

First Impressions



Goodland, KS

K-State Research and Extension



- Goodland asked for First Impressions, Ulysses agreed to be its partner; about a 2.5 hour drive.
- Volunteer visitors in both communities were trained and photos were taken of Goodland on July 26th.
- Seven Ulysses visitors visited late June through early August.
- Results presented by Zoom and video recording.
- Goodland uses the results for further discussion and action plans.

- **Feedback:**

How does a first-time visitor view my town?

- Evaluate successes.
- Set goals and priorities for next steps.

- **If you don't agree with the observation:**

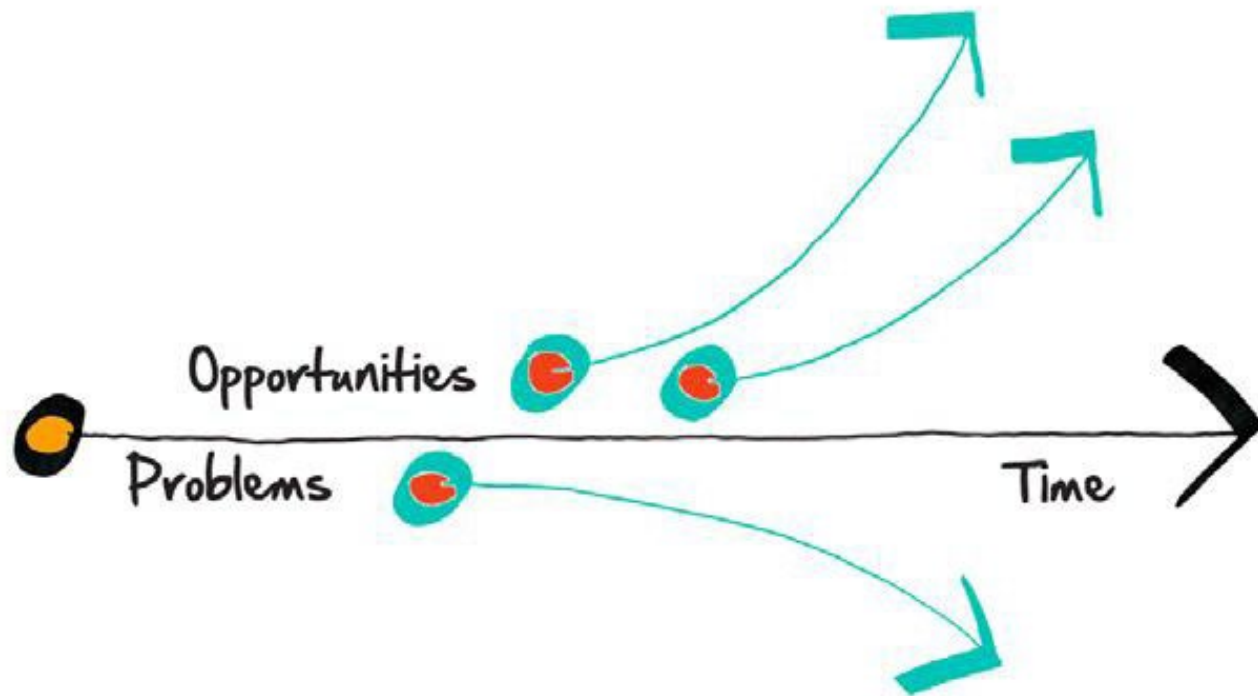
- ***Be curious:*** Why does the visitor see it this way?
- Is the observation worth considering?
- What can we do to change it– or the perception?

Curiosity: A strong desire to know or learn something.

-Oxford Living Dictionary

Asset Based Community Development

People move in the direction of their conversations



Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

We need to change the narrative about rural.

- Rural is *changing*, not dying.
- Brain Gain (30-49 year olds moving to rural) is a “new trend” that has been happening since the 70’s.
- People research a number of places before they move to a rural town.
- Rural is in the middle of ***everywhere***. You live one place, work another and play another. With transportation and internet, it’s all accessible to you.

Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, U of MN

- In a survey of newcomers to rural areas, the reasons people move to a rural community are:
 - Simpler pace of life,
 - Safety and security,
 - Affordable housing,
 - Outdoor recreation,
 - Quality schools
 - ***“A job” isn’t in the top 10 reasons.***
- Communities can work together to attract newcomers and create quality of life for everyone.

