



***OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE RESIDENTS OF***

**SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS**

**AS THEIR NEXT**

**COUNTY APPRAISER**

***Seeking experienced professional and credentialed governmental property tax appraisers with proven management and leadership skills.***



## **About Sedgwick County**

### **History**

Originally a camping ground of the Osage and Wichita Indian tribes, Sedgwick County, Kansas is thought to be a place of discovery for such explorers as Francisco Coronado and Kit Carson. The earliest European settler to the region was M. DuTissenet, a Frenchman operating under the direction of the governor of Louisiana, in 1719. DuTissenet brought with him soldiers, traders, and hunters who soon populated and transformed the region from prairie to a land of opportunity.

Sedgwick County was officially established nearly 150 years later on February 26, 1867, and bears the name of Civil War hero Major General John Sedgwick of the Union Army who was killed during the battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse in Virginia. After an initial failed attempt at establishing an official county government, the Governor of the State of Kansas appointed three Commissioners to aid in the effort. In April of 1870, the first County officials were elected and the County seat of Wichita was chosen.



## Geography

Occupying 1,008 square miles of land in south central Kansas, Sedgwick County falls within the borders of the Arkansas River Lowlands. It is noted for its extreme flatness, as its highest point is only 1,540 feet above sea level. The County's lowest point, approximately 1,220 feet above sea level, occurs along the southern border where the Arkansas River leaves the County. Sedgwick County's largest city is Wichita, which is located along Interstate 35 with service areas to Interstate 135, US 54, and various other highways.

## Population

Sedgwick County is a growing region, currently home to an estimated 508,000 citizens. The County's population has increased 13.1 percent since 2000 and has increased significantly faster than the population of Kansas as a whole (8.1 percent since 2000). According to 2016 census estimates, Sedgwick County surpassed the half-million mark with an estimated 500,900 people in 2011. The population of Sedgwick County is expected to grow to approximately 630,439 by 2064. In addition to a strong growth trend, the *U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 American Community Survey*, reports Sedgwick County is a relatively young community, with 87.3 percent of its population younger than the age of 65. By 2064, however, the number of citizens age 65 and older is expected to increase to 140,817, a 116.4 percent change from 2014 to 2064.

## Economic Condition and Outlook

Sedgwick County is a regional economic center with manufacturing, health care service, and retail trade as primary industries. The economic information contained in this brochure was drawn from publications of the Center for Economic Development and Business Research (CEDBR) at Wichita State University and from the U.S. Department of Labor. The Wichita metropolitan statistical area (MSA) is comprised of Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey, Kingman and Sumner Counties in Kansas.

## Employment/Income

The United States Department of Labor reported that the average 2017 labor force for the Wichita MSA was 309,338 residents, a slight decrease of 0.2 percent from 2016. The Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University reports as of December 2017 the labor force for the Wichita MSA at 307,987. Of those who are eligible for employment, approximately 96.6 percent (297,521) were employed in 2017. According to the American Community Survey, as posted on the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University's website, the 2017 median income was \$52,068 for households in Sedgwick County, up from \$51,424 in 2016 and \$51,059 in 2015.

## Property Values/Tax Payers

Similar to other jurisdictions, Sedgwick County has continued to address modest growth in property valuations by making operational changes. Prior to the national recession, assessed property valuations grew by an average of 5.5 percent annually between 1999 and 2009. Since that time, assessed valuations were below 1.0 percent for three years (2010 to 2012), and fell in value for the 2013 budget by 0.7 percent. In 2016, there was an increase to 1.4 percent, and assessed value increased to 2.8 percent in 2017. Assessed value increased by





3.3 percent in 2018. In Sedgwick County, residential property accounts for the largest percentage (61.3 percent) of the total assessed value of real property. The second largest is commercial property, comprising 35.4 percent of the County's total assessed value of real property. The large percentage of residential property shows that individuals and families recognize the County as a growing community where they can purchase a home and establish roots, while the large portion of commercial property shows that the County's business environment is also favorable. Another economic indicator is the total assessed value of the largest five taxpayers compared to the total assessed valuation of the County. A concentrated property tax base can be detrimental to a community in times of economic downturn, especially if a jurisdiction's largest taxpayers are in the same industry. Sedgwick County's largest five taxpayers comprised 7.83 percent of the County's total assessed value in 2017.

