

# First Impressions

## Phillipsburg, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership with  
The Dane G. Hansen Foundation

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

**DANE G. HANSEN**

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

# Phillipsburg Demographics

- Population – 2,581
- Median Household Income - \$39,018
- High School Education – 90.2%, College Education –18.1 %
- Median resident age is 42.5 years
- Poverty rate is 8.7%

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



## Web Presence:

- <http://cityofphillipsburg.com/>
- <http://www.phillipscountykansas.com/>
- <http://www.phillipsburgchambermainstreet.com/>
- Very thorough and comprehensive
- Inviting and user friendly

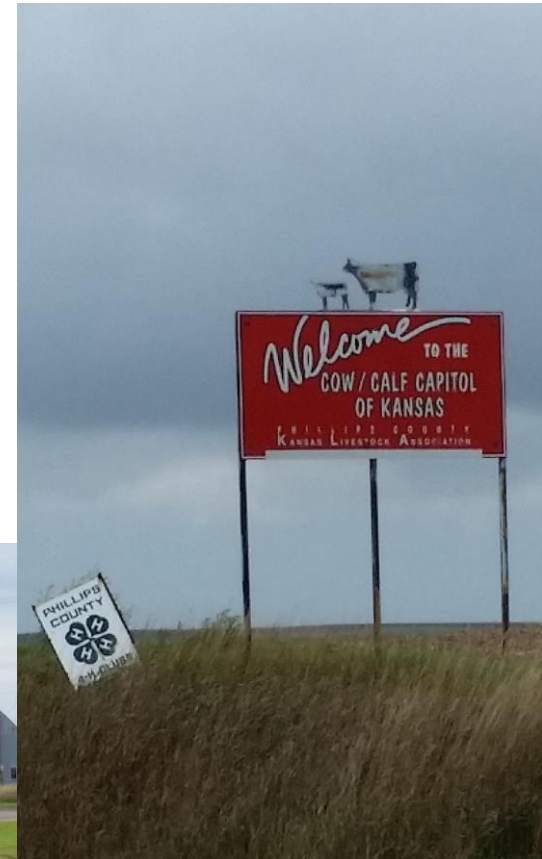


# The “Five-Minute” Impression

- Downtown parking was an immediate observation
- Several service businesses on town square making it convenient to take care of business



- Wooden signage with landscaping very attractive
- Things seem to be well-maintained and cared for
- Did not see signage coming in from the south



## Downtown Business Area

- Downtown appears to be thriving
- Buildings occupied had adequate signage



- Good variety of downtown, including retail, service, coffee shop, boutique, hardware, furniture. A visitor could enjoy spending time in downtown Phillipsburg



- Does not appear to be continuity in a streetscape or landscaping program, but maybe not needed
- Downtown and square are attractive with benches, planters, and trash receptacles with a brick landing at every corner.



- Some sidewalks need attention
- Street signage could be improved downtown
- Vacant store fronts appear to be getting renovated for usage



- People were nice and helpful throughout town
- Greeted and treated friendly at all locations
- Employees may need education on Phillipsburg's events and local attractions



## Other Retail Areas

- This was not noted
- Most located on the East and South entrances



- Area surrounding several of the businesses could use some clean-up
- Ironical to have the greenhouse sign almost covered by weeds



# Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

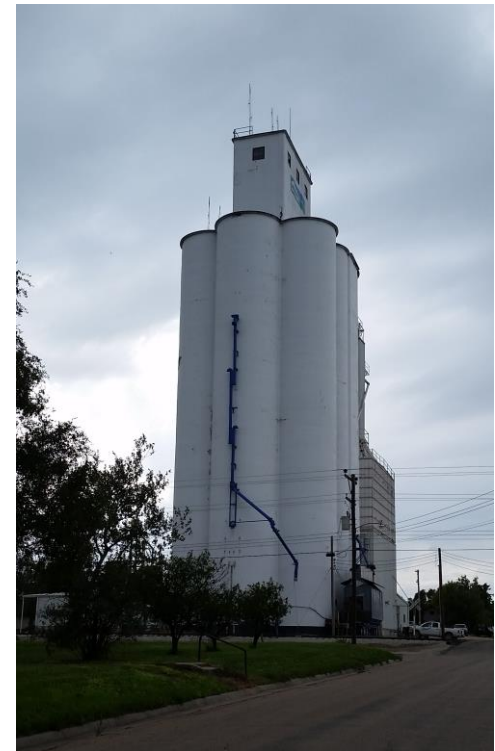
- The industrial park area is ideally located with good rail service
- North entrance to the community comes through the industrial park



- Reuse of water from Ethanol Plant is a great sustainability initiative for the community
- Might consider signage next to the towers regarding initiative and place info on the website



- Nice clean display of livestock equipment on west side of town
- Typical Ag facilities



# Health Care Services

- Hospital is ideally located adjacent to the long term assisted living facility
- Good directional signage for senior living facility



- All health care facilities well maintained
- Signage for medical clinic was a little confusing



- Senior Center is located south of HWY 36
- Health Department and High Plains Mental Health in close proximity to each other



# Housing

- Total Number of Housing Units – 1,278
- Occupied housing units – 1,108
- Vacant housing units – 170
- Owner occupied – 69.8%
- Renter occupied – 30.2%