- “In small towns everyone knows each other.” **False!**
- *Get to know each other*, invite them to a newcomers’ meal.
- If you bring 7 people to a 700-citizen town every year in 10 years, you’ll have a 10% increase. It matters! It is a challenge with housing, but it is achievable.
- We are our own worst enemies. We must monitor our customer service and what we say. It matters.
- Don’t say, “You have to live here twenty years to be an insider.” And don’t act like it either.

- 75% of rural homeowners are Baby Boomers and older. 30% are over 75.
- Housing will be freed up as the Baby Boomers retire and move closer to medical services.
- Rural communities need retirement housing (not nursing facilities, but maintenance free) to retain seniors.- *Ben Winchester, Senior Research Fellow, University of Minnesota*



*Ben Winchester was our guest on the
First Friday Call.*

See the recording at:

<https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- 2020 Census: 4,465 ↓ 0.53% 2010 Census: 4,489
- Median household income: \$56,024 **\$61,091**
- High school or GED 86.9% **91.4%**
- At least a BS 19.5% **33.9%**
- Median Age: 37.2 years **37.3 years**

16% of residents are 65 and above in Goodland and Kansas as a whole.

Blue: Kansas Comparison Data

- Moved since Last Year: 16.6% 15.1%
+/- 10% margin of error
- Poverty rate 7.1% 11.7%
(% of people below poverty line)

Race/Ethnicity

White: 77.3%

American Indian: 0.8%

Black: 0.6%

Hispanic: 16.9%

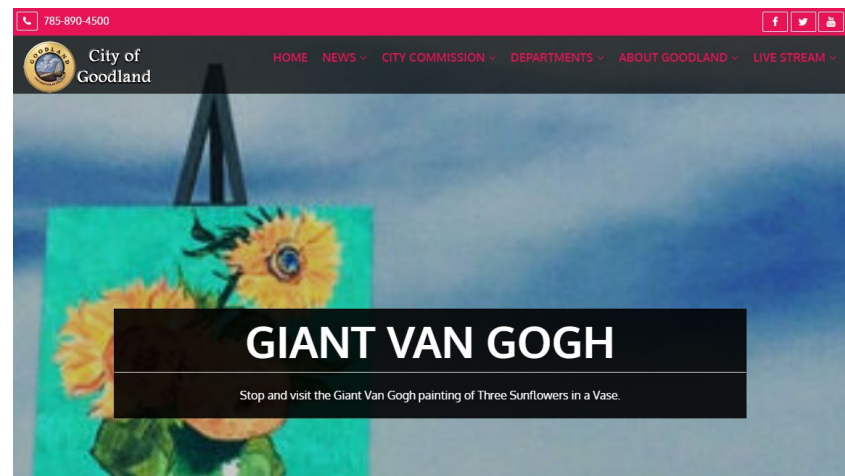
Asian: 1.7%

Two or more races: 2.8%

Blue: Kansas Comparison Data

Website Goodlandks.gov

- Official city website came up as first result during Google search for some.
- The website was very attractive and nicely presented. It reflected what was found during the in-person visits well.
- Website highlighted scrolling shots of interesting things in town and descriptions.
- Some had difficulty finding the website, or any related sites, in their searches.



*Images retrieved from
internet 9/23/22*

Facebook www.facebook.com/cityofgoodland

Visitors did find the Facebook page. Page was current with about 2,200 followers.

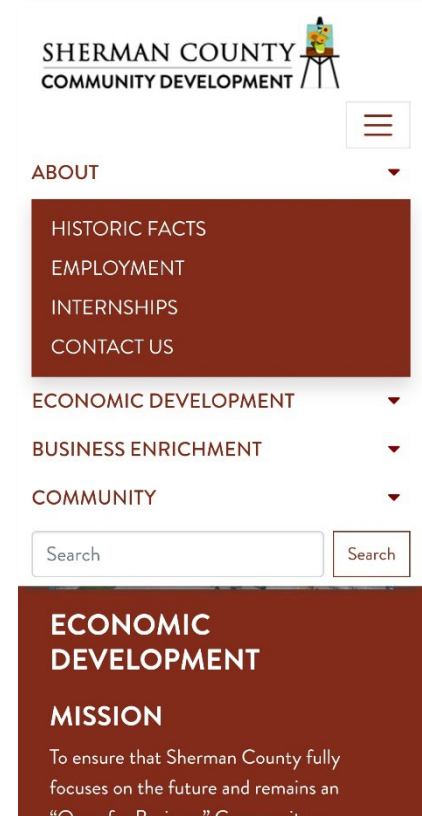
- The NWS Office's Facebook page came up in web searches for some before the city's page.
- Some couldn't find it via a search engine but could through Facebook's search function.
- Also found was a Facebook page for the Flatlander Festival.



