

First Impressions



Anthony, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Larned asked for First Impressions, Anthony agreed to be its partner; Distance is just at 2 hours.
- Volunteer visitors in both communities were trained and photos were taken of Anthony in July.
- 5 visitors from Larned came to Anthony in July and August.
- Results presented on January 23, 2024.
- Anthony uses the results for further discussion and action plans.

- **Feedback:**

How does a first-time visitor view my town?

- Evaluate successes.
- Set goals and priorities for next steps.

- **If you don't agree with the observation:**

- ***Be curious:*** Why does the visitor see it this way?
- Is the observation worth considering?
- What can we do to change it– or the perception?

Curiosity: A strong desire to know or learn something.

-Oxford Living Dictionary

Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons people move to a rural community are:
 - Simpler pace of life,
 - Safety and security,
 - Affordable housing,
 - Outdoor recreation,
 - Quality schools
 - ***“A job” isn’t in the top 10 reasons.***
- Communities can work together to attract newcomers and create quality of life for everyone.

- “In small towns everyone knows each other.” **False!**
- *Get to know each other*, invite them to a newcomers’ meal.
- If you bring 7 people to a 700-citizen town every year in 10 years, you’ll have a 10% increase. It matters! It is a challenge with housing, but it is achievable.
- We are our own worst enemies. We must monitor our customer service and what we say. It matters.
- Don’t say, “You have to live here twenty years to be an insider.” And don’t act like it either.

- Housing will be freed up as the Baby Boomers retire and move closer to medical services.
- Rural communities need retirement housing (not nursing facilities, but maintenance free) to retain seniors.- *Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, University of Minnesota*



*Ben Winchester was our guest on the
First Friday Call.*

See the recording at:

<https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- 2022 KS Certified Population: 2,033 ↓ **10.4 % since 2010**
(~3.5 % if using 2020 to 2022 data)
- 2020 U.S. Census: 2,108
- 2010 U.S. Census: 2,269
- Median household income: \$51,117 **\$69,747**
- High school or GED 92.7% **91.8%**
- At least a B.S. Degree 16.0% **34.7%**
- Median Age: 38.4 years **37.3 years**
- Persons 65 and Over 18.7% **17.2%**

Blue: Kansas Comparison Data

- Moved since Last Year (2021):

13.4%

15.7%

Consider the margin of error. For example, the Census lists 1,912 lived in the same house, but give a +/- 193 margin of error for that total.

- Poverty rate

13.1%

12.0%

(% of people below poverty line)

Race/Ethnicity

White: 90.9%

Black: 0.2%

Asian: 0.2%

Other: 0%

Not Hispanic or Latino:
94.9%

American Indian: 1.1%

Native Hawaiian/Other

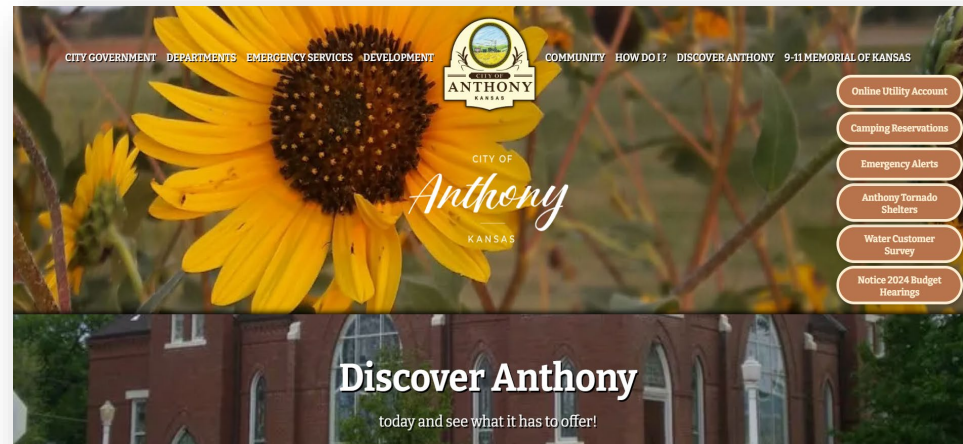
Pacific Islander: 0%

Two or more races: 2.5%

Hispanic or Latino:
5.1%

Website

- Anthony presents itself very well online. It was easy to get information and it did reflect what was seen in the community for the most part.
- There were some items on the website that visitors didn't see in person because of lack of signage or directions.



- There was some confusion about the details related to the hot air balloon festival found online – was it in May or September?
- City of Anthony website was at the top of the search results.
- Would be nice to see more history of the community on the city's website.



Sunflower Balloonfest

The Balloon Festival is a three-day event and always includes tons of fun activities, like hot air balloon rides, a parade, helicopter rides, a kite festival, car show, and more. Most of the balloon-related activities will be held at the Anthony Municipal Airport, but they'll also have lots of fun activities and things to do in the town of Anthony, Kansas during the festival.

Sunflower Balloon Fest 2021 is September 17, 18 & 19 located at the Anthony Municipal Airport.

[WEBSITE](#)

“Five-Minute” Impression

- The hospital, high school, and lake were the first things people noticed before entering town and they were impressive.
- Street signs seemed faded and there was no directional signage to point to certain spots in the city.
- Great rental housing development!
- Downtown looked nice – one side appeared newer than the other and the buildings were empty.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- The hotel looks new as you first enter, but then appears empty and a little run down. The Shopko building also appeared empty.
- The fenced Memorial Park in the downtown area appears to be nice.
- A McDonald’s in a community this size is great.
- Some felt that their five-minute impression had an industrial feel. Some bright spots and dull spots scattered throughout.
- Driving by the school and hospital on your way in sets a high expectation for the standard of living in town.
- Murals and parks were appreciated as were the number of businesses in the business district.



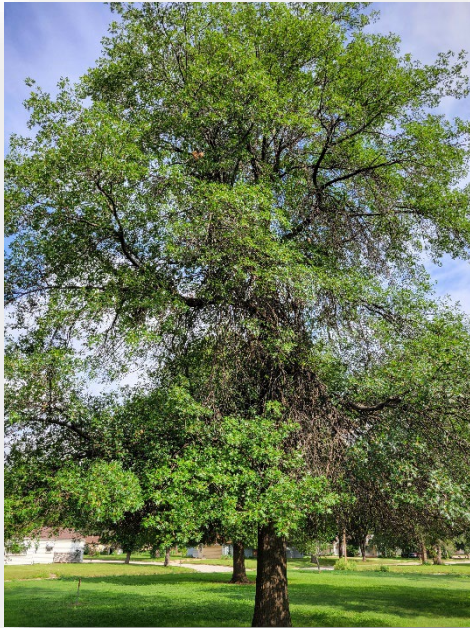
“Five-Minute” Impression

- The entry signs were nice. One entrance had a picket fence and Welcome to Anthony sign which was a favorite. Another entrance, no signs were observed, though the sale barn creates an industrial feel there.
- Day-to-day necessities available at the north entrance.
- Can “Welcome to Anthony” be painted on the old grain silo in the field?



“Five-Minute” Impression

- A lot of trees along the streets and highways.
- Some potholes and curbs in disrepair seen in areas coming in from the north, specifically around the Chinese restaurant and Shopko buildings.



Downtown Business Area

- Visitors were made aware of the fire that took place about 16 years ago which explains the side of the street that appears newer.
- Wider variety of businesses on the older side of the street, though some needed signage to show they were open. The flower shop could use a newer sign. Other business signs were impressive.
- The murals were appealing.
- The theater could use some paint, but the building was very unique.



Downtown Business Area



- Some visitors encountered extreme temperatures when visiting (110F) which helped them quickly notice a lack of shade while shopping.
- They did notice a small number of buildings with awnings, but zero trees.
- The downtown was very quiet. Would music help?
- Maybe there's an opportunity for some outdoor seating here.

Downtown Business Area

- Some of the businesses observed during the visit included a lot of places to eat.
- Petunia's was a cute business and served a good breakfast.
- Kristy's Kafe had great food for lunch.
- The old-fashioned soda fountain at the drug store was a hit.
- The beauty shop had a nice selection of products and shoes.

- The sewing shop, flower shop, Pack and Flavor, and Country at Heart all had a good selection of merchandise.



Downtown Business Area

- The Crown Circle didn't have a very big selection.
- On a Saturday afternoon there were some stores open – the smoke shop, a restaurant, two home décor businesses and a clothing store. A good variety of products, but not much in the way of products for men. Maybe there's an opportunity to carry some men's items while they are out shopping with their spouses.
- Lots of food options downtown – this was appreciated.
- Some office/service type businesses were also noted.



Downtown Business Area



- As far as customer service was concerned, Petunia's had great customer service and for most, Kristy's was also friendly.
- The flower shop customer service was great and they let visitors use their restrooms.
- The drugstore, Country at Heart, Pack and Flavor, sewing shop and beauty shop were also all friendly.



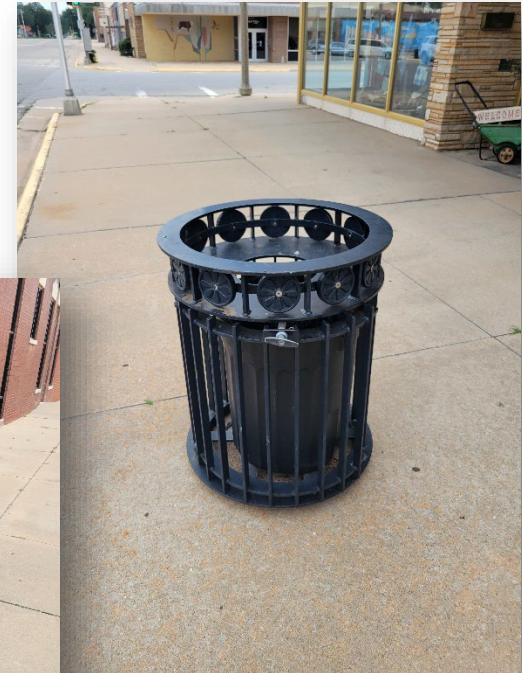
Downtown Business Area

- Visitors loved Higher Ground and The Ark. They were told about the concept and visitors loved what they were doing.
- While some stores offered greetings, others did not greet customers. Visitors to the Crown Circle were not greeted at all and the clerk didn't look up from their phone.
- For some visitors at Kristy's, some were not greeted, but once they were seated their waiter was great.
- An observation about the people encountered in general (not customer service related) they were all very friendly with each other, saying hello, holding doors, but did not interact with some of the visitors.



Public Amenities Downtown

- Some didn't see any amenities downtown.
- Others saw some nice benches and trash cans.
- The benches were very nice.
- No public restrooms, drinking fountains or public wi-fi networks were seen.



Downtown Parking and More

- Plenty of parking was available downtown and it was easy to walk to multiple locations by parking in one spot.
- Buildings were impressive, but there's a lack of landscaping/streetscaping.



- Noted were dollar/discount type stores, convenience stores, groceries and a hardware/lumber store.
- Some indicated that they observed 3 grocery stores.
- A medical supply store was also observed.
- There was a NAPA Auto Parts store, beauty shops, and a Pizza Ranch.
- The other shopping areas seemed to be more of a consumption district with fast food options. This was very visual and easily accessible, though not an attractive area.



- *A drive-by is not how industry will find you, check with your local Eco Devo director to make sure your site is listed on LocationOne @ Kansas Department of Commerce.*

Observation:

- The industrial area seemed to intermingle with downtown.
- A sectionalized, official industrial park was not noticed.
- The south part of town featured a huge sale barn with farmland around it.
- The space around the Co-Op in the middle of town could perhaps be better utilized as there were quite a few lots full of machinery.

- The hospital outside of town was very impressive and appeared to be brand new.
- It was a wonderful facility and clearly visible. This is a great selling point for the community.
- The hospital also offers non-emergency care.



Health Care Services



- Visitors did observe two dental offices, Greene Vision, the County Health Department, a mental health center, chiropractic services and a wellness center.
- Most of these facilities looked clean, professional, and welcoming. The mental health facility didn't feel as welcoming as the others.
- Visitors mentioned they'd be comfortable living in Anthony whatever their health needs might be.

- An assisted living facility and a nursing home were both observed not very far from each other.
- Signs for these facilities were also noted.



- Only 3 for sale signs were seen during visits.
- There was a variety of housing, just not currently on the market.
- Most people in any income level would have housing options here if more was on the market as there was a good mix.
- Quite a few unique fixer-upper type of homes that could turn out really nice.
- The area of Anthony Ave. and Pearl St. seemed to be the nicest neighborhood.
- Most neighborhoods had an abundance of trees.



- The houses looked more well-kept the farther they were from downtown.
- A few condemned homes were seen.
- A lot of housing looked to be built in the 1960s-70s with not much in the way of new housing.
- There were a large number of branches piled up next to the street in some neighborhoods.

- For rentals – Penn Place had several units that were impressive. Could not tell if they were low-income properties or not.
- The number of individual rental properties was low, but there was an abundance of apartment units which was impressive.
- The Housing Authority is such a great asset to the community to help find housing/rentals.



		Kansas
• Occupied Housing Units:	799	1.15m
• Owner Occupied:	71%	65.3%
• Renter Occupied:	29%	34.7%
• Vacant Housing Units	407	124k
- For rent:	151	
- For sale:	0	
- Sold, not occupied:	37	
- Seasonal/recreational:	60	
- All other vacants:	147	
• Average Household Size:	2.6	2.48

Blue = Kansas Comparison Data

Data Source: Census.gov 2020 Census
& ACS 5-year Narrative Profile (Household Size) - retrieved on or
before 11/1/2023

Kansas

- Average Travel Time to Work: 15.5 mins 19.6 mins
- Households without a computer*: 63 (7.9%) 45k (3.8%)
- Households without an internet subscription: 190 (23.7%) 108k (9.2%)

* Includes smartphones, tablets, other wireless devices

- Kansas Housing Corporation is a resource to find out about housing grants and other tools for homeowners and renters.
- Also has some resources to address homelessness.

<https://kshousingcorp.org/>



- Head Start at the lake, preschool, a daycare at the Methodist Church, 2 grade schools, and a high school by the hospital were observed. All looked to be in nice condition.
- One visitor mentioned that his wife felt the elementary school looks like a place she'd like to work.
- Anthony outwardly projects a strong education system.
- Visitors felt the high school itself looked new.



- When searching online, one can find information about the Head Start, but in person there weren't a lot of signs to point people that way.
- The high school and middle school have 5-star ratings.
- There were several sources online pointing out the impressive educational system.
- Others felt that research online shows that the schools do not quite meet the state expectations in reading and math.



Comments:

- Little Lambs Daycare, Head Start, Blessed Beginnings were noted.
- No signs were seen in the community relating to childcare other than the schools.
- Online searches indicated there were a few daycares or preschools available.

Harper County Data: Childcare centers- 2 , Licensed family/group childcare homes- 9, Preschools- 2.

- Children under 6 with all parents in labor force: 255; Desired capacity of county's childcare facilities: 128
- **Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential Childcare need: 50%**
- Contact ks.childcareaware.org to access local childcare specialists.
785-823-3343

Source <https://ks.childcareaware.org/data-research/> Retrieved from internet 11/7/23

- Several churches were seen in town: Nazarene, Pentecostal, Christian, Episcopal, Baptist, and Catholic.
- All buildings and grounds seemed to be in nice condition.
- Thrift and coffee shops in town were faith-based.
- There are signs all over town advertising Christian religious groups and places.



- The arts center, High Ground, Leather Bound, and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program were observed.
- A Lions Club sign was seen but couldn't tell if it was very active.
- Some could not tell if any other groups were very active or had community projects.
- Anthony PRIDE, Kiwanis, and Veterans organizations were found during the online search.
- The 9/11 Memorial park, and murals have some evidence of civic clubs working in town.





- The signage around and at the entrances of the lake was great.
- Street signs were in bad shape – very faded and difficult to read.
- No signage for the pool, library, baseball fields, or Reflection Ridge were seen – could probably use some signs there.
- The residential roads were very rough. One visitor even hit their head on their car window due to how rough the streets were.
- Some of the dirt roads at the south of town could use some maintenance.
- Some potholes observed in neighborhoods.

- Some identified city hall but were unable to visit at the time.
- It was closed during some visits, but it was noted that the building was well maintained.



- Police and fire protection were observed by some.
- Others did not see a fire or police station and thought maybe better signage could be put in place.
- The city website does have information about police and fire, however some of the details seemed outdated and links didn't always work.



Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department Home Contact Us search GO

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt

Kansas Insurance Department
420 SW 9th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678
Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only)
[Email Us](#) | Phone: 785-296-3071

ISO Public Protection Classification

Most U.S. insurers of home and business properties use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

PPC Program: <https://www.isomitigation.com/program-works/how-the-ppc-program-works.html>

A community's PPC depends on:

1. Emergency communications systems, including facilities for the public to report fires, staffing, training, certification of telecommunicators, and facilities for dispatching fire departments
2. The fire department, including equipment, staffing, training, and geographic deployment of fire companies
3. The water supply system, including the inspection and flow testing of hydrants and a careful evaluation of



- The library summer reading program was part of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
- The library was well-kept.
- The old library building was beautiful and seems to have an art installation.
- The new library felt a bit out of the way.
- Some felt that customer service at the library could have been better during their visit.



- Visitors had a difficult time finding the pool and the ball fields.
- Two parks were noted.
- No walking trails were found.
- The pool was small but clean. It wasn't immediately apparent if it was a public pool or not because there were people swimming but no lifeguards on duty.
- Pool and park gave a family friendly atmosphere feel to the neighborhood.



- Some felt the 9/11 Memorial park was clean and complimented the community. Others felt the grounds were not well-kept. The memorial itself is lovely, but visitors were confused about the story of Anthony and 9/11.
- The baseball complex was expansive, but maintenance was lacking.
- Some of the playground equipment and benches at the parks was older.



- Was there a community slogan? If so, visitors didn't see it.
- The website did have a tagline of "Active, Attractive, and Alive" which may be the community's slogan, but it's not connected to a specific attraction or event in town.
- Recreation is the community's biggest asset. The lake is wonderful, the golf course is right by the lake which is great.
- The gun club seems active and had an event going on during one visit.
- Visitors hope to visit the hot air balloon festival sometime.
- There's also the Anthony Historical Museum.
- Other than coming into town to eat, visitors felt if they were spending time at the lake, they wouldn't have much reason to come into town.

- Significant events include a rodeo in a nearby community which might draw some people into town.
- The Sunflower Balloon Festival, but please update the information on the city website in case that's how people find out about it. The details there were 2 years old.
- Visitors also noted the campgrounds and frisbee golf course.
- There was a bowling alley found, but visitors couldn't tell if it was in business.
- The museum probably sees success in drawing some visitors. They might benefit from making the outdoor exhibits a little more organized. One visitor felt if it wasn't for the museum signage it could be mistaken for a storage lot.

Visitor's Center or Chamber

- The Chamber was not easy to find and needed some signage visible from the street – some felt.
- Others said the signage was great.
- The Chamber did have some brochures about the city and surrounding areas.
- It was only open 1.5 days a week and some visitors arrived when it was closed so they were not able to get any information.



What would bring you back?

- Higher Ground, Leather Bound, Rexall's ice cream fountain, Petunia's, Kristy's, Lake Anthony, Jmac Flowers and Gifts, Country at Heart, Pack and Flavor, the beauty shop, and the golf course would be worth visiting again for some.
- Some said they would come back to Kristy's if they were in the area and may come back for the lake or balloon festival.
- Kristy's has a "world famous" baked potato pizza that would be worth trying.

- People seemed friendly.
- The parks were nice.
- Great variety of shops in town – lots of businesses downtown.
- The hospital.
- The strong entrepreneurial spirit.
- Community wealth and industry represented (Atmos, Home Lumber, Community Garden).
- The lake
- The balloon festival.
- City pool was well-kept and showed pride in the quality of life here.
- Housing locator resources.

- Signage around town is not in good condition.
- Overgrown weeds in some areas of town.
- Empty buildings.
- Not much in the way of available housing if someone wanted to move here.
- Some lack of businesses downtown – the newer buildings rebuilt after the fire?
- Lack of clothing options for men.
- Some of the biggest community assets are outside of town: school, lake, hospital. Upkeep on external assets is the priority while internal assets are suffering.
- Some felt the obstacles they observed were small and could be remedied with small improvements.
- One visitor felt like Anthony was simultaneously full of life and dying. There are people and events, but the town itself doesn't seem to be growing: empty buildings, no new developments, some larger businesses lost.

What will you remember?

- Good food.
- Nice people.
- Lots of potential.
- The need for more signage to point out assets.
- The lake and unique neighborhoods around the lake.
- Rough north end of downtown with one of the old church building signs talking about Hitler?
- The 9/11 memorial and that the city is known for the balloon fest.
- The museums and Chamber were closed during some visits, so they would remember they were unable to go into those places.

- Remember that potential new residents are researching before they come. Use your City and School websites to highlight your many assets.
- What are you proud of? Show us online.
- Tell your positive stories. Make your residents want to contribute to a positive story.

N o o n e c a n d o e v e r y t h i n g ,
b u t e v e r y o n e c a n d o s o m e t h i n g .

Thank you to our volunteer visitors.

Set Next Steps:

- Start talking! Find ways to discuss what you heard in small groups of every kind.

Contact me if you need resources or have questions:

Jan Steen

Community Vitality Specialist

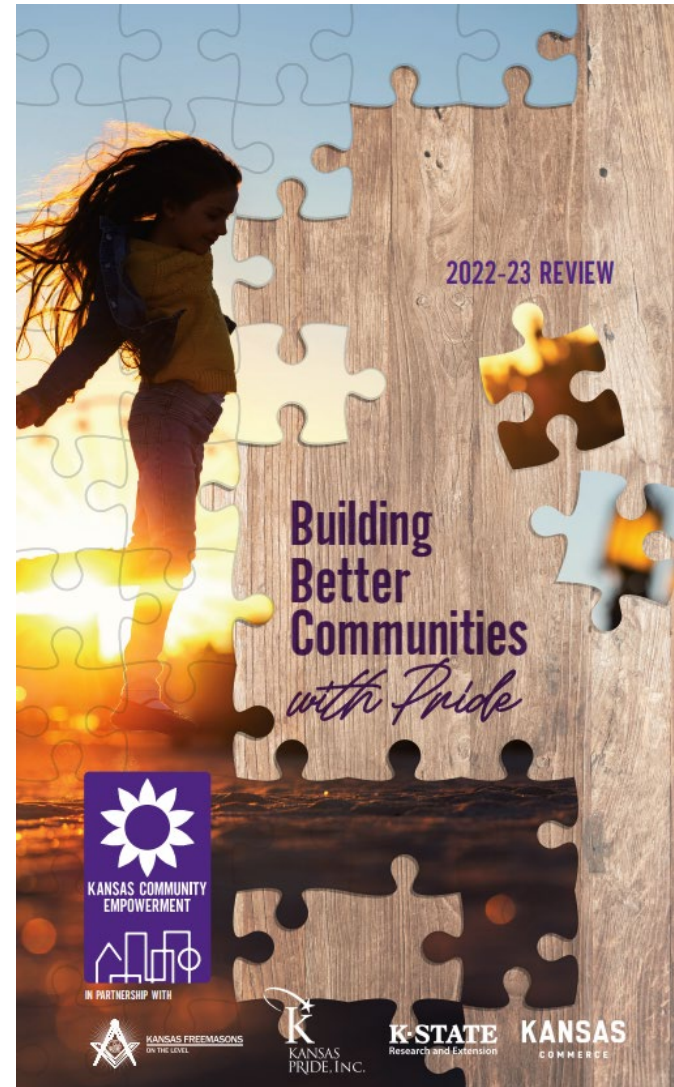
Kansas Community Empowerment Co-Coordinator, K-State Research and Extension

785.532.5840 jmsteen@ksu.edu

Kansas Community Empowerment

<http://kce.k-state.edu>

- Local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future and volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.



Youth Community Perceptions

- Youth-Based Community Assessment.
- Gives communities insights on how youth see their community.
- Creates opportunities for youth voices in the community.
- Allows youth to become involved in local government and community process



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Grant Writing Classes and Support

Contact

KSRECV@ksu.edu

to participate.



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5 GRANT WRITING RESOURCES

K-State Research and Extension provides resources to help you write and submit successful grant proposals to improve lives, livelihoods and communities across Kansas.

- 1 ONLINE GRANT WRITING CLASSES**
Class alum reported receiving \$28 million in successful grants. 
- 2 A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL GRANT DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT COURSE**
An 8-week course dedicated to helping you complete a fundable proposal. 
- 3 A LIST OF CONTRACT GRANT WRITERS**
Professionals willing and ready to write grants on a contract basis.
- 4 SUPPORT FOR KANSAS PRIDE COMMUNITIES**
Excellent resources for those wanting to bring more to their communities.
- 5 ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT BY K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS**
Our professionals are prepared to help you find grants and review your grant proposals.

Small Business and Community Development

- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am**

Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.

- [Register here](#)

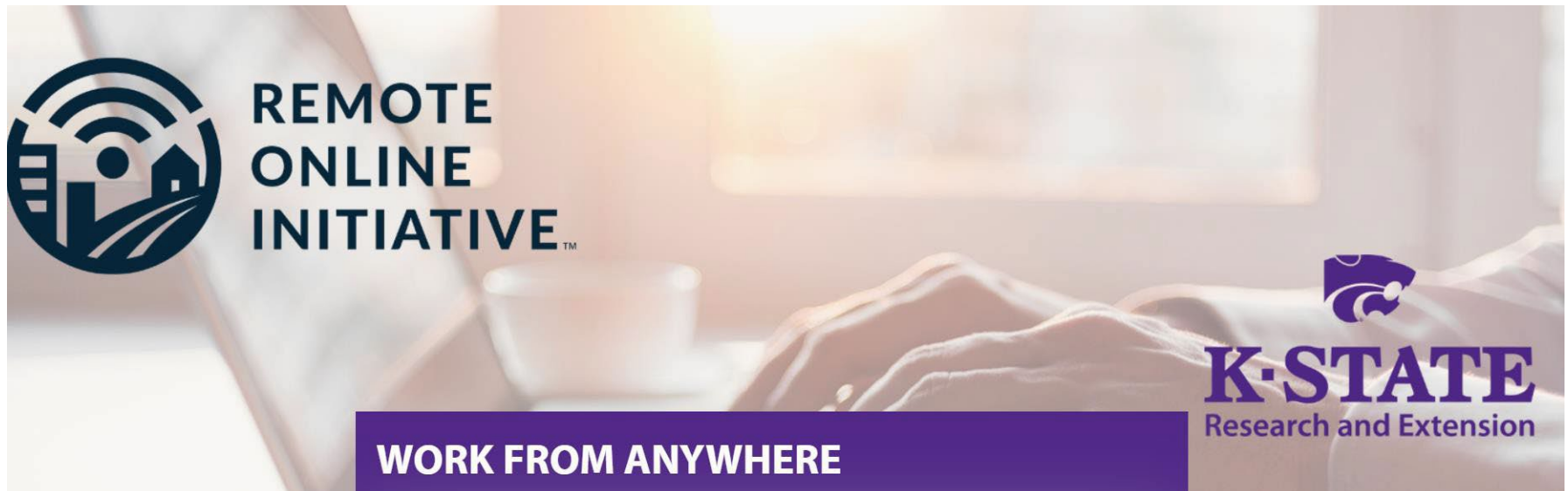
- Previous calls are recorded at

<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- Now people have a choice, and millions of them are planning to move.
- **“The pivot to remote work is the biggest, fastest transformation of the labor market since the World War II mobilization.”**
- **Major cities will see the biggest out-migration:** 20.6% of those planning to move are currently based in a major city.
- **People are seeking less expensive housing:** Altogether, **more than half** (52.5%) are planning to move to a house that is significantly more affordable than their current home.
- **People are moving beyond regular commute distances:** 54.7% of people are moving over two hours away or more from their current location, which is beyond daily or even weekly commuting distances for most.

[UpWork October, 2020 <https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move>, retrieved from Internet 12-12-20, UpWork October, 2020](https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move)

- Kansas Remote Online Initiative
 - Certified Remote Work Professional
 - Certified Remote Work Leader
- *Certification in 4-weeks*
- kansasremotework.com



Rural Grocery/KS Healthy Food Initiative

- **Goal:** Increase access to healthy food and to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.
- Technical assistance and financing to develop new or renovate fresh food retail in underserved communities throughout Kansas.

<http://kansashealthyfood.org/>