#### **Cost of Living/Housing**

The current overall cost of living in Wichita is below the national average of 100 on the Overall Cost of Living Index. Compared to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (84.6), Omaha, Nebraska (91.8), Dallas, Texas (100.4), and Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas (93.1), the overall cost of living for area residents (91.8) is comparable to other area communities. As of Dec 2017, the median home sales price in Wichita for new and existing homes was \$145,000.

#### **About the Sedgwick County Government**

Sedgwick County utilizes a Commission/Manager form of government under which the County Manager's Office implements the priorities and goals of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC is the County's governing body. It is comprised of five-members and meets in regular weekly sessions. Commissioners are elected according to geographical area (districts) and serve four-year overlapping terms. The Chairman of the Board is elected by the Commissioners and serves a one-year term. In addition to the BOCC, citizens of Sedgwick County elect the County Clerk, the Register of Deeds, the County Treasurer, the Sheriff, the District Attorney and the 18th Judicial District Judges.

Sedgwick County is recognized by the International City-County Management Association as a Council-Manager form of government. Accordingly, the Board appoints a professional County Manager to administer most County functions and to implement policy decisions. The BOCC also appoints the County Counselor, County Appraiser and the Assistant County Man-

ager for the Department of Public Works, Facilities Maintenance & Project Services.

Sedgwick County employs nearly 2,800 persons and functions on a current budget of \$439,530,627. The County provides a full range of services including public safety, public works, criminal justice, recreation, entertainment, cultural, human/social, and education.

#### **About the County Appraiser's Office and the County Appraiser**

The County Appraiser's Office is required by law to annually appraise all tangible, taxable property by January 1. In Sedgwick County there are 221,814 residential, agricultural, multi-family, commercial and industrial parcels as well as 33,791 personal property accounts. In addition, the Office applies classification rates and determines tax exemption eligibility of religious, charitable, educational and municipal properties. The County Appraiser leads, manages, plans, organizes, administers and directs the activities and operations of the Sedgwick County Appraiser's Office in compliance with county policies and applicable Kansas Law. In conformance with the Kansas State Property Valuation Division the County Ap-



praiser Office serves and assists the property assessment needs of the citizens and the community. The County Appraiser is responsible to deliver quality public service through use of effective leadership, strategic planning, performance measurement, teamwork, maximizing resources, innovative approaches and high professional standards. The County Appraiser's Office currently employs sixty-five (65) FTE's and has an FY 2019 budget of \$4,843,692.

The County Appraiser advises the County Commissioners and County Manager on matters pertaining to property appraisals and attends meetings of the BOCC, responds to inquiries made by the Commissioners and other County officials and makes presentations on a regular basis. He or she also presents testimony to state legislators and assists the County's Division of Finance with long-term valuation forecasting.

The County Appraiser leads, manages, plans, organizes, administers, and directs the activities and operations of the Appraiser's Office in compliance with County policies and applicable Kansas Law, under the direction of the Property Valuation Divi-

sion serving and assisting the needs of the citizens, and community.