- A page auto-generated by Facebook (not the official city page) to show places to go and things to do also has about 2.2k likes.

<https://www.facebook.com/places/Things-to-do-in-Goodland-Kansas/112069008805012/>

- Thetopsideofkansas.org and Goodland's activity center website were on later results pages of searches in Google.
- Thetopsideofkansas.org was not as easy to navigate on a mobile device compared to a computer. It had good information for people moving to town – not necessarily if visiting.
- Some found more online resources once they got to Goodland in the form of QR codes in the park.



- **Facebook & Websites**
- Visitors had trouble locating Facebook pages for the Chamber and Visitors Bureau.
- Some negative press about SPARK funds found during Facebook search.
- Visitors noted once in town it was easy to find information online about restaurants while using their phones.
- One of the top returned results was a site called “Roxie on the Road” that had 10 things to do in Goodland:
<https://roxieontheroad.com/top-10-things-you-should-do-in-goodland-ks/>

“Five-Minute” Impression

- Beautiful entry signs. Other signage in town is amazing.
- The Loop was well marked, though some of the Loop road was a little rough.
- A Tesla charging station was noted near I-70.



“Five-Minute” Impression

- Well-kept public housing and neighborhoods neat a tidy.
- Main Street was bustling with activity.
- Retirement community buildings were amazing.
- Quite a few agriculture businesses seen while driving through.



- From south Hwy 27, the farmsteads were neat and well-kept. There was a weedy lot observed from this direction.
- Ample signage on buildings and industrial areas.
- Some signage was faded coming in from the east on I-70, and some were too small to read at 75 mph.
- Both I-70 approaches were decent, but nothing really says “Stop Here.”

Downtown Business Area

- Some empty buildings but a good mix of retail and service businesses exist. It would be nice to have the signs on the vacant buildings removed or at least signs on the doors indicating they were closed.
- It was mentioned some of the vacant buildings appear run down, which may have been more apparent since there were nicer buildings close by.
- Some pink signs on Main were difficult to read in the sun.
- Electronic sign on Main was nice and the ads displayed were attractive and easy to read.



Downtown Business Area



- Downtown had a pleasing and welcoming atmosphere.
- Historic buildings that were still utilized were beautiful!
- Loved the plaques on the buildings – there's a lot of great history here.
- Antique store was stunning with its entry way and outdoor walk around displays.

Downtown Business Area

- Different stores and restaurants were found with a good variety of items. Surprised that there were multiple of the same type of stores and doing well.
- Many antique and second-hand shops noted.
- Heirloom was highlighted as a wonderful children's clothing store. Lou Lou's was closed during some visits but open during others and had a good variety of clothing, jewelry, and gift items.



Downtown Business Area

- Coffee shops and cafes were closed on Friday afternoons so some visitors couldn't go to those.
- The Hallmark store received multiple praises for its great displays and helpful staff.
- The gun smith had friendly staff, the movie theater was playing a current movie.



Downtown Business Area

- Burgers and Cones was closed during some visits, and no sign indicating such made it difficult to tell right away.
- The furniture store was very crowded.

