

“What If” to “What Is”

From Shared Possibilities
to
Collective Realities



“...Perhaps to be too practical is madness...
to surrender dreams – this may be
madness...and maddest of all:
to see life as it is and not as it should be!”

~ Cervantes

“Sentiment without action
is the ruin of the soul.”

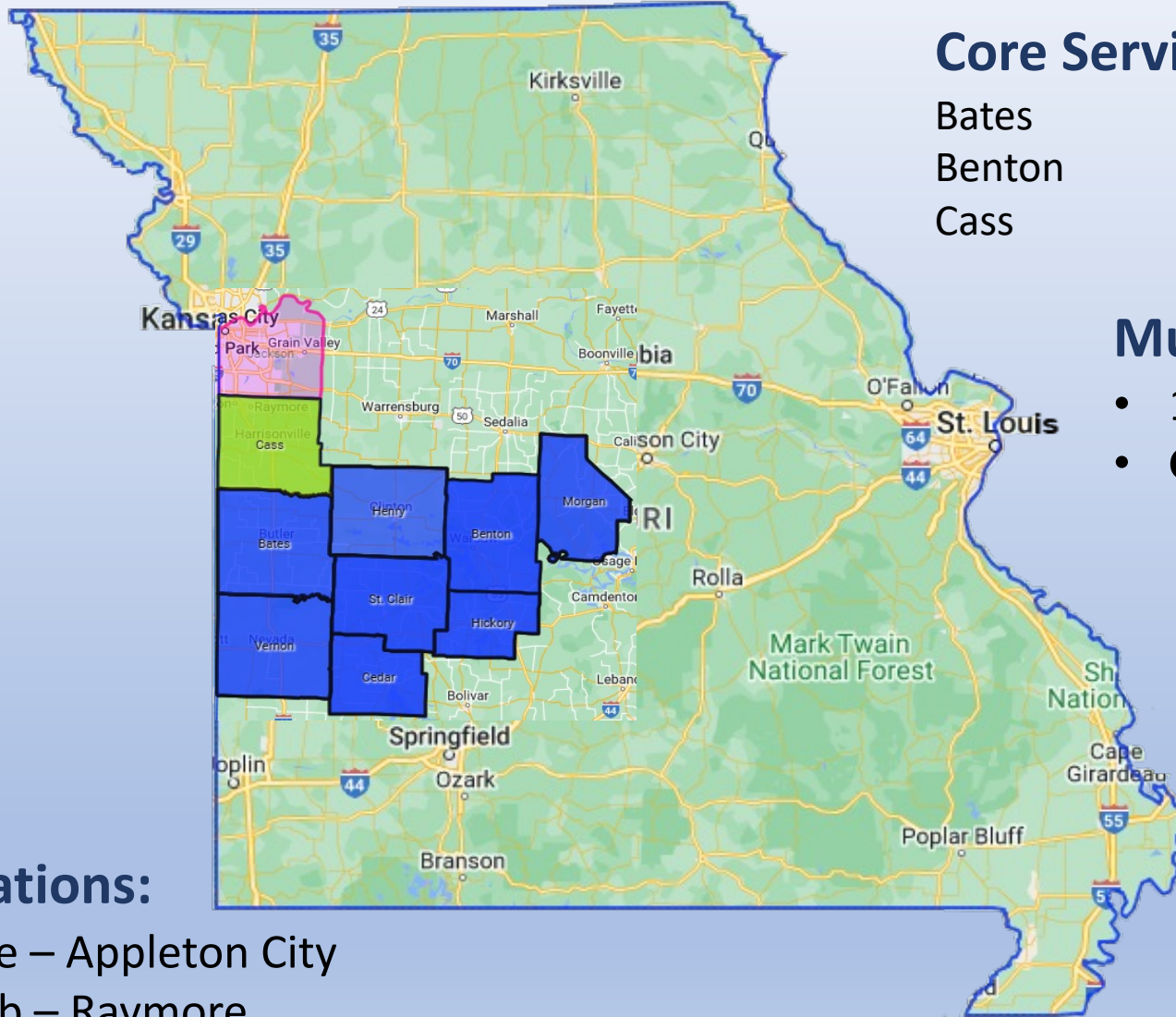
~ Edward Abbey

“We are called to be architects of the future, not its victims.”

“To change something,
*build a new model that makes the existing
model obsolete.*”

~ R. Buckminster Fuller

West Central Missouri Community Action Agency



Core Service Area counties include:

Bates	Cedar	Morgan
Benton	Henry	St. Clair
Cass	Hickory	Vernon

Multi-Family Housing:

- 12 properties in 7 counties
- **Grant Park** – 48 units, workforce housing

Workforce YOU

- Launched in Cass County
- 30+ community partners

Office Locations:

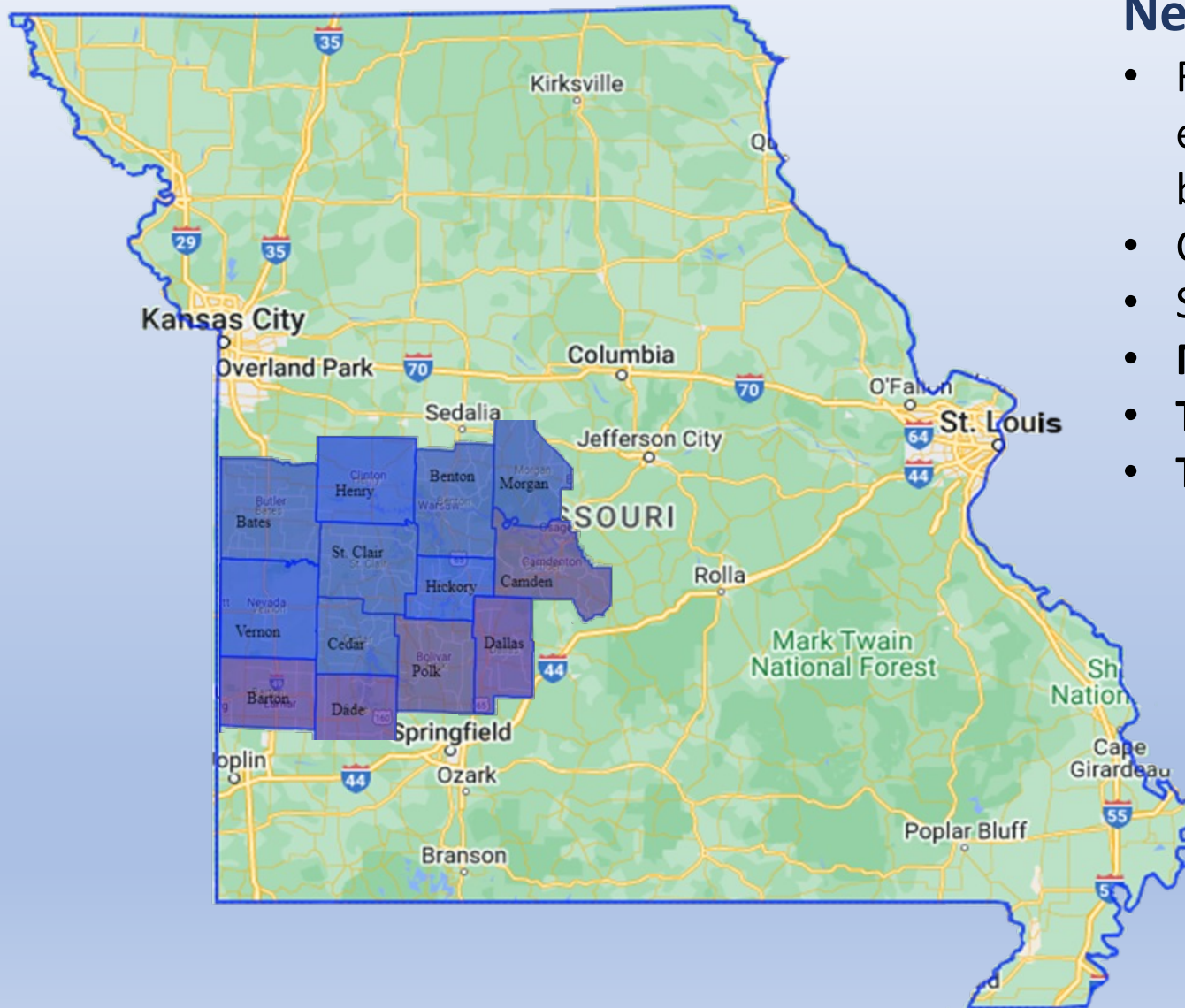
Central Office – Appleton City

Northern Hub – Raymore

Southern Hub – West Central Liston Center, El Dorado Springs



New Growth Capital & START HERE Network



New Growth Capital:

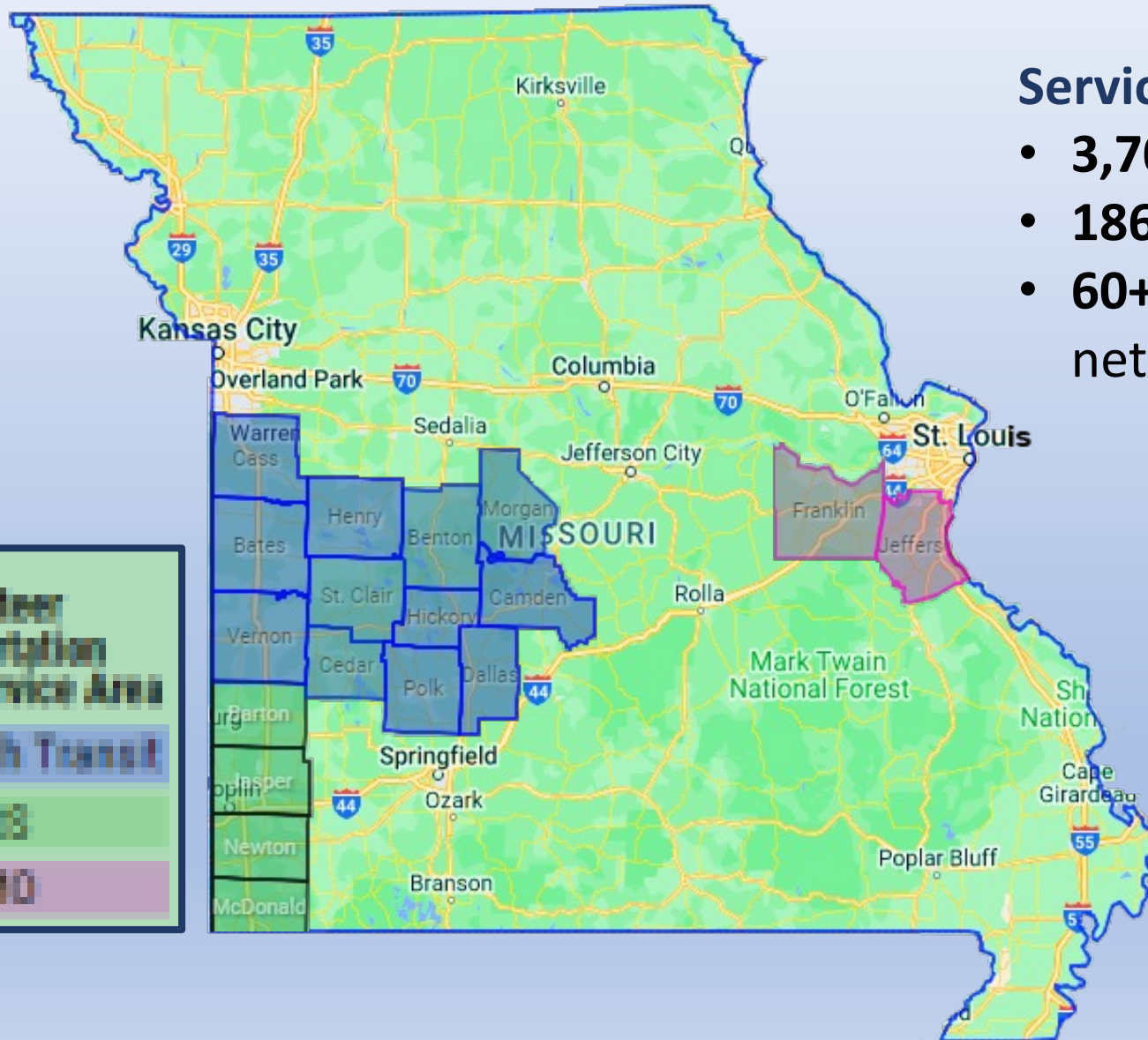
- Regional loan program - helps entrepreneurs & small businesses become bankable
- Credit building loans & trainings
- SBA & USDA Microlender
- **Microloans - \$500 to \$50,000**
- **Total Number of Loans: 105**
- **Total Amount Loaned: \$679,877.50**

START HERE Network:

- 17 partners
- Provide referrals, resources & support to clients



New Growth Transit – Current Service Area

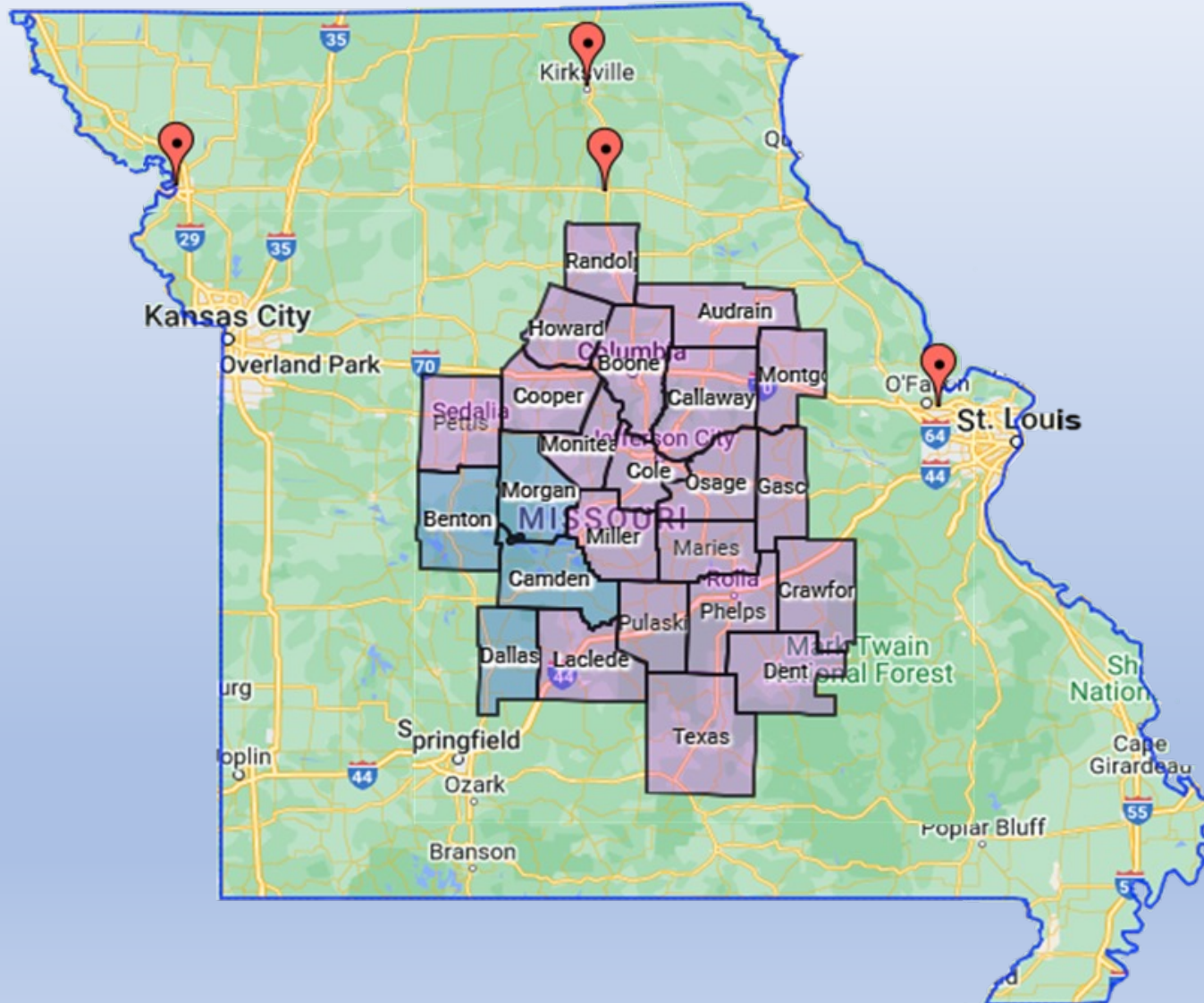


Services provided in 18 counties

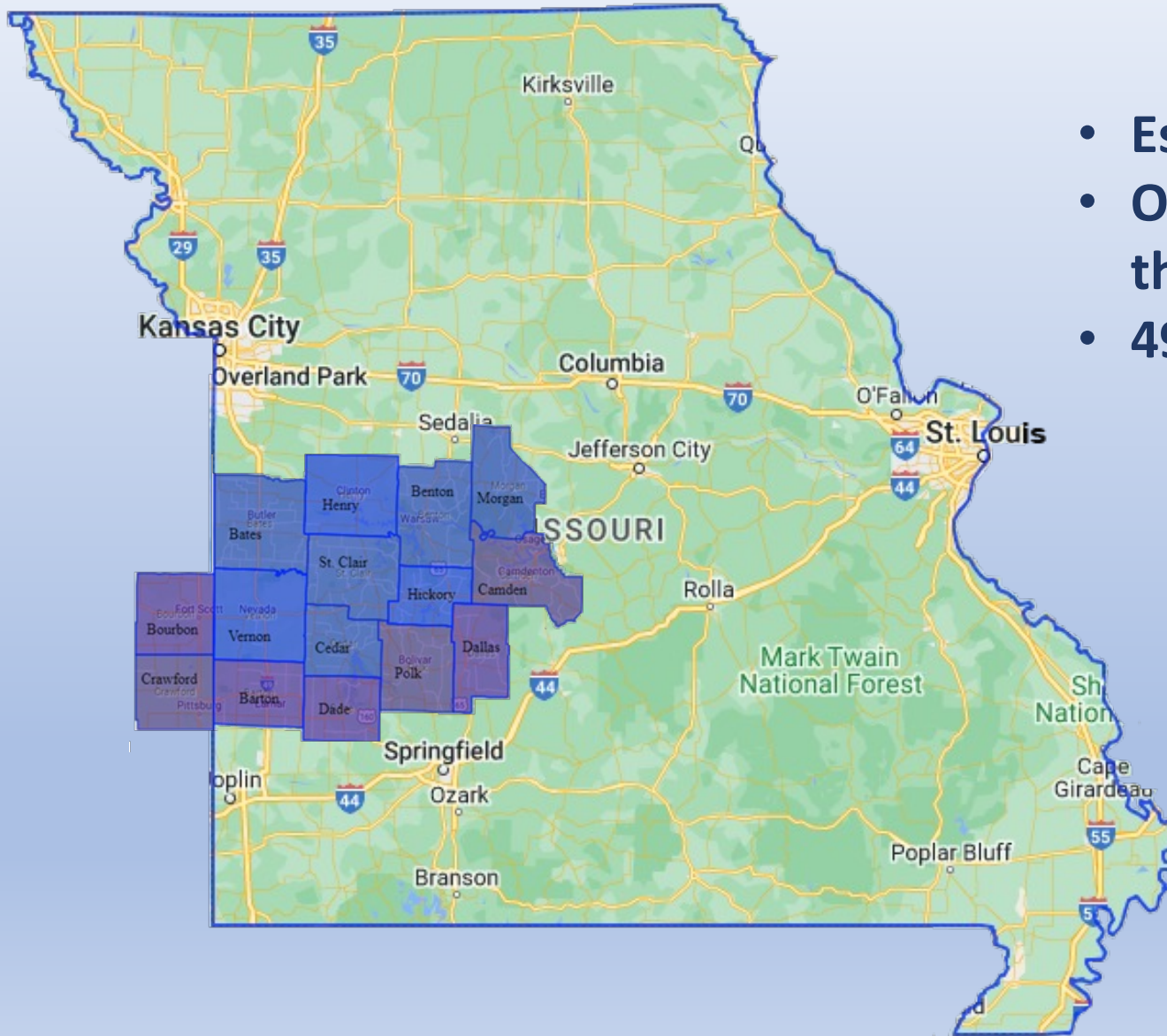
- **3,700** Trips since January 2024
- **186,856** Miles since January 2024
- **60+** Certified volunteer drivers in network



