management Society) call Paradise Pointe home.

Course Improvements. Reconstruction of the sand traps on the Posse course continued through June. Reconstructed bunkers in 2004 included 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17 & 18. Landscaping at the expanded clubhouse will finish that project in the spring of to 2005.

Ranger Division -- A Range of Success

The Clay County Park Ranger Division completed a year of many activities ranging from enforcement issues to the presentation of numerous interpretive programs. Clay County is fortunate to have a Park Ranger staff able to shift from Law Enforcement to park ambassador or naturalist interpreters numerous times in the same work day, a feat that is both challenging and satisfying. Major activity highlights include:

- **Rangers for Youth (RFY).** Park Rangers presented interpretive programs to 800 disadvantaged youth, scouts and other youth in 2004. Introducing a child to outdoor recreation, the sport of fishing or the natural beauty on a hike provides its own reward to Clay County Park Rangers.
- **RFY Cabin Upgrade.** An effort by Concerned Citizens for the RFY program has helped through donation to upgrade the RFY cabin area. Additional amenities include a sleeping quarters, men's and women's restroom and a class room/dining hall. Groups making donations are the Fox 4 Love Fund for Children, Variform of Kearney, and Bill Geiger, owner of Geiger Ready Mix.
- **Native Prairie Grass program.** A plan was formulated to re-establish the prairie environment starting with 26 acres. Another 100 acres is designated for the plan in 2005. The entire program will encompass over 1,100 acres in the long-term. An agency focus group, including Missouri Department of Conservation, Quails Unlimited, Prairie Foundation and Turkey Foundation and others will be established to work together to make the program a success.

Park Revenue

Annual park system revenue in 2004 totaled more than \$5 million. Two full-time employees work to facilitate and account for these funds. In addition, an average of 28 part-time staff attends to fee collection locations, throughout the Park system. Park revenue is generated through fees collected for services at the marinas, golf complex, historic sites and other sources.



On the Water Front

Three marinas on Smithville Lake are available for patron use. Each received its share of improvements in 2004. Highlights include:

Paradise Pointe Marina.

This outstanding facility includes eight season rental docks (four of which are new) that provide 238 covered rental slips and 29 slips on the 300-foot breakwater. The breakwater aids in



protecting the docks from strong wave action. In 2004, additional work included maintenance and improvements the installation of electrical power for new docks, the installation of encapsulated flotation for two docks and repairs to damage caused by two major wind storms.

Camp Branch Marina.

With some foam replacement made in 2004, Camp Branch Marina is in excellent condition. This facility includes 212 slips for seasonal rental, and approximately 24 courtesy slips for overnight use and the rental fleet.

Sailboat Cove. This facility built specifically for sailboats consists of 72 rental slips and 40 moorings. Plans in 2005 include the replacement of one dock. With this dock replacement, Sailboat Cove will be a first-rate facility.

Park System Care and Upkeep

The Operations Division maintains the park system and its facilities. Its duties also include preparation for major events at Smithville Lake. The division also maintains seven lift stations and five waste treatment lagoons. Fifteen buildings, including several on the National Register of Historic Places, are among the facilities maintained by division employees. The division also maintains approximately 21 miles of road within park boundaries. Major 2004 activities included:

Major Projects

New Park Offices. Completed interior demolition of the former Camp Branch Marina restaurant; completed new framing, HVAC, plumbing and electrical work.

Clubhouse Basement. Completed excavation of basement, certain interior and exterior work and items not included in the building expansion contract, for Paradise Pointe Golf Complex Clubhouse expansion.

Historic Sites

Clay County Historic Sites provides operations and programming for the Jesse James Museum, Jesse James Bank Museum, Mt. Gilead Church & School and the Donald C. Pharis Farm. Notable 2004 programs and activities include:

Jesse James Historic Sites

- *Woe to the Governors:* A special James Farm exhibit
- Western Writers Workshop and Friends of the James Farm annual meeting
- 3 black powder events by Friends of the James Farm
- Historic Re-enactors at both museums
- 6 book signings by noted authors
- 1930s kitchen added to the James Farm tour
- POS system installed at both the farm and bank museum

Historic Mt. Gilead

- Two Lincoln presentations at Mt. Gilead Church
- Spring Ladies Tea and a new Fall Tea

Pharis Farm

- 1940s Christmas at the Pharis Farm special event

Other Activities

- Three separate filmmakers utilized Clay County Historic Sites for documentaries on Jesse James
- Historic Sites staff made application for a Conservation Assessment Program grant to assist with archiving of historic paper documents
- Presented 15 interpretive off site visits to various groups interested in Jesse James and Clay County history

Major Events

- **Ultramax Triathlon.** In 2004, this statewide event relocated to Smithville Lake, a site appealing to planners of this and other similar events in part because of its new trail system. The three-part race drew approximately 1,500 participants and visitors.
- **Society for Creative Anachronism.** The SAC War of the Lilies, a nine-day event attracted 2,000 people to the Kelsey Short. Provided preparation, event support and cleaned-up due to age.

Major Maintenance:

- **Navigational Buoys.** Replaced and reset navigational buoys three separate times at various Smithville Lake locations.
- **Crows Creek Campground.** Replaced 30 electric pedestals with the expectation to be replacing many more in next few years due to age.
- **James Cabin.** Repaired three damaged walls and replaced the tongue-and-groove kitchen flooring; re-sided the two exterior walls; and painted the entire cabin.
- **Pharis Farm.** Installed new utilities; removed back porch; built a new wagon shed; and chinked Cabin building.