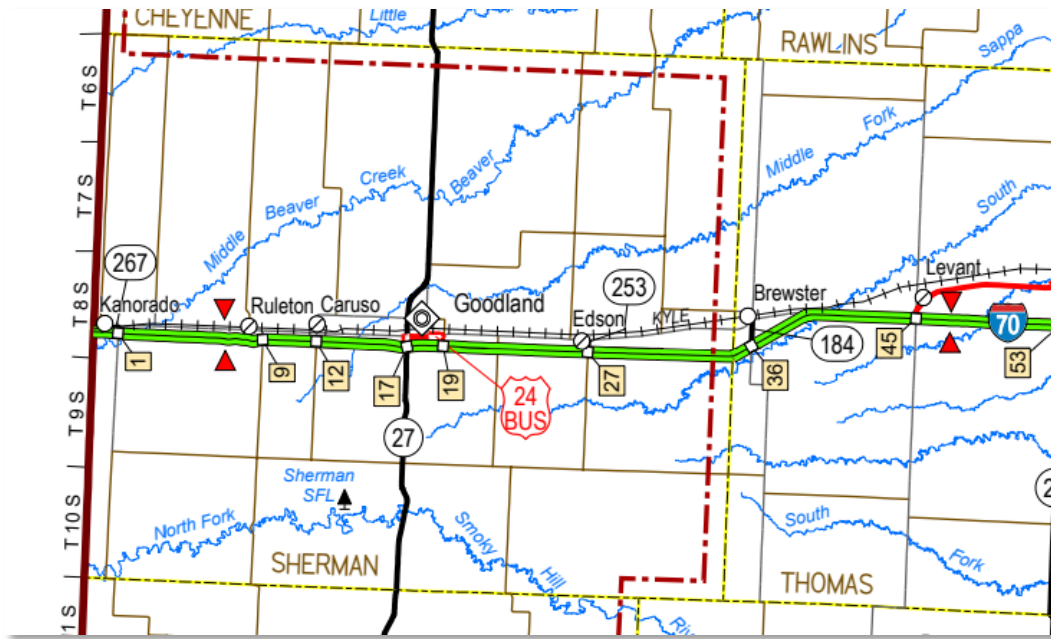




- Visitors indicated that customer service was great everywhere they visited, including the gun smith, Heirloom, Tequila's and The Bricks by Maria (though the tables were a bit close for comfort at The Bricks).
- Easy to strike up a conversation everywhere and visitors were met with politeness, curiosity, and an invitation to come back again.

Downtown Business Area

- Only disappointing part of the customer service experience was more couldn't answer questions about events or things to do in Goodland when asked.
- A lot of people said to go down I-70 to find more interesting things.



Public Amenities Downtown

- Public restrooms were found at the park east of the courthouse by some, others did not see these and ended up at the gas station to use the facilities instead.
- Some said there were trash bins downtown while others felt they were lacking. The same can be said for drinking fountains.
- Public wi-fi was found by some but they couldn't stay connected, while others did not find any available.
- There were benches outside of Lou Lou's, but no others noted.



Downtown Parking and More

- Parking was never a problem during visits. Easy to access many businesses and other areas by parking in one spot.
- Nice landscaping in downtown. Flower pots were beautiful. One business with an older car that had flowers growing out of it was noted.

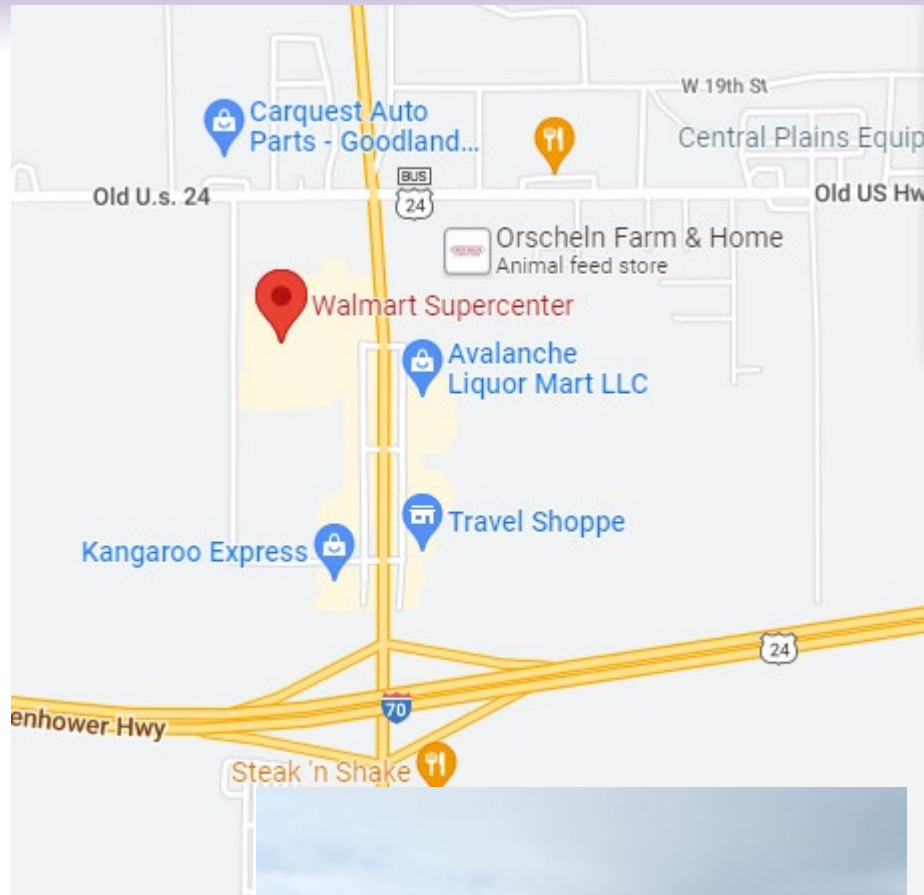


Downtown Parking and More

- Some visitors came during Alumni Weekend and commented that everything was picked up and mowed very nicely.
- Some sidewalks on Main were in disrepair and could be a problem for someone not steady on their feet.



