

First Impressions

White City, Kansas

K-State Research and Extension in Partnership
with

The Dane G. Hansen Foundation



- 2010 Census Population **618**
(Up 19.3% since 2000 count of **518**) **KS= +6.1%**
- 2015 Estimate is **524** (UP 1.2% since 2000 **KS= +8.1%**)
- 5.9% college educated, 90.7% high school or GED
 - **KS 31% college education, 90% HS or equivalency**
- 61.1% family households, 38.9% non-family
- Poverty rate is 21.8% (**KS=13.6%**)
- Median Age 45.3 years (**36**)
- Median household income is \$46,250 (**\$52,205**)

Web Presence:

City <http://whitecityks.net/>

- Informative website. Especially liked the events calendar and the new residents' information.
- More information was desired on activities and entertainment in the area.
- City websites usually have photos of buildings (like yours); photos of people having fun together are more descriptive of the small town life that people are looking for.

Web Presence:

FaceBook

- **City:** <https://www.facebook.com/WhiteCityKS/>

- **High School**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/White-City-High/862448440462316>

The “Five-Minute” Impression

- School, fire and rescue department and parks indicate that there are many people still engaged in keeping the community safe.
- Many well-maintained homes, but some needing a little pride.
- Signs coming into town were attractive and informative. South entrance is more obscure.



The “Five-Minute” Impression



- Some street signs are faded and hard to read.
- Brick downtown streets.
- No curb/guttering in residential areas.



Downtown Business Area

- Buildings that were in use were well maintained and inviting, however the fronts of the vacant buildings could use some attention.
- Especially impressed with the hardware store.
- Everyone was friendly and courteous.
- The mural at the top of the building was very good.
- Nice bank.



Downtown Business Area

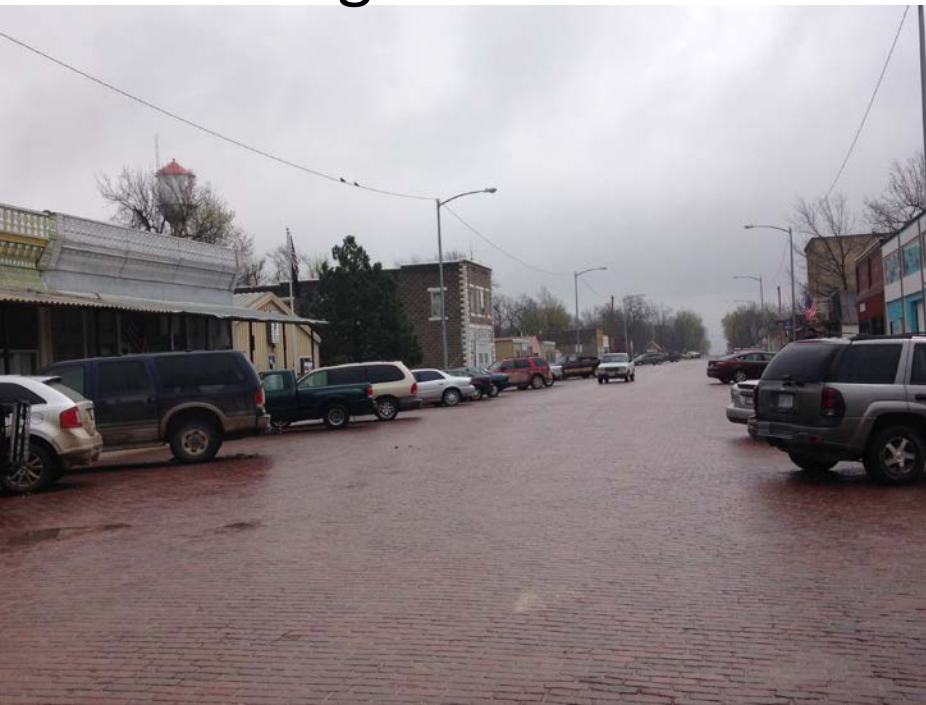


Downtown Business Area



Downtown Business Area

- We visited the newspaper and got a warm welcome and lots of useful information.
- The Senior Center and City building were informative and friendly. Many cars on Main Street as a bus was taking seniors to Holton.



Downtown Business Area

- There was not much merchandise to observe, as the opportunity to buy things in White City is very limited.
- Machine Shop, Gas Pump, Hunts Pizza, Beauty Salon, Hardware Store, Bank.