**As the head of the County Appraiser's Office, the County Appraiser is responsible to:**

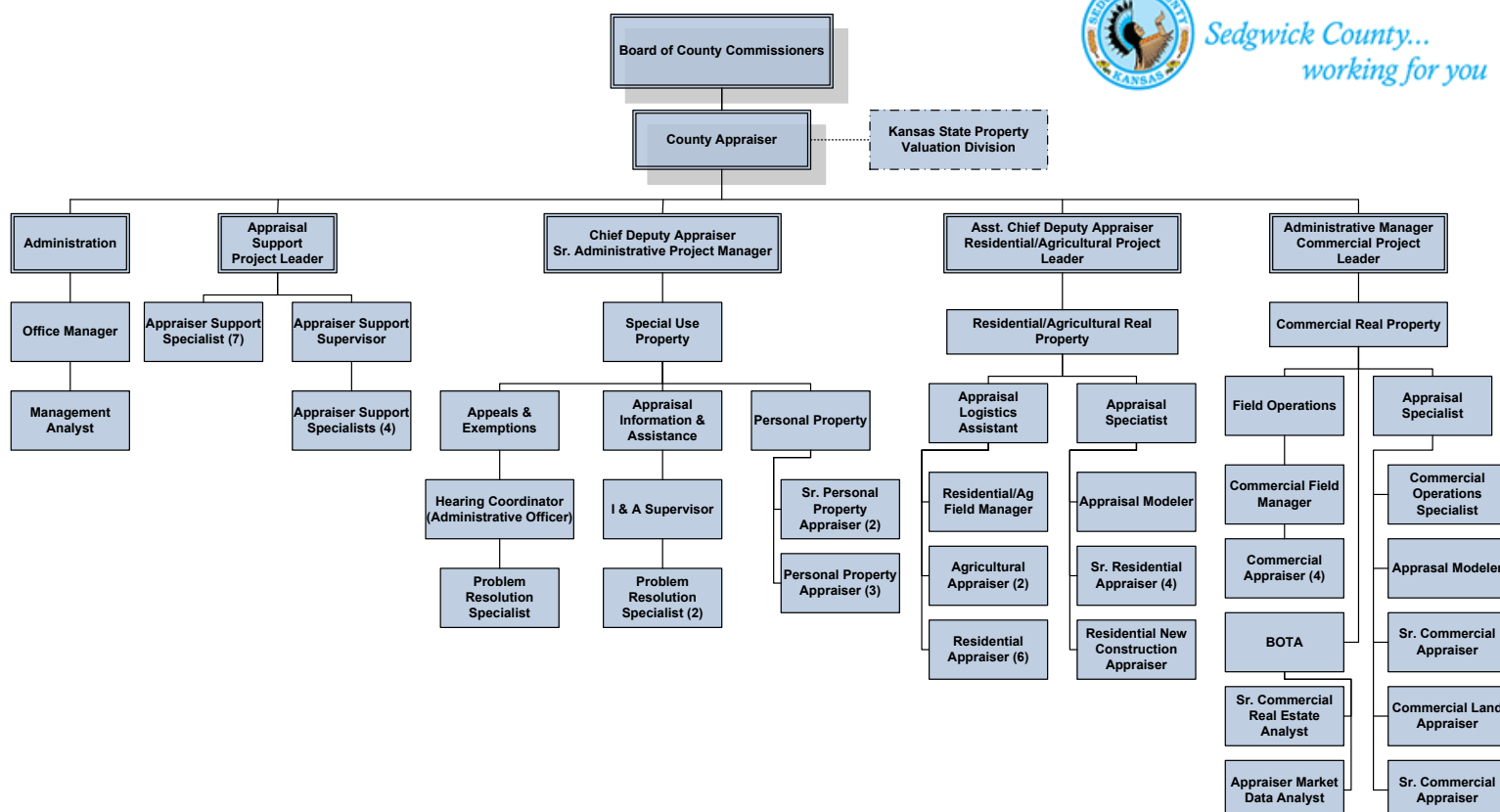
- Determine innovative methods to promote cross-functional teams and processes which enhance service and cost effectiveness
- Review departmental and office-wide practices to ensure continuous quality improvement
- Review State and local laws, guideline policies, resolutions and similar documents on a regular basis for compliance
- Formulate policies and procedures for the County's appraisal functions
- Formulate long-term goals, policies and procedures for the Department and presents budget requests, and exercises budgetary control over departmental operations