- Excellent customer service at the Welcome Center.
- Some visitors checked out the Ace Hardware store and Wal-Mart.
- Easy access to all shopping areas in town including easy access off I-70.
- Ag-related stores were noted on Old US 24.
- There were some junky lots here and there in the other retail areas, but nothing out of the ordinary. A large pile of concrete rubble was noticed by some from I-70.



Industrial Parks/Commercial

- Several visitors felt the industrial area was well-defined with a nice arch sign and plenty of room to expand.
- Some didn't feel it was a well-defined industrial park but did see areas where there was heavy commercial and industry and there were big, empty lots adjacent to those areas in case expansion was an option.
- The west end of town was indicated as possibly having room to expand.



- *A drive-by is not how industry will find you, check with your local Eco Devo director to make sure your site is listed on LocationOne @ Kansas Department of Commerce.*

Observation:

- “Entrepreneurs who choose to start their small businesses are responsible for 63 percent of net new jobs created in the United States every year.”
- *Global marketing makes your town accessible to purchases all over the world.*

- Some said the healthcare facilities were modern with excellent directional signage to get people there.
- Others felt the hospital was hard to find and noted it seemed to be an older building, but well maintained.
- Emergency room was easy to identify.



- Several dentists were found and an optometrist.
- Some noted a lot of healthcare providers throughout town, many easily accessible on Main Street. Those offices appeared to be well-kept.
- There were also some visitors who didn't see healthcare options while walking and driving around town.



- There was some surprise initially that the pharmacy was so far away from Main Street, but realized it made sense to have it near the hospital.
- No public health services, like a Health Department, were noted.
- Visitors noted that the assisted living facilities were beautifully landscaped and easily accessible and that there was a good number of these facilities.



- One visitor observed that there were hardly any homes for sale during their visit while another felt there was quite a lot of real estate for sale and at different price points.
- The homes in the northeast part of town were noted as beautiful.
- Southwest part of town shows signs of disrepair.
- Housing overall seemed to be mostly nicer, higher end, though some neighborhoods were pretty run down.



- Some real estate offices were seen downtown and internet searches for housing indicated there were some properties for rent and sale.
- Some of the homes listed seemed wildly expensive with prices more appropriate for other parts of the country.
- Most neighborhoods were inviting and there looks to be room to build new homes.

- Several apartment complexes were seen, but no indication on availability of units there.
- The Goodland Housing Authority was really the only thing some saw that might have had rentals and it was the most prevalent result on internet searches.



Housing data

KANSAS

- Occupied Housing Units 1,829
- Owner Occupied 61% 66%
- Vacant Houses 19.4%
- Average Household size 2.1
 - Households without a computer*: 7.1%
 - Households without Internet Subscription: 7.7%
- Travel Time to jobs: 9.2 min 19.6 min
Blue: Kansas Comparison Data

*Includes Smartphones, tablets, other wireless devices.

Data source: <https://censusreporter.org/>

- Kansas Housing Corporation is a resource to find out about housing grants and other tools for homeowners and renters.
- Also has some resources to address homelessness.

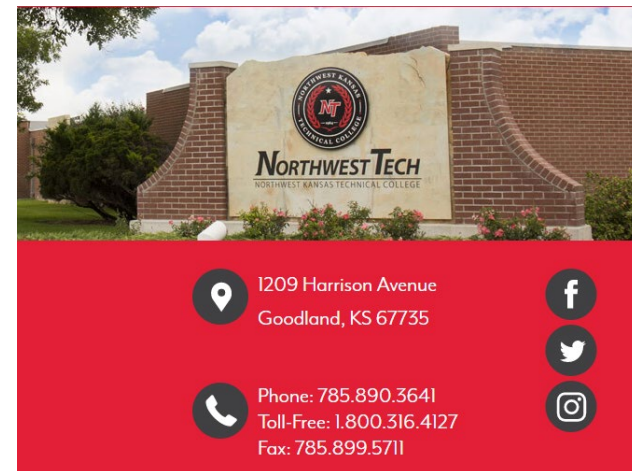
<https://kshousingcorp.org/>



- As a whole – the school facilities were well-kept and appeared to be positive assets to the community. Pre-K through post-secondary seemed adequate in size for the population.
- North Elementary school has a great school garden area.