Highway Department

The Highway Department is responsible for the construction, maintenance, and repair of over 375 miles of roads, 67 bridges and their associated right-of-ways in unincorporated Clay County. The goal of the Highway Department is to increase the quality, stability and longevity of these roads and bridges and to meet the changing demands created by rapid growth in the County. Additionally, the Department maintains and repairs the equipment needed to carry out these responsibilities

Roadway Improvements

Improving the quality and stability of hard-surface roads continued to be a top priority in 2004; 60 miles were resurfaced with chip seal and 11.5 miles were resurfaced with asphalt. Use Tax funds totaling \$400,500 were expended for the asphalt resurfacing. Other highlights included:

112th Street Bridge. At Fishing River near Excelsior Springs. Completed and opened in August at cost of \$526,644 using a combination of federal and county funding.

Snow and Ice. More than 4,000 man hours and 3,900 tons of sand/salt mixture were spent clearing snow and ice from County roads during eight winter storms.

County Right-of-Ways. Mowed and cut back trees and brush along county highway right-of-ways for extended sight distances and improved public safety. 1,100 work hours spent clearing trash and debris from the sides of County roads.

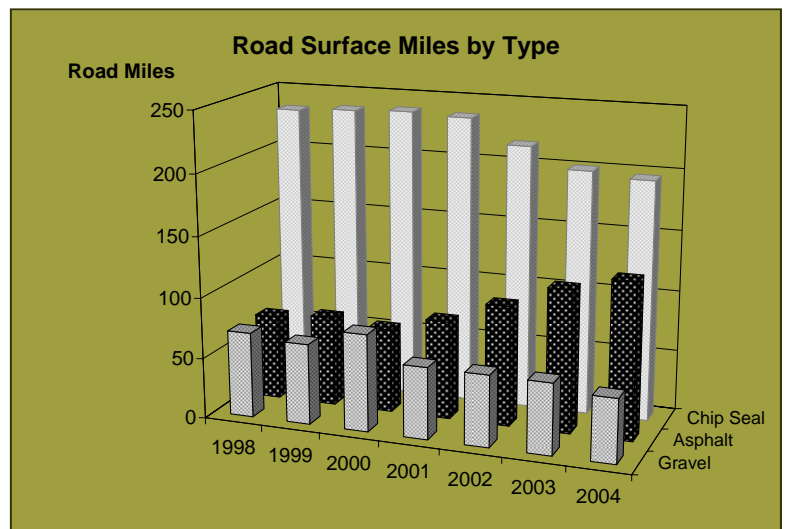
Trails and Airport Assistance. 1,400 work hours utilized assisting the Smithville Lake Trails project hauling rock. 450 work hours spent preparing for a new hangar construction at the Clay County Regional Airport.

County Highway System Progress

The Highway Department continually evaluates the roadway system to provide the best possible road surfaces for its citizens. For the last 3 years, crews have used a reclaiming machine on chip-seal roads to grind the existing surface and underlying rock, and then add additional rock and compact to material to create a dense foundation on which to lay the new chip-seal surface. The result is a smoother road that has a longer life with fewer needed repairs. Chart 3 illustrates the changes in the county road system over the past decade.

Major Activities

- Resurfaced 60.48 miles of chip seal road and 11.5 miles of asphalt road
- Bladed and graveled 52.4 miles of gravel road
- Snow and ice removal on County roads
- Used 763 tons of cold asphalt material to patch potholes
- Maintenance of 5,500 traffic signs and 1,850 culverts
- Issued 125 driveway permits and 29 excavation permits



Clay County Regional Airport

Clay County Regional Airport (CCRA) is a growing center for air commerce in metropolitan Kansas City and surrounding areas. By fulfilling local and transient corporate and general aviation needs, the Airport will enhance business and economic development in Clay County.

CCRA is a designated reliever airport by the Federal Aviation Administration for Kansas City International Airport and serves this purpose by reducing the volume of private, light cargo, and light corporate air traffic at KCI.



Facilities and Services Upgrades

Building on the completion of the runway expansion project and the completion of the Pat Danner Aviation Center in 2003, the Airport continued to demonstrate its importance in the northland. Many activities at the airport point to continued progress. Activities in 2004 include:

Hangar Construction. With full-to-capacity hangars, an order was placed for the construction of a new 16-unit nested T-hangar. Earth work, grading, and site preparation were completed by the Highway Department. Construction of the hangar is expected to be completed early in 2005. Plans were also developed to enclose the shadeport either as a single enclosed structure or as a nested T-hangar.

Airport Property Improvements. Phase 2 of the Airport Master Plan was completed in October finishing the elevations required for runway extension and for the extension of the hangar rows.

Waste Water Treatment Plant. Clay County donated 48 acres on the northwest corner of the airport property to the City of Kearney for a waste water treatment plant, which will be developed in the next few years. The facility will be jointly utilized by the airport and will greatly enhance the available services.

With every increasing based aircraft and improvements to the surrounding area, CCRA is poised to be the next aviation business center in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Airport Equipment

Airport operations equipment brought online further enhances the services available at CCRA.

- **Sicard Snow Blower--** acquired from Kansas City's Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport. The snow blower will allow runways and taxiways to be cleared more efficiently, further enhancing services available at CCRA.
- **Yale Aircraft Tug--** was refurbished and made available for use allowing airport personnel to move planes more easily.
- **Aircraft Fueler--** a 1,500-gallon military aircraft fueler from State of Missouri Surplus.

Community Relations

Community Relations communicates the County's message in a positive manner, both internally and externally, through the use of public relations services including the production of high-quality publications, the County website and intranet, and key relationships with news producers, editors and reporters, and other sources of communication and collaboration.

2004 Activities

Community Relations' focus on public information and communication coordination with other departments and their activities enabled the department to achieve its goals.

Constituent Services

The Community Relations Department coordinates many activities for the County's constituents – those served by the County in some way. This function comprises the largest portion of the department's activities. Highlights include:

Public Information and County News.

Served as the County Commission's communications officer; distributed 51 news releases about commission department activities generating positive news articles in the local media.

Special Events.