## Sedgwick County, Kansas

### County Appraiser's Office



*Sedgwick County...  
working for you*



- Develop and oversee the valuations and classification of property to ensure that the burden of property tax is distributed equitably for property owners in Sedgwick County
- Define innovative approaches to using technology for the delivery of public services which enhance productivity and accessibility,
- Determine the valuations and classification of properties in accordance with laws, rules, and regulations governing the appraisal process,
- Gather and analyze information and compiles reports for Property Valuation Department of Revenue, Federal Agencies, BOCC, other County officials and departments,
- Maintain annual procedural and statistical compliance requirements for Kansas Department of Revenue Property Valuation Division.

**Technology responsibilities** include applying the principles and practices of computer assisted mass appraisal (CAMA) and generally accepted mass appraisal standards and methodology including, but not limited to, the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) and management to contribute to the success of the County.

**As a County department head:**

- The County Appraiser must understand how an organization must adjust in light of internal and external trends and influences. He or she will keep the big, long range picture in mind; build a shared long-range organizational vision with others and be committed to a course of action

to achieve long-range goals and influences others to inspire and motivate this vision into action.

- The County Appraiser is responsible to communicate vision, inspire motivation, engage with others to solve problems; work to find a win/win resolution of differences, is aware of how management style impacts staff productivity and development, modifies leadership style to meet situational requirements and helps team to stay focused on major goals while managing within a context of multiple directives.
- The County Appraiser is expected to adapt quickly to change and to readily consider new approaches, remain flexible and open to new ideas and encourage others to value change.
- The County Appraiser thinks and acts effectively under pressure, persists towards solutions and goals in changing circumstances and successfully overcomes obstacles to achieve results.

### Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

- There is a desire to modify the Informal Hearing process so that it provides a real opportunity to resolve assessment issues locally.
- Enable the Appraiser Office staff to become more responsive and efficient through staff cross training.
- The International Association of Assessing Officers is conducting an audit of the office looking at operations, the CAMA system, staffing and technology.

For more information about Sedgwick County and the County Appraisers Office visit [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)





