

First Impressions

Lucas, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- Lucas – Population 393
- 20.6% college educated, 89.0% high school or GED
- 41.3% single, 58.7% married
- Poverty rate is 13.8%
- Median worker income is \$22,045



- Web Presence:

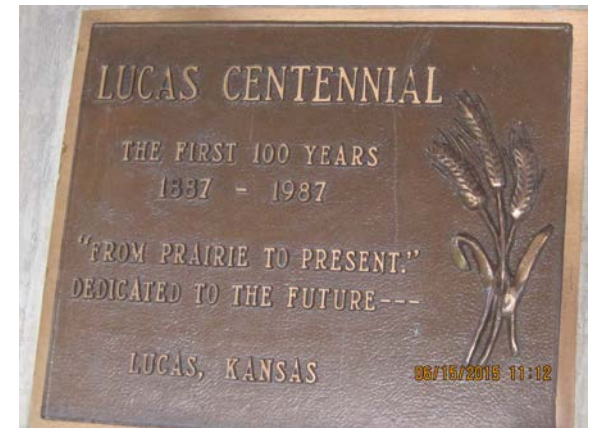
Easy to find information!!

<http://www.lucaskansas.com/>

<http://www.kansastravel.org/lucaskansas.htm>

<http://getruralkansas.org/Lucas/114index.shtml>

<https://www.facebook.com/GetLucas>



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Definitely and artist community
- Very clean entrances into the town
- Business hours were unclear
- Some buildings downtown needed cosmetic updating/repair
- Signs were adequate
- Streets for the most part were good





Downtown Business Area

- Great customer service and greeted with smiles
- Main street is nice and open
- Most businesses had benches of their own
- Buildings for the most part were ok to good
- Some looked a bit aged and needed new siding/paint
- Easy parking on main street
- Drinking fountain at Bowl Plaza would be a good addition



- Brant's Meat Market – Great product! Very friendly and helpful! Historical site!
- Hardware store and grocery store looked nice and carry a good line of products
- Exterior of bank rough looking (hail storm??)

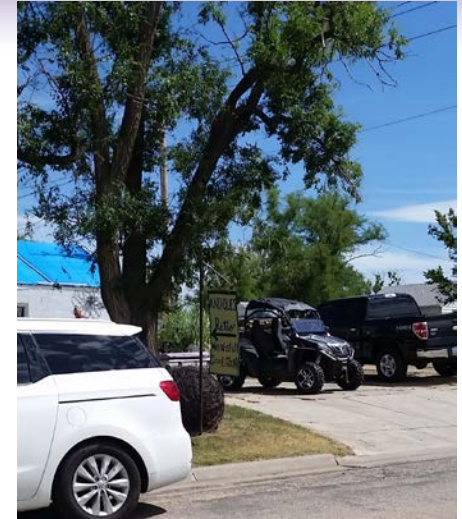


- Movie Theater is awesome!
- Several beauty shops
- Local newspaper



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Unique home businesses
- Unsure of hours of home businesses
- Nice service station & convenience store
- Restaurant located on highway



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Land Pride
- Heartland Hay
- United Ag Services







Health Care Services

- They have a medical clinic!!
- Lucas Medical Clinic in good condition



- Closure of Golden Living Center



Future of the facility?

Housing

- The median age of homes is 72 years
- \$906 a month is the typical owner cost for a home with a mortgage
- Rentals are 9.2% of homes and 66.4% are occupied by their owners. The other 24.4%????
- The median number of rooms a home has is 6





Housing observations

- Noticed several houses for sale
- Two apartment complexes
- Demand for rentals unmet



- Need for clean-up/demolition of older properties



Schools

- K-6 are the only grades taught in Lucas
- School known as Lucas-Sylvan (signage??)
- Lucaskansas.com website very helpful in finding information about the school
- Grounds well-maintained



- Nice playgrounds equipment
- Courts in need of attention



Childcare

- The group received an unclear answer from the city clerk. A name was provided for winter months but didn't know if the service was provided during the summer. A phone number was provided however it was out of service.
- Child care information contacts???

Faith/Religion

- Noticed Baptist, Lutheran and Methodist churches and possibly one more but missed the name



Civic

- Lucas PRIDE Program
- Library was having a reading program
- Lions Club
- Where do people find out about service or community organizations??



Public Infrastructure

- Downtown streets and sidewalks in good shape
- Evidence of community working on repairs
- Signage was moderate to good, fairly well marked, some signs faded and hard to read
- West side of town appeared to be neglected or the older part of town
- Information was easily available almost everywhere we went
- Room for expansion in the industrial area



- Civic Center was perceived as an activity building from the outside rather than the city building
- Fire Department looked very nice and well kept
- Library felt welcoming and appreciated the separate children's room



- Nice city park, ball park and playground



Infrastructure Concerns

- No evidence of the type of police protection
- Good fire protection but what about EMS??
- Lack of a water feature for youth



Recreation/Tourism

- Expect the unexpected in Lucas
- Garden of Eden, Grass Roots Art Center, Brant's Meat Market, Bowl Plaza, World's biggest collection of the smallest replicas
- Flyers and brochures were readily available



Local/Area Attractions not mentioned

- Post Rock Scenic By-way
- Wilson Lake
- Grass Roots Arts Capital
- Miller's Park



Most Positive Observations!!

- Many attractions making it worth the time to take the trip off of the beaten path to see everything this little town has to offer.
- Friendly people
- Clean Main Street
- Movie Theater



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Housing and rentals
- Daycare services
- Senior care
- Physical wellness activities
- School Identity



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

- The incredible amount of tourist attractions for such a little town!!
- Main street appearance is nice but needs a few improvements to look great.
- Lack of options to eat downtown, café was closed.

“We all enjoyed our trip and hope we have provided some useful information and thoughts. We also plan to try and apply what we saw to our little town as well.” *Almena First Impressions Team*