New Growth Transit – Possible Expansions



New Growth Women's Business Center



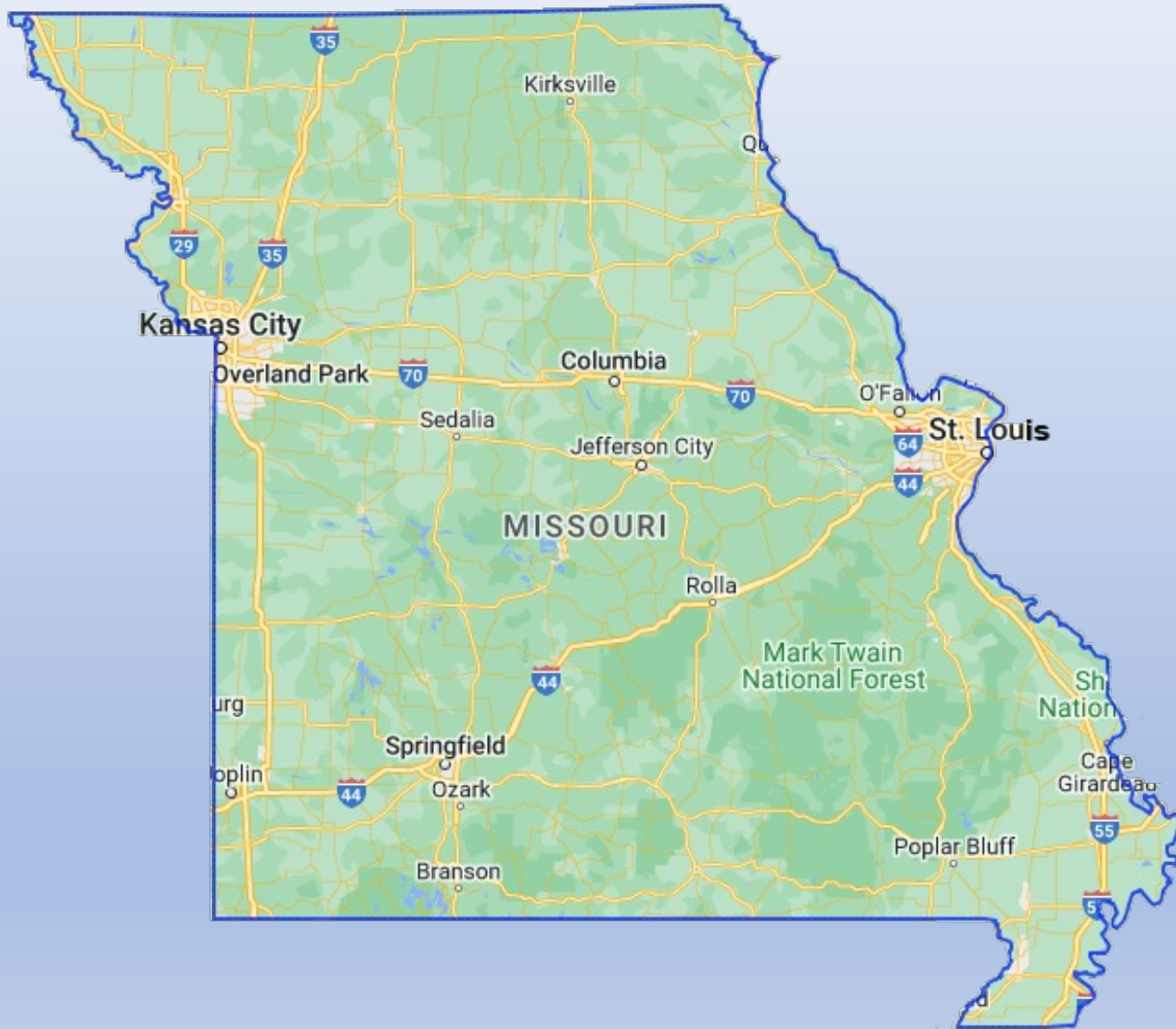
- Established in 2020
- One of 5 rural and remote WBC's in the nation
- 493 clients served to date



