

First Impressions

Almena, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- Almena – Population 401
- 11.2% college educated, 94.0% high school or GED
- 53% male, 47% female
- Median age of 42.6 years
- Poverty rate is 16.4%
- Median household income is \$39,167
- 27.3% have moved since the previous year



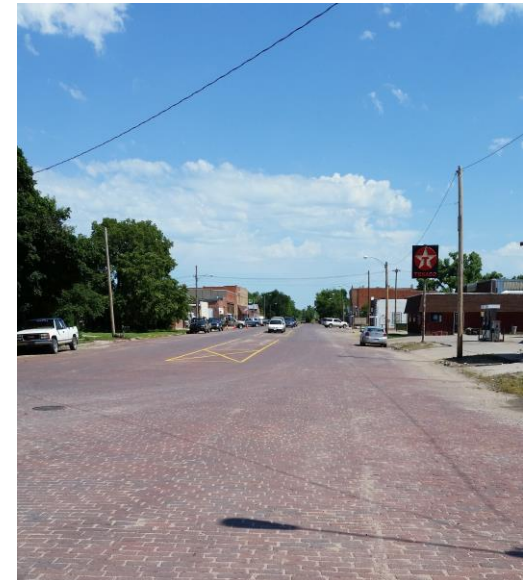
Web Presence:

- There wasn't much about Alma online
- No website of their own
- Alma has a Facebook and businesses listed also have Facebook pages



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Almena is clean and welcoming. Welcome signs were posted at every entrance to the town.
- The main street bricks and parkway gives the town a nostalgic feel.
- The necessary businesses needed to survive were there.
- Liked the center street parking.
- The town looks like a nice place to live.





Good name recognition of the community with signage. Some of the signage however could use touch-up work.

Downtown Business Area

- People were friendly and helpful
- Even though there were 8 empty buildings most main street buildings were in good shape
- Nice variety of businesses and services for a small town – newspaper, city office, library, bank, café, bar, tire shop, gas station, elevator, feed store, post office, phone company





- Very nice community center!
- City Office was closed
- The Newspaper office was closed



- Nice little mini park downtown
- Water fountain on Main Street
- Main Street was neat and clean
- Most yards were in good shape



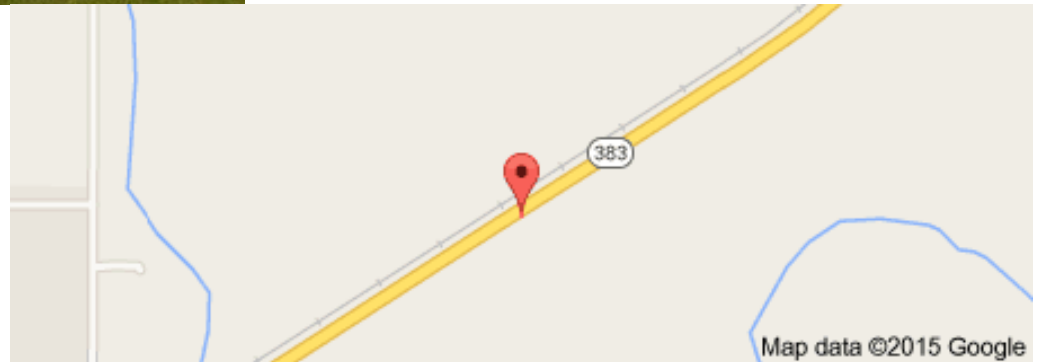
Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas



- Huskie Hogs – can you capitalize in this?



Calvert Mines - How does this add to the community? Could it be used as an attraction?



Housing

- Total housing units – 297 (100%)
- Owner occupied housing units – 211 (71%)
- Renter occupied housing units – 65 (22%)
- Vacant housing units – 21 (7%)
- Median value of owner occupied housing units - \$42,700
- (Source – Census Reporter Profiles)





Housing observations

- Didn't see any houses listed for sale or rent
- No realtor's yard signs
- None listed on bulletin board in grocery store
- Found one set of apartments



Schools

- Northern Valley Schools – K – 12
- Website contains lots of info, tabs for elementary and middle school but not for high school
- Grounds well-maintained



- Nice playgrounds equipment
- School greenhouse



- Well maintained ball fields



Childcare

- No information was found by the team
- Since the visit, info on a new child care center was found on the Almena Facebook Page –Mindy's Magical Playhouse (Almena Community Daycare)



Faith/Religion

- Two churches were found. They had to be searched out. Signs downtown pointing to the churches would be nice.
- Both churches were well kept.
- However, an old abandoned church was also found.



Civic

- American Legion
- Naphtali Lodge
- Sunflower Pioneer Power Association Antique Club
- Volunteers for the Sunflower Pioneer Power Association Antique Club were getting things ready for their show over the week-end



Public Infrastructure

- Streets were brick so they were rough, but it gave a nice atmosphere to Main Street.
- Not much streetscaping. There were some planters along Main Street.
- Many empty lots around town that once had homes on them. Removal of the old homes helped to make the town look cleaner. What are the plans for these lots?
- Several lots had old equipment or junk piles.
- Most of the residential streets were narrow and not in good shape.
- Sidewalks were lacking or in disrepair.



- City Office was closed
- The library was very nice
- There is a volunteer fire department



- The team found one of the two parks – small and un-kept
- The restrooms were locked
- Wiring to the speaker in the old jail was broken. It needs to be fixed or removed



- On a follow up visit a roadside park was located
- Restrooms were unlocked but in very poor condition
- Had a disk golf course
- Information sign needs reconditioned
- Road sign for directions to the park



Infrastructure Concerns

- No evidence of the type of police protection
- Good fire protection but what about EMS?? I saw an ambulance by the fire station, where is it stored?
- Lack of a water feature for youth
- Plan for lots which have been cleared??



Recreation/Tourism

- The Sunflower Pioneer Power Association Park could be a draw if it was promoted. They have all but 4 windmills ever made in Kansas.



Most Positive Observations!!

- The brick streets and nostalgic downtown
- The Sunflower Pioneer Power Association Park
- The school – K-12!!
- Very nice library/city office/community center
- Grain elevator and farm related businesses



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Lack of self-promotion
- The need to create an identify for Almena
- Lack of businesses on Main Street
- Housing
- Reducing the turnover rate
- Does Almena have a strategic plan?
- The need to form an Almena supporter group

What will you remember the most in six months from now?

- Positive – Their brick Main Street and the Sunflower Pioneer Power Association Park
- The nice community center
- Negative – Locked restrooms in the park and the broken speaker at the jail



Kansas PRIDE is helping communities create the
type of place they want to call “Home”



- The Dane G. Hansen Foundation wants to help communities in Northwest Kansas become the best they can be and take great PRIDE in who they are and what they can be.



- <http://danehansenfoundation.org/>