

# First Impressions

## Gypsum, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership  
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



## Demographics:

- Population: 405
- Graduation rates: High School- 93.9% (KS 90.5) College – 8.6% (KS 32.3)
- Median age: 39.3 years (KS 36.3)
- Poverty rate: 8.2% (KS 12.8%)
- Median household income: \$44,792 (KS \$55,477)

(Source: [factfinder.census.gov](https://factfinder.census.gov))



## Web Presence:

- Hard to find online presence
- Easy to find online presence
- “Get Rural Kansas”
- No city website
- Facebook presence is minimal



# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Paved Main Street but unpaved side streets
- Nice benches on main that stood out
- Nice small park on main





- Sign into town was clean but had little information
- No signage on the south entry
- Noticed several businesses approaching city limits. One with several buildings and cars but no sign.



## Downtown Business Area

- Downtown had very few buildings-looked as if many had been removed over time
- Clean downtown sidewalks
- Metal benches along sidewalks
- Street music



- Two digital signs
- Restaurant, bank, gun shop and flea market





- Auto garage with a gas pump
- Several service businesses were not noted





- Folks were friendly and helpful
- Good food and service at the café
- Variety of products at the gun shop
- Typical flea market but service was not offered



- Some buildings could use some paint/TLC



- Nice big auditorium
- How is it utilized?





- What's the status of these 2 buildings?



- Nice public restroom
- 10 to 12 metal benches, some with shade over them
- Trash containers
- Is there public wi-fi?



- No parallel parking?
- Curbing needed repair





## Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Doesn't appear to be any retail other than downtown
- What are these businesses?



# Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Agricultural business on the edge of town – generous gravel yard, neat and efficient
- Frisbie Construction outside of town



- Some old commercial areas which could use some clean-up
- Potential facility for new business venture





# Health Care Services

- No health services available
- 6<sup>th</sup> Street Massage??

# Housing

- Total housing units – 186
- Occupied units – 158 (84.9%)
- Owner occupied – 116 (73.4%)
- Renter occupied – 42 (26.6%)
- Vacant housing units – 28 (15.1%)
- Median home value - \$63,300

(KS \$139,200)

(Source – [factfinder.census.gov](https://factfinder.census.gov))



- A mix of housing is available for varying income levels and family size
- More than 65% were built before 1940





- Some houses for sale
- Saw one for rent
- No apartments, low income or senior living facilities
- Mobile home park



- As in all communities, a few homes and yards could use some TLC





# Schools

- School in town closed for many years



- Gypsum part of the SE of Saline school district
- Improvements taking place on buildings and track
- District office located onsite





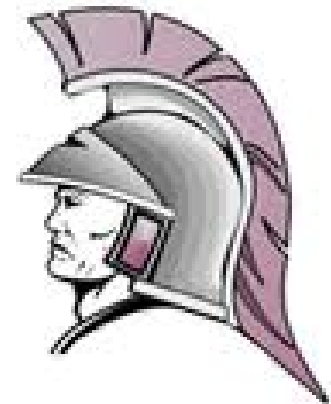
- Location of the school unclear on the website
- Website user friendly
- Indicates good quality school system
- Use for this sign?



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The Kansas State Department of Education verifies that this district has attained the highest level of achievement in providing services to children and youth with disabilities.

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# Childcare

- One in-home daycare found

# Faith/Religion

- Three churches in town
- Nice signage entering town



- Catholic, Baptist and Methodist
- Nice facilities
- Temple Church??





- Cemetery sign on K-4



# Civic

- Lions Club signs on west and south entrances



- Small memory park
- Benches nice civic project
- What else?





# Public Infrastructure

- Unpaved streets resulting in dust
- Meandering streets, some ending without warning
- Very few sidewalks



- Streets were named
- Several signs warning to watch for children





- City Hall hard to locate
- Small sign
- City building closed 5/13 – 5/28
- Not open during visits





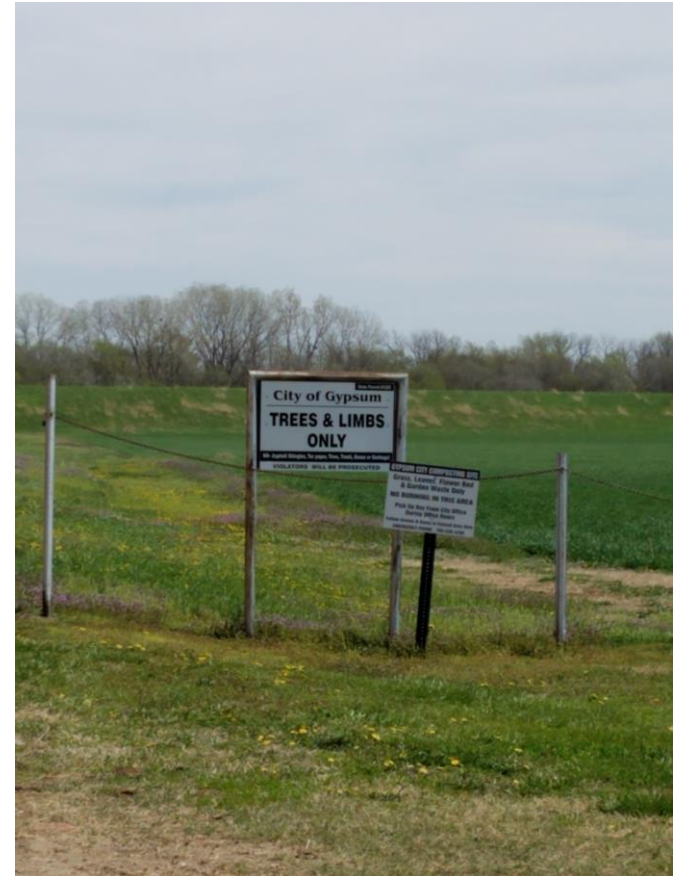
- Nice volunteer fire department building
- Emergency services building
- No police protection noted



- Entrance for library not easily spotted
- Sign advertising monthly book club
- Library story hour
- Not open during visits



- Not mentioned – city recycling efforts





- Park very plain
- Limited children play equipment
- Frisbee Golf
- Basketball courts not noted



- Ballfield not noted
- Nor restrooms and concession stand



- Mini park behind fire truck garage
- Nice playground equipment and shelter
- Public restrooms conveniently located





- Frisbie Park with Gazebo
- Nice digital sign
- Small memorial park



# Recreation/Tourism

- Fall Festival
- 2018 celebrated 50 year anniversary of Fall Festival
- Gypsum Pie Festival & Car Show





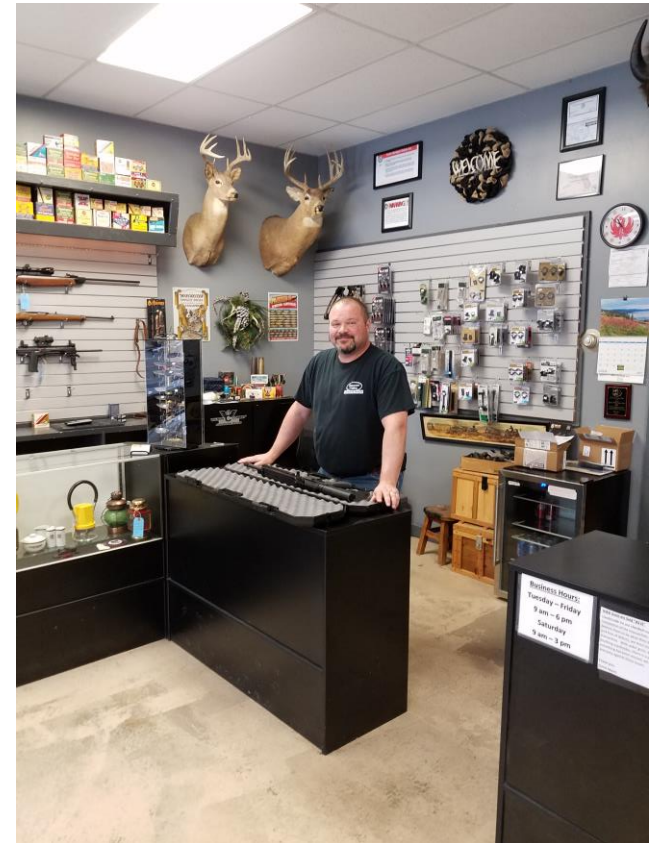
- Gypsy Stables and Sporting Clays II could be a draw





# Restaurants, Specialty Shops or attractions that would bring you back:

- Good food at Exit 14 restaurant
- Product at gun shop
- Pie Festival??



# Most Positive Observations!!

- Town had a nice feel upon arrival
- Friendly people
- Clean main street sidewalks
- Nice digital signs
- Attractive picnic area at the gazebo
- Street music



# Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Keeping old buildings in repair
- Unpaved streets
- Need for more families with children
- Need for more businesses
- The challenge is to keep on keeping on!
- Housing





# What will you remember most in six months?

- It felt welcome and how nice a small town can look.
- The food at Exit 14 was very good and I would return just for that.
- Dusty streets
- Street music



## Recommendations:

- Establish a united web presence
- Capitalize on “Gypsum Next 13 Exits”
- Clean-up of properties
- Let folks know where you are
- Improved city park signage
- Take advantage of the dyke for a walking trail
- City Office hours??

# 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/>