Coordinated a number of events and ceremonies including: the dedication

of new docks at Paradise Pointe Marina, the second section of Northland Trails at Smithville Lake and the new 112th Street Bridge near Excelsior Springs. Coordinated the annual Boards and Commissions Dinner and chaired the employee events committee.

Special Projects. Coordinated with other departments on various projects; continued to coordinate the incorporation of new features to www.claycogov.com; assisted with the preparation and presentation of the 2005; coordinated a Clay County overview presentation to the Constitutional Charter Commission.

Tourism. At the request of the County Commission, served as the staff liaison to the newly appointed Clay County Tourism

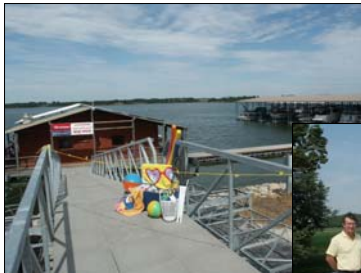
Board. Coordinated meetings, provided input and assisted with the preparation of a new strategic tourism plan for Clay County. Attended several workshops in the development of an award-winning regional tourism coalition of agencies--the Kansas City Regional Destination Alliance. Conducted a Clay County tour for key staff members of the Kansas City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Intranet. Worked in cooperation with Information Technology and Human Resources for the launch of Clay County Connection, an employee resource that

includes many types of employee information.

Community Recognition. Prepared more than 50 courtesy resolutions, including recognition of the State Championship teams from Clay County: Kearney Football Team, Oak Park Cheerleading Squad and Wrestling Team, Liberty Cross Country Team, and numerous citizen achievements.

Community Service. Assisted with the coordination two community service projects: one provided sundries to troops overseas; the other collected coats for needy area students.



Marketing

This function of the department works in conjunction with Clay County Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites and Paradise Pointe Golf Complex to provide appropriate, effective promotions of county amenities. Budget reductions continue to make this a challenging function.

- **Golf Marketing.** Assisted with the planning and preparation of the marketing plan for Paradise Pointe Golf Complex with Midwest Golf and Clay County Parks. The plan includes a mix of free promotions, television and print advertising.
- **Park Marketing.** Prepared and placed advertising for Smithville Lake in Wheelers Campground Directory and the State of Missouri Vacation Planner. Developed news releases designed to promote Smithville Lake's trails and other amenities.
- **Historic Sites Marketing.** Prepared and placed advertising in State of Missouri Vacation Planner and Wild West, a special interest magazine. Jesse James Farm and Museum was also named to the "Best of..." list by Wild West. This inclusion was promoted to the local media through a news release and was published by most of the Clay County papers. Designed and printed a brochure promoting Mt. Gilead as a site for weddings and special events.
- **Media Relations and Coordination.** Assisted in the coordination of Historic Sites tours for media United Press Syndicate, Waco (Texas) Tribune Herald and the Omaha World Herald. Assisted in the Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation in the release of information regarding the Ultramax Triathlon event at Smithville Lake.
- **Fulfillment.** Continued to participate in the Missouri Division of Tourism vacation planner program, which generates information requests about County amenities. A dedicated volunteer fulfills those requests and has just completed her seventh year serving the County.

Professional Development and Staffing

Membership in the Regional Association of Public Information Officers, Kansas City Metro Area Government Webmasters, City-County Communications and Marketing Association provides opportunities for networking and educational opportunities with other marketing and communications professionals. The Community Relations staff utilizes the resources of these groups whenever possible in an effort to keep training costs at a minimum. Though these opportunities occur regularly, the ability to provide more formal training is nominal due to limited available budget. The department employs one fulltime director and a part-time assistant.

Planning & Zoning

The primary functions of the Planning & Zoning Department, along with the Building Division, are to assist the public in all aspects of planning for development, including master planning, zoning of property, subdivision of land into building lots, floodplain administration, street addressing, the issuance of building permits and conducting building inspections. The department also investigates complaints regarding possible zoning violations.

2004 Activities

Planning. The department is in the process of projecting growth patterns and helping to direct those activities to appropriate locations. A 10 member commission-appointed task force worked with a consultant to develop recommendations for boundaries and scope of services for a countywide sewer district. The issue has been presented to the County Commission and is awaiting public approval.

Zoning. The Planning and Zoning Commission considered 28 rezoning or conditional use applications, and 55 preliminary and final plats applications. Most rezoning issues constitute land division of less than 10 lots; however, there were several larger subdivisions processed. The Board of Zoning Adjustment considered seven applications for variances in 2004.

Development Trends. Development activity continues to be strong in Clay County. While much of the activity has been within incorporated areas, the rural areas have also shown a large increase. Unincorporated Clay County, ranks fifth among all municipalities in Clay County for the number of building permits issued. The number of zoning and plat applications were up 4% over the number processed in 2003. Development has been affected by new federal environmental regulations and increased scrutiny of construction plans has been implemented.

Department Revenue. The increased development activity in Clay County has also caused an increase in revenue for Planning and Zoning. In 2004 the department collected over \$195,000 in total revenue, \$7,000 more than was collected in 2003. These revenues offset at least 86% of the department's budget and 128% of the costs associated with employee's salaries and benefits.