Downtown Amenities

Drinking fountains, benches, public restrooms?

- Downtown area is lacking things that encourage socialization such as shade and benches.
- Public restrooms are available in City Hall and Senior Center, but not after hours.
- Did not observe drinking fountains.
- Ample parking.



Other Retail Shopping Areas

- In many small towns, there is a downtown and “that area near the highway.”
- White City’s shopping is in one spot.



Industrial Parks/Commercial Areas

- Did not see any industrial areas in person or on website.

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.” *It would be better to think about how to help them in your downtown spaces than to worry about industrial.*
- *The same UPS truck who competed with your downtown can help your entrepreneur serve the world.*

Health Care Services

- One of the buildings indicated that health care was available, but was no longer in operation. The sign should be removed to show that it is available to others.
- Local residents go to Council Grove, Junction City and Herington for Health Care.



Health Care Services

- Volunteer Fire Department and ambulance, EMT service
- There are no assisted living facilities.



Housing data

KANSAS

- Total Housing Units 307
- Total Occupied Houses 216 (70.4%) (89.5%)
- Vacant Houses 91 (29.6%) (10.5%)

- Owner Occupied 157 (73%) (66.7%)
- Renter Occupied 59 (27%) (33.3%)

Housing

- Not many houses for sale or lots available for purchase.



Housing

- A variety of homes.
- New housing at Sunset Acres.



Housing



Areas for cleanup



Rental Housing

- Housing Authority apartments.
- We did not observe any property for rent and did not ask about it.
 - *Would the city clerk have information?*
 - *Some cities have listed landlord names on their websites.*



Schools

- **USD 481**
<http://www.usd481.org/>
- Website gives good arguments for the advantages of a small school district.



The screenshot shows the USD 481 website with a dark background and a red header. The header contains navigation links: Welcome, Documents, Employment, Links, and BOE. On either side of the header is a husky head logo. Below the header, the text 'WELCOME TO USD #481' is displayed in large red letters, followed by the slogan 'HOME OF THE HEAT' in a stylized orange font. A central graphic features a circular logo with 'RURAL USD 481 RUSTIC' surrounded by paw prints. Below this, a white banner reads 'SERVING HOPE, WHITE CITY, & WOODBINE'. The main content area has a dark background with a large, faint husky head. It includes two buttons: 'White City Huskies Home Page' (red) and 'Hope Lions Home Page' (orange). A section titled 'Our Mighty Schools Advantages...' lists several bullet points. To the right, 'Contact Information' lists the Superintendent, Principal, and another principal with their emails and phone numbers. At the bottom, a button says 'Sign up Now for Textcaster!!!!'.

Welcome Documents Employment Links BOE

WELCOME TO USD #481
"HOME OF THE HEAT"

RURAL
USD 481
RUSTIC

SERVING HOPE, WHITE CITY, & WOODBINE

pm @ Hope

White City Huskies Home Page Hope Lions Home Page

Our Mighty Schools Advantages...

- Full Kansas QPA Accreditation!
- Strong early childhood commitment:
Parents as Teachers-prenatal to 3 yrs.
4 yr old preschool and full day kindergarten
- White City Governor's Choice Award
- Individualized instruction for students
- 9:1 Student to Teacher Ratio
- Schools have received Standard of Excellence Awards
- Numerous extra-curricular activities
- Progressive Schools with a friendly Rural Atmosphere

Contact Information:
Ralph Blevins, Superintendent
rblevins@usd481.com
785-349-2964


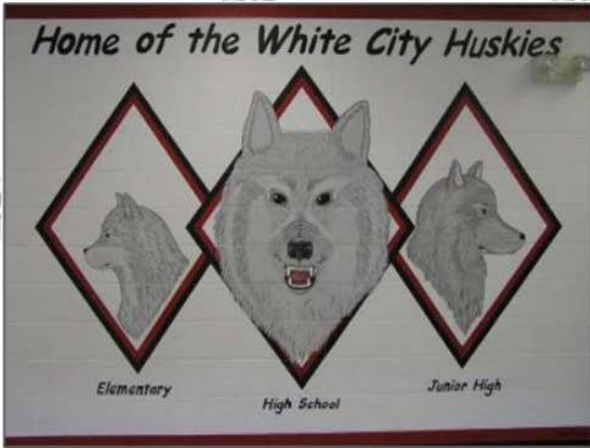
Mike Teeter, Hope Principal
mteeter@usd481.com
785-366-7221

Joel Kahnt, White City Principal
jkahnt@usd481.com
785-349-2211

Sign up Now for Textcaster!!!!

