

First Impressions

Delia, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Vermillion asked for First Impressions, Delia agreed to be its partner; 58 min drive.
- I trained the volunteers about the visit and survey on May 7. I took photos on May 28.
- Two visitors on May 24, met with Delia volunteers, one visitor came on August 6.
- Results are presented in person on October 9.
- Delia uses the results for further discussion and action plans.

Why: First Impressions?

- **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

We need to change the narrative about rural.

- Rural is *changing*, not dying.
- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- Rural is in the middle of ***everywhere***. You live one place, work another and play another. With transportation and internet, it’s all accessible to you.

Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- 46% of Kansas households moved between 1995-1999
- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons they come 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 have to 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.

- 75% of rural homeowners are Baby Boomers and older. 30% are over 75.
- 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
March 1, 2019 First Friday Call.*

See the recording at:

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

- 2019 Estimate 157 2010 Census: 154
(up 1.9% since 2010 **KS= +2.1%**)
- Median household income is \$55,625 (**\$62,087**)
- 94.2% high school or GED, 16.3% college educated,
91.8% HS or equivalency, KS 34.0% college education,
- Median Age 30.9 years **(37.2)**
- Poverty rate 21.7% **(KS=11.4%)**

- <18 years 22%
- 18-64 years: 55%
- >65 years: 22%

Age

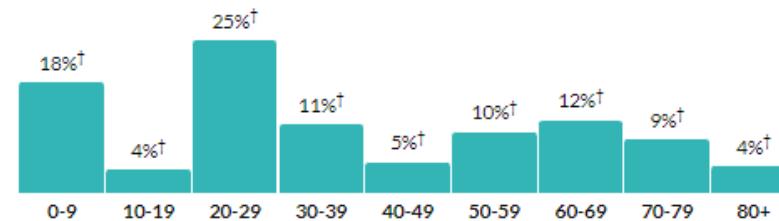
30.9

Median age

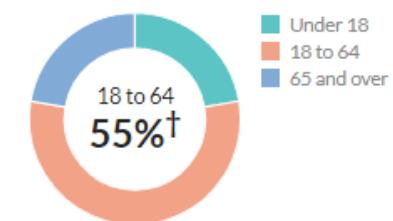
about three-quarters of the figure in
the Topeka, KS Metro Area: 39.9

about 80 percent of the figure in
Kansas: 36.7

Population by age range



Population by age category



<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2017525-delia-ks/>

Retrieved from internet 9-24-21

Web Search:

Comments:

Best info on Delia was from Kansas PRIDE president who sent list of businesses and contact numbers. This was especially helpful in making appointments in advance to talk to mayor and volunteers.

Web Search:

1. Wikipedia
2. MapQuest
3. “Best Places to Live in Delia, KS”
4. City-Data profile
5. Livability.com profile

Web Search:

6. [Lost Kansas Communities](#) by Kelsi Horner, Chapman Center for Rural Studies, KSU History Department, November, 2011.

Delia, even though it may be labeled a “lost town,” is fighting the label, battling to bring their town back to life. The history of Delia runs deep. Building upon the determination instilled by their forefather, who prevailed in the debate over the town’s location, citizens of the little town might gather strength and win the battle.

<https://lostkscommunities.omeka.net/items/show/68>

Retrieved from Internet 9/24/21

Facebook

1. Make a plan,
2. Execute the plan,
3. Evaluate the plan.

For community developers:

At every step:

COMMUNICATE the plan.



Delia Community PRIDE

@DeliaCommunityPRIDE · Nonprofit Organization

Send Message

Home About Photos Reviews More

About See All

412 Nora Ave Delia, KS 66418

Delia Community PRIDE is an organization in Delia, Kansas that promotes community involvement and improvement. Meetings are held monthly on the 2nd W... See More

517 people like this including 3 of your friends

546 people follow this

25 people checked in here

<http://www.thekrcf.org/existing-funds>

(785) 771-3715

Create Post

Photo/Video Check in Tag Friends

Delia Community PRIDE September 19 at 7:41 PM

More Delia Days Pics!!! Thanks again to everyone that volunteered to make this year's event a success!! Delia Earlybirds 4H Club do such an awesome job running the kids games and they helped us out by operating the concession stand this year also.

A photograph of a man wearing a cowboy hat and a plaid shirt, standing on a stage and playing a white electric guitar. He is positioned in front of a microphone and some equipment.

Facebook

4. *Engage and acknowledge others.*
5. *Celebrate Success*

For the win... Delia Community PRIDE!



Delia Community PRIDE

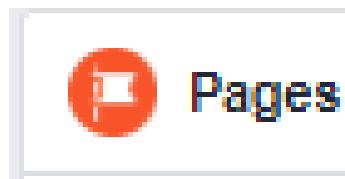
September 19 at 7:41 PM ·

...

More Delia Days Pics!!! Thanks again to everyone that volunteered to make this year's event a success!! Delia Earlybirds 4H Club do such an awesome job running the kids games and they helped us out by operating the concession stand this year also.

Facebook

An opportunity for co-marketing.



-  **Delia, Kansas**
239 like this
Delia is a city in Jackson County, Kansas, United States. As of the 2010 census, the city population was 169. History Delia was...
-  **Delia Community PRIDE**
517 like this
Jaime Menon and 3 other friends like this
Delia Community PRIDE is an organization in Delia, Kansas tha...
-  **Delia Charter School**
2 like this
-  **Hilltop Hideaway Retreat**
73 like this
Hilltop Hideaway Retreat is the perfect getaway in the beautiful countryside of Delia, Kansas. This rustic yet elegant cabin will...
-  **Delia Thrift Store**
323 like this
David Key and 2 other friends like this
Clothes, house-wares, shoes, toys, baby items, knick knacks, fu...
-  **City of Delia**
Page · 121 like this
The City of Delia, founded in 1905, is a quiet little town that prides itself on community involvement.
-  **Hilltop Hideaway Retreat, Delia, KS**
1 likes this
-  **Delia Rural Fire District #5**
429 like this
Linda Dohrman likes this
Provide Fire, Rescue and EMS services to the Delia Area and M...
-  **Boro 919 DELIAKS WORLD**
Page

Co-Marketing Example

Collaboration between Businesses:



On Wednesday morning, Sam Capoun, owner of Mesa Collection, 216 Main St. in Maple Hill, shows off one of her bags she sells. Capoun has coordinated with other local businesses to adjust hours to align and help drive more customers into the small Kansas town. Evert Nelson/The Capital-Journal



Mike Babb clears the final bits of snow in front of his restaurant, Flint Hills Smokehouse, on Wednesday morning. coordinated his hours to align with those of Mesa Collection's so that visitors to Maple Hill can eat at the restaurar go shop, or vice versa. Evert Nelson/The Capital-Journal

Maple Hill, population 600. Two businesses struggling during the pandemic coordinated their social media and their hours for the benefit of both.

“It’s so much better to love thy neighbor, this is a unique and limited market.”

“Five-Minute” Impression

- Clean, neat, NO abandoned structures, trashy car accumulation. Dogs comfortably resting in the center of the street. Not a lot of traffic. Yards mown and trimmed. I was ready to move in.
- How clean the town looked. No run-down houses-great up-keep. One offensive language flag. Welcome sign “Welcome to Delia” “Little Town With Lots of ” Could see the Catholic Church through the trees, very appealing.

“Five-Minute” Impression



“Five-Minute” Impression



Downtown Business Area

- We found what used to be Main Street, but no businesses now except for one. All buildings that are left are well-kept. Upholstery shop on Main street in a building that used to be a post office. Found out it was a bank before that. They have redecorated the inside keeping the “old” style look- even using the old vault for storage. The owner greeted us and gave us a tour. It was very beautiful and inviting. Many projects were being worked on.

Downtown Business Area



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- There is a “Thrift Shop” located in the old high school. Also the City Library was there. The Thrift Store is maintained by Delia PRIDE- very organized, lots of items but not junky. I could have found lots of things to buy if I had had more time.

Other Retail Shopping Areas

How can Delia highlight their “hidden” businesses?



- No local services. Closest is Rossville or Potawatomie Band Clinic. I don't know how far away. Probably also Topeka. Was told some go to Holton and or St. Mary's for the Onaga Health System.

No one expects you to have health care in a town this size.

Other small towns use their website to show how far medical services are “in minutes.”

- Limited number of homes available, only 2 available for rent and none for sale.
- There was a mix of older homes in the heart of town. Some newer builds on the edges of town. I did not observe any for sale signs in the neighborhood.







Housing data **KANSAS**

- Total Housing Units 69
- Total Occupied Houses 65 (94%) (88.8%)
- Vacant Houses 4 (6%) (11.2%)
- Owner Occupied 81.5% (66.3%)
- Renter Occupied 18.5% (33.7%)

<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2017525-delia-ks/> retrieved 9-24-21

https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B25008&geo_ids=16000US2017525&primary_geo_id=16000US2017525

- No local schools. They are consolidated and are bused. The old buildings are still there – being used for various city things (library, thrift store) and are rented out for various functions (wedding receptions, reunions, etc.)



Comments:

- None available in town.
- We were told there is a child care but the person was gone on vacation. Did not check it out.

Jackson County Data:

- **Desired Capacity of existing Child Care** 383
- **Number of Children Under Age 6 potentially needing care:** 724
- **Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential need** 53%
- Creating a Child Care Action Plan
<https://ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Draft-Child-Care-Supply-Demand-Action-Plan.pdf>
- Contact ks.childcareaware.org to access local child care specialists.
785-823-3343

Source <https://ks.childcareaware.org/wp-content/uploads/Supply-Demand-2019-FINAL.pdf>

- We saw two churches- one Presbyterian and one Catholic. Neither has services every week. They are open for weddings, baptisms, funerals, etc., as needed. They both looked well maintained from the outside. We toured the Catholic Church; it is in excellent condition. The priest and/or pastor come for services once a month, I think.



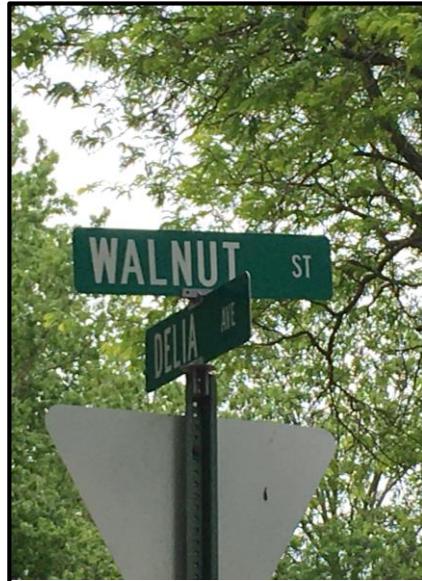
- The only one mentioned was Delia Community PRIDE. They do a lot of fund raising with once-a-month soup dinners, taco feeds, and whatever else they come up with. It seems to be a great fund raiser for them – the townspeople look forward to them.



- Lots of potholes and dogs in streets, parking around homes and city buildings landscaping neat except 3 homes/yards.



- Streets are dirt and rock, but really good. Didn't notice street signs. Landscaping was fine- lots of pretty flowers, well maintained yards.



- We were welcomed enthusiastically by two residents. They showed us many things, talked about many things, laughed about many things—they are very proud of their town.

Fire, EMS and Police Services

- Police from Rossville, 8 miles south.
- I drove past the fire station. It was very nice. Trucks were being cleaned and serviced.

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

[f](#) [t](#)

[The Department](#)
[Auto/Home](#)
[Health/Life](#)
[Insurance Fraud & Education](#)
[Producer/Agency Services](#)
[Company Services](#)
[Other Services](#)

[HOME : ISO](#)

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



Knowledge
for Life

- Located in the old high school building. There were a lot of books for reading and they were getting ready for their “Summer Reading.”



- At Community Center, otherwise, none evident. Ball diamond frequently used for team practice adjacent to city hall, but not viewed.
- I did not observe any playgrounds or parks.



Well-Known for an attraction or event?

- Newsletter put out by Delia PRIDE gives lots of information: sewing group, exercise equipment available at school (donated). Community Bake sales, breakfasts, September festival, soup suppers, 4-H, Car Shows.
- While doing research on Delia PRIDE's Facebook Page I saw that they were having a Tall Corn Festival that weekend. (August visitor comment)

Natural or manmade features that can draw people?

- Only RV parking but that is a great service for residents who don't have room and reduces clutter on town streets.



Visitor's Center

- No visitor's center, but the Thrift store serves that purpose.

What would bring you back?

- The upholstery shop- quality creative work offered; and the people were very friendly.
- Just the community itself. It was a great time.



Delia Days!

- *Great promotion of the work that was done!*



Delia Days!

- *Great promotion of the work that was done!*





Most Positive Observations

- Close to Rossville for services lacking in Delia, as well as schools. A few die-hard workers that give everything possible to support the life/growth/health of the town. Neat residential area with no obviously abandoned homes. Recycling and trash removal available. We visited on trash day and people had cans full and ready for collection. Community activities are a BIG socialization plus. KS PRIDE participation is a positive.

Most Positive Observations

- Cleanliness, friendliness, well maintained.
- The community was well kept and tidy. Homes had good landscaping and were generally picked up. The fire station was very nice and looked to be new.



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Lack of gas station, gathering place for morning coffee and socializing. Lacking younger generation involved in activities- city council, etc. No place for tree/leaf, grass disposal; it was misused and discontinued. Lack of emergency medical treatment. Maybe fire chief is trained? Prairie Band Reservation has EMT that would come for medical emergency.

Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Probably the fact of no local restaurant [to serve] as a gathering place for the locals.
- There does not seem to be a lot happening here. I did not see a playground for kids (playgrounds are always a draw for small towns; if you have a nice playground parents WILL bring their kids) I don't know if the community building is used for community events but could see it being a great asset to the community.

What will you remember?

- Wonderful for retirement- quiet. Estimated that 30% of Delia residents are retired. Newsletter is wonderful to remind residents of activities- great idea!
- Positive: the welcome, the visit, the pride.
Negative: Very positive trip, but with more thought I remember only one negative: a flag flying at one house with vulgar language.
- Had a nice community feel to it. It looks like locals take pride in their town. It has a lot of potential.

Recommendations

- Continue to invite others to participate.
- Please thank and appreciate all the work others are doing.
- Consider ways to highlight and promote businesses.
- Keep up the good work!



**NO ONE CAN DO EVERYTHING,
BUT EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING.**

Thank you to our volunteer visitors.

Set Next Steps:

- Keep the conversation going! Find ways to discuss what you heard in small groups of every kind.

Contact me if you need resources or have questions:

Nancy Daniels

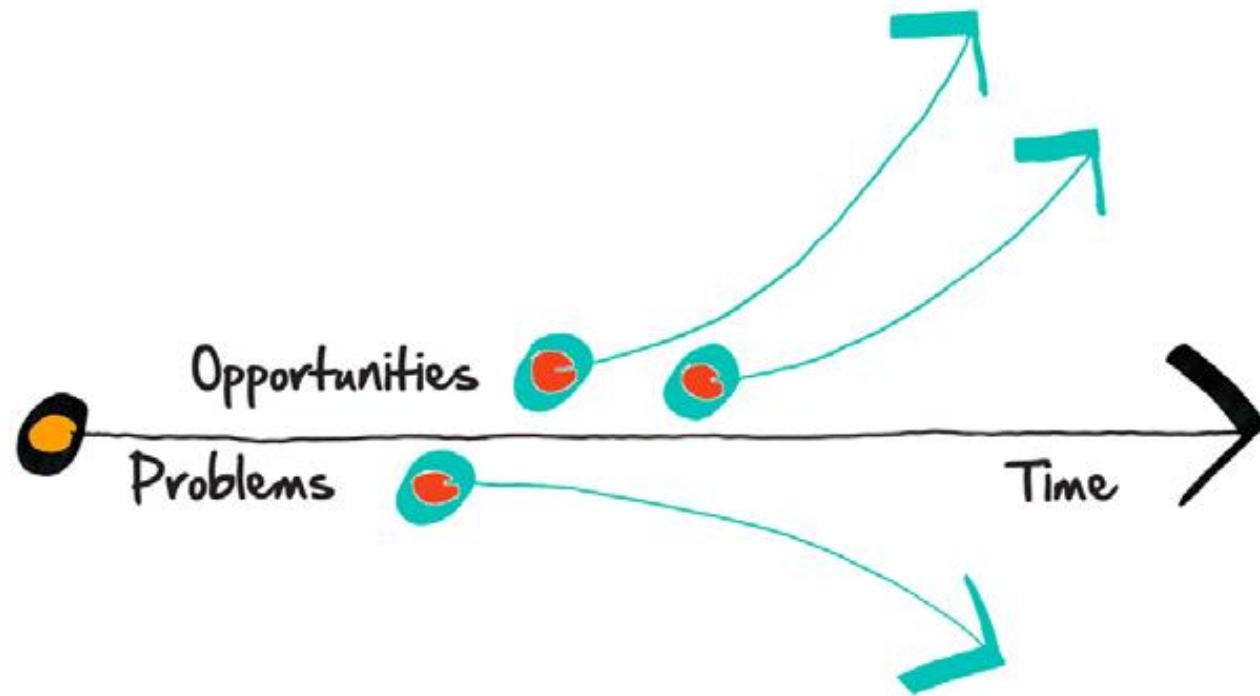
Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension

785.410.6352

nkdaniels@ksu.edu

Asset Based Community Development

People move in the direction of their conversations



Climate Change Refugees



CBS Sunday Morning, January 24, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SByFy9R6320>

Retrieved from the Internet, 2-8-2021

There isn't a community in America, particularly in coastal America, where we are not seeing a transition from the coast to higher ground.

- Jesse Keenan, PhD, Tulane University



K-State Research and Extension

PRIDE: <http://kansasprideprogram.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

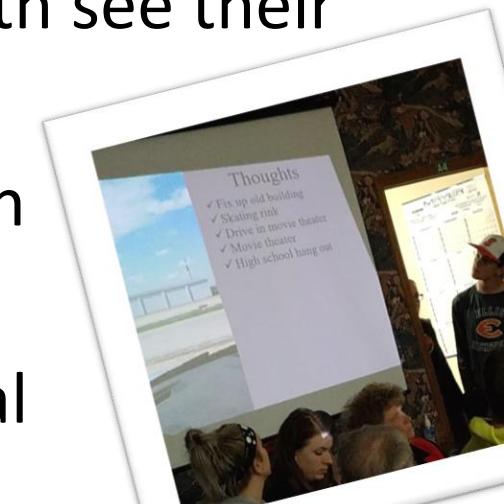
- Youth-Based Community Assessment.
- Gives communities insights on how youth see their community.
- Creates opportunities for youth voices in the community.
- Allows youth to become involved in local government and community process



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Community
Vitality

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Contact

Nancy Daniels

nkdaniels@ksu.edu

to participate.

Grant Writing Workshops

Grants are a vital piece in your community's funding puzzle...and you can do it.

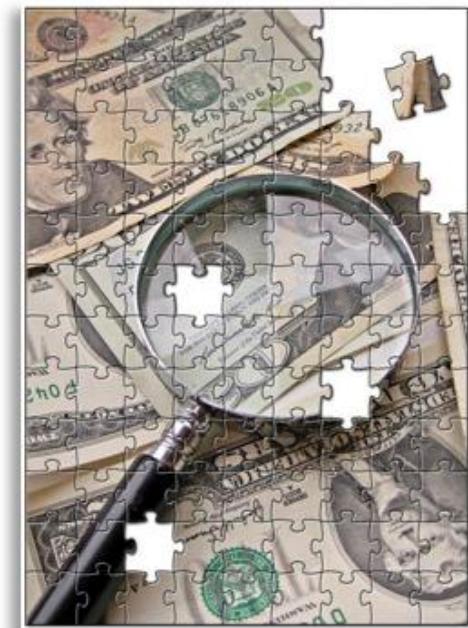
K-State Research and Extension's Community Vitality Team offers grant writing workshops for local communities.

Objectives

- Conquer your grant writing fears and start writing.
- Learn new sources of data to document community needs.
- Learn new sources of grant funding.
- Practice developing the Grant Elements: Problem, Outcomes, Activities, Evaluation, and Budget.

Short Term Outcomes

- 93% have increased confidence to write a successful grant.
- 94% learned new sources of data to document community needs.
- 80% learned new sources for finding grants.
- 91% have increased confidence to develop the elements of a successful grant.



K-State Research and Extension

- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am (CT)**
 - Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.
 - Contact Nancy Daniels nkdaniels@ksu.edu or [Register here](#)
 - Community Vitality Calendar of events:
<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/>
 - Previous calls are recorded at
<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- <http://smallbizsurvival.com/>
 - THE SMALL TOWN AND RURAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

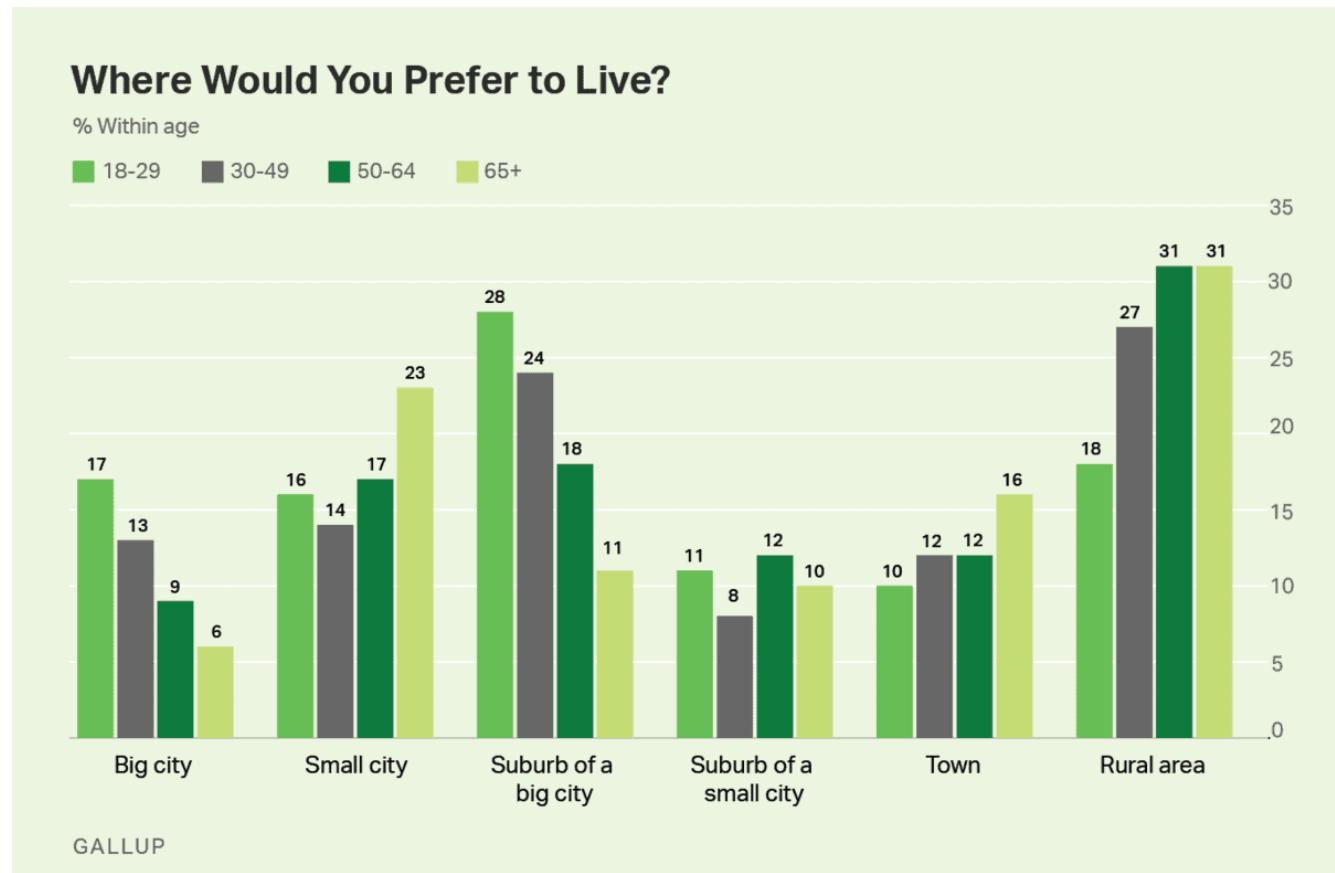


Zoom Towns: attracting and supporting remote workers in rural small towns

BY BECKY MCCRAY — 1 COMMENT

People have been saying for years that they would prefer to live in rural areas.

- Americans under age 30 are the only group whose top desired place to live is *not* rural; rural was #2, even for them.



- 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

Resources I like:

- <http://saveyour.town/>
 - Monthly live webinars; available on recording.
 - Pay once and show as many times as you want.
 - Watch parties encouraged.

10 Tools:

<https://saveyour.town/workwithus/>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the SAVEYOUR.town website. At the top, there is a dark blue header bar with the website's name "SAVEYOUR.town" in white. Below the name, there is a navigation menu with links to "Home", "About Becky & Deb", "Get our newsletter", "Work with us", "Survey", "Articles", "Contact", and "Member Login". To the right of the menu, there are icons for Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The main content area has a white background. It features a large heading "Here's how your town can become an Idea Friendly Town". Below this, there is a section with the text "We are a community of possibilities, not of problems." followed by two subtitles: "We are action takers." and "We are optimistic." A quote "It's not about what this town used to be." is displayed in a stylized font. Further down, there is another section with the text "We have people right now, assets right here, and we can take action right away. We don't need another plan, another committee, or another meeting." At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the text "The Idea Friendly Creed plus our weekly email newsletters keep you going".

Kansas Department of Agriculture in partnership other state organizations, will work with your community to find the best opportunities for growth using the assets of your region.

GROW IN KANSAS



STRATEGIC GROWTH INITIATIVE

A pilot program for the proactive recruitment of food, agriculture and UAS/small aircraft business to Kansas.

For more information on the Strategic Growth Initiative, please contact

Russell Plaschka, Ag Business Development Program Manager

785-564-7466 • Russell.Plaschka@ks.gov

agriculture.ks.gov/GrowAg

Grow Smarter. Grow Stronger. Grow Kansas.

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/>

khfi@ksu.edu

Keeping Groceries Alive: [Webinar series for Grocery Transition](#)





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