NEW GROWTH
WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER



Missouri Rural Development Partners

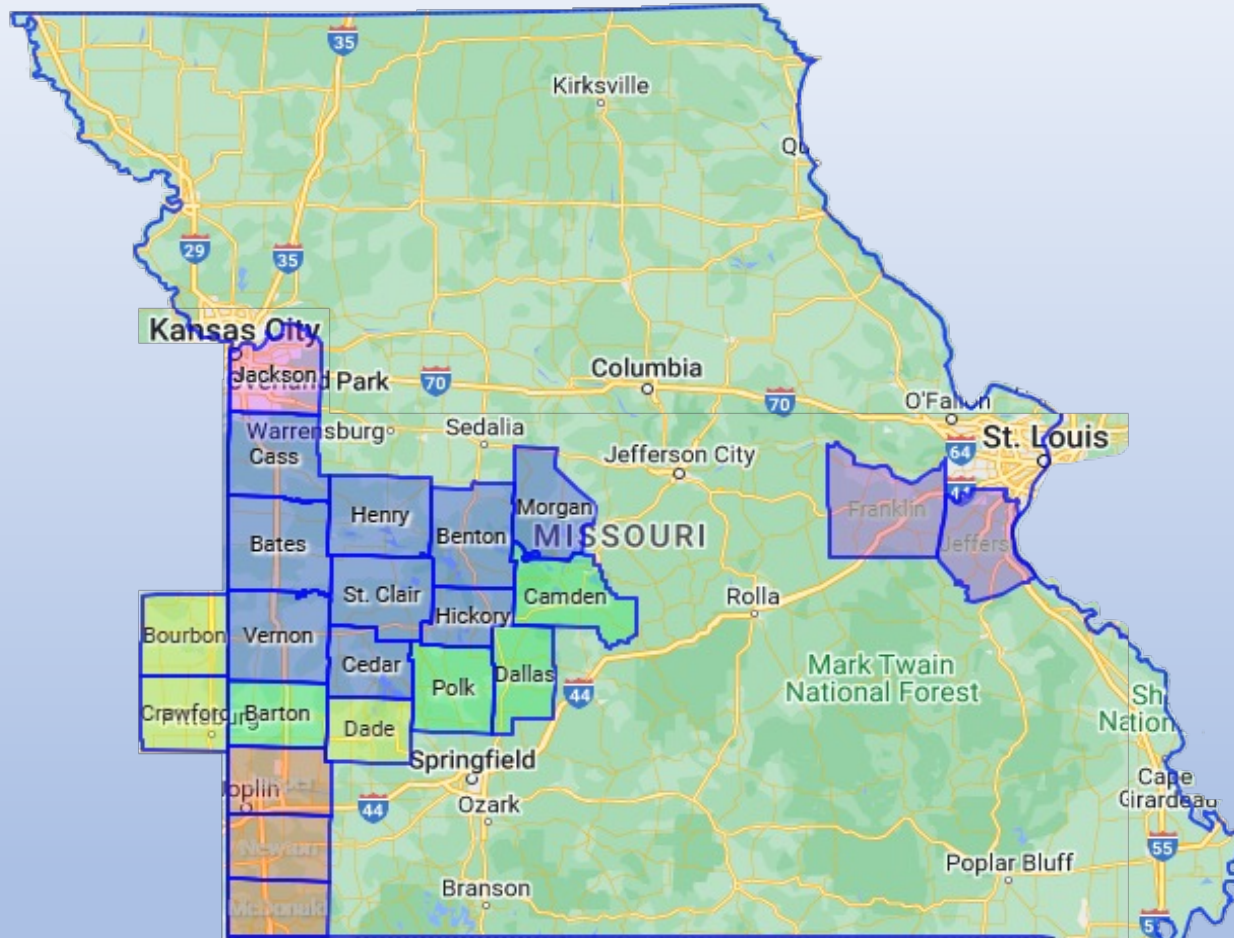


Missouri Rural Development Partners:

- 501c3
- 1 of 13 members of the Partners for Rural America
- 13 Board Members representing multiple private and public sectors across Missouri
- 20+ year organization; Re-activated in 2023
- Administered by New Growth
- USDA designated State Rural Development Council



