

First Impressions

Oakley, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



Oakley Demographics

- Population – 2,125
- Median Household Income - \$44,555
- Average Household Income - \$58,374
- High School Education – 92.9%, College Education – 17.7 %
- Median resident age is 44.1 years
- Poverty rate is 10.0%



Web Presence:

- www.DiscoverOakley.com
- Easy to maneuver and lots of information
- Good links to other resources
- Good photos however pages are very heavy on text
- Some outdated information
- Very active Facebook Page



The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Very positive – lots of businesses, well-kept homes, nice streets – a complete self-sustaining community
- I-70 signage was excellent, good directional signage
- Wide variety of entrance signage, however some was difficult to read



- Community is very clean
- Lot of commercial and industrial at the entrances
- Some buildings that need repair/clean-up
- Green space between businesses



Downtown Business Area

- Existing businesses were taking good care of their building.
- Empty buildings in need of repair.
- Way finder signs easy to read and good community info sign
- Streets and sidewalks are in good shape.



- Community seemed active
- Variety of businesses – donut shop, grocery store, quilt shop, hardware store, insurance agencies, gift shop, dollar store, liquor store, gas stations/convenience stores, motels, activity center
- One great attribute – a community theatre with electronic sign



- Downtown park nice
- Good use of vacant lot with the pocket park
- Customer service was good



- No trouble parking. However businesses seemed spread out and it would be a hike from one to another.
- Variety of eating choices within the community
- Might consider the addition of some benches downtown



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- East I-70 exit
- Truck stop, implement dealership, motels



- West I-70 Exit onto HWY 83
- Run down feeling, not real attractive
- Interesting collections of businesses – camp ground, restaurant, service station, antiques shop



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Along all entrances of town
- From the east the air port, implement dealership, trailer or camper parks



- Very evident agriculture is the economic driver



Health Care Services

- Nice Medical Complex with services located together



- Observed offices for vision, dental, chiropractic
- Public Health
- Cancer Center



- EMS located with Hospital
- Public Transportation Service
- Did not find Senior Center or Meal Site



Housing

- Total Number of Housing Units – 1,072
- Median house value in 2015 - \$81,486
- Owner occupied – 660 (61.6%)
- Renter occupied – 306 – (28.5%)
- Vacant housing units – 106 (9.9%)



Housing observations

- Good mix of houses for all income levels
- Well-kept yards
- Pride in home ownership
- Trash receptacles along street



- Limited multi-family units
- New Construction
- Very few for sale signs



- There are a few homes and yards throughout town which could use some repair or clean-up



Schools

- Public School – Pre to High School in a central location
- Large school grounds, well maintained, buildings seemed adequate



- Nice athletic field
- Good play ground
- Good promotion of physical activity



- What is happening with these facilities?



- Private School – St. Joseph's School - Pre to 5th grade



- Northwest Educational Service Center
- Services available for all ages and special needs – Huge Plus!!



Childcare

- Forgot to check at the city office
- Did not see anything marked as “Day Care”.
- Nothing in the newspaper or website
- Head Start is easily identified



Faith/Religion

- Website listed 10 different churches in the community
- Those observed appeared well kept and vital
- Well rounded with plenty of choices





Civic

- Good listing of civic organizations on the website
- City office did not have a list of organizations
- Masonic Lodge and VFW were noted



Public Infrastructure

- Signage very good
- Streets all over town very good
- Not many sidewalks in residential areas



- Few areas of clean up needed
- Ag clutter on vacant lots



- City Office nicely signed
- No brochures given or were available
- Not knowledgeable of information on the website
- City Office, Police and Fire in close proximity



- Excellent Library – meets needs of both youth and adults
- Housed in the same building as Fick Fossil Museum
- Artwork of school children displayed
- Sitting area in the lobby
- One group missed the library – the word “Library” on signage pretty small



- Very attractive city park
- Swimming pool nicely done
- Good ball complex



- Impact Center
- Fair Grounds



Recreation/Tourism

- Buffalo Bill Cultural Center a great attraction
- Workers were very helpful



- Fick Fossil History Museum
- Wonderful exhibits
- Well promoted from the highway
- Good directional signage



- Very nice war memorial and park
- Memorial by city office



- Community owned carnival
- The Cave Youth Center
- Fun Center



- Slogan – “Stop for the Legend, Stay for the Day!”
- Is this used elsewhere in the community
- Annie Oakley Motel??



- Several camper parks



Restaurants, Specialty Shops or Attractions that would bring you back

- Steak House on I-70
- Buffalo Bill Cultural Center
- Water/Corn Shucking event



Most Positive Observations!!

- Thriving business community
- Well-maintained streets and homes
- Cleanliness of community
- Great pool with walking trail



Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Vacant buildings and their maintenance needs
- Entrances very industrial – could use some beautification
- Spread of the community



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

- Positive visit at the Buffalo Bill Cultural Center
- Impressed with the cleanliness of town and streets
- Excellent directional signage



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/>