- K-State Research and Extension office appeared active with programs being offered.
- Northwest Kansas Technical College is an obvious asset to the community. Very nice campus, lots of improvements happening.



- Max Jones Fieldhouse is a nice facility with fantastic signage.
- Some banners around the gym were a bit small for how high up they were.



- It was noted by one visitor that the school website made it easy to find information in English or Spanish and that an accountability report online gave details about the quality of the education system.
- Other visitors indicated they could not find information online about the quality of the education system.

KANSAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
K.S.A. 72-5178 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2020-2021
Goodland USD 352



MENU

SCHOOLS



ENGLISH



English

Spanish

Comments:

- Some visitors noted a building being renovated as a large, new childcare facility.
- Others noted they did not see any information about childcare in Goodland online or while visiting the community – lacking availability and affordability details.
- Of multiple locals asked, visitors were told family members watch their kids.

Sherman County Data:

- **Extent Desired Capacity meets Potential Childcare need** **33%**
- Contact ks.childcareaware.org to access local childcare specialists.
785-823-3343

Source <https://ks.childcareaware.org/data-research/> Retrieved from internet 9/26/22

- Several different churches and denominations were found.
- Most noted that there were no faith-based community services seen while in town, though some noted the church thrift shop – it was interesting and the ladies there were very nice.
- More than one visitor mentioned the Catholic and Methodist churches had food booths at the fair.



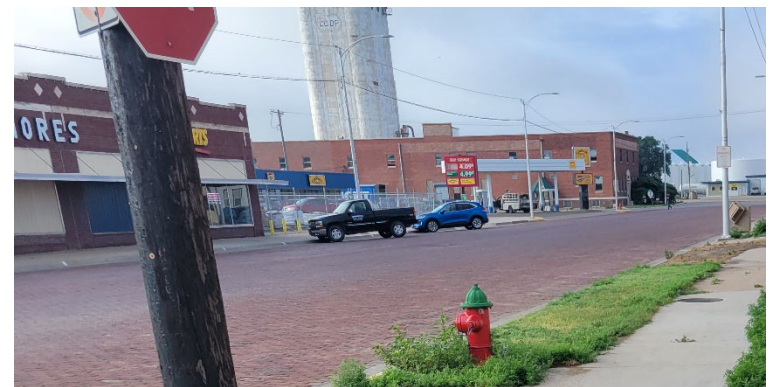


- Civic club signs easily seen when entering town.
- Specifically noticed while in town: Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has a large facility that looks nice; Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis observed.
- Rotary is associated with the park area near the Van Gogh easel – seating, signage, walking path. “Beautiful park!”
- Rotary also had a “Protect Our Children” sign near one of the schools.
- Elks had a drug awareness program trailer at their building.
- Kiwanis had a food booth at the fair and noted they put out 900 flags 6 times throughout the year.



- Lacking sidewalks in some areas of the community where they could be of benefit.
- Several intersections had no traffic control.
- Lack of public restrooms – even the visitor center had a note that there were no public restrooms at their facility.
- Landscaping was average; several areas around town needed to be mowed, but not too overgrown.
- Some dips in the streets noticed while driving around. Overall road conditions were good.

- Planters on Main were attractive.
- People liked the brick streets.
- Streets well maintained.
- Most neighborhoods were clean, sidewalks were good, lots of parking and things were well marked.
- Loop signage was great – one visitor noted that it seems like the Loop runs backward and takes you through a residential/commercial area which seemed confusing.



- City hall was closed when some visitors came to town.
- Others observed it but did not go inside.



- Police and fire protection seem well funded.
- Several vehicles were observed throughout town by most, others didn't see any police vehicles in town during their visit but did hear sirens.
- Signs pointing people to police and fire stations were found.

Welcome to Kansas Insurance Department

Home Contact Us

Kansas Insurance Commissioner
Vicki Schmidt

Kansas Insurance Department
420 SW 9th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1678
Consumer Hotline: 800-432-2484 (KS only)
[Email Us](#) | Phone: 785-296-3071

HOME : ISO

ISO Public Protection Classification

Most U.S. insurers of home and business properties use Insurance Services Office's (ISO) Property Protection Classification (PPC) in calculating premiums. In general, the price of insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC, assuming all other factors are equal.

PPC Program: <https://www.isomitigation.com/program-works/how-the-ppc-program-works.html>

A community's PPC depends on:

1. Emergency communications systems, including facilities for the public to report fires, staffing, training, certification of telecommunicators, and facilities for dispatching fire departments
2. The fire department, including equipment, staffing, training, and geographic deployment of fire companies
3. The water supply system, including the inspection and flow testing of hydrants and a careful evaluation of

- > The Department
- > Auto/Home
- > Health/Life
- > Insurance Fraud & Education
- > Producer/Agency Services
- > Company Services
- > Other Services



- “Great library!”
- The Kansas Room was very enjoyable and the library itself is up to date.
- Beautiful facility and a highlight for many visitors. Great landscaping, too.
- Sections for all age groups with activity centers and computers.
- Head librarian was very helpful with community information.
- Good website for the library.



- City parks were very popular with the visitors.
- Beautiful landscaping throughout the many parks in town. Those responsible for litter control and upkeep should be applauded for the great job they do.
- Walking areas and trails were nice. Skatepark and ballpark also observed.
- Dog parks were nice for visitors with pets. Good condition, though one observation was there wasn't much in one of the parks for dogs.

- No restrooms noticed at the picnic areas in the park west of the swimming pool.
- The covered picnic area was nice and benches were great in all parks.





Well-known for an attraction or event?

- Found some information online about a “Flatlander Festival” but nothing noted in the community.
- The one-block area of the swimming pool, park, skateboard park, tennis courts is great. Parking is crumbling, however, on the south side of the area.
- Someone did an amazing job putting out posters and flyers for the fair. The initials painted on store windows for the fair were a little confusing – listing times or “come to the fair” would have been helpful.



- Known for giant easel and other easels around town. If there's a slogan associated with these it was missed. Kids had fun looking through town to find other paintings. Great way to get people into town to find them all.
- Some did not find that there were any attractions or events the city was known for.



- Visitors saw a sign for the Saturday farmers' market.
- Some also saw a lot of information about an upcoming school reunion, but it wasn't anything visitors would be interested in.
- The fair was taking place during some visits – the fair website had good details on this. The fair building was very hot according to some visitors.
- Not a lot of activity at the fair until after 7 PM.
- Food was good at the fair and visitors appreciated the shaded areas to sit and eat.
- The home-owned carnival was great!

- Some felt the museum was a neat space and there would be benefit to advertising the helicopter more widely. 4-H display at the museum was interesting.
- Others felt the customer service at the museum was a turn off with staff not enthusiastic about giving out the postcards the plaque at the easel promised.



- The KOA camping area looked like a nice one, though mostly empty at the time. Also observed was a sign on I-70 for Camp-Inn.
- Airport has a potential to bring people to town if they hosted an air show or fly-in event. Runways appear to have been undergoing some improvements.



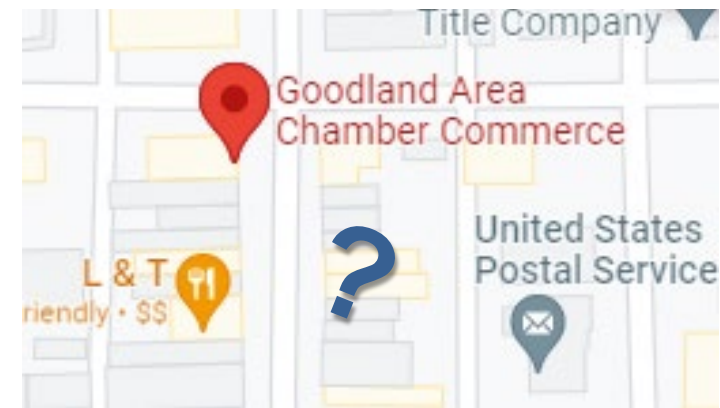
Visitor's Center

- Welcome Center near the Van Gogh easel.
- Some visitors indicated the center was closed when they visited.
- Most noted helpful staff and useful information and appreciated the bottled water.
- “It would be nice if there was a public restroom there.”
- Maybe could use some landscaping.



Visitor's Center + Chamber

- Welcome Center had rack cards and maps which were good.
- Some felt the directions to the center were confusing and kept getting routed to Wal-Mart. Others had no issue and felt it was in a good location.
- Difficulties finding Chamber office.



What would bring you back?

- Tequila's was a great experience.
- The L&T Family Restaurant was also a great experience. One visitor has already suggested it to many people and will go back eat there personally.
- Visitors felt the coffee/snow cone place would be a good draw, but it was closed in the afternoons.
- If in town again some said they would spend time around town, at Lou Lou's Boutique, and the children's store.



Most Positive Observations

- Northwest Kansas Technical College campus.
- The downtown is in good shape.
- Easy access from I-70.
- The Dane G. Hansen Foundation is a huge resource to the community.
- The town is clean and friendly.
- “It would be a place I would move to.”
- Impressed by the planning and execution of several projects for visitors. Good communication between the entities that serve the community and it’s clear they have a plan.
- Nice selection of businesses on Main.
- The fair carnival was great!
- Community pride.



- Getting people to venture off I-70. It's a missed opportunity to encourage traffic to stop. It's a nice place, and you have to stop somewhere, why not here?
- Need more activities for people to do. There are hotels but likely they are for people just driving through.
- Lack of workforce.
- Some felt the internet presence was lacking.
- People in town don't know what there is to do here and recommend driving to Colby because there's more there.
- Lack of housing for sale.
- The building at the fairgrounds could be used throughout the year if it was air conditioned.
- Not much in the way of night life and other activities for young people.

What will you remember?

- The L&T Family Restaurant.
- The parks.
- The giant painting and other easels around town.
- Entrance to the antique store on Main.
- The great carnival.
- Friendly people.
- “I was pleasantly surprised and feel like it would be a nice place in western Kansas to live.”

- Remember that potential new residents are researching before they come. Use your City and School websites to highlight your many assets.
- What are you proud of? Show us online.
- Tell your positive stories. Make your residents want to contribute to a positive story.

N o o n e c a n d o e v e r y t h i n g ,
b u t e v e r y o n e c a n d o s o m e t h i n g .

Thank you to our volunteer visitors.

Set Next Steps:

- Start talking! Find ways to discuss what you heard in small groups of every kind.

Contact me if you need resources or have questions:

Jan Steen

Community Vitality Specialist

**Kansas PRIDE Program Co-Coordinator, K-State Research and
Extension**

785.532.5840

jmsteen@ksu.edu

Kansas PRIDE: <http://kansasprideprogram.k-state.edu/>

- Local communities identify what they would like to preserve, create, or improve for their future and volunteers pull together to create their ideal community future.



Youth Community Perceptions

- Youth-Based Community Assessment.
- Gives communities insights on how youth see their community.
- Creates opportunities for youth voices in the community.
- Allows youth to become involved in local government and community process



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Community
Vitality

K-STATE
Research and Extension



Grant Writing Classes and Support

Contact

KSRECV@ksu.edu

to participate.



K-STATE
Research and Extension

5 GRANT WRITING RESOURCES

K-State Research and Extension provides resources to help you write and submit successful grant proposals to improve lives, livelihoods and communities across Kansas.

- 1 ONLINE GRANT WRITING CLASSES**
Class alum reported receiving \$28 million in successful grants. 
- 2 A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL GRANT DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT COURSE**
An 8-week course dedicated to helping you complete a fundable proposal. 
- 3 A LIST OF CONTRACT GRANT WRITERS**
Professionals willing and ready to write grants on a contract basis.
- 4 SUPPORT FOR KANSAS PRIDE COMMUNITIES**
Excellent resources for those wanting to bring more to their communities.
- 5 ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT BY K-STATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROFESSIONALS**
Our professionals are prepared to help you find grants and review your grant proposals.

Small Business and Community Development

- **First Friday e-Calls 9:30-10:30 am**

Connecting small businesses and communities with the resources to make them successful.

- [Register here](#)

- Previous calls are recorded at

<http://www.ksre.k-state.edu/community/business/entrepreneurship/>

- Now people have a choice, and millions of them are planning to move.
- **“The pivot to remote work is the biggest, fastest transformation of the labor market since the World War II mobilization.”**
- **Major cities will see the biggest out-migration:** 20.6% of those planning to move are currently based in a major city.
- **People are seeking less expensive housing:** Altogether, **more than half** (52.5%) are planning to move to a house that is significantly more affordable than their current home.
- **People are moving beyond regular commute distances:** 54.7% of people are moving over two hours away or more from their current location, which is beyond daily or even weekly commuting distances for most.

[UpWork October, 2020 <https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move>, retrieved from Internet 12-12-20, UpWork October, 2020](https://www.upwork.com/press/releases/economist-report-remote-workers-on-the-move)

- Kansas Remote Online Initiative
 - Certified Remote Work Professional
 - Certified Remote Work Leader
- *Certification in 4-weeks*
- kansasremotework.com



Rural Grocery/KS Healthy Food Initiative

- **Goal:** Increase access to healthy food and to improve the health and economic development of Kansans and their communities.
- Technical assistance and financing to develop new or renovate fresh food retail in underserved communities throughout Kansas.

<http://kansashealthyfood.org/>