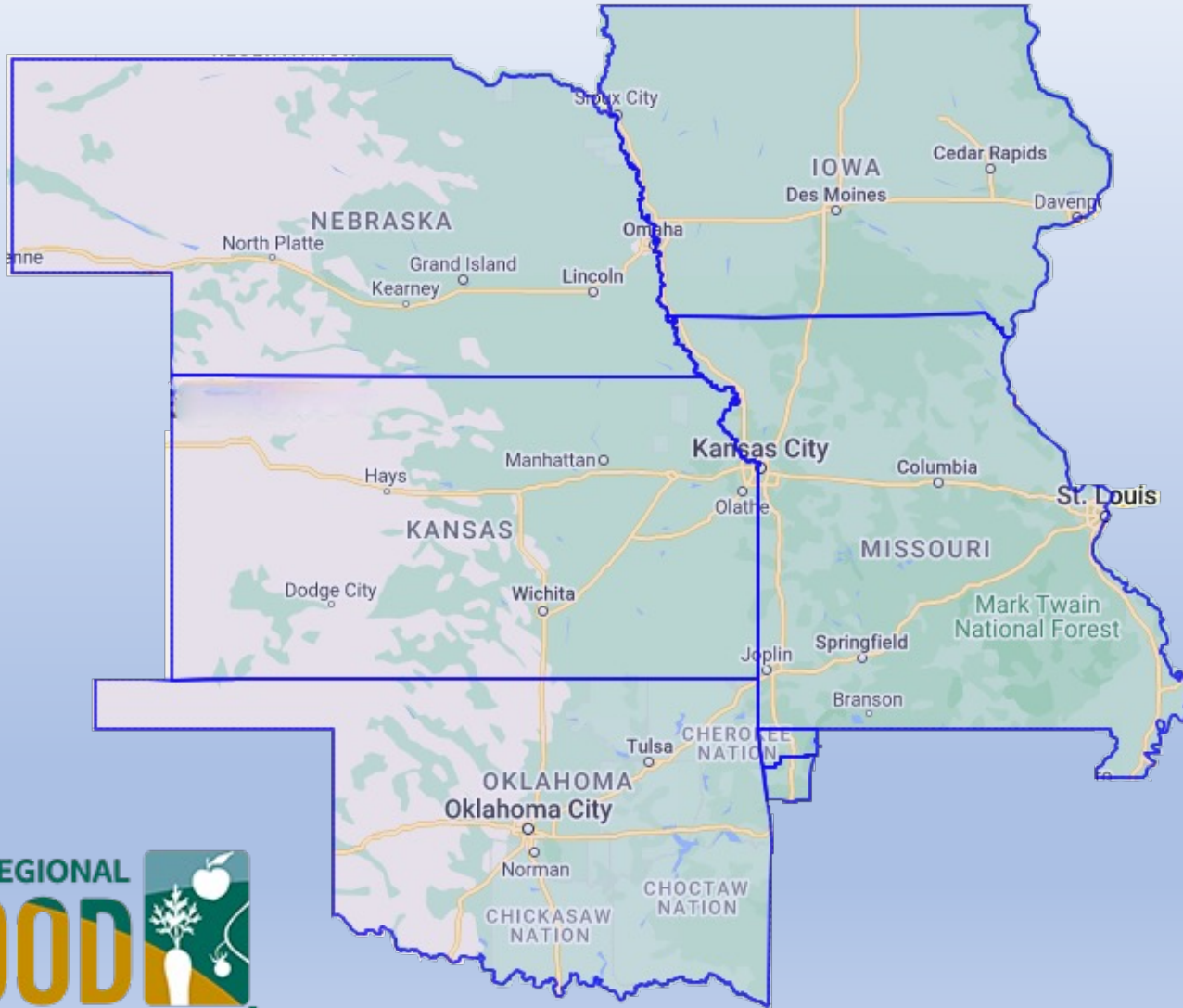
West Central - New Growth Footprint



West Central & New Growth Combined Services
West Central region
Multi-Family Housing
WBC only
NGT & WBC
NGT-EZMO
NGT - CARS



Heartland Regional Food Business Center



Purpose: to help farm and food enterprises develop local and regional food businesses and markets

- 5 states + 2 counties in Arkansas
- Co-Directors with University of Nebraska
- 33 organizations and 14 key business partners
- <https://heartlandfoodbusiness.org>