Committees and Statutory Boards

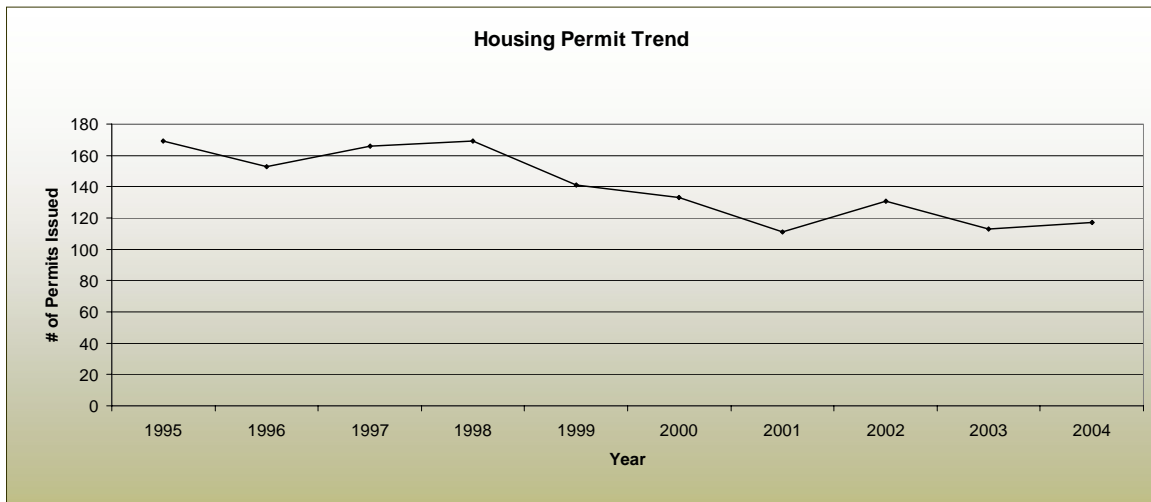
Planning and Zoning interacts directly with the County Commission and three appointed boards. The three boards are created in accordance with Revised Missouri State Statutes, serving in advisory and administrative capacities.

Primary among these is the **Planning and Zoning Commission**, which reviews and makes recommendations to the County Commission regarding applications for rezoning, conditional use permits, and subdivision plats.

The **Board of Zoning Adjustment** conducts public hearings to decide requests for variances to the County zoning regulations and hears appeals to decisions of the planning director related to zoning. The

Building Codes Commission evaluates construction codes and recommends the adoption of certain codes to the County Commission. This four-member board also hears appeals regarding decisions of the building official relating to his interpretation and application of the adopted building codes.

Building Permits. In 2004 the department issued 117 building permits for single-family dwellings, an increase of 4% from 2003. At 188, a slight decrease was seen in number of building permits issued for structures such as accessory buildings, decks, swimming pools, and ponds represents a slight decrease from the previous year.



Zoning Violations

Planning staff investigates code violations when formal complaints are made. The predominant complaints were: abandoned cars and junk and businesses being operated illegally in residential zones. One case was referred to and prosecuted by the County Prosecutor in 2004. Most problems have been corrected through cooperation of the offenders.

Animal Shelter Committee

A committee was formed in 2004 to examine the need and possible location for a Clay County animal shelter. This project focused on numerous possibilities and presented their recommendations to the Commission on December 20. There was ample evidence supporting the need for a shelter, and the promise of resources being donated by a private citizen.

Internet Access

A significant amount of information is available at www.claycogov.com, including a complete version of the 2003 Clay County Land Development Code and brochures that provide information about building. To help new residents understand the urban/rural nature of the county, a brochure, *Moving to Unincorporated Clay County?*, is available from the website or in print at the Planning & Zoning office.

Facilities Management

The Facilities Management mission is to preserve the County's capital assets, by operating and maintaining the facilities systems in a cost effective and professional manner, to ensure a safe, accessible, efficient and attractive environment for the public and all employees.

Operations and Staffing

Facilities Management handles the day-to-day maintenance, custodial and general upkeep of 15 facilities. Daily operations include repairs to the buildings and associated systems, renovation projects, waste disposal, recycling, grounds keeping, building security, meeting set-ups, construction project management and related support activities. New Department Director Donna Koontz was hired in the last quarter of 2004 and is reviewing procedures to streamline processes. The facilities staff should be commended for its work behind the scenes enabling a continuity of government in Clay County during inclement weather-- including tornadoes.

2004 Activities

In addition to routine building operations and maintenance, Facilities Management was involved in a number of projects enhancing county facilities. Highlights include:

- **AED Program.** Facilities personnel worked with the Risk Management Specialist to install Automatic External Defibrillator units in the county facilities.
- **Emergency Power A/C Bypass System.** An emergency power a/c bypass system was implemented in order to operate on generator power for longer durations at the Shrader Facility. The May 2003 Tornado prompted this upgrade.
- **Further upgrades at the Shrader Facility.** This project included the installation of a new panel and two new air conditioner units for the server room.
- **Additions to Emergency Back-up Power System.** In the Public Safety facility, the training room and the Emergency Operations Center area were added.
- **2003 Tornado Damage.** The final repairs from the 2003 tornado were completed with finishing touches at the boys and girls group homes and lighting repairs at the Election Board.
- **Razing of Storage Building.** Bids were taken and awarded for the tear down of the old lumber yard storage building. Demolition is scheduled in 2005.
- **County Building Upgrades.** Replacement of an aged and leaking boiler in the Administration building; new air velocity controls at the Justice Center and Public Safety facilities; new grounding system and security at the radio tower with the addition of chain link and barb wire fencing.
- **Grounds and Landscaping.** County grounds were upgraded with the replacement of 15 trees and the addition of a retaining wall at the Public Safety Building. During the winter months, Facilities Management is better equipped to handle snow removal in County parking areas with its new Chevy Silverado outfitted with a plow blade and salt spreader.
- **Cemetery Maintenance.** Upkeep was provided to three cemeteries Rogers, Crowley and, Fountain Waller and included the removal of 20 downed trees at Fountain Waller.

Information Technology

The Mission of the Information Technology (IT) Department for Clay County Missouri is to provide the optimum computer and telephony support necessary to all departments and offices of the Clay County form of government. It is the department's goal to meet the technological needs of its customers, the departments and the offices of Clay County, to ensure that they can best service the citizens of Clay County.

Technology Activities

The year of 2004 provided many opportunities and changes to the scope and climate of the Clay County IT Department in the normal support of its customers. Highlights of those changes include:

- **Network Security.** Enhanced round-the-clock monitoring of the network; upgraded network equipment to more secure operating systems; network encryption protection is underway to further protect the network; implementing more authentication controls for connectivity to the network and e-mail from the outside.
- **Phone System.** Clay County adopted a phased approach to upgrading to a new Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone system in 2004. This three-phase plan enhances features and services both to staff and citizens.
- **Web Site.** www.claycogov.com enhanced to use county databases eliminating the need to input the data multiple times. New web pages include: Senior Citizens Services Board, Constitutional Charter Commission Citizen, and Contact Forms.
- **Public Access Resource Center.** Monitors have been upgraded to allow for visually impaired users and better utilization of space.
- **Desktop Support.** The Recorder of Deeds returned to the county network in 2004; IT installed systems and supports 11 additional employees. New computers were installed in 20 other stations.
- **Intranet.** Launched Clay County Connection, which provides more flexibility, serves as an employee resource and content management system

Key Inter-Departmental Activities

Information Technology facilitated several offices in reaching their technology goals. Three key accomplishments were:

- **Missouri Highway Patrol Connection.** Setup secured connection to the Missouri Highway Patrol allowing the Sheriff's Department Booking to transmit fingerprints of incoming inmates in "real time." In addition, this connection enables compliance on Conceal-and-Carry Gun Permit Applications.
- **School Resource Officer Connection.** Set up secure connections through the North Kansas City School District to enable School Resource Deputies to connect to the County Network to access their applications.
- **New Customer Support.** Re-integrated the hardware and software of the Recorder of Deeds office into the Clay County network. Through close cooperation with the Recorder and his staff, IT completed the transition and the office now has full access to Clay County Connection and IT computer support.

Purchasing

To provide Clay County with the approved, and budgeted, required goods and services, when and where needed, in the proper quantity and quality, deriving the maximum value per tax dollar invested, and assuring that all vendors who wish to do business with the County have equal opportunity and impartial treatment in compliance with the legal requirements of the State of Missouri and the County of Clay.

Purchasing Policy Outline

Clay County's purchasing policy mandates that a competitive environment exist when all goods or services are purchased. Responsibility for competitiveness in purchases costing less than \$500.00 lies with the procuring department or office. Purchase orders for goods or services costing more than \$500.00 and less than \$4,500.00 must have telephone quotes from three vendors attached. Purchases over \$4,500.00 must be accomplished by written bid, advertised according to state statute and approved by the County Commission.

2004 Purchasing Activities

In addition to the maintenance, repairs, operating supplies and equipment needed for the County, the Purchasing Department assisted, through competitive procurement practices, with the following noteworthy purchases for calendar year 2004:

- **Golf Course Clubhouse Expansion.**

Proposals were received for the Paradise Pointe Golf Complex clubhouse expansion project within the Park Department. The expansion includes the addition of a tournament room to the existing clubhouse along with window and siding upgrades to the remaining facade. The proposal was awarded to Purdum Construction.

- **Digital Postage Equipment.**

Bids were received ensuring Clay County adheres to digital regulations required by the United States Postal Service. The bid was awarded to Pitney Bowes.

- **Lead Paint Removal.** This project is located at Juvenile Group Home facilities. The proposal was awarded to B & R Insulation.

- **Drug Court Process Analysis and Outcome Evaluation.** Proposals were received for the Clay County Drug Court to analyze the drug court process

Heart Awareness Program

All Clay County facilities are now equipped with Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) and appropriate training was provided to fifty-two (52) Clay County employees for adult and youth treatment. Appropriate program oversight was provided by the Mid America Heart Institute St. Luke's Health System. The following Clay County buildings have at least one AED available:

- Administration Building
- Clay County Annex
- Rooney Justice Center
- Facilities Management
- Highway Department
- Juvenile Justice Center
- Public Safety/Detention
- Sheriff's Department
- Shrader Building
- Clay County Regional Airport
- Clay County Parks



ensuring all requirements by the State of Missouri and Federal Government are met. This proposal was awarded to Resource Development Institute.

- **Voice-over Internet Protocol Phone System.** Bids were received for Phase 1 of the phone system. The new hardware will update an antiquated phone system within the County, thereby providing better service and response to Clay County citizens. The bids were awarded to Alexander Open Systems.
- **Sixteen-Unit T-Hangar.** Bids were received for Clay County Regional Airport. The Highway Department and Airport staff worked together to bid this project. This hangar space demonstrates the need within the County for additional airplane storage. The bid was awarded to T-Corp.

2004 Budget Activities

Two budget related goals of the Purchasing Department involved new projects in the County's EDEN accounting system. These goals were met and implemented in 2004:

- 2005 Clay County Budget. Utilized existing financial accounting system, EDEN, Budget Module for 2005 Clay County Budget.
- Budget Data Entry. Trained Users on financial accounting system, EDEN, Budget Module for 2005 Clay County Budget Entry.

Purchase Order History

Invitation for Bid (Bid) and Request for Proposal (RFP) History. The Purchasing Department let 47 bids and 44 Requests for Proposals (RFPs) during 2004. This compares to 29 bids and 44 RFPs during 2003.

Approximately 12,741 purchase orders were processed in 2004 resulting in the expense of \$20,819,752. This compares to 12,008 purchase orders were processed in 2003 consisting of \$25,571,723 of expenditures Charts 4 and 5 demonstrate that comparison.

