

# First Impressions

## Mankato, 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 tan 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 tan arch is positioned behind the word "FOUNDATION".

**DANE G. HANSEN**

**F O U N D A T I O N**

# Mankato Demographics

- Population – 869
- Median Household Income - \$39,375
- High School Education – 90.6%, College Education – 13.5%
- Median resident age is 50.6 years
- Poverty rate is 15.8%

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



## Web Presence:

- <https://www.mankatoks.com>
- Website attractive
- Reflects what was seen
- Quick link to school – Nice!
- Love the community project list!



# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Hwy 36 is a smooth ride, looked new along with the curbing
- Great entrance signs on both the east and west side
- No signs really promoting the community





- Condition of commercial and residential properties varied greatly
- Appearance came off as income mixed neighborhoods
- Mankato looked cute, quiet and promising



- Schools, hospital, community center and library were all impressive
- Landscaping/Tidy up – Transportation office, churches, bank have set the examples



## Downtown Business Area

- Great variety of shops, all within walking distance
- The age of the downtown showed a little, could use some TLC
- Business area has many options



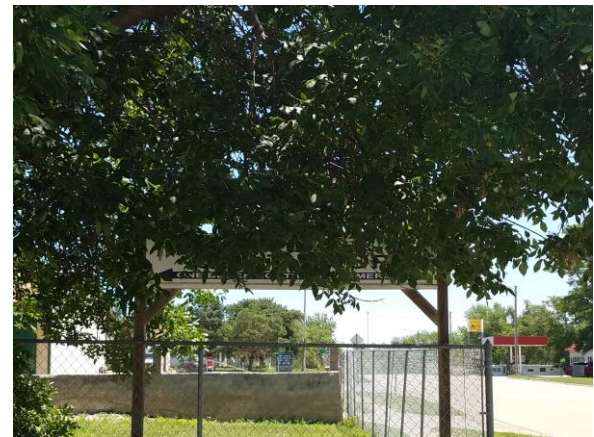


- Furniture store, appliance shop, law offices, pharmacy, dentist office, church, thrift store, Possibilities, health services, auto body, storage, etc.





- It took a few circles around to find the grocery store
- Hidden Treasures was not mentioned by the visitors
- Thrift store is huge and well organized



- Didn't see much beautification, such as plants, flowers, community pride signage/banners
- Trash cans downtown
- Lots of event posters and flyers lining the windows



- Customer service was hit and miss. Initially ignored at Bob's Inn but eventually had good service.
- Possibilities was very friendly and knowledgeable. Encouraged stopping at other shops
- Pharmacy said it should be open but it was closed





## Other Retail Areas

- Along HWY 36
- Dollar General - excellent location
- Mankato Express – very nice clean store however gas pumps were dated





- Mac Kwik Shop – pay at the pump works!
- Sweden Crème – a never judge a book by it's cover type of place



# Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Area on the east side of town could be an industrial area
- Transfer station



- New Sale Barn – a big plus!
- Ag Services





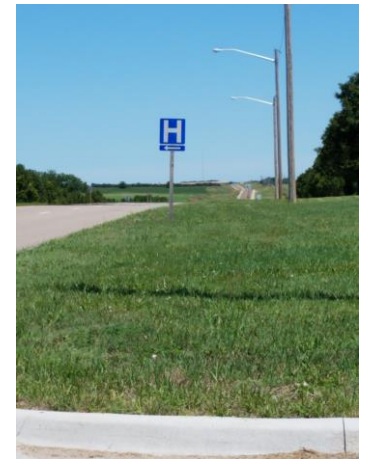
- Some commercial properties could use some TLC





# Health Care Services

- Twelve bed hospital, small sign on HWY 36
- Clinic



- Dentist
- Pharmacy
- Public Health Clinic
- Chiropractor





- Senior Center
- Senior Living
- Public Transportation



# Housing

- Total Number of Housing Units – 464
- Occupied housing units – 353
- Vacant housing units – 111
- Owner occupied – 75.4%
- Renter occupied – 24.6%



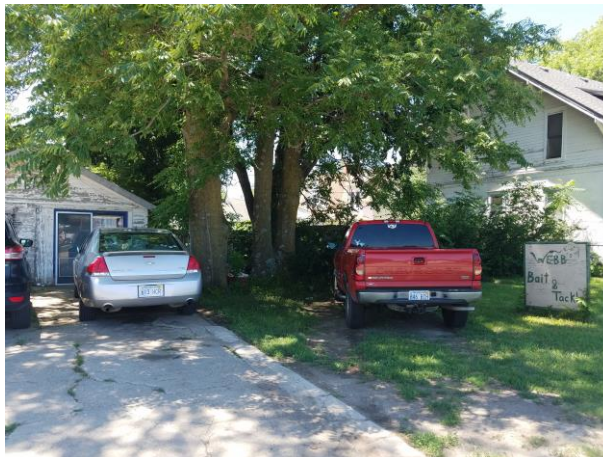


# Housing observations

- Many houses online for sale
- Good mix of housing available but neighborhoods are mixed income



- As all towns, there are some housing areas needing clean-up or improvements
- Many small yards





- Two sets of income based apartments
- Reported rent was very economical





# Schools

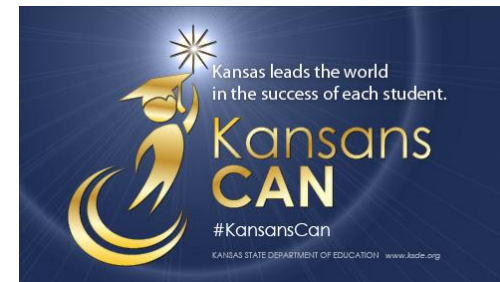
- K – 12 and preschools
- Elementary appears to be older than the Jr/Sr High



- Jr/Sr High School was impressive but seemed rather bland
- Very nice athletic fields
- Strong community support



- Varying opinions on the website
- Good information for patrons
- Difficult to get a sense if relocating though
- Statement of where to report broken links to



## Rock Hills Schools

Unified School District 107

109 E Main Mankato KS 66956 785-378-3102



# Faith/Religion

- Five different churches in the community
- Well maintained and kept up







- Mankato Thrift Store
- What is the status of this building?





## Civic

- The Chamber of Commerce appears to be active
- Movie theater is a volunteer, non-profit organization



- Historical Society, host the farmers market
- Community Garden
- VFW – liked the flag disposal box



- 4-H and FFA





# Public Infrastructure

- HWY 36 was amazing
- Brick streets seem to be holding up well
- Sidewalks are hit and miss throughout town



- Signage and landscape was lacking
- Clean-up and landscaping throughout residential and commercial area is desperately needed



- Large city building
- Directional signage is needed
- City Administrator is very helpful and knowledgeable
- Nice Courthouse with Sheriff's Office on the north end





- Volunteer fire department. Heard good comments about personnel and equipment
- Very nice library. Sponsors a summer concert series



- Impressive city park
- Focal point for many events





- HWY signage for park could be improved
- Nice limestone sign on residential street





- Nice swimming pool
- Difficult to find



# Recreation/Tourism

- Mammoth Festival, new event, saw lots of posters
- Historical Society facilities





- Threshing Bee advertised outside of town
- Two lakes close by, an opportunity to be explored
- Jewell State Fishing Lake





- Variety of eating establishments



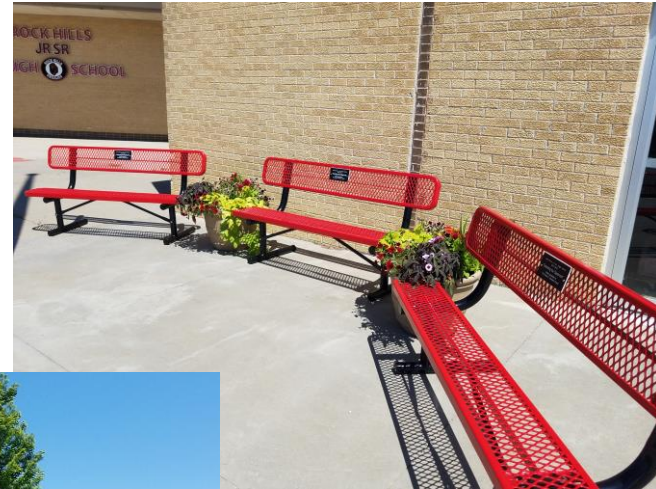
## Attractions mentioned or promoted

- Philly Cheese Steak Melt at the Sweden Crème
- Maybe some of the planned events would bring me back



# Most Positive Observations!

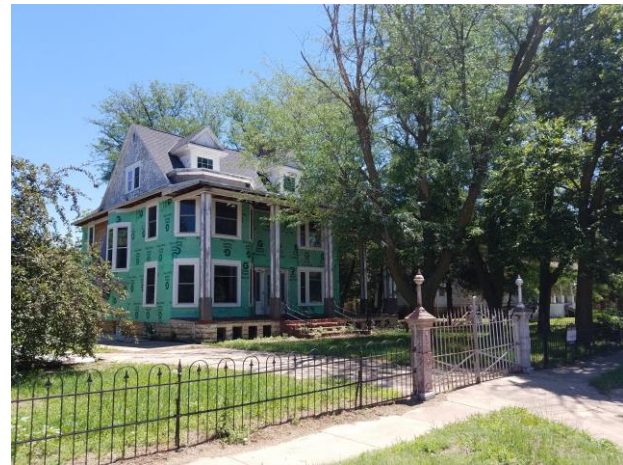
- School system, city park, medical services provided, community center/library, swimming pool, proximity to lakes
- Indication of growth – new sale barn





# Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Maintaining an inviting downtown and residential area
- Revitalization and growth
- Jobs
- Housing
- Financing community projects
- Finding ways to keep or attract young people



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

- Impressed by the many services provided, both businesses and activities
- Missing out by not capturing traffic from HWY 36
- The need for signage to get people to stop
- The need for clean-up in both residential and commercial areas
- The amazing food at the Sweden Creme



## Recommendations:

- Community clean ups
- Try to move forward the interns' downtown revitalization plans
- Signage along HWY 36 ( KDOT Regs??)
- Way finder signage – City Hall, Library/Community Center, Schools, Hospital, Pool, Park, Fairgrounds, Downtown Business District
- Yard of the month project, could be done year around
- Collaborating with Lovewell and Waconda Lakes



- 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/>