

First Impressions

Hill City, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation

The logo for the Dane G. Hansen Foundation features a stylized orange arch above the text "DANE G. HANSEN" in a bold, dark blue serif font. Below this, the word "FOUNDATION" is written in a smaller, dark blue serif font, with each letter separated by a wide space. A second, larger orange arch is positioned behind the word "FOUNDATION".

DANE G. HANSEN

F O U N D A T I O N

Hill City Demographics

- Population – 1,474
- Median Household Income - \$41,726
- High School Education – 94.6%, College Education – 24.5%
- Median resident age is 50.2 years
- Poverty rate is 11.1%

Source: factfinder.census.gov



Web Presence/Google Search:

- <http://discoverhillcity.com/>
- <http://discovergrahamcountyks.com/CITYCOUNTY/CityGovernments/HillCity.aspx>



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Clean, lots well kept
- Nice entrances from the north and west
- Church signs could use some updating

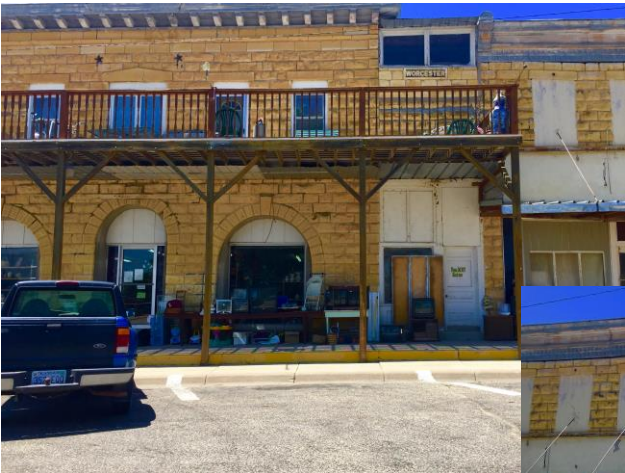


- Entrances from the south and east could use some clean-up, area north of Dollar General is junky, a lot of ag or commercial clutter on east entrance
- Nice Welcome to Hill City Banners



Downtown Business Area

- Downtown appears to be divided into 2 parts – old downtown and HWY 24
- Coming from the north, signage for the business districts directs you toward the old downtown



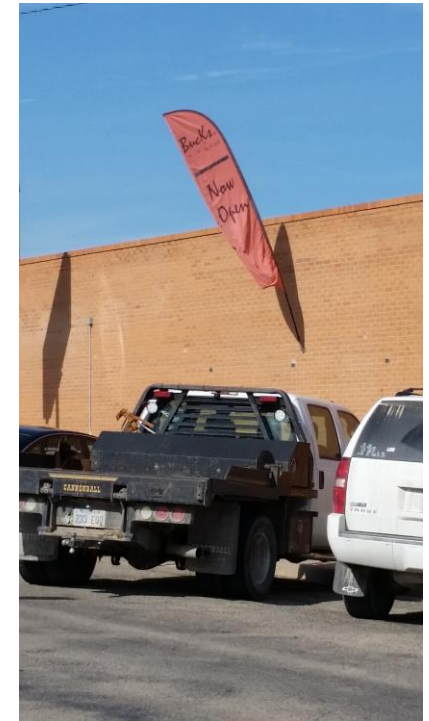
- There is a good variety of businesses and services located on Pomeroy



- HWY 24 also has a wide variety of businesses and services.
- Need to find a way to make folks turn off of HWY 24 onto Pomeroy.



- Customer service was generally good
- May need to do some education about things to do in Hill City
- Did not appear to be much in the way of streetscaping to create interest but this vehicle caught my attention



Other Retail Areas

- Found mostly on HWY 24 – eating establishments and restaurants
- Dollar General and Lumbar Yard found on S HWY 283



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Really not a defined industrial park
- On the south side of town is the power plant and recycling center
- A number of un-kept ag or other commercial facilities



- Typical ag facilities - elevator
- Sale barn



- North of town is Crawford Supply, Nine Wire Fencing and the Airport



Health Care Services

- Hospital is easily located coming from the north
- Not so easy to find from other directions



- Long term care facilities conveniently located next to the hospital
- Nice medical clinic
- Health Department located downtown



- Downtown pharmacy
- Is the Community Center used for senior meals?
- Kobler Center for Developmental Services



Housing

- Total Number of Housing Units – 821
- Occupied housing units – 699
- Vacant housing units – 122
- Owner occupied – 75.6%
- Renter occupied – 24.4%
- Median house value - \$68,000



Housing observations

- Variety of homes
- Not many houses for sale
- Some apartments are available



- There was a link on the website for one realtor but it did not work
- Able to find a nice list of rentals at City Hall
- Noticed several properties which needed clean-up



- Graham Estate was a nice building but it didn't seem very inviting



Schools

- USD 281 Grade School & Jr/Sr High School – 32 teachers, 20 other staff
- Student teacher ratio of 12.76 to 1
- Approximately 400 students enrolled



- Nice athletic fields
- School grounds seem well maintained
- Able to maintain vocational programs



- Discovery World Preschool – 20 child capacity
- Hill City Early Childhood Center – Head Start – 33 children

Childcare

- Unable to find out information from City Hall or Chamber Office
- http://childcarecenter.us/kansas_homecare/hill_city_ks_city
listed 4 providers: Amy's Daycare, Gosselin Day Care Home, Tenderheart Day Care Home, and Marcy Lynn Day Care Home

Faith/Religion

- Nine churches were noted on the entrance sign
- Churches well maintained





- Faith based second hand shop
- Unsure of this facility?



Civic

- Not much information was gathered on civic organizations
- Two groups listed on website – Masonic Lodge and Morland Lions Club
- How do folks find out how to become involved?



Public Infrastructure

- Streets were maintained
- Some areas unpaved roads were less attractive
- Less desirable areas were hidden by vegetation



- Sidewalks in need of improvement in some areas
- Some nice landscaping in places



- City Hall provided a lot of good information
- The entrance was congested and could use some work to make the flow of traffic easier
- Nice planter in front of the office



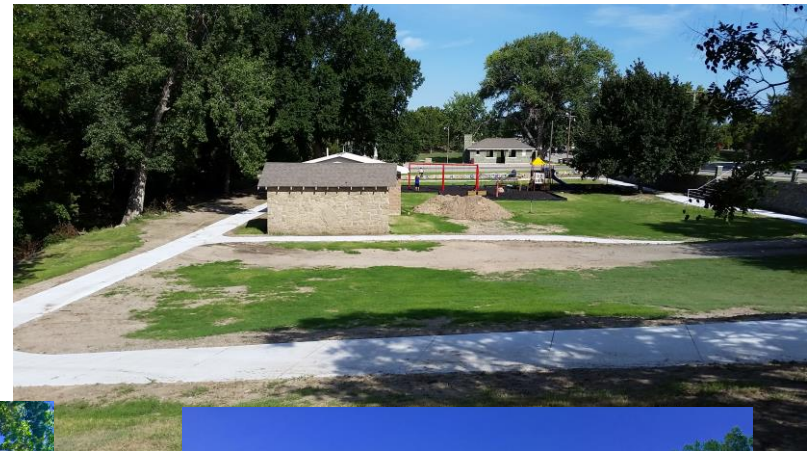
- Police Station located on HWY 24
- EMS/Fire Close by



- Nice readers statue at the library
- Staff was very helpful
- Several displays were available for viewing



- Very nice park with gazebo and picnic shelter
- Clean restrooms and walking trail
- Good to see sand volleyball and basketball courts
- Walking trail and restrooms could use some signage



- Nice small park in the northwest part of town not noted by visiting team
- Clean restroom facilities
- Nice memorial benches



- Pool and bathhouse (not noted)
- Tennis courts (not noted)



- The ball fields were also not noted
- May need increased signage to locate
- The Youth Center downtown was also missed



Recreation/Tourism

- Chamber Office was difficult to find and needs signage
- The golf course was mentioned and that fall is a big time for special events as it is hunting season



- Other points of interest not noted: The Historical Oil Museum, and the Graham County Historical Society Museum



- Courthouse
- Veterans' Memorial
- Movie Theater



- Roadside Park with HWY 24 Alliance Kiosk
- RV Park
- Fair grounds



Most Positive Observations!

- Businesses along HWY 24 were very helpful
- The grocery store is a real asset to the community
- Community has an exceptional small town newspaper



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Need for signage in the community
- Hospitality training or education on what is available in the community
- The downtown business district has many rundown and vacant buildings



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

- The grocery store with the step ladders in the aisles
- Exceptional newspaper & positive articles
- HWY 24 is the real business district and not the downtown
- It appears the community pulls together to help folks in time of need



Recommendations:

- Signage for public facilities
- Some enhancements to the website – make sure all links are active and information is up to date
- Clean-up of the block west of the Courthouse
- Clean-up of the entrances from the east and south
- Landscaping or streetscaping to add interest and pull folks off of HWY 24 to the downtown

- 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/>