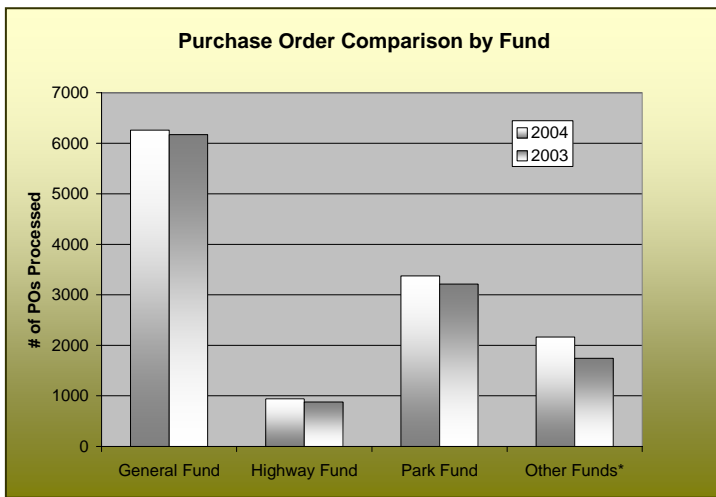


Chart 4

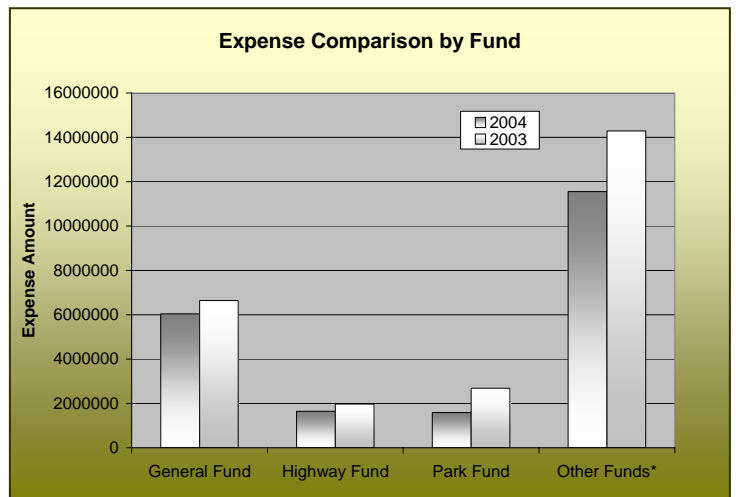


Chart 5

*Other Funds includes: Drug Court, Law Enforcement Training, Law Enforcement Grants, Law Enforcement Sales Tax, Emergency Communications, Assessor, TIF, Use Tax, Airport, Road Trust, etc.

Human Resources

The Clay County Human Resources Department strives to be stewards to the internal Clay County community by developing and administering the policies of the County Commission while offering the employees of Clay County a healthy, safe and rewarding place to work, learn and grow.

Human Resources provides support and guidance to operational departments and to the County Commission on human resources related issues. The department coordinates recruitment and serves as the administrator of various benefit programs.

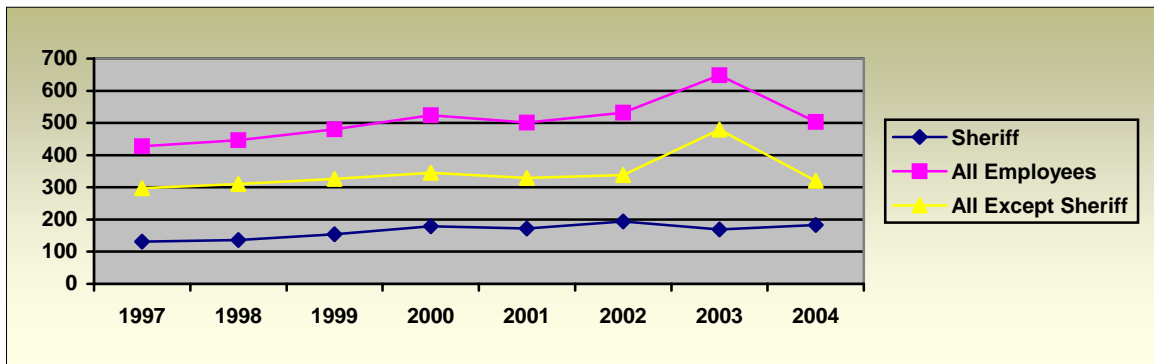
2004 Activities

Employee benefits continue to be a strong, though deteriorating, recruitment and retention tool for the County. The next few years will continue to be a challenge for Clay County's Human Resources Department. Major annual highlights include:

Clay County Staffing

County payroll data lists 494 full time and 95 part time employees as of the last payroll in 2004. A total of 68 full time and 61 part time employees were hired during 2004. The full time employee turnover is around 11%.

Risk Management. Risk Management worked closely with MARCIT to track and reduce our losses, claims and costs incurred by the County. Due to this new position, created in 2004, the County had an overall compliance rating of 70% with our insurance carrier.



Employee Safety. Employee accidents /losses were below industry expectation in 2004, continuing a trend from the past several years.

The Safety Committee, established in 2001, reviews facilities, practices, and conditions within the county operations to identify actual or potential safety hazards.

Thomas McGee, in conjunction with MARCIT, began its second year as the county's provider of workers compensation insurance coverage. Thomas McGee and MARCIT continue to be active in assisting the County with accident prevention efforts including work site inspections and Safety Committee Meetings.

Intranet. During 2004, HR continued to work with the Community Relations and IT in the launch of Clay County Connection. The site contains County employee information and includes resources such as the personnel manual, occupant emergency response plan, forms directory, telephone directory, recycling program summaries, and general employee information.

Employee Compensation and Benefits

Compensation. The County provided a 2.1% cost-of-living adjustment for all employees and increased ranging by this cost-of-living factor that is tied to the percentage increase in social security benefits. Human Resources implemented a new performance evaluation process on which future merit increases will be based, although merit increases were not approved by the Commission in the 2004 budget.

County Retirement Plans

- **LAGERS.** The County Commission decreased the benefit from 2.0% to 1.6% with approval of the 2005 budget. Clay County has participated in LAGERS since 1975 without cost to employees.
- **CERF.** Clay County has also participated in County Employee's Retirement Fund since it established in 1994.

Health and Dental Insurance

- **Health Insurance.** Clay County completed its third year with Coventry Health Insurance in 2004 and secured a 2005 rate increase cap of 11.2%. Employees shared the increase equally with the County. The County has managed rising healthcare costs through bidding coverage and assistance from its insurance consultants, CBIZ.
- **Dental Insurance.** Dental insurance is through Delta Dental. Employees shared an 8% increase over 2004 rates with the County.
- **Group Life Insurance.** The County group life benefit is two times annual pay. A vast majority of employees view as a valuable addition to the County Benefit Plan.

Operations and Staffing

The HR Department is staffed with a Director, HR Specialist and Risk Management Specialist. While some HR duties continue to be decentralized throughout the County, the HR department is continually striving to centralize many of these functions to ensure fairness and continuity throughout the County. The department:

- Coordinates the administration of benefit plans
- Workers compensation
- Employee budgeting
- Recruitment
- FMLA and leave tracking
- Training programs
- Employee relations
- Labor relations
- New hire orientations
- Cobra Administration
- Compensation and reclassification issues
- Policies and procedures.

The average ratio for the Kansas City metro area continues to be 1 HR employee for every 120 employees with a minimum of 1 to 51 and a maximum of 1 to 266. Clay County's ratio is 1 to 202, indicating a staffing ratio that operates very lean.

The department has done well to perform at its current level. However, as demands on the department continue to grow and employment issues continue to become more complex, staffing for the department will become an even greater issue.

Elected Offices

Assessor

The Assessor's Office operates in accordance with the statutes of the State of Missouri. The current County Assessor is Cathy Rinehart.

2004 REPORT

The Clay County Assessment department is actively working on the 2005 re-assessment. The department is running parallel with the new and old real estate system. This is a long and tedious process with data entry for two systems. There are over 78,000 parcels with most parcels having more than 200 individual features that a need to be converted and manually checked. We have contracted Mobile Video to take digital pictures. These pictures are to be utilized with the new real estate system. By using Mobile Video we are reviewing two-thirds of all of the properties, updating information, and gathering new data for re-assessment. Naturally, we are not taking pictures of vacant land.

GIS (Geographic Information Systems) is preparing Clay County maps to be internet accessible. The Clay County assessment department is working toward having all real estate information Internet accessible.

New this year the personal property department has assessment lists on the Clay County web site. This way people can get the form, fill it out and send it to the assessment department.

Auditor

The chief duty of the Clay County Auditor is to serve as the County's Financial Controller. The Auditor is responsible for the accounting of transactions of the county and preparing financial statements in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards, as well as to perform annual audits of each County department on an annual basis or upon retirement of an officeholder. The current County Auditor is Vic Hurlbert, CPA.

Other significant duties include performing an annual inventory of the county's fixed assets. The Auditor staff maintains control on payroll calculations and approved payroll journals produced by the county clerk's office. Additionally, the Auditor's office reviews all accounts payable activities for all funds and verifies compliance with the budget approved by the County Commission. The Auditor's office verifies activity in the Office of County Collector of Revenue, the Office of County Assessor and the Office of the Recorder of Deeds. Taxpayers can review the financial status of their Clay County government. Monthly financial statements for the County government are posted on the County's web site at www.claycogov.com/OFFICES/Auditor/index.php.

Children's Justice Center

The mission of the R. Kenneth Elliott Children's Justice Center is to protect and/or correct children who come within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court by utilizing treatment, intervention and services to benefit children, families and the community. The Children's Justice Center is a part of the Circuit Court.

Collector

The purpose of the County Collector's Office is to collect taxes owed on personal and real property, delinquent taxes owed on real estate, and to distribute monies collected to the appropriate taxing entities, in accordance with State of Missouri statutes. In addition, the Collector is responsible for the administration of data and the checks and balances of that data and day-to-day operations of the office. The current Collector of Revenue is Sandra Reeves.

2004 REPORT

With the help of our Tax Maintenance Fund, the Clay County Collector's office has been able to launch into the 21st century with creative, visionary consumer-friendly tax collection methods. We have been able to print an insert sheet for our bills educating the public about the "why, what, and when" questions of our office. We have an innovative video screen at both the Liberty and annex locations notifying patrons standing in line as to the statutes and services of our office. We also have a kiosk operation at both locations enabling our residents to pay by E-Check and credit card accessing the Internet payment links. We also have online payment for those taxpayers wishing to pay from the comfort of their home computers. We have 24-hour telephone payment ability, and our website is going to be updated daily when our latest purchase of software is installed. This allows not only our residents but title companies, appraisal companies, mortgage banks, real estate professionals and license fee offices to confirm payment in a professional venue. We have had excellent cooperation and support from the county offices that we interact with on a daily basis.

County Clerk

The County Clerk's Office operates in accordance with the statutes of the State of Missouri. The current County Clerk is Pamela Mason.

County Commission

The County Commission, comprised of two elected district members and one member elected at large, sets policy for and administers County government, including the budget; authorizes county ordinances; operates numerous departments through the County Administrator; appoints citizens to county Boards and Commissions; and represents the County in various venues and operates in accordance with Missouri State Statutes. The current County Commissioners are: Carol McCaslin, Presiding Commissioner; Larry Larson, Western Commissioner; and Craig Porter, Eastern Commissioner. Reports from Commission Departments precede the Elected Official section of this report.

Prosecuting Attorney

It is the mission of the Clay County Prosecuting Attorney's Office to seek justice in all matters and cases that come before it while balancing compassion for victims and witnesses with the mandates of the court and the law.

The Clay County Prosecutor staff of nearly 60 full- and part-time employees provides services to the public through the Check Division, Child Support Enforcement Division, and Criminal Division.

The Clay County Prosecuting Attorney is Dan White.

Public Administrator

The Public Administrator's Office operates in accordance with the statutes of the State of Missouri. The current Public Administrator is Debbie Gwin.

Recorder of Deeds

The Recorder of Deeds Office operates in accordance with the statutes of the State of Missouri. The current Recorder of Deeds is Bob Sevier.

Sheriff

The mission of the Clay County Sheriff's Department is to enhance the quality of life in Clay County by working cooperatively with the public and to serve our citizens within the framework of the United States Constitution to enforce the laws, provide a safe environment and reduce the fear of crime. The current County Sheriff is Paul Vescovo.

2004 REPORT

Carry Concealed Weapons Permits. On August 9, 2004, the Clay County Sheriff's Office began accepting applications for Carry Concealed Weapon permits as a result of a new law passed by the Missouri legislature. Although this was basically an unfunded mandate imposed on the county Sheriffs in Missouri, Sheriff Vescovo and his staff, with financial assistance from the County Commission, began this program as soon as equipment and training was in place to accommodate this. Since beginning the program, the Sheriff's Office has processed 548 applications, and has done so without the benefit of any additional personnel. The utilization of exiting personnel to accomplish this has sometimes proved problematic, but goes to show how the Clay County Sheriff's Office is always striving to deliver services to the citizens of Clay County in the most efficient manner possible.

Detention Center. Another way in which the Sheriff's Office is providing a valuable service to Clay County citizens is through its utilization of the Detention Center to provide prisoner housing to Clay County municipal law enforcement agencies. Since shortly after the recent expansion/renovation project, prisoners from several local municipal law enforcement agencies have been using the Clay County Detention Center to house their prisoners. The service is currently used by the cities of Smithville, Claycomo, Holt, Mosby, Randolph, Excelsior Springs and Liberty. Estimated revenues brought in by the housing of municipal prisoners and other detention-based revenue sources was estimated at over \$266,000 in 2004, and will probably increase in future years.

School Resource Deputy Program. The Clay County Sheriff's Office continues to have a strong impact of another segment of Clay County's population – youth. Presently the School Resource Deputy program, in a cooperative partnership with the North Kansas City School District, has deputies present in 2 high schools and 5 middle schools, with responsibility for an additional seven elementary “feeder” schools. All told, their presence in those schools touches the lives of over 13,000 young citizens and provides a positive influence on them. In addition to the School Resource Deputies, Clay County D.A.R.E. deputies are also present in several elementary schools throughout Clay County, presently in Kearney, Holt, Smithville, Missouri City, Liberty, and Kansas City North. Their Drug Abuse Resistance Education helps provide approximately 600 elementary age students with knowledge and education to enable them to resist the temptations of harmful substances to their physical and mental health.

Emergency Management

Citizen Corp. A Citizen Corp Board was established and is in the process of promoting community involvement. The following groups make up the Citizen Corp: Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Medical Reserves Corp., Neighborhood Watch Program and Volunteers in Police Service. Each group is their own entity under the umbrella of Citizen Corp.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Within the past two years, 164 people received CERT training in Clay and Platte Counties; an advisory board has been created and is responsible for developing training, continuing education and volunteer activities. The group is willing and able to assist all communities within the two-county area with volunteerism, disaster assistance and community events. Each member of CERT is required to attend at least one refresher training course and one volunteer activity within a 12-month period.

Homeland Security. Part 1: Received equipment and materials for the Northland Fire Chiefs Association (HazMat Team); completed most of the expenditures for this grant, which will end March 30, 2005.

Part 2: This grant will be used for the purchase of a command post for Emergency Management, HazMat Team and local agencies to use in event of a disaster or emergency; grant ends April 30, 2005.

Storm Ready County Designation. In 2004, we were awarded the honor of being a Storm Ready county. This was accomplished by the joint efforts and many agencies and local county departments.

Training/Exercises. Held or participated in several training sessions throughout the year, including:

- In cooperation with Clay County Public Health Center, participated in Bio-terrorism training exercise.
- Conducted an Animal Agri-terrorism exercise for county departments, local and state agencies to familiarize everyone with their own and other's responsibilities in this type of disaster.
- Assembled, trained and distributed law enforcement personnel throughout the county in the use of escape kits. Conducted annual Weather Spotters training with the attendance in excess of 150 participants.

Conclusion. As the Clay County Sheriff's Office continues to march forward into 2005, Sheriff Vescovo and his staff continue to examine ways to provide service to the citizens of Clay County in the most efficient and professional manner they can. In this time of fiscal constraint and shrinking budgets, this mission has greater importance than ever, and Sheriff Vescovo is determined to succeed in a manner that will provide the best value to the citizens of Clay County.

Treasurer

The County Treasurer is responsible for receipting all County revenues, making bank deposits, investing County monies, balancing County bank accounts, banking funds held in trust by the County and tracking all County funds. The County Treasurer is also responsible for writing juror checks and helping people claim their unclaimed property. The current County Treasurer is Sheila Snell Erzen.

Acknowledgments



This report would not have been possible without the assistance and support of the many offices and departments of Clay County. The following participants provided input for this 2004 year-end State of the County written report:

Gary Panethiere, CPA, County Administrator and Chief Budget Officer

Leslie Ensign, Editor, Community Relations Director

Pat Thomas, Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Director

Jim McQuerrey, Highway Administrator

Duane Jackson, Airport Manager

Carole Bloom, Planning & Zoning Director

Donna Koontz, Facilities Management Director

Terry Rennack, Information Technology Director

Alexa Barton, Purchasing Director and Asst. County Administrator

Amy Brusven, Human Resources Director

Cathy Rinehart, Assessor

Sandra Reeves, Collector of Revenue

Paul Vescovo, Sheriff

D.C. Rogers, Emergency Management Director