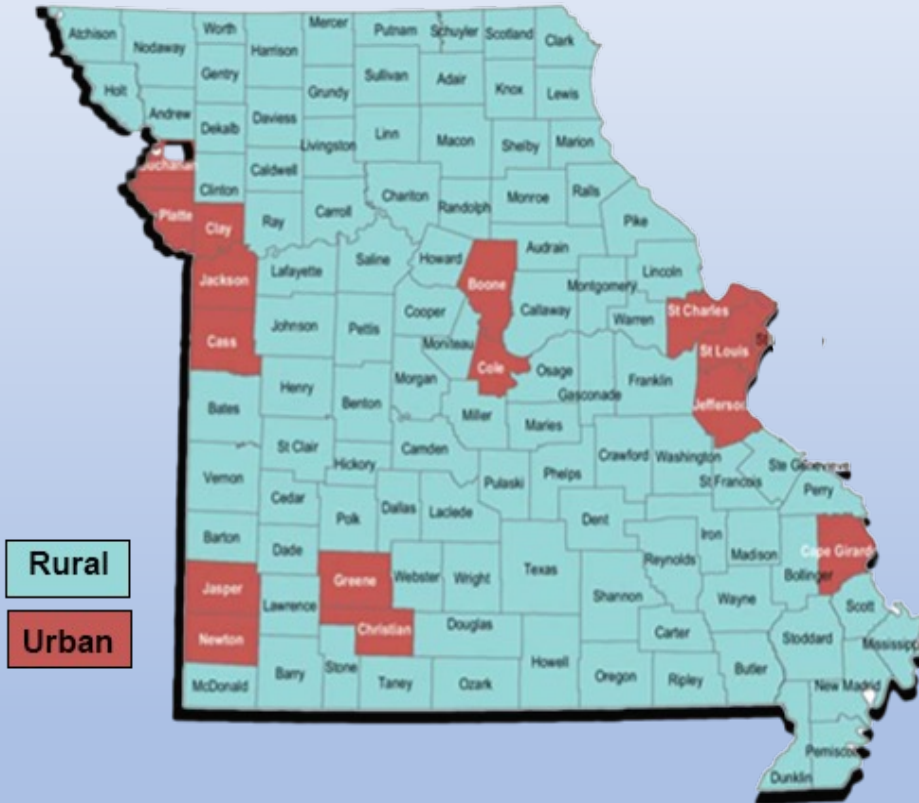
Rural LISC Report

“Catalyzing Economic Impact: Rural Missouri”



Key Takeaways

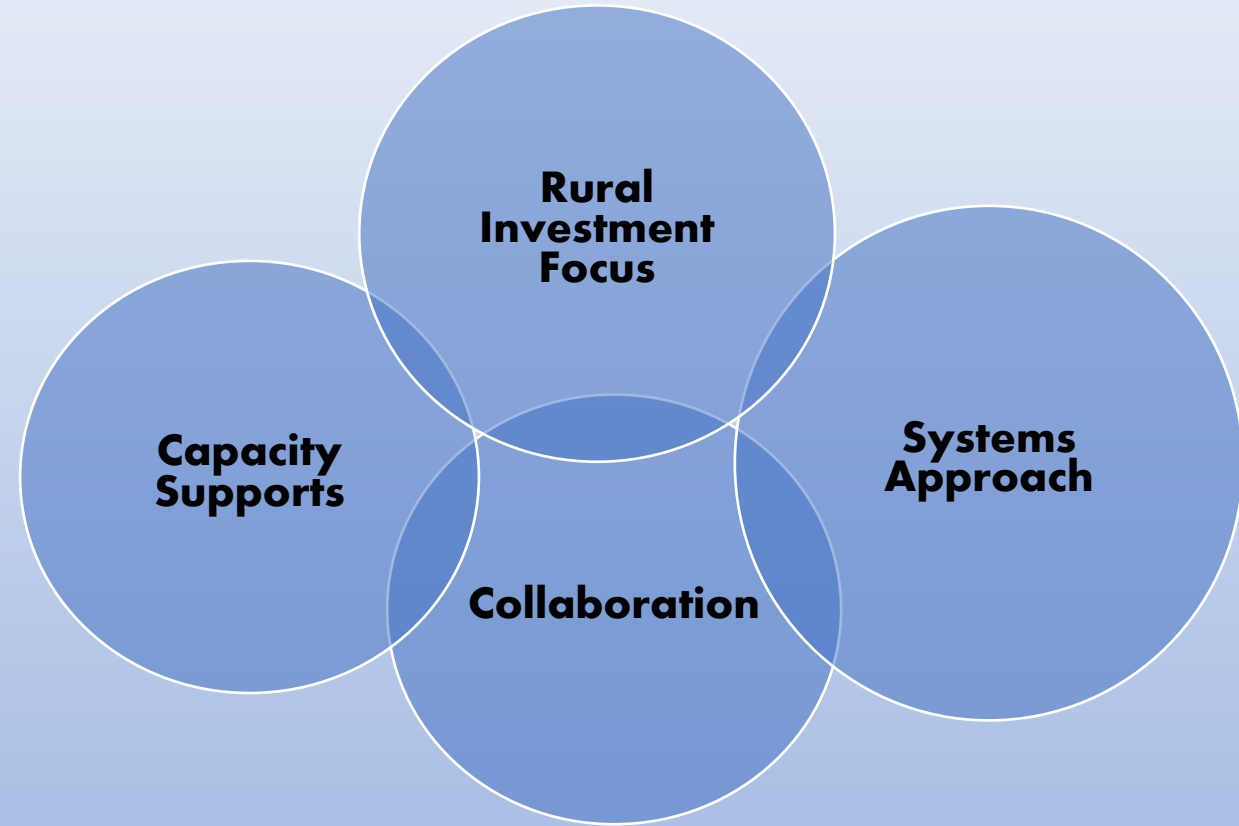
Rural/Urban County Classification Missouri, 2019



Data:

- 97% of Missouri land area is rural
- 101 Missouri counties are considered rural
- 37% of Missouri residents live in rural areas
- 5.9% increase in residents since 2003

Key Takeaways



Key Takeaways

**Create a system for alignment; create a common, statewide rural platform;
a statewide *RURAL* collaborative**

Create a coordinated *RURAL* economic development effort

Create a matching grant program to leverage additional state and local efforts

**Create an entity charged with developing and overseeing a
RURAL investment strategy**

Create advocacy structure and priorities through the rural collaborative

Develop a Public Private Partnership



What If ?