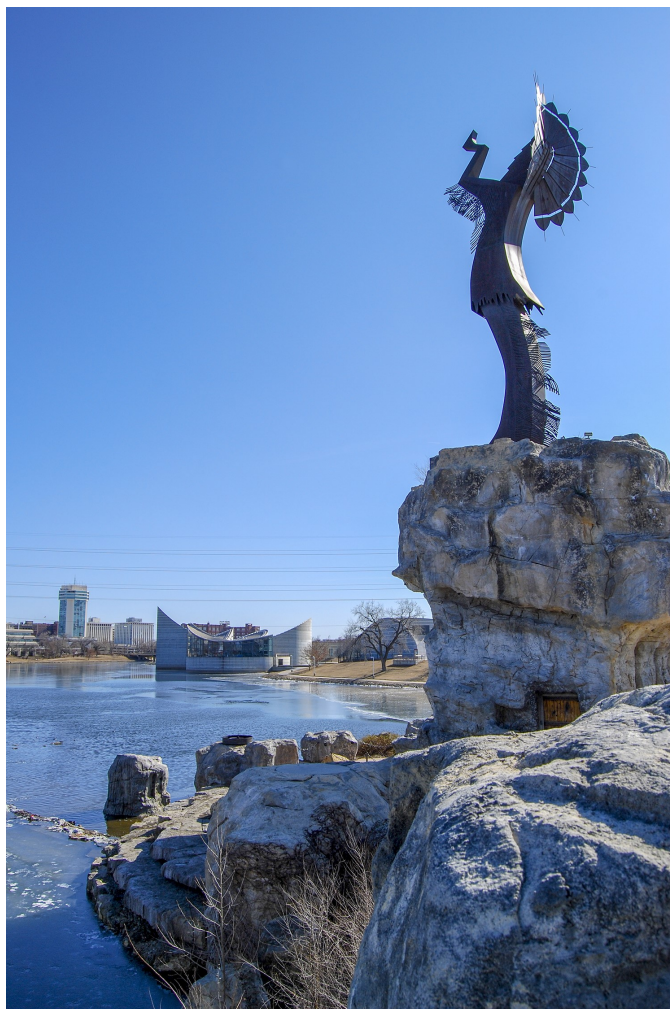


**Minimum qualifications** are a Bachelor's Degree in Finance, Accounting, Economics, Business Administration, Regional/Urban Planning or a related field from an accredited college or university; certification as a General Real Property Appraiser pursuant to Article 41 of Chapter 58 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated and amendments; OR Registered Mass Appraiser (RMA) pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of Revenue; OR Holds a valid Residential Evaluation Specialist (RES) or Certified Assessment Evaluation (CAE) designation from IAAO. Must have one of the required appraisal designations or successfully obtain one within six (6) months of appointment by the Board of County Commissioners. Must have a minimum of five (5) years CAMA experience with five (5) years commercial property appraisal experience including three (3) years in a managerial/supervisory capacity.

**Preferred qualifications** are a Master's Degree in Finance, Accounting, Economics, Business Administration, Regional/Urban Planning or a related field from an accredited college or university combined with additional CAMA assessment administration or other local government education and training plus ten (10) years of experience in assessing properties which includes five (5) years in a managerial/supervisory capacity. IAAO designation, CAE preferred.

**In addition to the above, the following management and leadership style characteristics are highly desired in the next County Appraiser:**

- Understands the value of public/private partnerships.
- Places trust in and delegates responsibility to staff.
- Is personally strong and confident and will speak his or her mind (i.e. is neither easily intimidated nor overbearing).
- Makes self easily available and approachable.
- Is responsive - returns phone calls and will meet personally with tax payers.
- Is committed to making the Sedgwick County Appraiser's Office the best that it can be through decisive lead-
- Strong and proven management and leadership skills are critical and must be combined with technical knowledge and understanding.
- Is an experienced manager who will continually analyze the organizational structure and performance quality of the Office and make changes if need be.
- Is an assertive and effective communicator - comfortable in dealing with the general public, business leadership, developers, the BOCC, County leadership and Appraiser Office employees.





ership to include: being a strong advocate for the Office with the BOCC, attracting and retaining quality employees, providing ongoing employee training and development, mentoring of younger staff and succession planning.

- Is a proactive and strong advocate for the Appraiser's Office with the public through public speaking, attendance at community functions, finding or creating opportunities to meet with tax payers.
- Has the ability to explain complex technical subjects to non technical people so that they understand them.

#### Desired Interpersonal Characteristics

- Tends to be transparent.
- Understands technology and work flow processes.
- Is innovative and not automatically wedded to past practices.
- Is receptive to and encourages new ideas.
- Is insightful with the ability to anticipate and prepare for problems before they occur.



#### Compensation

The compensation package includes a competitive base salary and fringe benefits that will ultimately depend upon the qualifications of the selected candidate. The beginning salary will be commensurate with experience. The County offers excellent benefits which include: State Retirement, a generous paid time-off program, Medical/Prescription insurance (95% County paid), Dental Vision, Life & AD&D insurance, a Flexible Healthcare Spending Account, a Dependent Daycare Flexible Spending Account, AFLAC and other benefits.

#### To Apply

The County is anxious to fill this position. It will remain open until filled. To be considered, please email your cover letter, resume and current salary to:

Robert E. Slavin, President

#### **SLAVIN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS**

3040 Holcomb Bridge Road #A1

Norcross, Georgia 30071

Phone: (770) 449-4656

Fax: (770) 416-0848

Email: [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net)

[www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com)



*Sedgwick County...*  
*working for you*



**The Sedgwick County is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer**