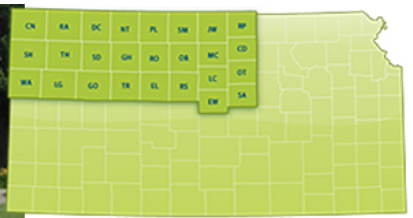


# First Impressions

## Norton, Kansas

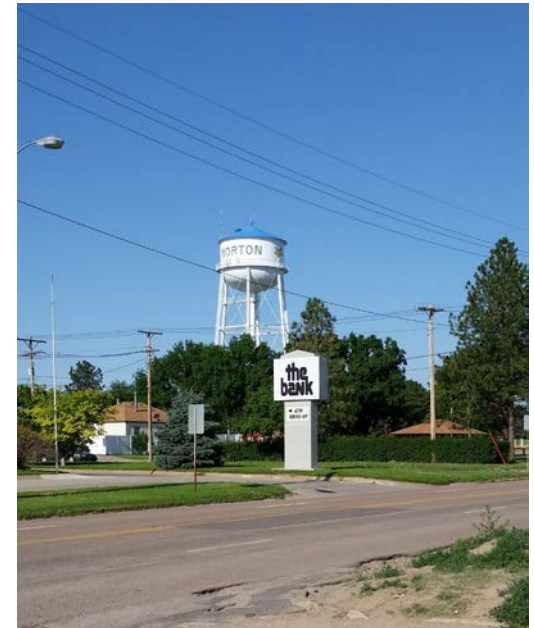
K-State Research and Extension in Partnership  
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



# Norton Demographics

- Population – 2,880
- Median Household Income - \$35,012
- High School Education – 89.4%, College Education – 15.2%
- Unemployment Rate of 6.8%
- Median resident age is 40.1 years
- Poverty rate is 9.5%



## Web Presence:

- [www.discovernorton.com](http://www.discovernorton.com)
- Norton has a quite robust website
- Lots of useful information
- User friendly



# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Norton looked welcoming
- Nice entrance signs at all 4 entrances
- The town seemed clean and well-kept for the most part
- Flowers on corners downtown look very nice
- Blue Jay Park inviting as you come from the south



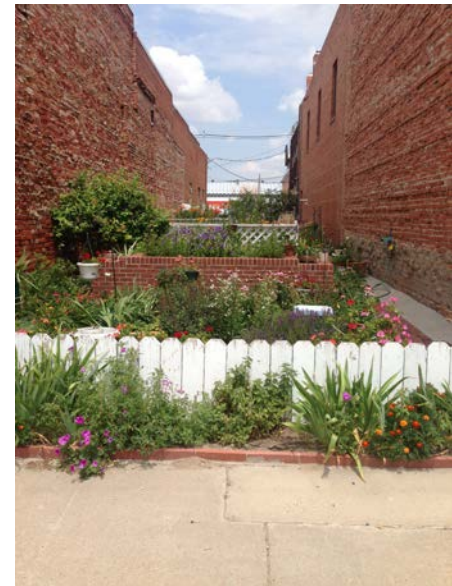


- Vacant church an eyesore
- West Hwy 36 is rough
- Need of directional signage for downtown, city hall, police, EMS, fire



## Downtown Business Area

- Buildings in downtown area mostly in good condition or under renovation
- Love the brick streets
- One corner building desperately needs attention
- Vacant lot between building used for a pocket park

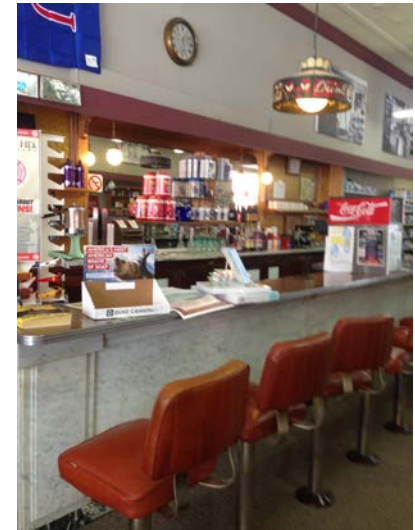


- Building being used for junk storage
- Sidewalk work needed
- Mural very attractive





- Nice variety of downtown store – restaurants, 2 pharmacies, vehicle repair, hardware, computer-internet companies, boutiques, clothing stores, car wash, floral, telephone, antiques, etc.
- Good customer and friendly conversations





- Beautiful Courthouse downtown
- Very attractive planters
- Nice Mini Park by visitors center



## Other Retail Shopping Areas

- Along Hwy 36 & N183
- Appearance OK and easy access
- Saturday Farmers Market



# Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Area in good location right off of Hwy 36
- Don't have downtown truck traffic
- Well-kept, not junky
- Signage did not indicate what they made





- Sale barn located North of town
- Grain storage off of Hwy 36
- Good location for Truck Tire Shop



# Health Care Services

- Hospital easy access right off of Hwy 36
- Valley Hope also on Hwy 36
- Medical clinic attached to the hospital
- EMS located on the west side of town



- Wide variety of health care providers & services
  - Optometrists
  - Dentists
  - Massage Therapists
  - Chiropractors
  - Public Health
  - Mental Health
  - Home Health
  - Assisted Living
  - Long Term Care



# Housing

- Total Number of Housing Units – 1517
- Occupied housing units – 1331 or 87.74%
- Vacant housing units – 186 or 12.26%
- For Seasonal, Recreational or occasional use – 15 or 0.99%
- Homeowner vacancy rate – 3.8%
- Rental vacancy rate – 8.3%



# Housing observations

- Mix of available housing – old, new, small, large
- Marked areas of socioeconomic status
- Older homes need some TLC
- Some “eclectic” owners



- The Housing Authority looked quite nice
- Timber Creek Duplexes were inviting
- Prairie Hills needs some TLC





# Schools

- 3 Buildings for the school – K-6, 7-8, and High School
- Well-Maintained
- Good school pride shown



- 2 Preschools found
- Head Start
- Early Learning Center



# Childcare

- Observed one day care
- No information kept at Child Care Aware



# Faith/Religion

- Wide variety of denominations
- Well-maintained
- Welcoming spirit
- The Rock Youth Center





## Civic

- Good listing of clubs and organizations on the website
- Signage with evidence of some organizations on the way into town
- Disc Golf Course a good example of community working together
- Memory box by the Girl Scouts





# Public Infrastructure

- Infrastructure seemed fine
- Couple areas of landscaping down the center of the street needed some attention
- Metal work on light poles are very attractive and eye catching



- Sidewalks are lacking or are in poor condition in residential areas
- Some streets a little rough



- City Office was difficult to find
- There is a need for directional signage
- Police Office located with city office
- Nice KDOT facility located in Norton





- The library is a GEM!
- Staff Friendly and Helpful
- The statues outside are great
- Also have the NW Kansas Library



- Pool and Park is a nice complex
- Ball fields close by
- Nice shelters and playground equipment





- Blue Jay Park is wonderful
- Many facilities in one place
- Race track, football field, fairgrounds
- Could a walking trail be incorporated with this park??





- Elmwood Park located above Blue Jay Park
- Has a disc golf course
- Beautiful comforting area



# Recreation/Tourism

- Nice Theatre
- Race track at Blue Jay Park
- City pool looked like a blast





- Veterans Memorial Park/Roadside Park
- Very Attractive
- Nice quick stop for travelers





- Chamber Building is very visible
- Nice use of an older building
- Planters in front very attractive



## Attractions not mentioned or promoted

- Prairie Dog State Lake/Sebelius Reservoir
- Adobe House
- Norton County Historical Society Museum



# Restaurants, Specialty Shops or Attractions that would bring you back

- Loved the kitchen store
- Mexican Restaurant
- The Lake





# Most Positive Observations!!

- The repurposing of downtown buildings
- Community pride
- Good occupation mix
- Parks



# Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Signage
- Need for sidewalks
- Maintaining and recruiting downtown businesses
- Housing Improvements



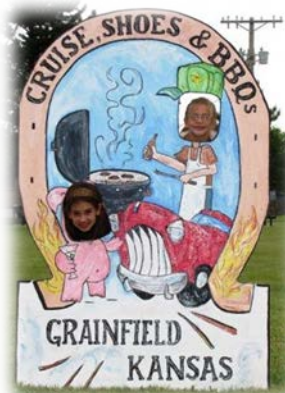
# What will you remember the most in six months from now?

- The downtown park and pocket park
- Anxious to see how renovations turn out
- The Kitchen shop and new clothing store
- Anxious to see if TLC has been applied to residential areas





# 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/>