Schools

- **WCHS** <http://www.wchuskies.com/index.htm>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">School Calendar2014-15 School Info2015-16 School Supply ListsAlumniBoard & AdministrationCommunity Info & NewsCounselor's CornerDaily AnnouncementsElementaryExchange StudentsFaculty/StaffFall '14 HomecomingFavorite WebsitesFriends of RachelGraduations & PromotionsHigh SchoolHigh School Athletics	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">High School Honor RollHuskie HonorsJunior HighJunior High AthleticsJunior High Honor Roll<u>Library</u>Menus -- May 2015Post-Secondary InfoPre-SchoolPrincipal's PagePrograms & ResourcesProm 2013Senior/Parent NightStudent LifeStudent OrganizationsTitle I ProgramWinter Homecoming 2014
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This page comes up in a web search, but it may be an abandoned site. (It does NOT link to the USD 481 site.)

The information is very dated and doesn't reflect well on the school.

- 2014-2015
- Prom 2013

Schools

- PreK-12 in White City.
- Nicely maintained with adequate size.



Childcare

- Pre-K is next to school and private care providers are also available.



Faith/Religion

- Two churches, a nice cemetery.
- Other churches outside of White City.
- Did not see Church activities evident.



Civic

- 4-H on sign at entrance.
- Active American Legion and Eastern Star.
 - Saw veteran's memorials throughout town
- Library Cookie Walk
- Girl Scouts



Public Infrastructure

- Not the best time of the year to observe landscaping.
- City park had nice equipment and restrooms.
- Sidewalks would be difficult for strollers, walkers or wheelchairs.



Public Infrastructure

- We weren't sure what the story was about the black train engine but felt it could be better displayed in a park.
- Grand Street would be more grand with additional landscaping.



Public Infrastructure

- Street signs are faded and very difficult to read from a distance.
- Side streets lack curb, gutter and sidewalks, gravel streets.



City Hall, Fire, EMS and Police Services

- City clerk was very friendly and helpful.
- She maintains website, bulletin board and has a city pamphlet.
- Police are supplied by Morris County.
- Volunteer fire district with a new, impressive facility.



Library

- Nice, clean, well maintained with many books.
- Free internet services for citizens.
- Copy services for 25 cents per sheet.
- Not open full time, but library hours are posted.



City Parks

- Katy Park.
- *I longed for more interpretation of the displays.*
- Restrooms provided, not open yet.



City Parks

- Centennial Park
- A football field next to the high school and baseball fields in Centennial Park.
- Parks will look more attractive in warmer weather.
- The playground equipment was great.



- Clean up needed near the park



Recreation/Tourism

- City brochure advertises recreational spots in the area.
- Monthly flea Market “Show and Sell” Great idea; didn’t find information on the website.
- Senior Center Activities.
- 4th of July Celebration with raffles underway.



Most Positive Observations

- Attraction of small town living and being able to send your children to a small school.
- Monthly flea market “Show and Sell”
- Very active Senior Center, Nice newspaper.
- Beautiful Fire Department building.
- Nice Community room in City Hall to rent.
- “Mail is all out” sign at Post Office— we will do that!

Biggest Obstacles/Challenges

- Keeping the schools open in this political climate.
- There is very little merchandise in town. A restaurant, bar and grocery store in this small town would make it easier and more enjoyable.
- Nice enhancements would include a walking or bike trail and a community garden, if you don't already have one.

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

- Positive: a town that has been able to maintain its schools.
- Negative: Vacant buildings and homes in need of maintenance.
- The Fire District and building, newspaper, Senior Center and City building.
- The friendliness of all we spoke to.

Next Steps:

Thank our leadership team:

- *Susan McKenzie*
- *Tracy Schmidt*
- *Christine Smith*
- *Scott Fairbanks*
- *Jim Barber and John Riffel, Leadership Support*
- **Set next steps!**
 - Which group will lead the discussion?
- *Contact me if you need resources or help:*
 - Nancy Daniels
 - Community Vitality Specialist, K-State Research and Extension
 - 785.410.6352
 - nkdaniels@ksu.edu