# Housing observations

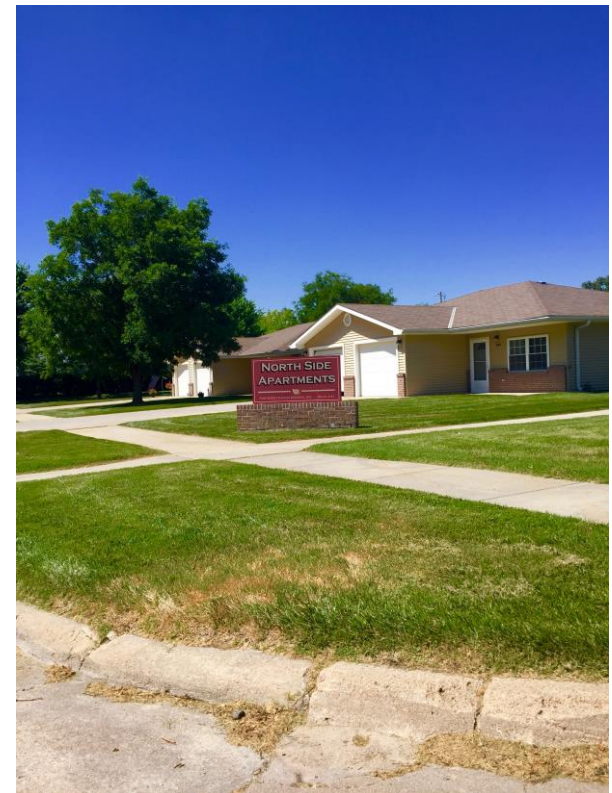
- Only a few FOR Sale signs observed indicating a tight housing market
- Challenge for new residents to find housing



- Many nice homes and neighborhoods appear to be well maintained



- Rental property options are limited



- As all communities, there are some areas in need of clean-up



# Schools

- Three separate school facilities, Grade School, Middle School and High School
- Appears to be adequate in size and well maintained



- Did not notice a preschool or Heat Start
- Nice to have links from the city website to the school website



- School facilities could use some directional signage
- Nice athletic facilities



## Childcare

- Did not observe any childcare service facilities
- Through conversation learned childcare is a top priority for Phillipsburg
- Waiting list for childcare providers making it difficult to obtain care
- Affordability of childcare is also an issue

## Faith/Religion

- Churches were located throughout the community – a wide variety of denominations were represented
- All were nice and well maintained
- Possibly some outdate information on the website





## Civic

- The team noted the Golf Course Club and the Soccer Club
- Some volunteer opportunities listed on website



- Store windows painted promoting the fair
- 2016 Kansas Biggest Outdoor Rodeo



- What about organizations such as Masons, VFW, Rotary, Lions, Scouts, 4-H, etc.? None of this was noted by visiting group



# Public Infrastructure

- Streets and signage in residential areas were good
- There were no distinguished streetscapes in the neighborhoods



- Did observe some land use planning in new development
- Some older areas of town could use some clean-up



- Well received at City Hall. Learned a lot and appreciated the tenured staff
- Fire protection provided by volunteers
- Police protections provided by the Sheriff's Department



- Library was a nice facility, well organized.
- Was a little difficult to find information by age level and genre
- Love the idea of checking out artwork
- Very attractive landscaping



- City Park was very nice and looked like a great adventure for a child.
- Nice play equipment and a disc golf course
- Nice stone bridge leading to a campsite (rv park)



- Two other small parks, Armstrong and Miner Parks were not found by the visiting team



- Ballparks appeared to be well maintained and have adequate parking for a large crowd or tournament events



- Signage for the old pool is still present on the highway
- Old pool area has great potential to be repurposed for basketball or tennis courts



- Good to see renovation of community building
- Any thoughts on this facility?



## Recreation/Tourism

- Huck Boyd Community Center is a jewel of a facility
- Volunteers very helpful and shared information on performances hosted: Annual Giving Campaign; Christmas Cantata; C&R Railroad Museum Train Collection; Mr. Bill Clarke's photo collection



- Aquatic Center/Wellness Center is very nice!
- Spacious, fun and functional!



- Golf Course
- Majestic Theatre



- Windows painted to promote 4-H Fair and Rodeo
- Riverless Festival in June – duck races at the pool for charity
- Slogan – Discover Phillipsburg – that's catchy and easy to remember!



- Visitors Center, Chamber of Commerce and Community Foundation all in same building near the downtown square
- Chamber had some great publications but were unable to access because the office was locked. Would suggest setting publication racks in the lobby area



- Scrolling marquee outside office building was nice but didn't notice upcoming events being advertised
- Loved the planters outside the Chamber Office and downtown locations
- Maybe replace map with one that lists attractions and points of interest (ex. Map in Nex-Tech Directory)



## Natural or Man-made Features :

- Fort Bissell Museum
- Kirwin Wildlife Refuge
- Local map showed a lake in the northern part of town. Did not find



# Restaurants, specialty shops or attractions that would bring you back?

- Our group ate lunch at the local café and would dine there again. The food selection was good.



# Most Positive Observations!

- Huck Boyd Community Center
- Recreation Center = it's a nice community facility that offers a great variety of physical fitness options for both older and younger members. Great model for other small communities to build from



# Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Housing
- Childcare



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

- The staff at the Huck Boyd Community Center and their willingness to open the center and give a tour of the facility
- Nothing negative stands out, but having the cooperation/support of all entities the opportunity to address the housing and childcare needs could be met
- Great deal of repurposing within the community, utilizing assets and reshaping them into something current and functional. The theatre is one such example
- There seems to be a great deal of pride and ownership within the community!

## Recommendations:

- Phillipsburg is know for it's rodeo. Market and promote year around within the community
- Way finder or directional signage
- Map with points of interest on website and in publications
- Kiosk with publications in lobby of Fischer Building
- Repurposing of old pool
- Promoting civic groups and organizations
- Improve appearance of the intersection of HWYs 36 & 183 and North 183 out of town

- 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/>